


# Chapter 19

## The Effect of Soft Power on the Selection of a Touristic Destination

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Through tourism, which is one of the most important activities in bringing cultures closer to each other, there are intense soft power activities in the touristic place where the tourism event takes place, as both the culture that accepts tourists and the culture that is tourist affect each other, with or without awareness. In this study, which was carried out with the methodology of document review in order to reveal the effect of soft power on tourism, considering the data of the United Nations World Tourism Organization in 2022 report which includes the top ten countries that attract the most tourists and get the most income from the world tourism movements with the results of the researches made by the Global Soft Power Index. According to the data obtained, it was tested to reach a judgment by making comparisons with the 2023 Global Soft Power Index ranking. Accordingly, it has been concluded that the countries with the highest ranks in the World Soft Power Index are mostly the countries that attract the most tourists in the world and the most revenue from world tourism.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Countries need power to stay in their places as well as to be on the world map. Holding economic, political or strategic power is an important agenda item in the internal and foreign policies of countries. The issue of being a country mentioned by its global influence rather than the geographical area is a common concern all over the world. The painful picture of power displays based on coercion in history

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3693-0250-7.ch019

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has forced countries to find different ways to obtain that power. It is an important outcome of this quest that people accept a power on a voluntary basis and perhaps without feeling it. Soft power, which does not rely on brute force to obtain power, has been an important tool that countries have used for a while to increase their influencing domain. The lure of soft power is the willingness of the acceptor to remove the barriers to imposing the power. A globalizing technological age is laying the groundwork for the use of soft power. Social media, which exists on the basis of influencing and being influenced, seems to be enough for you to be a willing person wherever you are in the world. Instant sharing, which enables one to become a brand, is also a powerful tool to place experience alternatives in minds that have never been experienced before.

It can be said that being popular is effective for being preferred. The top rows of “must do”, “must see” or “must go” lists provide us with popular agendas of those preferred in terms of tourism. The difficulty of trying to be a permanent power in a rapidly changing world is an indisputable fact. The struggle of the tourism sector is great in an environment where experiences are sometimes exhausted before they are experienced. In this sense, it is inevitable for the sector to make an effort to increase the arguments it has. However, the idea of whether or not popularity is constructed here is also the key to how and how people’s preferences can be directed. “In a world where uniqueness is standardized, how much are we sacrificing features that make us who we are, such as authenticity?” may need to be considered. It should not be forgotten that cultural diversity is a product of world heritage and one of the most important resources of tourism. Examining the scope and depth of soft power is also a necessity in order to reveal these problematics more clearly. In this sense, it is extremely important to analyze and analyze the relations between the tourism sector and soft power. Thus, it will be possible to reveal whether the effects of soft power are as soft as it was named.

In this chapter, the effects of soft power in the selection of touristic destinations discussed in the light of data obtained through document review methodology. “Is it the tourist attraction of that country or the soft power factors that attract tourists to a country?” This question constituted the main question of the research. For this purpose, firstly the concepts of power, soft power and touristic destination were explained. Then, the “Global Soft Power Index 2023” scale and the countries attracting the most tourists in 2022 were examined together. During the examination, the data of “Business & Trade, Governance, International Relations, Culture & Heritage, Media & Communication, Education & Science, People & Values, and Sustainable Future”, which were the subject of the index, were used in detail and it will be evaluated which elements stand out in touristic attractiveness (Global Soft Power Index, 2023). Thus, it was considered to clarify the possible relations and connections between the soft power elements applied by the countries and the touristic attraction. In addition, what needs to be done to become a remarkable touristic destination was examined within the framework of soft power. In conclusion, “How can soft power be managed in a sustainable way?” was tried to contribute to the discussion within the framework of the tourism sector and to determine the advantages and disadvantages related to the subject.

### **Power and Soft Power**

Power is a frequently discussed concept in the social sciences literature. The most important feature of the concept is that it presents a multidimensional structure. Robbins and Coluter (2003) consider this structure through its ability to influence and influence. Whereas Weber (1978) draws attention to the coercive ability of power and emphasizes that this concept is the key point for people to exhibit desired behaviors. This thought of Weber is similar to Foucault’s viewpoint of the concept. According to Fou-

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