

A Rising Soft Power: India and the Advantage of India-Vietnam Educational Cooperation from 2014 to 2021

Trieu Huy Ha¹

Received: June 7, 2022

Revised: December 10, 2022

Accepted: December 14, 2022

Abstract

The objective of this article is to generalize salient points of India-Vietnam educational cooperation from the perspective of India with the hope of providing a better understanding of this tie since the Act East Policy (AEP). This research paper employs qualitative methods, together with data collection and a thematic and grounded theory approach to draw some new findings. First, there is a slight increase in Vietnamese students in India's education, and this country became a new provider of scholarships for Vietnamese students. Besides, the role of student exchange programs, together with India's investment in Vietnam's academic institutes, is a typical example of the rising soft power of India in the case of Vietnam. Meanwhile, activities of Indian Studies institutes in Vietnam shouldered the role of organizing a wide range of academic conferences and educated Vietnamese people about Indian culture and its influences. It is expected that India would perform its strong commitment to educational cooperation with Vietnam to pull off AEP. The continuation of Vietnam's open-door policy along with the AEP of India would stimulate the role of Vietnam and India in a close interaction in the Southeast Asian stage down the road.

Keywords: Act East Policy, Vietnam, India, Educational Cooperation, Soft Power

¹ Department of Liberal Arts Education, University of Management and Technology, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Introduction

Globalization engenders a sense of cross-border cooperation and fosters all bilateral and multilateral relations of all countries in the world to share mutual interests for further national development. India is an incipient country in South Asia and has shown a great commitment to Southeast Asia affairs since 1996. The strategic presence of India in Southeast Asia met the open-door policy of the Vietnam government in an attempt to achieve a deep integration into Southeast Asia. When releasing the “Look East Policy (LEP)” in 1991, India probably grasped the tendency of international relations, which was experiencing a volte-face from the Cold War era to the multipolar order with the rising role of peace talks and economic growth objectives. LEP can be seen as an adaptation of India to expand its strength in Southeast Asia. The suzerainty of China in Southeast Asia, along with the tactical appearance of the US, is synonymous with creating byzantine international relations in Southeast Asia. Under the premiership of Nerada Modi, the “Act East Policy (AEP)” was well-publicized in 2014 (Modi, 2014), with the purpose of intensifying the economic well-being of India and building a regional notion of India. Modi argued that AEP targeted to promote economic cooperation, cultural ties, and the enormous importance of a strategic relationship with countries in the Indo-pacific region through a proactive and down-to-earth approach (Daily Update, 2021).

Although education is not accentuated in this policy, this aspect takes a hint at connectivity and culture, which promote the role of cooperation through India’s initiatives in the fields of education, water resources, and health (Daily Update, 2021). Meanwhile, Vietnam is a developing country in Southeast Asia and is a key member of ASEAN, which was assumed to be a destination for India’s new foreign policy. In 1996, the Vietnam government intentionally moved up the level of regional and international integration and fraternized vast countries in the world accordingly (Womack, 1997, p. 37). Thanks to becoming an official party of ASEAN and Vietnam- America rapprochement, Vietnam was geared to

completely set up its bilateral and multilateral relations and create mutual understanding to fructify strategic national interests. The open-door policy of Vietnam harbingered rapid growth of Vietnam as the government concentrated on reaping a great benefit from foreign investments and economic ties. Because of later merging into the regional stage, the Vietnam government was eager to initiate multi-faceted cooperation with its partners in economic and cultural links (Vietnam Communist Party, 1996, p. 41). In the latest Congress of the Vietnam Communist Party (VCP), the Vietnam authority insisted on its inheritance of international scientific and technological advancements as well as digging into bilateral and multilateral relations (Vietnam Communist Party, 2021, p. 163). VCP fostered an overriding ambition to push up its foreign relations in various fields to build a notion of being an active entity in the Southeast Asia environment.

With the strength of AEP, Modi administration effortlessly sways over its foreign relations in Southeast Asia via cultural ties. As for India, Vietnam is a critical element to open the door for the greater power of India in Southeast Asia and boost a sense of India's soft power in this region. Vietnam's education is in hours of need to improve the quality of the human resources, so the Indian government inadvertently satisfies this urgent requirement of Vietnam's government. The massive help of India for educational cooperation is instrumental in riveting this bilateral relationship and translating the AEP into reality. As a result, the objectives of this research paper are:

1. How did India, in concert with Vietnam stimulate educational cooperation over the course of India's AEP?
2. What can be seen from India- Vietnam educational cooperation, and what prospects are we expecting for this tie in the future?

Literature Review

India's soft power is a ripe area for scholarship. Ngaibakching and Amba Pande paid heed to the potency of India's AEP to build mutual trust between

India and ASEAN and safeguard the Indo-Pacific security sphere. Seeking their arguments in a wide range of updated online newspapers, the authors indicated that ASEAN, the USA, Japan, Australia, and India would form a unified stand on the Indo-Pacific concept to create a platform for mutual development and shape a regional order (Ngaibakching & Pande, 2020, p. 67). Meanwhile, Jha (2010) optimistically assessed India's soft power in competition with China in Southeast Asia. Undeniably, soft power considerably influences the traditional culture of some ethnic groups in this region (Jha, 2010). The role of AEP would elevate India's seat to a higher level and promote this strength in a competitive environment of power in Southeast Asia. Patryk Kugiel heavily focused on the alternatives to India's foreign policies and evaluated the effectiveness of India's soft power in its foreign policy. The author assumed that this policy would be significant to students and researchers to analyze Indian foreign policy and soft power theory and eventually make a better understanding of India's international relations in the contemporary world (Kugiel, 2015).

In the case study of India- Vietnam educational cooperation, Tien (2016) employed a wide range of source materials and desk-research papers with the brilliant assistance of the historical approach, made coherent arguments that Vietnam and India rested on a long and cordial basis of bilateral relations in history. The manifestation of India in Southeast Asia was beneficial to a growing interest of India in Southeast Asia. Yet, it challenged the security sphere of this region to maintain well-being in a complex background of intertwined contradicting interests (Tien, 2016, p. 14). Le Thi Hang Nga closely examined an important relationship between Vietnam and India after the momentous benchmark of Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in 2016 with a subdivision of cooperation fields in the economy, defense, politics and security, culture, and education. Thanks to employing a wealth of information from official internet websites along with a geopolitics approach, Nga concluded that the tremendous assistance of India to Vietnam emanates from a grave apprehension of India to a rise of China in

Southeast Asia. This hot-bottom issue has been raised in a number of discussions between India and ASEAN. Nga assumed that the educational aid package of India would create academic centers and technical centers in Vietnam to make a joint vision about the future of the bilateral relationship this event was a primordial condition to accelerate educational ties between the two countries down the road (Nga, 2017, pp. 405-408; Quang & Nga, 2018, p. 21).

Summing up from the above-mentioned literature review, it is obvious that the source of India's power is opulent to foster a notion of the role of India in Southeast Asia. However, a dearth of India- Vietnam relationships as a specific case study is noticeable to bridge the gap and make an outlook over the potential of India- Vietnam educational cooperation and the future of India's soft power in Vietnam and Southeast Asia.

Methodology

This study utilized a qualitative design of social science research. The author employs a wide range of primary data on the internet, including updated news on Vietnam and India's governmental websites. Also, secondary sources consisting of academic titles, newspapers, and media are beneficial to be cited and assessed throughout the paper.

This study is conducted based on the perspective of India, and the author emphasized a case study of India-Vietnam educational cooperation. This case was largely gleaned and examined due to the reason that Vietnam was eager to maintain its power balance policy to benefit from all external factors to earn support in an attempt to moderate great powers in Southeast Asia. Besides, a huge investment in various foreign education in Vietnam raised the concern of India about ingraining its soft power in Vietnam. India and Vietnam share several similarities in culture and history, which have a significant impact on educational cooperation and forge a deeper involvement of India in Vietnam. The data collection is conducive to gathering a series of newspapers, statistics, and earlier

research findings. All of them were under review with the intention of inspecting the changing number of Vietnamese students in Indian education while the data deprived of the internet, diplomatic documents, and dispatches play a significant role in historically tracing the evolution of Vietnam-India educational ties in the context of the rising Indian soft power.

Thematic analysis was applied to deal with research questions since it allowed the author to review a variety of previous research papers to examine the India- Vietnam educational cooperation and have a better understanding of international relation context and tone of foreign policy to reassess available collected data. Besides, the grounded theory method is conducive to adding some new concepts and raising a cognition of soft power. This technique allowed the author to reassess previous theories and broaden definitions of theories.

Results

An Uptick of Vietnamese Students in India and Indian Students in Vietnam

The initially noticed signal of this topic was a sharp rise of Vietnamese students in Indian education. ACT accentuated the key role of education in disseminating India's soft power to Southeast Asia and according to Peterson, granting scholarship awards has the goal of building a notion of relationship (Peterson, 2014, p. 3). Indian government pulled off this policy, and the number of Vietnamese students inside India's education is a typical example of the India-Vietnam agreement to inflate the significance of educational diplomacy to gain objectives of India's soft power. The table derived from the Ministry of Education unveils the increasing number of Vietnamese higher education students in India from the school year of 2014-2015 to the school year of 2019-2020

Table 1

The Number of Overseas Vietnamese Students in India (2014-2020) (Indian Ministry of Education)

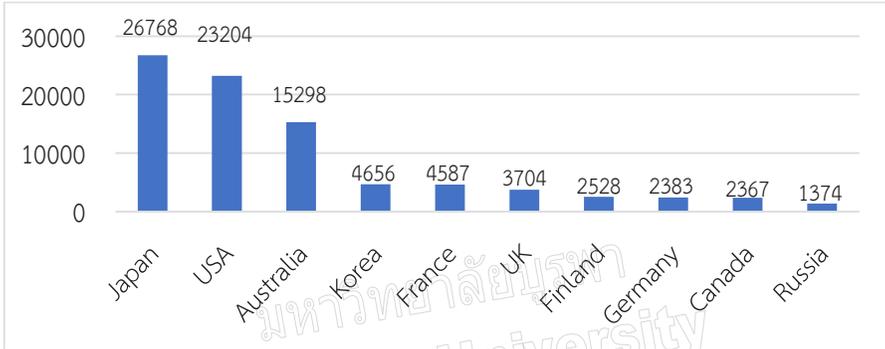
Academic year	Undergraduate	Master	Doctoral	Post Grads	Others	Total
2014-2015	33	22	27	51	11	144
2015-2016	33	12	41	80	4	170
2016-2017	37	9	72	71	3	232
2017-2018	40	23	77	104	2	246
2018-2019	40	3	76	109	9	237
2019-2020	47	0	34	46	2	169

Note. From "AISHE Report (2014-2020)," by India Ministry of Education, n.d., (https://www.education.gov.in/en/statistics-new?shs_term_node_tid_depth=384).

Table 1 illustrates the number of overseas Vietnamese students learning in India from 2014 to 2020. The figure for total students shows a steady increase despite a slight decline in the academic year of 2019-2020 due to the bleak outcome of the COVID-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, many Vietnamese students pursued undergraduate courses in India, from 33 students in 2014 slightly to 47 students in 2020, thanks to intergovernmental contacts on undergraduate training courses. Kenzie argued that there were five types of international education cooperation, including people exchange, transnational education, information exchange, regulatory reform, and development partnership (McKenzie et al., 2008, p. 138). The soar of Vietnamese students in India can be deemed to be a critical type of people exchange and transnational education, where India's educational values are effortlessly penetrated in exchange student communities. It is noticeable that the scholarship sponsor is significant in translating AEP into reality with the purpose of enlightening the role of India's education in targeting countries and elevating the position of India's soft power in India-Vietnam educational diplomacy.

Figure 1

2021 Vietnamese Higher Education Study Abroad Statistics (Unit: people)



Note. From “Market Report Vietnam - Student Recruitment Data by Education Fair,” by Education Fair, 2022, (<https://www.educationfair.nl/market-reports/asia/vietnam/>).

However, figure 1 is a comparison chart to put India in a correlation with its rivalries of educational diplomacy in the case study of Vietnam. While India is probably inferior to excellent educational addresses in the world and reveals that India did not rank the highest number of overseas students compared to developed countries. This indicates that India is grappling with their role in harsh competition with educational tycoons in appealing to Southeast Asian students, including Vietnam.

The relationship between Vietnam and India is a bidirectional process. Vietnam’s government also reaps great benefits from higher influences of AEP to attract Indian students to register for academic courses in Vietnam. For example, India had a strong synergy with Vietnam in coping with the danger and deterring people from this contagious disease of COVID-19. Vietnam government gave its assent to proposals of India’s government concerning splendid opportunities for Medical Studies in Vietnam. Hong Bang International University shepherded this project, and there were roughly 200 Indian students formally joined offered

courses in Vietnam's academics (Nguyen, 2021). Obviously, both Vietnam and India laid education at the heart of soft power. Accordingly, the interaction between Vietnam and India would enrich mutual knowledge and elevate a higher degree of regional cooperation in specific fields under the umbrella of a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. Not only intensely concentrating on the preemptive scheme for military and economic cooperation, but also educational diplomacy is an effective instrument in pushing India's soft power ahead. The two countries indefinitely maintain a robust relationship and increase the level of cooperation in education and training.

A Wealth of Scholarship

As mentioned, scholarship plays a critical role in India-Vietnam educational cooperation. Exceptional achievements of India in technology and computer sciences created a formidable reputation to allocate monetary and educational investments in stimulating the further wisdom development of India's education (Chandrashekar, 1995) and this strong point is expected to make a burgeoning growth of India's education in the world down the road. Soni (2019) argued that Nation branding is how a country or place positions and promotes itself as a place for people to visit, invest in, and build an unrivaled reputation for its quality of goods and services (Soni, 2019). This concept heavily focused on illustrations of Nation Branding in international relations. Peterson extended personal arguments that higher education would become a brilliant tool of educational diplomacy and exhibit incremental progress in expert, student, and analysis numbers (Peterson, 2014, p. 4). Indian government snatched this enormous chance to dig into devise a beneficial policy for its strength and clear a path for overseas students. This policy lies at the underground layer of AEP that accentuates a considerable role of culture and education.

For example, Vietnam is a great annual receiver of the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) program initiated in 1964 (India Ministry of External Affairs, 2015). This program aims to share experiences in economic

development, technological advancement, and transformation to encourage bilateral cooperation between India and its partners. Significantly, the scholarship has an array of IT, English language training, entrepreneurship development, high-performance computing, and other areas. Vietnamese students were convinced that India's information technology, English language, and software technology were prominent fields of Indian education, so this facet folded lots of Vietnamese students under a greater weight of Indian education. In particular, over the past 57 years (1964-2021), it is estimated that over 200,000 professionals were exceptionally awarded ITEC scholarships. In 2019-2020, ITEC offered approximately 14,000 scholarships to professionals and multilateral institutions for 160 partners. As for Vietnam, Vietnamese students earned more than 200 scholarships consisting of more than 130 training slots under the ITEC/Civilian and technical Cooperation Scheme of the Colombo Plan and the other 70 training slots under ITEC (Defense) for Vietnam. (Quyen, 2021). It seems to be plausible to argue that India's soft power in educational diplomacy was in full swing. It would be committed to pushing collaborative means ahead and making an exponential rise of Nation Branding.

Soft power proves its distinguished contribution to assist a state in achieving national interests through a lens of culture in place of squandering huge expenditures and uncalled-for conflicts. Nye cited a myriad of student exchanges program between the United States and the Soviet Union to affirm that soft power was feasible and conducive to strategizing national interests without wars and conflicts (Nye, 2004, pp. 45-46). As for India, the elements of India's soft power include not only a wide range of films and Bollywood, yoga, ayurveda, political pluralism, religious diversity, and openness to global influences (Nicolas, 2012, p. 29), but also academic exchange would make a huge contribution to promoting its appearance in international relations. For instance, the Indian Council of Cultural Relations generously offered a substantial number of annual scholarship programs to Vietnamese students in culture and language.

Annually, the Indian Council of Cultural Relations offers 14 scholarships under EEP/CEP (Education Exchange program/Cultural Exchange Program). Other sources come from the MGCSS (Mekong Ganga Cooperation Scholarship Scheme), GSS (General Scholarship Scheme), the Department of Orientation, and Buddhist and Sanskrit studies (Xuan, 2016). Nye underscored the function of education to broaden some discussions and expand the scope of knowledge for people-to-people understanding. The function of colleges and universities would be likely to assist a state in formulating and implementing a foreign policy for soft power (Nye, 2005, p. 13). Education is a sub-element of public diplomacy and a ripe area of soft power. A rich source of scholarships in cultural exchange between India and Vietnam is a typical case of India's soft power to forge a mutual understanding and enlarge the appearance of India in cultural aspects of cooperation between the two countries in a wide selection of India-based civilization in the religious life of ancient people under a heavy impact of India civilization in Vietnam (Osborne, 2013, pp. 40-61).

As analyzed as a key realm of public diplomacy, education is also subdivided into two mechanisms, including state and people. Nevertheless, the role of people would be a proper tool to enhance mutual understanding between states. Under the light of Liberalism, researchers interpreted this norm as a specific reflection of Liberalism. They proved that a strategic presence of NGOs would fulfill this critical function, especially at the local or national level, as non-governmental and private services would be unable to meet all the needs of their constituents and civil society organizations. For this purpose, they strengthen cooperation with other organizations or countries to enhance the efficiency of diplomatic ties (Bros, 2017, p. 16). The scope of nongovernmental support reveals a richness of scholarship for Vietnamese students. International contacts in education were deciphered by Hugh M.Jenkins. Those activities involve at least two parties, the student applicant and the admitting institution, and often include the governmental or private agency or organization that invests in

the educational programs (Jenkins, 1977, p. 1513). In particular, Table 2 enumerates the yearly number of scholarships and supporters of India’s private universities for Vietnamese students. With the purpose of appealing to Vietnamese students, India’s private colleges generously offered diverse packages of scholarships to Vietnamese students, and it clearly illustrates the aegis of nongovernmental elements to promote India’s education to international students in a collective effort.

Table 2

Annual Indian Ambassador Scholarship of Vietnam

Name of Universities	Quantity	Levels of training
University of Integral (Lucknow)	6	Undergraduate and Master’s courses
Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology	75	Undergraduate and Master Ph.D. courses
Rishihood University	10	Undergraduate and Master Ph.D. courses
Sharda University	22	Undergraduate and Master Ph.D. courses

Note. From “Vietnam is the Largest Recipient of ITEC Scholarships,” by D. Quyen, 2021, (<https://thoidai.com.vn/viet-nam-la-quoc-gia-nhan-so-luong-hoc-bong-itec-lon-nhat-cua-an-do-90823.html>).

Academic Activities

It seems plausible to argue that academics is a sunrise of public diplomacy to disseminate soft power to targeting countries of a state. Frankel assumed that it would be a misconception once the term “cultural exchange” and “international educational exchange” were recognized as similar (Frankel, 1965, p. 67). Academic activity does its utmost to keep a healthy relationship between states and people to deepen mutual understanding and seek a path to deal with unresolved issues through scientific activities and forums. Antônio F. de Lima Jr. argued that this is influential in diminishing misunderstanding and creating an enabling environment as cross-cultural friction decreases (De Lima,

2007, p. 240). The academic activity would mutually address the joint concern and navigate policies. India's government extraordinarily stresses public diplomacy to grow its influence in other parts of the continent, and its government paid greater attention to expanding the extent of academic activities in Vietnam. Those academic activities fostered a notion of Indian culture in Vietnam and exhibited a higher level of educational cooperation. For instance, the Indian government assisted Vietnam to establish various research centers and departments to enhance the knowledge of Indian studies. The IT and English Training Center at the National Defense Academy of Vietnam, the Vocational Training Center in Ho Chi Minh City, High-Performance Computing Center at Hanoi Polytechnic University specified a concerted attempt of both India and Vietnam to solidify a rising notion of educational linkages in Vietnam. Additionally, the Institute of Indian and Southwest Asian Studies (VNIISAS), which is directly under the management of the Vietnam Academy of Social Science, currently functions as the main research center about Indian influences in Vietnam. Established in 2012, this center has shown its disproportionate importance in studies and research about India (Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, 2012). These centers organized to monthly publish the *Vietnam Journal of Indian and Asian Studies Research*, which culled a handful of updated research around India and South Asia. The journal is committed to encouraging a deeper analysis of India and South Asia to forge a deeper notion of readers about India and South Asia.

Besides, Research Centers are critical to host a wide array of academic conferences and forums. For instance, the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences (VASS), in collaboration with the Indian Embassy, organized a conference named "Gandhiji: A saint from Gujarat" on the occasion of Gandhiji's birthday and international non-violent day in 2017. VNIISAS, in concert with VASS, continuously held an international conference with academic attention on the rising of India and its influence on regional security on September 20, 2018 (Quang & Nga, 2018, p. 49). In 2021, India- ASEAN Research Center, in collaboration with the Vietnam

Academy of India and Southwest Asia Studies, organized an international conference with the theme of “Cultural and Civilizational links between Vietnam and India.” Those events added a handful of research findings and statements about the role of India’s appearance in Southeast Asia and Vietnam. Simultaneously, those forums recommended further potentials of Indian studies in Vietnam through the emergent affairs of India following its engagement with Southeast Asia (Quan Doi Nhan Dan Online Newspaper, 2021).

Scientific activities are glaring illustrations of public diplomacy in education which is grossly beneficial to enhancing mutual understanding between states. Traditionally, state dialogue is a key instrument for acquiring shared understanding. Globalization urged states in order to take advantage of people-to-people contacts to build Nation Branding and gain national interests in all diplomatic deals. In this case study, the operation of academic centers in targeting countries remained a strategic presence of India. It deepened a sense of cooperation and an appearance of people and culture. As a result, scientific and research activities are key public diplomacy programs, and a norm of soft power can be intensified through these academic activities. The installation of the Center for Indian Studies at Ho Chi Minh Political Academy in September 2014 illustrates a greater degree of academic interaction between India and Vietnam (Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics, 2021). The functions of this center are to create a growing literature on India and its strategies in international relations. With the theme of “Vietnam – India relation in the ear of Asia Pacific Ocean” on the occasion of the 69th year of India’s independence and the state-level visit of Narendra Modi to Vietnam in September 2016 (Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics, 2016) along with “Indian soft power and Vietnam soft power in the context of globalization,” India floated an initiative to provide a handful of academic papers shedding light on elements of India’s soft power and recommendations for building Vietnam’s soft power as well as assessments on

the application of India's soft power in Vietnam (Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics, 2017).

By and large, India won Vietnam's allegiance to have a grip on its soft power in education in Vietnam. India-Vietnam education cooperation shows a burgeoning demand in Vietnam and India to enhance the quality of education and human resources. While boarding the effort to consolidate soft power in Vietnam under the umbrella of AEP, the Vietnam government placed its faith in the role of India to implement a coherent policy, "More friends, fewer enemies," and significantly boost a sense of Vietnam in international relations. The hands-on involvement of India in educational cooperation stated that Vietnam was one of the key elements in India's AEP, and India's generous aid for Vietnam would ginger the AEP up and bolster India's strategic presence in Southeast Asia in the context of globalization and regional affairs.

The Rising Soft Power of India in Education: An Outlook for India-Vietnam Ties

First and foremost, India and Vietnam have a joint vision statement of educational cooperation. Both countries are densely populated nations, so education is expected to play a vital role in harnessing well-qualified human resources and providing a large consumption market. In particular, India and Vietnam reached an agreement on communications, education, trade, and investment to take our bilateral agenda forward, which put emphasis on education as one of the major cooperations of bilateral relations in 2018 (India Ministry of External Affairs, 2018a). As for ASEAN, India accentuated that it would provide access to wide-ranging applications in health, education, disaster response, meteorology, and communications to enable deeper connectivity (India Ministry of External Affairs, 2018b). Also, India is supposed to be an advantageous external interference for Southeast Asian countries to gradually sway over regional affairs in a byzantine conflict of great power in this region. Kenzie argued that this method was conducted within a Memorandum of

Understanding framework to enhance education in a less developed country through a more developed partner (McKenzie, et al., 2008, p. 28).

In this case, India possesses major advantages in information and technology with a wealth of scholarships for international students. Even if the government published the AEP, Nye also argued that colleges and universities could help raise the level of discussion and devise foreign policy by cultivating a better understanding of power and how the world has changed in an important way (Nye, 2004, p. 15). India is possible to lay great emphasis on the values of Indian culture in Vietnam, and Indian studies are assumed to become a potential research field in Vietnam academics. In education, Vietnam is anticipated to scholarly attract Indian experts for further research on Indian culture and appeal to India's investment in Vietnam's education.

Besides, the Vietnam government is in the initial soft power concept-building stage. In the latest meeting of the VCP, public diplomacy is perceived as a crucial strategy. It was one of the three diplomatic underpinnings of Vietnam (Vietnam Communist Party, 2021, p. 163). Wagle (2018) supposed that "As the diaspora populations of both countries in the other negligible, these two distinct areas can provide the vital people-to-people connectivity which would ensure that the relationship includes social and public elements (Wagle, 2018, p. 4). Meanwhile, McKenzie argued that people exchange was a stereotypical form of educational cooperation. It involves international exchanges of students, teachers, researchers, and administrators through scholarships, study visits, curriculum projects, and research collaboration (McKenzie, et al., 2008, p. 28). India-Vietnam educational cooperation has a wide window of opportunities to generate a source of scholarship through the wishes and memoranda of universities and commitments of the two governments. They would build mutual respect and be beneficial to riveting educational cooperation and convey the power of India's soft power to the Vietnamese people efficiently.

The future of India-Vietnam educational cooperation would depend on academic activities to see points of India's role in Vietnam and Southeast Asia. Balasubramanyam stated that traveling long distances to seek knowledge has a strong correlation with other cultures to sow seeds of ideas and gain a higher level of mutual understanding (Balasubramanyam, 2018). In this definition, the mobilization of students is expected to raise a notion of foreign culture and students to lie a center of cultural diffusion and rivet people-to-people diplomacy. The complex sphere of Southeast Asia and China's growing power would fashion more active measurements of India to tackle potential conflicts in this region. While Vietnam showed its affection for the rising role of India in the ASEAN Summit, it is likely to see an open window of chances to seek a deeper involvement of India in educational cooperation. Hence, it is forecasted that India would scholarly invest in the thriving development of India-based research centers in Vietnam, and its allocation continues to experience a relentless climb in Vietnam's education, which would concentrate on such as medical studies, Indian and Vietnamese literature, cultural studies, and linguistics. Notably, India's art and culture are expected to be televised and frequently diffused among Vietnamese people. The advantage of training courses in India would be more effective thanks to educational fairs, seminars, and student meetings by the Embassy of India in Vietnam to solidify a firm grasp of India's role in Vietnam. Then, AEP would be conducted on various sides of cooperation.

Conclusion

To sum up, this article examines the achievements of India-Vietnam educational cooperation to evaluate the efficiency of India's soft power in the central AEP Policy. It is evident that India gained a fruit of attainments to gain its national interests in Southeast Asia via AEP. After 2014, educational cooperation activities were frequently and bilaterally kicked off. Public diplomacy, which can be viewed as a critical element of AEP, was a technique of India to raise India's

role in the context of a variety of powers in Southeast Asia. It is indicated that there are four factors of India's educational cooperation, including India's scholarships, overseas research institutes, overseas Indian students, and academic activity. India is contingent on these elements to realize the AEP and grow its India- Vietnam ties. This is considered a continued effort over the past few years, and it would become secondary attention of India in an attempt to maintain a healthy relationship with ASEAN countries with the wisdom development of India in this region. With regard to China's strength in the South China Sea, India's soft power, though limiting the chances for a breakthrough of India' soft power in Southeast Asia to deter the suzerainty of China in multi-faceted cooperation, would remain stable and take subtle action to improve the notion of Vietnamese people gradually and rationally about India and relieve a nagging concern of India about the power competition in Southeast Asia.

References

- Balasubramanyam, C. (2018). *Academic diplomacy, an evolving discipline*. <https://diplomacybeyond.com/academic-diplomacy-an-evolving-discipline/>
- Bros, N. (2017). Public diplomacy and cooperation with non-governmental organizations in the liberal international relations perspective. *Journal of Education Culture and Society*, 8(1), 11-22. <https://doi.org/10.15503/jecs20171.11.22>
- Chandrashekar, S. (1995). Technology priorities for India's development: Need for restructuring. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 30(43), 2739-2748.
- Daily Update. (2021). *India's Act East Policy*. <https://www.drishtias.com/daily-updates/daily-news-analysis/india-s-act-east-policy-1>
- De Lima Jr., A.F. (2007). The role of international educational exchanges in public diplomacy. *Place Branding Public Diplomacy*, 3(3), 234-251, <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.pb.6000066>
- Education Fair. (2022). *Market report Vietnam - student recruitment data by education fair*. <https://www.educationfair.nl/market-reports/asia/vietnam/>
- Frankel, C. (1965). *The neglected aspect of foreign policy: American educational and cultural policy abroad*. The Brookings Institution.
- Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics. (2016). *International scientific forum: India and Vietnam in the context of Asia-Pacific Ocean*. <http://www.cis.org.vn/article/1359/toa-dam-khoa-hoc-quoc-te-quan-he-viet-nam-an-do-trong-the-ky-chau-a-thai-binh-duong.html>
- Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics. (2017). *Scientific forum: Impacts of soft power in Vietnam-India developmental cooperation*. <http://www.cis.org.vn/article/2471/toa-dam-khoa-hoc-tac-dong-cua-suc-manh-mem-trong-hop-tac-phan-trien-viet-nam-an-do.html>
- Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics. (2021). *An introduction to Indian research center*. <http://www.cis.org.vn/article/4076/gioi-thieu-trung-tam-nghien-cuu-an-do.html>

- India government Ministry of External Affairs. (2015). *50 years of ITEC*. https://www.mea.gov.in/Uploads/PublicationDocs/24148_REVISIED_50_yrs_of_ITEC_brochure.pdf
- India Ministry of External Affairs. (2018a). *Address by the foreign secretary at the regional connectivity conference: South Asia in the Indo-Pacific context*. <https://www.mea.gov.in/SpeechesStatements.htm?dtl/30556/address+by+foreign+secretary+at+the+regional+connectivity+conference++south+asia+in+the+indopacific+context>
- India Ministry of External Affairs. (2018b). *Press statement by Rashtrapati ji at the presidential palace in Hanoi, Vietnam*. <https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/30610/press+statement+by+rashtrapati+ji+at+presidential+palace+in+hanoi+vietnam>
- India Ministry of Education. (n.d.). *AISHE report (2014-2020)*. https://www.education.gov.in/en/statistics-new?shs_term_node_tid_depth=384
- Jenkins, H. M. (1977). Exchange international students. In A. S. Knowles (Ed.), *The International Encyclopedia of Higher Education* (pp. 1512–1518). Jossey-Bass.
- Jha, P. S. (2010). *India and China: The battle between soft and hard power*. Penguin Books India/Viking.
- Kugiel, P. (2015). *India's soft power: A new foreign policy strategy*. Routledge Publishing House.
- McKenzie, K. B., Christman, D. E., Hernandez, F., Fierro, E., Capper, C. A., Dantley, M., González, M. L., Cambron-McCabe, N., & Scheurich, J. J. (2008). From the field: A proposal for educating leaders for social justice. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 44(1), 111–138. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X07309470>
- Modi, N. (2014). *Act East Policy*. <https://byjus.com/free-ias-prep/act-east-policy/>
- Nga, L. T. H. (2017). India–Vietnam relations since September 2016: From the symbolic to practical results. *China Report*, 53(3), 400–408. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0009445517711509>

- Ngaibiakching, & Pande, A. (2020). India's Act East Policy and ASEAN: Building a regional order through partnership in the Indo-Pacific. *International Studies*, 57(1), 67-78. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020881719885526>
- Nguyen, T. (2021). *India signed a contract for Indian students' medical studying in Vietnam*. <https://vnexpress.net/an-do-ky-thoa-thuan-dua-sinh-vien-sang-du-hoc-viet-nam-4303580.html>
- Nicolas, B. (2012). *India: the next superpower?: India's soft power: from potential to reality?*. IDEAS Reports - Special Reports.
- Nye, J. (2004). *Soft power: The means to success in world politics*. Public Affairs.
- Nye, J. (2005). Soft power university. *Forum for the future of higher education*, <https://library.educause.edu/-/media/files/library/2005/1/ffp0502s-pdf>
- Osborne, N. (2013). *Southeast Asia: An introductory history*. Allen & Unwin.
- Peterson, P. M. (2014). Diplomacy and education: A changing global landscape. *International Higher Education*, (75), 1-5.
- Quan Doi Nhan Dan Online Newspaper. (2021). *International conference: Cultural and civilizational linkages between India and ASEAN*. <https://www.qdnd.vn/kinh-te/tin-tuc/hoi-thao-quoc-te-ket-noi-van-hoa-van-minh-an-do-asean-673422>
- Quang, T. H., & Nga, L. T. H. (2018). Vietnam - India cooperation in the field of cultural and educational cooperation since the strategic partnership until now (9/2016 - 9/2018). *Journal of Indian and Asian Studies*, (11), 15-21.
- Quyên, D. (2021). *Vietnam is the largest recipient of ITEC scholarships*. <https://thoidai.com.vn/viet-nam-la-quoc-gia-nhan-so-luong-hoc-bong-tec-lon-nhat-cua-an-do-90823.html>
- Soni, P. (2019). *Nation branding: How to build an effective location brand identity*. <https://brandfinance.com/insights/nation-branding>
- Tien, T. N. (2016). *India and Southeast Asia in the new context of the world*. Culture and Art Publishing House.

- Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences. (2012). *Functions and missions of India and Southwest Asian research center*. <https://www.vass.gov.vn/noidung/gioithieu/cocautochuc/Pages/thong-tin-don-vi.aspx?ItemID=126&PostID=52>
- Vietnam Communist Party. (1996). *Documents of the 8th congress of Vietnam communists party*. National Political Publishing House.
- Vietnam Communist Party. (2021). *Documents of the 13th congress of Vietnam communists party*. National Political Publishing House.
- Wagle, A. A. (2018). A decade of India- Vietnam strategic partnership: Progress and prospects. *Institute of South Asian Studies*, <https://www.isas.nus.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/ISAS-Insights-No.-484-A-Decade-of-India-Vietnam-Vietnam-Strategic-Partnership-1-2.pdf>
- Womack, B. (1997). Vietnam in 1996: Reform immobilism. *Asian Survey*, 37(1), 79-87. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2645777>
- Xuan, T. (2016). *Undergraduate and graduate scholarships of India for Vietnamese students*. <https://nhandan.vn/du-hoc/hoc-bong-dai-hoc-sau-dai-hoc-tai-an-do-2016-250546/>