

Socio-Cultural Relations between Bangladesh and China: A Theoretical Review of Power Theory

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Abstract : In the meadow of international relations, several theories have been emerged to discuss the activity and relationship of the nation states along with their powers and functions. In this regard, theory of Liberalism, Realism, Constructivism and many other sub branches of philosophy have also been discussed to search of many distinguish questions. Those mentioned theories shed light on all the economic, political, military, religious, social and cultural activities of nation states. Among the theories, ‘Theory of Power’ is noteworthy for discussing the exchange relationship between the two countries. According to the international relation expertise, power theory is profoundly important for its functions and dealings. Besides, its sub branches like Hard Power, Soft Power and Smart Power theories are important for discussing the multidimensional relations between states to states. Bangladesh-China relationship in international politics covers basically above mentioned theories. But when we go through examine the socio-cultural relations between the both, it needs new theoretical appraisal. According to the theorist’s, the researches need to concentrate on the adherent ‘Theory of Power’ along with its sub branches like Soft Power Theory and Cultural Diplomacy Theory. Following the theory of international relations along with its theoretical interpretation, the nature and prospect of social and cultural relationship between Bangladesh and China will be furnished below.

Keywords: Theoretical Review, Power Theory, Soft Power, Hard Power, Cultural Diplomacy.

Introduction

To examine the nature and activity of multidimensional transactions with the other states theory is an indefinable guideline for political thinkers as well as statecrafts. Policies towards supplementary powers in terms of their active and inactive roles in politics are major areas of the theories. To examine the nature, activity and functioning of social and cultural relationship between Bangladesh and China the progression of theoretical framework is obvious. Because both the country nourishes a friendship relationship from the historic past which is also boosting with great vigor in current days. After the independence of Bangladesh in 1971, the People’s

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Republic of Bangladesh declared the policy of “Friendship to all, malice to none” to the nation states of the world. Within this policy, Bangladesh tried to develop its relations with the overseas nations with a view to working together. As a result, many countries gave recognition to Bangladesh and day by day Bangladesh made familiar to the foreign countries. Following this friendship process, China gave recognition in 1975 and formally established diplomatic relationship in 1976 by opening a consulate in Bangladesh. From that time the relationship between the two countries has been running with warm fold and it is increasingly developing day by day within their various bilateral dealings. Within the diplomatic relationship, several bilateral dealings like socio-economic and cultural exchanges were in progress from the very beginning and that caused a great impetus after the change of world politics in 1991, with the disintegration of Great Soviet Union. Because of the fall of the Great Soviet Union, the world gave hegemony to the United States of America (USA). From that period, new world order was formulated by the authority of the USA, which was considered the epoch making events in the history of world. In 1991, similar changes occurred in the history of Bangladesh where democratic government was formulated by overthrowing Hussain Muhammad Ershad, the military based President of Bangladesh at that time. With the change of world order and the change of internal politics in Bangladesh, newer relationship with China was opened up for the sake of peaceful rising. During that period the bilateral relations between the two countries developed significantly and that got the optimum after 2001. In 2001, after the notorious attack of Al-Qaeda to the Twin Tower of the United States of America, the scenario of world politics was changed. The United States’ policy towards the Muslim world changed due to their foreign policy dynamics and preservation of their hegemonic position.

After 2001, for the policy of the USA, most of the Muslim rising countries, with them who were considered to be the friends of USA experienced national and international crisis like war, rebellion, trafficking, militant disorder and economic deficiency. So, from that time, Bangladesh as a Muslim state has also been facing some sort of interfaith relations with the USA for bilateral dealings. Due to USA’s policy towards Bangladesh, it needs good friends and mentors like China. For this reason, Bangladesh has looked towards the East and enhanced its tie with China. China has also extended its friendship hand to Bangladesh. In order to involve into the new international politics, Bangladesh and China are enhancing their good foreign policies for the development of positive bilateral relations between themselves and which is strongly carried out till date. Due to this good diplomatic relationship between Bangladesh and China, huge economic dealings have been done and it is enhancing day by day. With the fold of economic dealings several social and cultural elements were exchanged between the two friendly countries during that period. This current research is a humble attempt to find out the theoretical framework of the mentioned relationship by which the notion of social and cultural relationship between Bangladesh and China during 1991 to 2019 has been carried out.

Aims and Objective of the study

The main aims and objective of the study is to explore the nature and activity of theoretical framework by which the socio-cultural relationship between Bangladesh and China has been carried out. With this, to explore different theory of international relations will be re-examined to formulate the nature and activity of this relationship. The objective also includes finding out the challenges and opportunities of the theories which need to be addressed and implemented.

Research Methodology

From the standpoint of Bangladesh-China social and cultural relations it is important to put emphasis on such a research study and both these countries consider it as a priority. In this respect, it is necessary to give proper attention on its theoretical basement and explanation in international relations. To the individual part of China, there have some noted research works been done on their foreign policy about socio-economic and political affairs, but when a small country like Bangladesh comes to be related with China, there may have very few concentrations. But there has no direct research work been done yet about examine the nature and theoretical standpoint of socio-cultural relations between Bangladesh and china. To examine the theoretical basement of Bangladesh-China social and cultural aspect a brief literature review need to be formulated. In the field of literature review some research works have been done by Rahman, T. S. & Uddin, M. J. (2011, June & December). *Bangladesh and China: A Review of 35 Years of Relations* just discussed about the economic and political connections of the both states and showed the nature of relationship and provides few pictures on some bilateral relations. Begum, A. (2015), in her book: *Sino-South Asian Relations: Missed Opportunities?* shows us China's relations and policy with the South Asian countries. She noticed about political and economic dealings but theoretical basement is completely missing here. Jasimuddin, A K M (2002), in his un-published M. Phil dissertation titled: *Bangladesh-China Relations (1971-1981)* discussed the relations between Bangladesh-China which didn't shows us any theoretical interpretations. Rahman and Uddin (2013) in their article titled, *Bangladesh-China Relations: Potentials of Growing Partnership and its Implications* in B. M. Kabir ed. Books titled; *Sino-South Asian Relations: Continuity and Change*, have focused on a more comprehensive study of Bangladesh-China relations and discussed elaborately economic and geo-strategic dimensions which is also kept us in a dark position about the conceptual basement of theoretical aspects. Sahoo, P. (2013), a prominent research scholar of Delhi University, concentrates on Bangladesh's economic relations with its great neighbors like India and China. In his research, he concentrates on trade relations with the tri-parties and their strategies which are also missing the theoretical interpretations. Kaplan, Robert D. (2010), famous American researcher and political analyst also noticed about Bangladesh affairs and its relations with the big powers. In his worthy book: *Monsoon: The Indian Ocean and the Future of American Power*, he noticed in chapter eight "Bangladesh the Existential Challenges" about Bangladesh's recent conditions of the decades with USA, China and Indian affairs and challenges to maintain relations with the big powers have scarce conceptual basement which doesn't includes socio-cultural arenas. Copper, John F. (China Report, May-June 1973), *China's Policy*

Towards Bangladesh, discussed about China's policy towards Bangladesh and its neighbors specially India. Here Copper discussed about political basement which doesn't bear any ideas about socio-cultural interpretations between Bangladesh and China.

Like the above mentioned review Ahmed, M. and Ying, S. (2015), *Research on Chinese Investment in Bangladesh Garment Sector*, Chowdhury, I. A. (2010, March 31), *Bangladesh-China: An Emerging Equation in Asian Diplomatic Calculations*, Chakrabarti, R. (1994) *China and Bangladesh*, Sarker (2014) *Bangladesh-China Relationship at the Dawn of the Twenty-first Century* and many other research doesn't shows us the theoretical basement of socio-cultural relations between Bangladesh and China. Due to this scarcity of conceptual interpretation of socio-cultural relationship between Bangladesh and China existing noted theories need to be re-examining to institute the basement of theoretical concept of Bangladesh-China relations. From the viewpoint of literature review to ensure the quality of the study and the compiled documentation, the author has followed the methodology of analytical description and elucidation. This study concentrates on the various theories of international relations and its statecrafts. To examine the current research, available literature of international relational theories needs critical examinations and requires scholastic overview. For these reason a good number of books and sources have been consulted by the author for this study. Some secondary sources e.g. journal articles, encyclopedias have been consulted for the research.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study is mainly based on existing secondary sources like theoretical write-up of different theories (books, various journals written in English and Chinese), electronic journals, working papers, conference papers, various websites, newspapers etc.. However, this study should not be considered as the inclusive study of the theoretical framework of the social and cultural relationship between Bangladesh and China. To inspect the theoretical concepts which are pertinent to the research the author only includes here statecraft and organizational theories like Power Theory (soft, hard and smart) and Cultural Diplomacy Theory which has been interpreted in the current theories of international relations and political science. After investigate the mentioned theories a pivotal theoretical interpretations will be furnish to explain Bangladesh-China social and cultural relations gone-through international relations theory existed and will carries new perspective of theoretical basement on socio-cultural research. However, the author has tried his paramount to mark the research praiseworthy and valuable.

1. Theory of Power and its Elucidations to the Research

Power is the identity of human existence which is perceived as an indispensable component of all sorts of social, economic, religious and political activities between individuals, groups, nations or states. Power exists in various forms and appearances. According to Joseph S. Nye, power is the aptitude to persuade the others activities to acquire a desired result.¹ He compares power with weather which everybody talks about but can realize a little. Joseph Nye indicates power as love which is easier to understand than determine.² Traditionally, power has been measured by the amount

of population and terrain of the states; demand of minerals, economic vigor, social solidity and the military strength. Waltz prescribed about various components of power, such as military power, population, territory, foreign aid, economic capacity, political solidity and capability of executing visions devoid of plain recipe.³ But, Waltz's list's is not a comprehensive whole which he discussed was examined as a poor conceptions need to more extensive considerations. Power basically characterizes either the capability to influence or tangible activity of influencing to the target by the actors.

Due to its nature and practices, the concept of 'Power' is emerged as a major academic discourse which has prior link with the concept of war and other functions. According to Webster Dictionary, power is the capability to perform or create a result according to possession, authority, or influence on others.⁴ The Free Dictionary explicates power as the military strength or politico-economic influence of a group/nation/country over other group/nation/countries.⁵ For the first time, Thucydides, the great historian and political thinker of Greece, speaks in his *History of Peloponnesian War* on the theory of availability of power in the international political arena. Defining the significance of power, modern leading political thinker, Hans J Morgenthau, mentions that power is a contemporary political interaction which is reflected in the international politics. He also focuses on the nature and exertion of power while depicting it as a challenging task of in political science.⁶ The Founder of Neo-realism, Kenneth Waltz says, "The proper definition of power remains a matter of controversy".⁷ Robert G., Stefano G. and some other scholars affirm that, there is an inadequate knowledge about power and it needs to be clear about the role of power in international politics.⁸

In the arena of international relations, *power* has a disciplinary connection to the Realism theory. In realism, *power* just indicates the hard power (military power) which is ascribed by Hobbs and Waltz in their realism and neo-realism discourses. Thomas Hobbes, a prominent proponent of classical realism, explains the causes behind the emergence of conflict under three concepts. In his book *Leviathan* he elaborates three assumptions which lead to a war of all against all. These assumptions are (1) men are alike; (2) men can non-cooperate in anarchy; and (3) men are always motivated to be involved in competition for the sake of achieving glory. His concept of "equality", however, is elaborated to the fact that the 'weakest has the strength to kill the strongest' because all are equal and all deserve to enjoy their resources equally. According to Hobbes "scarcity prevents each from having as much as he desires – which makes men enemies".⁹ This reflects the collision of power among human beings. While discussing structural realism, Waltz also comments on classical realism and raises questions about the allocation power and function.¹⁰ According to Waltz, hierarchy and anarchy are two basic political principles working behind the powers which move the powers functioning.¹¹ Both Hobbs and Waltz's say about the military or hard power which includes weaponry and power of man etc..¹² The thought of power generate in the earliest school of idea remained ubiquitous for most parts of the literature. But in twentieth century, the scheme of power has faced criticisms from the scholars of neo-liberal schools for overemphasizing 'power' in the global politics. According to Peter Bachrach and

Morton S. Baratz, power is articulated through the executive and non-executive approaches. It can be perceived through the concern of safety issues by communities along with their economic and political organizations and other functioning institutions.¹³ Pinar Bilgin and Berivan Elis consider it a narrow conception of power. They also add that, obligatory power is not partial to the substance of the resources but the survival of individuals in the outlined set up has no mobilization and it might be biased.¹⁴ According to the power theory, three types of power consist in global politics. 1. Hard power, 2. Soft power and 3. Smart power. Consequently, Nye refers three types of power in the contemporary international systems which are showing in the following table.

Table: 1 Categories of Power

Category of Power	Nature of power	principal exchanges	Policies of the Government
Hard power	Oppression prevention defense economic hurdle	pressure vigor	coercive diplomacy battle agreement
Smart power	Encouragement and Intimidation of both hard and soft power	expenses sanctions	assist inducements sanction's and finally hit
Soft power	Striking	dignity culture organizations	public diplomacy bilateral and multilateral diplomacy

To examine the related theories regarding social and cultural relations between Bangladesh and China, these three theories need prior consideration for making a discussion.

1.1 Hard Power

As a theory of international relations, *hard power theory* was coined more than a decade ago by Professor Joseph Nye. Harvard Scholar, Joseph Nye, used this term for the first time in 1980 in his book *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power* and it gave scholastic thought to the intellectuals of international relations and other political thinkers.¹⁵ According to Ney, *Hard Power* is something that likes exercising military or economic supremacy to grip others by transforming their positions.¹⁶ Further scholastic discussion over this theory has been done by noted international relations thinkers and scholars and it is now considered a great field of study, though there was a prior concept about this theory in the thoughts of Thucydides to Hobbs. As an older thought, Hard Power is apparent in its realistic shape and stepping up with strong shape.

According to Pallaver, it has a definite connection with the thought of realism, and it has been flourished in different spheres of world politics. People have a prior observance of its functions and impacts from the very beginning. There is a little similarity between hard power and soft power in terms of carrying those principles and there are some differences between them in the field of activity and appurtenance.¹⁷ According to Ney, hard power theory is well known to the scholars and it can depend on lives and threats. It gives the impression of acquiring privilege by using economic or military approaches.¹⁸ Hard power is completely resource based and it can be used when needed as a weapon (economic or military) to the opponents. Though in modern international politics military power is considered as a hard power for its usefulness but it does not always focus on using hard power to the opponent. As a hard power, economic power comes first in action and when economic power fails then military power finally comes in action to formulate the policy of a state or nation. In Syria and Iraq, we have observed the same policy furnished by the USA. The USA first imposed some economic restrictions and then finally attacked Syria and Iraq with its military force which has been a great instance of the nature of hard power. And it has some obvious effects in international politics and bilateral relations.¹⁹

According to Peter van Ham, when *hard power* (military power) emerges as an instrumental element of development for a bilateral relationship, then *soft power* appears as a component of legitimacy, integrity and cultural power which has a great dominance in maintaining bilateral relations.²⁰ And generally, supporters of hard power do not have faith in soft power. Because, they believe that, soft power is a relinquished power and like the hard power instead.²¹ But in international relations, soft power is important for constructing a smooth relationship with different organizations, nations or states. Because, only soft power activity can create confidence between two powers and finally they can get benefit from it. Considering the above characteristics, it can be said that, hard power is drastically different from soft power and not befitted to the social and cultural relations between Bangladesh and China.

1.2 Smart Power

Before going to discuss the *Soft Power* theory, we need focuses on the theory of *Smart Power*. The practice of this theory has earned much attention from different powerful states in international politics. Imposing both hard and soft power and all organs of states to achieve utmost benefit in favor of the actors is considered as *smart power*. Basically, smart power is the dexterous arrangement of both hard and soft power. The term Smart power is an opening of the policy driven by the conventional government, political parties and most widely by the public. Military forces, government of the states, nations and its alliances may consider as the party of smart power. In this process, the actor may approach by using economic and military powers as well as constructing alliance, friendship and partnership through various institutional levels to widen influence and ascertain authority over the concerned targets.²²

In 2004, for the first time the theory of *smart power* appeared as a foreign policy in Washington under the then President Barack Obama's administration. Suzanne Nossel, a noted American thinker, provided *smart power* theory and proposed to renovate the liberal internationalism doctrine in 2004. In his article, he tried to reinstate the significance of multilateralism. He provided the USA a suggestion to make friendship with other states because for him, 'own hand is not always the best tool'.²³ Robert Wright, another scholar of the USA claimed that, *smart power* is a strategy coming from the line with a progressive realism and said, "Realism might create a center of attention of the numerous liberals and progressivism, which might influence some conservatives". According to him, this latest foreign policy model can reunite "the compassionate aspire of idealists amid the controlling sense of realists."²⁴ This new principle entails a realist estimation of the intimidation and limits of the USA's power and put emphasis on the essential of cooperation with its friendly countries and within global organizations.

To achieve optimum advantage and tackle present unconventional threats, this framework has come out as the key stone of the USA foreign policy. Though over last the few decades, the USA had been inclined to *hard power*, but Obama, the previous President of the USA, aimed at making an equilibrium among the three 'Ds' – defense, diplomacy and development – by the reconstruction of the USA's national, bureaucratic capacities, which had ultimately made a noteworthy modification in the USA's defense policy in the contemporary years.²⁵ Some scholars also claim that, like the USA, the EU may consider as the *smart power*, which is a debatable agenda in modern international relations? According to them now European Union has same coinage and a military platform and more than 60,000 soldiers of the EU is still working many peacekeeping missions all over the world.²⁶ On the other hand they have visa free entrance between them and have various social and cultural exchanges in the queue. But, in the recent years Britain left the EU and many other are not sure about the fate of the European Union. Considering the above agendas it can be said the EU is still struggling to be smart power and need more capabilities to achieve. Nowadays, Bangladesh and China are enjoying a strong bond of friendship in terms of political and economic dealings but not according to the conditions that the theory of *smart power* believes. Considering the prior situation of the global politics, it should be said that, political and economic agenda related to the theory of *smart power* do not be suitable for the relationship of the context of socio-cultural relationship between Bangladesh and China.

1.3 Soft Power Theory

In International Relations, there are different schools of thoughts who discussed about state behavior, state interests and bilateral relations of multidisciplinary aspects between states and nations. In the theoretical framework, working about the socio-cultural relations between Bangladesh and China concentrates on the theory of soft power theory and cultural diplomacy theory. *Soft Power* theory is highly related to the research of social and cultural relations between two countries. Harvard Scholar Joseph Nye first time used this term in 1980s in his book *Bound to Lead: The*

Changing Nature of American Power and it's gave scholastic sustenance to the scholars of international relation and other political thinkers. Nye afterward discussed about Soft Power in the year of 2001 and in another illustrated writings *The Paradox of American Power*, where he discussed the nature and activities of the state and how soft power is working within them to initiate relationship with state to state.²⁷ The clear conceptual factors come out in another paper, *Soft Power: The Means to Success*. The term 'Soft Power' has become omnipresent in contemporary international relations. J.S. Nye, one of the spokesmen of the soft power theory mentioned that,

A country may achieve its preferred outcomes in world politics because other countries want to emulate it or have agreed to a system that produces such effects. In this sense, it is just as important to set the agenda and attract others in world politics as it is to force others to change in particular situations. This aspect of power..... that is, getting others to want what you want— might be called attractive or soft power behavior.²⁸

Moreover, Nye (2004), describe soft power as 'elusive, non-quantifiable, non-material or divine power and 'the capability to sway others among reason and to induce others through moral values' which is very significant, because 'you need people to buy into your values'.²⁹ Nye as a strong supporter of soft power believes that, it attracts the policy of a nation by diffusion of cultural values which constructs an ideological demand. On the other hand that will make the nation to draw closer attention towards the further parties. To fulfill the notion of soft power Nye recommend the exercise of arts, literature, values, films, intellectual sharing's, cultural diplomacy and additional subjects to generate such magnetism. In that case, soft power may originate from language and culture, values, domestic social institutions, policies, etc.. In that sense, soft power is a social aspect which has pre-political or non-political impression. It should be mentionable that, like the executors of the hard power, soft power executors also wants a result and the probable result is, making attraction and direct to acceptance of the using authority.³⁰

Therefore, a state can secure many interests and strategic objectives when these attract overseas nations. Though, Nye excludes economics from his soft power theory but he strongly argues in favor of behavioral terms and about peace and development.³¹ He also believes if the notion of soft power works wholeheartedly then it will create the success of the foreign policy of any nations like the United States. Joshua Kurlantzick, a noted scholar also affirmed the importance of Soft Power theory and said it has been changed over time and now it covers anything outside of the military and security dominion. He also noticed aid and investment and participation in mutual organizations may cover to the Soft Power theory.³² Pallaver, Matteo also said that, Soft power has a capability to draw attention of the people's executing without coercion. Legitimacy is the basement of soft power, which has a target to gaining peace without any war or power exercise.³³ Nye also ascribes such decision that, "if a citizens or a states think American intentions to be legitimate, (we) are more expected to persuade them to follow (our) escort without using pressure and inducement".³⁴ Furthermore, soft power is completely opposite to hard

power and by using legitimacy its control the actors. According to Nye “currently, victory depends on attract the foreign peoples to help them and made them capable to be practiced on democracy and social actions. By which Soft power can bring the peace to the society as well as to states. In this regards Nye wrote, “It is simple to draw attention of the peoples to democracy rather than to convince them to be in democratic”.³⁵

Another noted scholar Jeffrey Gil also addressed that Chinese language and culture is an essential component of soft power, and China conducts diverse activities to encourage the learning of Chinese language to the universe. The main objective is the foundation of Chinese lingua and cultural institutions throughout the world.³⁶ Though some noted scholars have different comments about the *soft power* theory and it faced criticism from Bially Mattern, Niall Ferguson, Takeshi Matsuda and others describing the theory as ‘delusional’ and ‘extreme soft’,³⁷ ‘too soft’³⁸ and a ‘weapon of cultural imperialism’.³⁹ Some analysts also make the mistake of considering soft power as culture components and puzzled to attach the cultural elements with the behavior of magnetism. Like this Niall Ferguson, a great American historian depicts soft power as a non-traditional actor, like the cultural and profitable goods, which may consider as the great mistake of thinking.⁴⁰ Because, soft power has a results but it always deals with social elements and legitimacy which target is not to achieve instant profit or business.

In 1992, China introduced the *soft power* theory in reign of President Jiang Zemin’s. For the first time his advisor Professor Wang Huning talked about the importance of *soft power* and said, “if a nation has a worthy culture, philosophical and beliefs, other nations will lean to track on it.... It doesn’t have to apply its hard power which is costly and less competent”.⁴¹ After Wang’s observations, sociologists, philosopher and scholar from different field paid great attention to the idea of *soft power* for the theoretical development of Chinese state.⁴² After critical review on the Nye’s soft power theory Chinese scholar’s pay attention how China can promote soft power to its national and international development? In this regard, professor Pang Zhongying wrote an article in 1997, about the Strategy and Management and how soft power can imply with it.

When Nye focuses on smart power and its application model in the USA and the EU that time Chinese scholars keep utmost concentration to the development of soft power in Chinese style to achieve the utmost benefit of economic development to face the pessimistic images of China. To achieve the economic as well as political benefit China declares the peaceful rise theory and started exporting its traditional culture like philosophy of Confucius, music, opera and so on.⁴³ In this regards, Glaser and Murphy said,

The Chinese approach to soft power is holistic: the domestic and foreign policy aspects of soft-power development are conceived as an organic whole. China is focusing on developing economics and building a “harmonious” society through internal institutional reforms and calling for harmonious development externally.⁴⁴

Chen Xiansi, another noted scholar of China provides a wide interpretation of Soft Power in 2006, adding diplomacy and culture, different activities of various

organizations, foreign investment, foreign aid, decreasing of tariff rates, exchange of foreign students and scholarship activity as China's soft power activity.⁴⁵ To examine this strategy Glaser and Murphy distinguish this as a "Chinese characteristics soft power" and affirmed its importance to the Chinese policy making activity.⁴⁶ All the mentioned discussion drew attention to the CPC leaders and distinguishes scholars of different fields of China, and as a result China formulates the soft power policy which is actively functioning to its friendly states and smoothly running on. From the aforementioned discussion it can be said that, the practice and importance of soft power is hardly inevitable for Bangladesh-China social and cultural relationship due to its nature and functioning.

1.3.1 Cultural Diplomacy Theory

Another theory is more important for the study of social and cultural relations is *Cultural Diplomacy Theory*. Though, some scholars distinguish it as a part of Soft Power theory.⁴⁷ Discussing about the Cultural Diplomacy, *Institute for Cultural Diplomacy (ICD)* mentioned that,

Cultural Diplomacy may best be described as a course of actions, which are based on the utilization of the exchange of ideas, values, traditions and other aspects of culture or identity, whether to strengthen relationships or enhance socio-cultural cooperation, promote national interests and beyond; Cultural diplomacy can be practiced by either the public sector, private sector or civil society.⁴⁸

Renowned American scholar Milton C. Cummings said that, cultural diplomacy may characterize within the exchange of beliefs, ideas, information, structure, traditions, values, and further features of culture within the fold of mutual respects and understandings of the concern states.⁴⁹ It can be done in the field of arts, literature, music, knowledge, games, and the economy which strengthen the further communications and mutual respects. Another scholar from the USA State Department, Mr. Richard T. Arndt said,

Cultural relations grow naturally and organically, without government intervention— the transactions of trade and tourism, student flows, communications, book circulation, migration, media access, inter-marriage—millions of daily cross-cultural encounters.⁵⁰

According to Arndt, Cultural Diplomacy is a lucrative policy taking into account of its upshot and results on foreign relations. It also helps to generate an underpinning of mutual trust and friendship between the concern parties and its people by which they can exchange socio-economic, political and also military arrangements. *Cultural diplomacy* also persuades the peoples who want to provide the state to enjoy the advantage of doubt on explicit strategy or requests for collaboration. He also illustrates *cultural diplomacy* as a part of public diplomacy and soft powers that incorporates the exchange of thoughts, information, art and further aspects of cultural elements among the nations and its populaces in order to promote reciprocal understanding.⁵¹ To understand the importance of Cultural Diplomacy, Mary N. Maack also describes that the main motifs of cultural diplomacy is to build a foreign nation by enhancing common understanding and share ideas to them and assembled broad assistance for socio-economic and political benefit.⁵² In this regards Arndt

remarks that, cultural diplomacy can attract the prominent members of distant societies who can't reach through by the conventional embassy approach. In the same time, it represent a constructive outline for mutual cooperation by decreasing mental differences and can create an impartial podium for the exchanges of multidimensional exchanges between people-to-people.⁵³ The aims of cultural diplomacy is to keep long-standing profit of national interest and to made an all-weather relationship by exchanging social and cultural elements with the fold of enhancing business and economic benefit.⁵⁴ Exchange of mass-media, radio and TV transmissions, satellite and internet, translations of various books and its publication, performing arts, various sports, Chinese learning centers like Confucius Institutes, scholarship and student exchange programs, academic exchanges and tourism can work strongly for the development of cultural diplomacy as a soft power components.⁵⁵

Examine a case study on the USA-Japan relations and observe their various dimensions of relationship and exchanges Shizuru Saeki remarks that, *cultural diplomacy* is a theory to shares of theme and particular data, exchange of arts and culture of their societal elements, and to encourage reciprocal understandings between inhabitants or diverse states.⁵⁶ In this regards she also noticed that to exchange cultural elements especially promote language is very influential to achieve state vision to the concern societies or states. From the very beginning of modern China as a great admirer of cultural diplomacy, China using culture to its public diplomacy as strong components of international politics. In 1942 Chairman Mao said about the importance of culture and later he started Cultural Revolution. This process was fostered till the demise of Mao. After Mao, though China started its development policy but culture always acted as a great power. When Ney refers the theory of Soft Power and Cultural Diplomacy raises as a part of soft power and its comes to the hand of Chinese scholars that gave them new though and they furnished it with their heritage and indigenus culture. In 2002, President Jiang Zemin given importance about cultural intertwines and its importance to the economic and political relations. The CPC and other political body of China had given importance of this policy and China in 2003 and declares *China's Peaceful Rise* and *Harmonious world*. In 2004 the term *Peaceful Rise* was reinstate by the term *Peaceful Development* and China declare that only cultural exchanges can help to achieve the utmost benefit in the brutal international competitions. In this regards, China vows to expand its cultural exchanges programs to the world body to win the heart and mind of the people of concern countries.⁵⁷ Palit indicates *Cultural Diplomacy* as typical efforts of China and claimed that, Cultural Diplomacy theory as a part of *Soft Power theory* acted actively to exporting different aspects of China's social and cultural elements to the outer world and actively working for enterprises, connections and exchanges.⁵⁸ She also mentioned that, promote all kind of cultural element to the overseas is an active notion of Cultural Diplomacy theory. For these reasons China established various language institutes, Confucius institutes, China Study Centers to the foreign countries and every year they are arranging cultural festivals and providing huge scholarships to its friendly allies.⁵⁹ On the other hand Bangladesh as a developing country just nourishes the policy of 'Friendship to all, malice to none'

and executes the prevailing theories of current world order. As a peace loving country Bangladesh always keep the policy of soft power and cultural diplomacy for its bilateral dealing though it has no distinct policy of its own.

Insinuation of Soft Power and Cultural Diplomacy theory to examine Bangladesh-China socio-cultural Relationship

Currently the tie between Bangladesh and China is very well shaped due to various socio-economic and political affairs. Bangladesh as a near-neighboring country rightly feels the importance of Chinese position and leadership in the world economy. As a developing country, Bangladesh is depending on China for its daily needs and socio-economic security. With the augmentation of economic and political relationship, both countries are also enjoying socio-cultural relationship which ultimately helps Bangladesh promotes other affairs as well. In order to get optimum result of the relationship, a cultural executive program under the bilateral cultural agreement was signed in 2002, and renewed in 2008 and 2012. This bilateral cultural agreement has actually shed light on the state level relations between the two countries.⁶⁰ The abovementioned theoretical discussion (Power Theory) has introduced us to the ways of maintaining socio-cultural relationship between Bangladesh and China. From the perspective of aforementioned theoretical discussion, the researcher thinks, this is logical to evaluate the present socio-cultural relations between Bangladesh and China to examine the theoretical basement and nature of relationships of the both countries.

To examine the real scenario relating to the theoretical applications, education and learning is the most influential medium of exchange that is carried out by *soft power* notions.⁶¹ As a strong component of *soft power*, education and learning materials between Bangladesh and China have been exchanged form the very beginning of the inception of the bilateral relationship. Xi Jinping, the incumbent President of PRC, mentions that “China needs to rejuvenate its Chinese Dream for strengthening *Cultural Soft Power* in world politics”.⁶² In line with this statement, China always works on reinforcing its socio-cultural issues on the world bodies. Xi Jinping also indicates that *Chinese Soft Power* lies in domestic cultural progress, enhancement of ideological and moral education, Marxists and Socialists ethics of Chinese model, cultural creation, traditional Chinese ethics, excellent tradition and modern spirit; intensify of cultural and educational exchanges, and use of various mass-media for dissemination and improvement of cultural communication with other countries.⁶³

In order to promote *cultural soft power*, China provides a good number of scholarships to the Bangladeshi nationals. Under Confucius Institutes, they are making Bangladeshi nationals educated about Chinese language, flora and fauna. For facilitating education, Confucius Institute of China in Bangladesh has provided tremendous efforts. Besides, other Chinese language departments in various educational institutions of Bangladesh also provide incredible support.⁶⁴ To enhance the socio-cultural relationship, and promote education and learning, many Bangladeshi nationals study in China. This inclination is also found in Chinese nationals who visit and study in Bangladesh as well. According to Wang, a leading Chinese Scholar, China always adopts Confucianism because it is the representative

of Chinese culture. He also refers to the teaching of Confucianism as the indicator of the revival of indigenous Chinese culture.⁶⁵ In modern era, China starts a policy of establishing Confucius Institutes in all of the friendly countries across the globe. Like the Alliance Francoise (1883), British Council (1934), Goethe Institute of Germany (After world War-II), American Center, Indian, Iranian and Russian Cultural Institutes, China established its Confucius Institutes in 2004 to disseminate Confucianism to the world body including Chinese heritage and culture.⁶⁶ To establish the state policy of *Peaceful Rising* and *Harmonious World* considering and branding of Chinese language and philosophy, China established Confucius Institutes as a notion of *soft power* theory in the various countries of the globe.⁶⁷ The motto of the Confucius Institutes is: "Learning language is the best way of building strong relationship and minimizing gap with people of different countries as it works like a bridge."⁶⁸

According to R. S. Zaharna, this dramatic rise of Confucius Institutes has drawn much attention from Public Diplomacy scholars and policy makers. Only a decade old, Confucius Institutes appear to have surpassed the other long-established institutes of prominent powers including France, Germany and Britain.⁶⁹ One Confucius Institute with the support of Yunnan University, China was established in 2006 in the North South University, Dhaka for disseminating Confucianism. Second Confucius Institute was established in 2016 as an integral part of Dhaka University which was jointly managed by Yunnan University of Kunming, Yunnan, China and the authority of the Dhaka University, Bangladesh. The Confucius Institutes of Bangladesh are also working in Bangladesh to maintain and enhance socio-cultural relationship for both sides as well. Both countries seem to be happy for being interconnected through these concerned institutions.⁷⁰ Objectives of the Confucius Institutes actually give us a concept of win-win relationship between Bangladesh and China.

Culture reflects the real scenario of a society including its norms, laws, customs, beliefs, arts and style of living. As a notion of *Cultural Diplomacy* theory like the exchange of education programs, Bangladesh and China foster various cultural relations between the both countries. Therefore, focusing on the importance of the cultural values, Bangladesh and China have started developing their bilateral relationship at the government level since 1978 through cultural agreements.⁷¹ In this regard, the friendship between the people of the two countries can also play a significant role apart from the government level. If we shed light on the cultural relationship between Bangladesh and China, we can see that this friendly relation is continuing to a large extent which is based on mutual trust and cooperation. We know that the participation of mass people can easily ensure the sphere of cooperation, and create multiple opportunities to ensure mutual trust and faith between two countries. Though the cultural relation at the government level was not noticeable in the past as compared to the political and economic relation, it has now been developing than before.⁷²

With the meadow of cultural diplomacy, Bangladesh and China also exchange various art troupes for enhancing socio-cultural relations between these two countries. China, as a great development partner, organises various socio-cultural

programs in Bangladesh. In addition, Chinese people are also participating in various socio-cultural programs of Bangladesh. Chinese Ambassador of Bangladesh, Cultural Counsellor and other officials sometimes join various national programs like International Mother Language Day, National Independence Day, Pohela Boishakh, Basonto Boron and other cultural programs as well. People of China residing in Bangladesh also enjoy those programs.⁷³ After being involved in relationship with China, Bangladesh comes to know the Chinese game as a component of culture. Several Chinese games like Wushu, Ping-Pong and Haozi etc. are familiar to the people of Bangladesh. Especially, Chinese acrobatic athletics is so familiar to the Bangladeshi people. After the establishment of the bilateral relationship between Bangladesh and China, the nature of cultural exchange has changed with a focus on the exchange of sports culture through expertise and instrumental support. Several Sports delegation exchange programs have also been shared by China in that regard. Like China, Bangladesh also provides technical support to China as a part of *cultural diplomacy* theory for developing Chinese cricket as found in *Cricket Diplomacy* by Dr. Dipu Moni, the previous Foreign Minister of Bangladesh.⁷⁴

Another key component of *Cultural Diplomacy* is Chinese food. Though the adopted food habit of Bangladesh is not familiar to China but Chinese food is very much famous to the Bangladeshi people. To make familiar Chinese foods to the Bangladeshi people, Chinese authority of Bangladesh arranges Chinese food festival every year.⁷⁵ With all the initiatives taken by the Chinese authority and various Bangladeshi business communities/Friendship Societies of Bangladesh, Chinese foods are very much popular to the Bangladeshi people. To fulfill the increasing demands of Chinese food in Bangladesh, more than 2000 Chinese restaurants are found in various parts of Bangladesh.⁷⁶ With the registered organizations, some other unregistered organizations are also working in Bangladesh. Every year, huge economic dealings are done in this sector, and more than 250,000 people are living on it.⁷⁷ Due to the much popularity of Chinese food, Chinese cuisine has developed into Bangladeshi-style cuisine nearly in every district town of the country, and people are very much fascinated with it.

Like Chinese foods, literary and historical works of Bengali and China also influenced each other's cultural elements.⁷⁸ Many of the Bengali literary writings of Rabindranath Tagore, Kazi Nazrul Islam and other literary figures are translated into Chinese language.⁷⁹ Mass-media always play a vital role to establish bilateral relations.⁸⁰ As a component of socio-cultural elements, it works promoting social and cultural relationship between Bangladesh and China. In the following, the role of mass-media on promoting Bangladesh-China social and cultural relationship has been examined on the basis of various documents. Chinese mass-media gives importance of Bangladeshi news and focus on its cultural heritage through Radio Beijing, CRI (China Radio International). In similar vein, BSS (Bangladesh Shongbad Shangstha) also does the same duty sensibly.⁸¹ With the fold of the cultural exchanges, Chinese Buddhism and various philosophical thoughts like Confucianism and Taoism also play very significant roles to the maintenance of social and cultural relationship between Bangladesh and China. In addition, religious and philosophical relationship, tourism and hospitality relation, people to people connection, exchange

of delegation and friendship associations between Bangladesh and China are also get impetus throughout the socio-cultural relationship grounded on theoretical production of *soft power* theory and *cultural diplomacy* theory.

Conclusion and tentative results

From the theoretical discussion aforementioned, we can come to a judgement that, in the international relation politics several theories are active to examine the social and cultural relations between the nation states and to scrutinize their various activities. Among the theories as a part of Power Theory *Soft Power Theory* is highly befitted to Bangladesh- China social and cultural relationship. To apprehend the real scenario of the relationship *Cultural Diplomacy Theory* of International Relations are highly related in this regards. Palit addressed China's basic policy of South Asia is Soft Power and its working on their policy of Good Neighborhood (mu lin youhao) and benevolent partnership (yi lin wei shan, yu lin wei ban) as a near neighboring country which is also focused on the statement of Xi Jinping.⁸² Following those theoretical aspects of how the impacts of social and cultural relations positively affect common life may ascribed with the different spectrum of social and cultural development between Bangladesh and China. As a friend loving state wants' the shadow of love of its near neighboring country and a welfare state China provided several socio-cultural facilities like establish Confucius Institute, China Study Center, Chinese Language Department to the different universities of Bangladesh, arranges several Chinese cultural events like moon light, dragon boat festivals, Chinese Independence Day program, Chinese sports, foods etc. and some other facilities provided from them like educational support, scholarship, exchange programs, mass media sharing (CRI) and so on. On the other hand Bangladeshi cultural elements also exchanged in China like; establishment of Bengali Institutes in the several institutions in China, celebration of National Independence Day of Bangladesh in China, Pohela Boishakh, International Mother Language Day celebration, exchange of sports delegations and other socio-cultural elements also expresses in China.

In due of the theoretical framework organizational sharing has been conducted by the both countries like educational exchange programs, exchange of various cultural troupes and sharing individual socio-cultural elements of this period has been formulated. Within the fold of theoretical framework China, in the new century, is still working for the recovery of its golden era of harmony, development and success. It also wants to reach to the world hegemony along with the harmony and friendship of its neighbors. To confirm its faith, China focuses on the principle of peaceful and harmonious world and declares *Chinese Dream* as its state policy and declared *One China One Belt Policy*. In this regard, China looks to South and Southeast Asian nations; and South and Southeast Asian nations also look to China as well. In this regards both China and Bangladesh are working together in national as well as international bodies. Chinese President His Excellency Mr. Xi Jinping found the similarity between *Chinese Dream* and *Sonar Bangla* (Golden Bengal) during his visit of Bangladesh in 2016. He considered those as the epitomes of social harmony and development where a great solidarity could be ensured.⁸³ As a South Asian state, Bangladesh also looks to East policy and strongly supports *One China One Belt Policy* that upholds the notion of China's socio-economic and political dealings.

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