

South Korea's Public Diplomacy and COVID-19: Evidence from an Expert Survey in Indonesia

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Abstract

South Korea perceived its soft power as weaker than its economic standing and military capacity. Hence, the government is allocating substantial resources to improve the national image through public diplomacy, which incorporates culture, knowledge, and policy. The current pandemic provides some sort of silver lining for South Korea as it is perceived successful in flattening the curve without a lockdown. Using an expert survey, our study finds that COVID-19 has become a game changer for South Korea's public diplomacy. The regional cooperation projects with ASEAN and bilateral assistance programs significantly support South Korea's "New Southern Policy", which was announced in 2017. This study offers important insights as to how South Korean soft power is perceived by a developing country such as Indonesia.

Keywords

South Korea, public diplomacy, COVID-19, soft power, Indonesia.

Biographies

Rupa Nanda is in her last year undertaking a bachelor's degree in International Relations at Bina Nusantara (Binus) University, Jakarta, Indonesia. Her research interests include gender, COVID-19, and comparative politics.

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