

Research on Promotion Strategies of Regional Soft Power: Take City's Cultural Soft Power for Example

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Abstract

This paper, based on clarification of connotation of soft power, analyzes elements of regional soft power, such as regional culture, public service, the quality of man power, regional image, regional communication and regional innovation, and then take city's cultural soft power for example, unfold the five key elements of the city's cultural soft power, include the city's spirit, the city's historical and cultural heritage, the cultural industry, the fine literature and art and the cultural brands, public cultural service system. At last we put forward suggestions of promoting regional soft power from the perspective of the six elements thereof.

Key words: Regional soft power; Elements; Promotion

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The world today is undergoing tremendous developments, essential changes as well as major adjustments, and the world multi-polarization and economic globalization have ushered in a profound stage of development. Science and technology update with each passing day. The exchanges between a variety of ideologies and cultures become more and more frequent. Culture has played a growing important role in the competition of comprehensive national strength.

CONNOTATION

A region as a country's comprehensive strength is composed of soft power and hard power together. With the continuous development of economic society, soft power of the social penetration is more durable, and become effective weapons in national and regional comprehensive competitiveness. According to our country's basic national conditions and development characteristics, the soft power is also increasingly being introduced into the regional development and regional competition.

Regional soft power is a power to realize regional sustainable development based on nonmaterial elements such as regional culture, the people's quality, public service and regional image, etc. by means of influencing the region's own development potential and attracting input of resources from outside the region. Regional soft power can be reflected through the influence, inclusiveness and radiation of regional culture, cohesion of the regional society, credibility of the regional government, creativity of the residents, the special function of regional credit, the appeal and attraction to places outside the region and the influence of regional image.

Meanwhile, the cultural soft power refers to the competitiveness and influences that generated from a country's or certain region's cultural force to infect, cohere, absorb, innovate, and propagate. Since the current world is faced with white-hot regional competitions, the cultural soft power is becoming not only an inexhaustible motive force and vital resource for the stabilization, prosperity and constant development of a region, but also important yardstick to measure the comprehensive strength and competitiveness. The soft power of city culture, however, means the power to inherit, innovate, protect and cohere and the power to radiate and influence in exchanges with foreign counties, which resulted from a city's material, institutional and ideological cultures. This kind of soft power provides spiritual dynamism, intellectual support and ideological guarantee for the city's prosperity and progress, which in turn will enhance the city's image, competitiveness and attraction.

1. ELEMENTS OF REGIONAL SOFT POWER

1.1 Regional Culture

Different geographical environment and natural conditions lead to differences in historical and cultural background and form cultural features obviously related to geographical locations. This kind of culture is regional culture, which can be divided into three parts: physical culture (such as historical buildings and cultural relics); economic effects in addition to social effects brought about by the combination of cultural economy, culture and industry; cultural activities, which can reflect dynamics of cultural activities of various regions.

1.2 Public Service

The main body of regional public service is local government departments and public service sectors. The objects of public service are all people, groups and institutions in this region and all people, groups and institutions that are not in this region but have fundamental interests with this region. In recent years, the central government has always proposed a change in the function of the government and encouraged the government to change from a dominant position to an assistant and guiding function. The core of the government transition is to promote public service ability, elevate public service level and construct a service-oriented government.

1.3 The Quality of Manpower

In knowledge economy times, talents in a certain region are the crucial resource of regional soft power. The quality of manpower refers to the group's comprehensive quality level reflected by aspects of individuals' comprehensive quality such as morality, intelligence, physical power, etc. of residents in a region in a certain period. The level of the quality of manpower determines creativity of human resources and fundamentally guarantees the role of regional soft power. With all other elements remaining the same, the improvement of the quality of manpower facilitates production and creativity. As a result, scientific and technological creativity and dynamics in the region are also improved.

1.4 Regional Image

Regional image is a very important symbol of regional soft power. Regional image refers to the overall internal and external image of a region. It is the general impression and evaluation of the region from the public inside and outside the region. This impression and evaluation include material aspects such as regional natural environment, nonmaterial aspects such as regional economy, culture, politics, history, etc. and the behavior of the residents in the region, which is the summarization of the regional space as well as a symbol of whether the society is advanced or not. We are mainly concerned with

nonmaterial image such as regional culture and politics. The construction of regional image can reinforce public consensus, unite the public, boost public morale, enhance the consciousness and initiative of the internal public to be devoted to achieving regional development, thus promoting the regional economic development.

1.5 Regional Communication

Regional communication refers to the process of information transmission and feedback among regions to achieve common development and harmonious win-win. No country or region rose abruptly purely through material growth. The development process of any region includes more or less certain sociality. It is a social process, in which the interdependence among regions and regional behavior are restrained by social politics and culture. In the present world where globalization and interdependence are continuously deepening, the further development of informatization, marketization and globalization keeps deepening the degree of interdependence in interregional social and economic development. It is more difficult for regions to develop in isolation without depending on the society. They can only attain greater development in external fusion. Therefore, it is of vital importance to enhance regional communication that facilitates regional economic development.

1.6 Regional Innovation

Regional innovation refers to the reform of the internal elements of a region in the development process and the acquisition of the ability to be differentiated from other regions. It is always the main and inexhaustible power to drive regional development. It is also the decisive force for regions to settle development crisis and boost faster development. The mechanism inside the region and the innovation thereof are the prerequisite of the emergence of regional innovation, which transform soft power resources into concrete power. Therefore, they are also important elements of regional soft power.

In addition, regional soft power also includes some spiritual elements, such as perceptual elements like values and sense of identity, etc.

2. THE KEY ELEMENTS OF THE SOFT POWER OF CITY CULTURE

2.1 The City's Spirit

The city's spirit refers to the core values that reflected by the citizen's spiritual temperament, moral quality, lifestyle, rules and regulations as well as city image and so on. The city's spirit is the soul of a city, and the character of a city, which shows by its citizen---the presenters. To be more specific, it embodies on the identification by its citizens of the city's culture and institutions. Based on this identification, people form a strong sense of cohesion, and

be encouraged and guided to love their city, to concern about their city's development, to protect the city's honorable reputation, also, to contribute their intelligence and endeavor for their city. Like a strong bond, city's spirit connects people from all walks of life tightly and shapes vigorous centripetal force and cohesive force.

2.2 The City's Historical and Cultural Heritage

Historical and cultural heritage is the witness to the city's history, and the carrier of the city's cultural deposits, which mainly includes places of historical interest, celebrities' poetry, folk traditions and customs. In addition, it reflects cultural concepts, code of conducts, and manners and customs that formed after a longtime practice of a people living in a specific region. It is the cultural code that helps people to better understand history, and it has significant values in cultural resources. It can cultivate the citizen's sense of cohesion and spirit of a modern city by playing the crucial role of encouraging people.

2.3 The Cultural Industry

Innovation is the inexhaustible motive force for a country's flourish and development, the source of strength for a city's pioneering progress and prosperity, and the carrier of a city's cultural innovation lies in its cultural industry. Cultural industry belongs to the tertiary industry, and it can also be called the creative industry. For a city, the creative industry not only can bring wealth and job opportunities, but also can improve aesthetic quality and innovation capacity of the public. Thus, the cultural industry, based on creation and innovation, has already become the innovative motive force for a city's economic development.

2.4 The Fine Literature and Art and the Cultural Brands

The radiant power of a city's culture refers to the influence and attraction of a city's culture for certain region or even the whole world. It is through the fine literature and art and cultural brands, the radiant power plays its role. The fine literature and art are the profound, exquisite and qualified products that have broad impact and long-lasting vitality. As for the city, the fine literature and art can usually show the spirit and image it preserves; demonstrate the cultural customs and fashions it advertizes; stand for the taste it possesses. The quantity of these fine literature and art will directly represent the soft power of a city's culture and level of cultural development and radiant power. The cultural brands are the products of branding cultural industry. They are the cards to propagandize a city's image, and they are shouldered with the mission to exchange the city's culture. Besides, they combine the spiritual and economic values, and can boost not only the popularity and reputation of a city, but also the influence and emotional appeal of it. It will shape the good international image for the city and improve its comprehensive competitiveness.

2.5 Public Cultural Service System

The public cultural service system is a system that offers cultural products and services to protect the citizens' basic cultural rights and satisfy their basic cultural needs. It mainly includes the systems to produce cultural goods, to broadcast culture, to invest in security and infrastructure construction and so on. By building the systems, every citizen will be guaranteed to have opportunity to enjoy the fruits of cultural development, absorb the nutrient of cultural products. The systems will raise the overall quality of the citizens.

3. SUGGESTIONS

Faced with the increasingly fierce domestic and international competition and the severe situation of China's regional soft power, we should promote regional soft power from the elements thereof in order to promote the all-round healthy development of China's regional soft power.

3.1 Construction of Regional Culture

We should push on with reform of the cultural modern market system, develop the cultural industry vigorously and improve competitiveness of China's regional cultural industry market. We should give full play to the advantages of our own region, cultivate our own advantages actively, construct cultural facilities energetically, carry out cultural activities, enrich public cultural life and construct favorable cultural atmosphere.

3.2 Construction of Public Service

First, adhere to the principle of people-oriented, administration according to law, governing for the people; strengthen the construction of a clean government; perfect the mechanism of democratic supervision; take the initiative to accept social supervision; make smooth the channel of public understanding government information; keep improving work efficiency. Gradually change to a service-oriented government to create a "standardized, coordinated, fair and transparent, clean and efficient" government. Secondly, put the people's livelihood in the first place; take overall consideration and push on steadily; realize the unity of realistic interests and fundamental interests of the masses; promote vigorously the development of social undertakings; improve the social security system; intensify poverty alleviation efforts; strengthen and innovate social management. Thirdly, promote the construction of the public sense of security. The current society lacks sense of security. The food security is frequently challenged. The problem of environment pollution is not alleviated. The traffic security is often questioned. High-speed train and metro accidents occur repeatedly. Inflation threatens public economic security. The relevant departments of the government must face these problems with a more positive attitude and severely strike the activities that endanger public security.

3.3 Construction of the Quality of Manpower

On one hand, adhere to the strategy of invigorating the country through science, technology and education. Make sure that education takes an important position in national development strategy and planning and plays a crucial role in facilitating social overall and coordinated development. We must increase investment in education and emphasize the reform of training mechanism. Deepen the reform of education and training system. Foster talents of various levels, especially those talents in urgent need. Make the structure of talents match the demand of economic, scientific and technological development. Transform abundant human resources into human resources advantages. On the other hand, attract elites from outside the region. First, give preferential policies; second, create favorable surroundings, fair living and development environment. Housing, education and medical service etc. are all the key points that people pay close attention to. That is why many elites choose economically developed regions. In addition, we should guard against the brain drain.

3.4 Construction of Regional Image

If the government provides efficient service and creates environment suitable for living and work, people will live and work in peace and the region enjoys an admirable image. In addition to the construction of image, we also need some external assistance, such as publicity of mass media. First, be good at selecting key points of publicity and change passive publicity to active spread. Second, rely on hot news, take advantage of various means of transmission such as the internet, television and magazines, link the publicity content with external important events, build the unique regional image. Last, improve and perfect the planning and construction of city facilities, make the city environment beautiful and pleasant, ensure the high quality and convenience of public service facilities, enhance overall image and quality.

3.5 Construction of Regional Communication

The promotion of regional soft power is a long process. We should strengthen regional communication and have complementary advantages with other regions. First, establish the due self-care, self-improvement and win-win mentality; absorb the cultural essence from outside the region with an open and tolerant attitude. Second, participate in domestic and international affairs actively, strengthen interregional communication and cooperation, and improve regional status and influence. Third, extend overall regional communication, such as reinforcing enterprises' cooperation of significant projects among different regions, intensifying cooperation among multinational corporations, and enhancing non-governmental exchanges by building sister cities. Last, improve and perfect the construction of infrastructure that ensures the level of regional communication to attain an efficient and win-win situation in regional communication.

3.6 Construction of Regional Innovation

Increase investment in various aspects. First, advocate vigorously the spirit of innovation of factualism, solidarity, dedication, harmony and enthusiasm of innovation. Strengthen the construction of credit and build favorable innovation atmosphere and system. Second, focus on developing superior resources, fostering and expanding superior industries in scientific and technological innovation. Focusing on service of regional economic and social development, we should intensify vigorously the main role of enterprises' technological innovation in the region and increase investment of scientific and technological innovation. In the meantime, lay emphasis on giving play to scientific research institutions' role of backbone and guidance, universities' role of foundation and new force. Quicken knowledge flow and innovation communication through innovation of network. Improve the ability of research and development, intermediary service ability, achievements transformation and industrialization ability.

In addition, promotion of soft power should be based on hard power. Imbalance between soft and hard power will surely lead to a decline in regional comprehensive power. We should keep promoting hard power in various regions based on the level of current economic development, thus creating a solid material foundation for promotion of soft power and enhancing regional comprehensive power.

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