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Sport Diplomacy as Public Diplomacy Element

Arif ÖZSARI[1], İ. Bülent FİŞEKÇİOĞLU[2], M. Çağrı ÇETİN[3], A. Sencer TEMEL[4]
[1] PhD student, Selçuk University, Graduate School of Health Sciences, Konya, TURKEY
[2] Selçuk University, Faculty of Sports Sciences, Konya, TURKEY
[3] Mersin University, School of Physical Education and Sports, Mersin, TURKEY
[4] PhD student, Selçuk University, Graduate School of Health Sciences, Konya, TURKEY
Email: arifozsari@hotmail.com

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Abstract

The concept of sport diplomacy which is an element of public diplomacy is thought to be a charming structure that surrounds states and nations in a globalized world where borders are eliminated. Although the concepts of sports and diplomacy serve different purposes, these two concepts continue to bring together different nations and cultures under the same roof of peace. It is commonly accepted that sports diplomacy uses sports and its branches as a tool and establishes important links among nations. The purpose of this literature is to evaluate the concepts of diplomacy, public diplomacy, and sports diplomacy and to draw a conceptual framework on sports diplomacy by using descriptive analysis. As a consequence, it can be said that, the sports and diplomacy concept are tried to be filled with various projects, sport as a diplomacy activity is a soft and rational force and nations carry out sports diplomacy activities through international sporting organizations, national brands, media and technology, sports ambassadors and lobbying in order to show each other their superiority in the sports universe to spread their cultures and be better economically.

Keywords: Diplomacy, Sport Diplomacy, International Relations

Introduction

In the international arena, the concept of diplomacy, is used to influence the political systems of other states and the decision-making mechanisms of the countries and public diplomacy which is the work of governments to influence the peoples and to create public opinion in their favor, has recently put forward its effectiveness (Gün, 2014). Other new types of diplomacy that is implemented in conjunction with public diplomacy or in different ways, is sports diplomacy (İnan, 2012). Today, sport has a tremendous contribution to peace as an element of "Public diplomacy" also called "soft power'' (Erandaç, 2011). Sports diplomacy is a one of the most civilized, peaceful and massive diplomatic instrument that many countries take advantages of it (Kurt, 2014). At the same time, sport is used as a tool for both international and intra-national relations as a means of soft power (Nygard and Gates, 2013).

Diplomacy

Diplomacy has been a concept that has led to the continuation of relations between societies since the early days of human history. Considering today's circumstances, it can be defined as a purpose of peaceful official activity between the international community units to carry out the state's external affairs bodies and the aims of foreign objectives policy which are approved with international legal norms (Zharmukhanbetova, 2010). From a wider perspective, diplomacy is the name given to all the countries that have been conducting their foreign relations. When approached from a narrower perspective diplomacy is the execution of foreign policy a part from the policy-building process. According to another point of view, diplomacy tries to preserve the international order while trying to deliver a state to certain objectives (Griffitths et al., 2013).

Public Diplomacy

If public diplomacy is to be defined in an abstract way, it is the whole activities of State's in order to influence other states and public opinion (Jane, 2014). Public diplomacy is defined not only relations with foreign governments but also special talks and interactions in addition to formal negotiations that are frequently made within the framework of non-governmental individuals and organizations (Nye, 2004). The concept of public diplomacy is used first time by A.Gullion who is Dean of the University of Fletcher (1965), defined public diplomacy as a communication activity is carried out in the international arena, as an effort to influence the public's attitudes for the formation and implementation of foreign policy (Köksoy, 2013). However, it would be appropriate to mention the historical dimension of public diplomacy as the fact that public diplomacy is an expression of practices that have been carried out among communities living in the world for centuries. In fact, it would be striking to go one step further at this point and the concept of public diplomacy was used to refer to "expropriation policy" in the foundation years of Ottoman.

The concept of "expropriation policy" which is revealed by historian Halil İnalcık is actually nothing more than public diplomacy practices. Because, during the establishment of the Ottoman Empire, the new lands were easily conquered thanks to "winning to your side" activities which had started to be carried out in the fourteenth century (Karadağ, 2012). Public diplomacy, which takes its essence from "soft power", carries the dimension of international relations from state to state to from state to public from public to public. In this respect, it covers all activities and works carried out in order to establish long-term relations by creating an inter-communal understanding, exchange of ideas, sharing of information, dialogue, negotiation, and cooperation environment to gain mutual minds and hearts. The forms of

public diplomacy that we face in different shapes constitute the basis for the formation of various views. Basically, sports diplomacy is evaluated within the framework of public diplomacy practices (Yıldırım, 2014).

Sport Diplomacy

The relationship between sports and political science has been discussed for a long time. However, the relationship between sports and diplomacy has not been fully explored and explained theoretically. In the current studies, it is observed that in order to clarify relationship between the two concepts are seen as case-specific studies (Murray, 2012).

It can be clearly said that sports have made public diplomacy effort on behalf of the country. (Arpacıoğlu, 2012). Sports diplomacy, as one of the sub-branches of diplomacy, is under the roof of public diplomacy. Sports diplomacy is one of the most civilized, peaceful, and massive diplomatic tools in a country (Kurt, 2014). It is generally accepted that sports can be used to unlock the doors of opportunity in public diplomacy and promote any dialogue (Sombosombo, 2012). Sports diplomacy is used to overcome linguistic and sociocultural differences with the universal passion of sports and to bring people together (Gök, 2016). In the period of the Cold War, sport was actively used as a means of diplomatic propaganda. In this period, two blocks have done various works on sports activities which is an area of interest of each sector with the effort to establish superiority to each other besides military and economic areas.

During the cold war, western and eastern block countries tried to gain superiority against each other in sports as well as in every field. In international sports contest, the message of ‘’we are better than them’’ was attempted to give to the world by the American and Soviet athletes, who are in intense competition each other. From time to time, the shadow of this ideological struggle fell on the sport. Western countries boycotted the 1980 Moscow Olympics and Eastern bloc countries boycotted the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics (Demir, 2012). In that period of time, the leader of the Nazi has considered 1936 Berlin Olympics as an opportunity to show the power of the Nazi regime to the whole world by filming all competitions and announce to everyone that German athletes are superior to others. In 1971, with the invitation of the US Table tennis national team to the People's Republic of China, the relations of US and China that have been dispersed since 1949 have been established for the first time. This table tennis event was followed with the visit of President Richard Nixon to Beijing which is considered a turning point in U.S.-Chinese relations (Erhan, 2010). The two former enemies, Japan, and South Korea, hosted the 2002 World Cup together, sending messages of friendship (Murray, 2012).

A sports-diplomacy relationship that began April 10, 1971, between the US and China today live its golden age because the United States sent the ping pong national team to China (Şafak, 2008). Emerging with the changing diplomatic environment, sports diplomacy is one of the key elements of public diplomacy ‘’meaning soft power’’ contributes to various fields such as sports, the country's athletes, fields of youth, coaches, referees, sports managers, sports scientists, sports clubs , national sports federations, international sport organizations international sport organizations -Public International Sports; Sports Journalists - sports TV or radio channels; international youth exchange, training and youth camp programs in terms of public diplomacy, the activities of these actors or institutions in the field of youth and sports are very important to show the national power resources of the country, such as economic, social, cultural, technology and human and to create a reputation and image in the direction of this power (Gök, 2016). Another example can be given from Turkey-Armenia relations. In

2008, former President of the Republic of Turkey went to the match between the national football teams of the two countries in Yerevan and this circumstance was considered as football diplomacy (Erhan, 2010). Sports diplomacy has four basic functions. These include: building peace, bringing nations together, establishing a dialogue platform, building consensus and confidence, as well as using a variety of tools for sports diplomacy to develop it (Nygard and Gates, 2013).

Sport Diplomacy Tools

Sports diplomacy, which is an element of public diplomacy practices, is a reflection of soft power and also an international tool. International organizations, national brand, media and technology, sports ambassadors, lobbying elements can be listed as sports diplomacy tools.

International Sport Organizations

Sports can be an opportunity for sports diplomacy to achieve various political goals (Brannagan et al., 2018). In most of the time, activities in the field of sports are part of public diplomacy (Kurtuluş, 2014). Sports is one of the unique elements that drives the massive masses from its behind. Large organizations such as world cups and Olympics reach billions of people at the same time. There is nothing else in the world that billions of people's participation can be achieved at the same time. In this respect, sport has very large (soft) power. In a short period of time, the achievements in big competitions can bring those countries into different positions in the eyes of the world (Yıldırım, 2014). According to Grix (2018), there are two ways for sports to be used for public diplomacy. The first one is to host mega sports organizations such as the Olympics or the FIFA World Cup. Hosting major sporting events with global attractiveness is one of the ways in which nations show themselves to increase their international prestige and gain soft power. A second way is to increase their image by using the achievements of sports in elite branches especially for the nations that do not host any sports and mega-activities. Ultimately, states can combine these two methods.

Kurtuluş (2014) stated that the most striking event in the field of sports diplomacy is the Olympics. The Olympics is followed by the entire world, are a very serious publicity tool for host countries. Although the Olympics and large sports games appear to be part of international sports, the countries participating in such events or games are also in the forefront of the diplomatic area. The main argument in the Olympics is that the countries participating in the Olympics represent themselves in a sporting sense and make them feel their existence and power to the world through the Olympics. These organizations are always supported and followed by the world (Doğu, 2010). Events such as Olympics attract many countries in terms of their value and impact on public diplomacy (Grix, 2018). At each period of the year, candidates are selected from the cities of various countries about where the Olympics will be held and here there are significant competitions between these candidate cities (countries). Moreover, the Olympics are among athletes from all over the world with diversified cultures by breaking down the their prejudices where they feel together with the spirit of sportsmanship, fraternity, solidarity alongside to competition, are turns into some kind of practice exchange diplomacy and get ideas about each other's culture (Kurtuluş, 2014). Besides the Olympics, it is commonly agreed that hosting international sports organizations is one of the appropriate ways to use sports as an art of diplomacy.

National Brand

The national brands owned by a country are one of the effective tools in delivering the messages to the target audience through public diplomacy. The reputation and the image of the national brands owned by the country also affect the reputation and image of the country. In brief, national branding contributes to the country's international recognition, reputation, and image (Gök, 2016).

National brands are an instrument of the initiative of non-state actors in the transmission of public diplomacy messages of a state. National brands owned by a country will contribute to its worldwide recognition, reputation, and quality. There is direct emotional and economic interaction between the country's reputation and the country brands that will come out of the country towards to buying (Saydam, 2010 Akt: Sancar, 2012). As a result of this interaction, the perception gained by countries in the global system is a respectable, reliable, strong country image. It is important to bring different cities to the forefront especially with their various features in terms of creating new brand cities. Not only in the sense of tourism, but also in the sense of awareness, should recognition and consciousness such studies be sustained. The combined and balanced use of soft forces will facilitate the functioning of public diplomacy (Yıldırım,2014).

As in science, education, art, technology, and other fields, the achievement succeed in sports is not accidental. On the contrary, thanks to the sports and sports policies of the country, the science, technology and materials used in the field of sports and the other facilities and supports provided to athletes on the name of the country come into prominence in the field of international sport and hereby sport achievements contributes to the country's national brand (Gök, 2016).

Media and Technology

Thanks to rapid using communication and technology tools, a quick interaction period began in the world. With the development of communication technologies, the time and space dimension in communication disappears. Public diplomacy as a strategic communication tool is defined as the sum of the activities of "public understanding, informing and influencing". Communication tools are also very strategic function in terms of public diplomacy. Television, radio, newspapers, and magazines play a major role in promoting the cultural and social values of the countries in the international area (Günek, 2011).

The media is the greatest force to deliver the activities of states or institutions to societies. Diplomacy, which can be defined as the art of managing relations, has gained different dimensions through the development of time, in order to find a common international solution or to convince other countries according to with their own ideas. Although the role of individuals and groups are very important in the formation of the public opinion there is no doubt that the mass media contributing to the process of thinking through technological developments and increasing their number and effectiveness (Yıldırım, 2014). For instance, BBC World which broadcasts in forty-three languages delivers British culture to 150 million people at the same time.

There is no doubt that, today internet especially social media has transformed the international community. Developments in the field of technology have become an indisputable channel for diplomatic communication and changed diplomacy practice. Substantially, this diplomacy model is often conceptualized as a form of public diplomacy and digital technologies such as Twitter, Facebook, and social media platforms is often included ways of communicating with

foreign public opinion in a non-expensive way by States (Adesina, 2017). Sports can affect large masses in different countries of the world and because of its public interest, it draws the attention of both commercial institutions and state institutions and international media organizations. Some countries can be identified with some sports branches they are successful in.

In world public opinion, Basketball is NBA and NBA is the USA. Football has a separate place within the sports branches, especially among the European countries. England's Premier League, Spain's La Liga and Italy's series A-League are carefully monitored by the world public opinion. In addition to this, it can be said that some successful teams such as Real Madrid and Barcelona to be ahead of their country's names. The organizations which are held on a regular basis such as champions league matches; UEFA cup has got great importance for the promotion of countries. Such that, a person who has not supported any team and has not followed any football matches may be more conservative than a fanatic supporter when it comes to the representation of his country in the international area. The great interest shown to such international organization and matches, in fact, it's not just football but also but also related to the reputation of the participating countries, it causes to the International Press to show an intense interest to the related subject (Erzen, 2014). It is also a fact that, the press and media are not interested in the activities mentioned above and the whole organizational dimension will be limited to the spectators coming to the facilities, it is thought that building national unity, national identity and nation will be created through ‘’strategic communication management’ ’in the international arena. However, advertisement activities that can be made by spending a lot of money can be performed more effectively because of the presence of large sports organizations in the media.

Sport Ambassador

Another factor contributing to soft power in public diplomacy activities is sports activities and athletes. Many popular athletes serve as a role model to world youth, at some point they are seen as a representative of their country's public diplomacy (Sancak, 2015). It is very important to have the power to bring together young people or sportsmen and sports staff (coaches, referees, sports managers, etc.), from different or similar cultures for the certain purposes and let them express to the outside world in terms of public diplomacy, communicate and interact with individuals from different cultures. The important thing to remember in terms of sports diplomacy; athletes, coaches, referees and sport managers of a country are important ambassadors although it is an international image of the country (Gök, 2016). According to various indicators, international sporting achievements gained through national teams and national athletes play a convincing role in projecting the cultures and values of countries into their specific goals at the same time making soft power attractive to other nations (Brannagan et al., 2018). On the other hand, athletes play a role in diplomatic functions as being a mediator in the development of mutual understanding through a variety of joint programs among countries (Kurtuluş, 2014). The famous baseball player Ken Griffey is one of the athletes assigned to work in the field of public diplomacy during the era of President George Bush. It is also seen that many sportsmen carry out his duty as Ambassador of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and they are also considered as the ambassador of sports.

Sporting achievements succeed by international athletes and teams also have been added among these factors called "soft power" which has been in the International Relations literature for the last 20 years. Moreover, sport has become an important place in the

formation of the images and perceptions of countries in the international area. To give a good example, the FIFA World Cup held in Japan and South Korea in 2002, after Turkey's third degree, the interest of those countries to Turkey has increased significantly (Erhan, 2010). It can be clearly said that coaches and sportsmen representing countries in international organizations are engaged in sports diplomacy activities as a sports ambassador.

Lobbying

The origin of lobbying word originated from the lobby, meaning corridor. Lobbying is based on influencing people who are active in making decisions. The techniques that lobbyists develop to make a significant contribution to the inter-state relations. One of the most important objectives of interstate relations is to achieve a positive international image. One of the most reliable and valid methods of gaining international image is to obtain the positive attitudes and the support of international decision-makers and authorities. Lobbying aims directly at decision-makers in order to achieve the foreign policy behavior desired in public diplomacy. Therefore; targeting decision makers is important in terms of delivering the message to the right recipient (Şporta, 2004; Sancar, 2012; Yıldırım, 2014; Karagöz, 2016).

In terms of public diplomacy of a country, lobbying activities are one of the important soft power sources taking advantages of youth leaders, athletes, coaches, (sportsmen, sports managers, sports press, etc.) and the actors involved in the field of youth and sports as far as in a strategic sense for promoting their own culture, people, language and even religion in a correct way (Gök, 2016).

Lobbying activities in sports are mainly related to changing the locations of countries and cities where sports organizations will be organized and determining the places where such sports organizations will be held by the decision of international sports organizations. Despite the decision-making power of international sports federations, sponsor companies or firms that sponsor them to have financial power. In the event of such a relationship, the firms or companies that are now sponsoring sports event do not hesitate to direct or request from the international sports federations to determine where sports organizations are located in accordance with their commercial interests. During the selection of the host city, which will hold Summer Olympic Games of IOC in 1996, Athens, is the capital of Greece, where the Olympic Games were born was considered as a host city at the 100th anniversary of the modern Summer Olympic Games of 1996, however at the end of the five rounds election organization went to Atlanta where include the many headquarters of big companies such as Coca-Cola, Delta Airlines, within this period it is widely expressed that American sponsoring companies especially Coca-Cola had an impact on the voting members of the IOC (Çetin, 2014 cited, Gök, 2016). In the 2009 FIFA Confederation Cup, the national instrument "vuvuzela'' was banned because the players were disturbed by the loud noise. However, at the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa, as a result of long discussions, it has been released again because of FIFA President and South African authorities' pressure. Lobbying activities are thought to have an effect on the lifting of this ban. It is seen that large and medium-power nations are closely related to sports diplomacy and functions. These functions are Olympics and the international organizations hosting for important organizations (Nygard and Gates, 2013). It is widely thought that the way to being the host city for international organizations which has important functions is through the skillful and successful lobbying activities.

Studies and Practices of European Commission in Sports Diplomacy

The concept of sports diplomacy was first introduced by the European Commission in 2015 to the European Union. The high-level sports diplomacy group within the European Commission was formed by the initiatives of the European Commission's Education, Culture, Youth and Sports Commissioner. In June 2016, a report including various recommendations was sent to all European Union ministries, is responsible for sports. Following this initiative, in November 2016, the European Union Parliament undertook responsibilities to all European Union ministries responsible for sports in order to carry out sports diplomacy activities.

It was decided to implement the European Union sports study plan between 2017-2020. The aim of this plan, establishing a strong dialogue between the third world countries and the countries that want to become the Member States of the European Union and to ensure that these countries integrate with European culture. At the same time, supporting some projects for the development of international sports activities is among the priorities of European Union sports diplomacy (Report to the European Commission, 2018). The European Commission organized a sports diplomacy seminar in 2016. More than 100 members of the European Union including European and national sports federations, Olympic Committees, and politicians attended this seminar. Following the seminar, 13 final declarations were published under 3 main headings. These titles are 1- Relations with the European Union, 2- Introduction of European Union values through International Sports Organizations, 3- Development of Sports Diplomacy Organizational Culture (Seminar on Sport Diplomacy Outcomes, 2016). The European Commission organized a second sports diplomacy seminar in 2017. 13 final declarations were published under 3 main headings. Respectively, these headings: 1- To organize European sports week celebration activities, outside the borders of the European Union. 2- Promotion activities of athletes and coaches who have won medals in international sports competitions. 3-What can be done to increase the international sports position of a country (Seminar on Sport Diplomacy Outcomes, 2017). The European Commission organized a third sports diplomacy seminar in January 2018. According to this seminar, it is the top priority of European Union sports diplomacy to support some projects for the development of international sports (including projects involving disadvantaged young people, disabled individuals, gender discrimination, health problems, refugee problems, etc.) and to ensure that non-member countries and third world countries take part in these projects. In addition to these projects, it was decided that large-scale organizations could be used for the development of international sports diplomacy (Report to the European Commission, 2018). It can be said that the concept of sports and diplomacy are tried to be filled with various projects and studies by looking at the above mentioned.

Conclusion

Sports diplomacy, which is one of the most important tools of influencing and guiding international societies in our time, is used as one of the most effective, smart and magical power tools in the respect of reflecting the sports culture of a country and defending its interests, as well as creating foreign public opinion.

Smart power is neither hard nor soft power; it is a successful composition of both (Demir, 2012). The unification of sport and the benefit for the public diplomacy in the international arena are not controversial. Activities carried out within the scope of public diplomacy include the proper use of potential which cannot be denied for the right purposes (Erzen,

2014). International organizations such as the Olympic and Paralympic Games are used or reflected as a foreign policy strategy to improve the international power position with the concept of sport diplomacy which is called soft power (Almeida et al., 2013).

As a result, it is widely believed that the sports and diplomacy concept is tried to be filled with various projects and sport as a diplomacy activity is a soft and rational force, nations carry out their sports diplomacy activities through international sporting organizations, national brands, media and technology, sports ambassadors and lobbying in order to show each other their superiority in the sports universe to spread their cultures and be better economically.

It can be thought that the rationalist way to have a word in sports diplomacy is, with the logic of following public diplomacy strategy and to empower sports managers who are well trained in sports management and have adequate qualification required by the age. Furthermore, it can be given various training to the athletes, trainers, and sportsman representing his countries for the effective sports diplomacy within the scope of sports diplomacy and to make them a sports ambassador.

Corresponding Author

Arif ÖZSARI
Selçuk University, Graduate School of Health Sciences, Konya, TURKEY
Email: arifozsari@hotmail.com

Conflict of Interest

The authors have not declared any conflicts of interest.

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