

A Comparative Study of China's Public Diplomacy Toward Indonesia: During the Presidencies of Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping

Herdiani Narita Pricillia*

Universitas Airlangga, Indonesia

Email: herdiani.narita.pricillia-2024@pasca.unair.ac.id *

Abstract. Chinese public diplomacy toward Indonesia represents a charm offensive within its soft power strategy to enhance its status and cultural image. This effort is driven by the rising interest of Indonesians in the Chinese language and culture, despite China's presence often being perceived as aggressive in international relations through public diplomacy. This research aims to analyze China's public diplomacy toward Indonesia under the administrations of Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping, using the concept of public diplomacy. The methodology employs a qualitative comparative research design utilizing internet-based and document-based data collection techniques, analyzing official government documents, policy statements, media reports, and academic publications from both Chinese and Indonesian sources spanning the two presidential periods. Findings show both administrations employed five key indicators: time, purpose, media/public opinion, and instruments of public diplomacy such as branding, cultural diplomacy, and exchange. The comparison reveals three major differences: instruments, agents, and targets. Under Hu Jintao, the Chinese government was the dominant actor, with the main goal of disseminating culture. In contrast, during Xi Jinping's era, non-state actors and mass media collaboration complemented government involvement, with the broader objective of enhancing and promoting China's branding. The Confucius Institute served as the primary instrument in both eras, though the products and programs differed. Hu Jintao's period emphasized cultural exhibitions, while Xi Jinping's diplomacy relied more on social media and internet platforms to reach wider audiences. Overall, China's evolving approach reflects a shift from cultural dissemination to strategic branding and influence-building in Indonesia.

Keywords: *Public Diplomacy, Comparison, China-Indonesia, President Hu Jintao, President Xi Jinping.*

INTRODUCTION

Public diplomacy is a relatively new concept that attracts attention from international relations scholars. Currently, China is increasing its influence and developing its country through public diplomacy. Chinese public diplomacy is also emphasized within the Party's Central Committee, which is considered to play an important role in foreign policy (Zacharias, 2021). China's foreign policy is connected to public diplomacy, including efforts such as the promotion of the Chinese language, developed by Hanban as the Office of the Chinese Language Council International. Through public diplomacy, China seeks to shift global perceptions from the "China Threat" to a "China Friendly and Peace Loving Notion" (Tai, 2018). According to China's first official public diplomacy report entitled *Bluebook of Public Diplomacy: Annual Report on China's Public Diplomacy Development* (2015), China conducts its public diplomacy through exchange diplomacy or cultural exchanges with other countries (Zhao Qizheng, 2015). One Confucian philosopher, Mengzi (372–289 BC), stated that the way to win the world is by winning the hearts of people, which is achieved by sharing what one enjoys and not forcing what is unpleasant upon them (Hooghe, 2015).

Considering this fact, China prioritized soft power expansion in the 20th century. For China, soft power is the key factor that determines whether a country or actor can influence

others through non-coercive means. China seeks significance through cultural diversification. Zhou Chu Qu's national strategy Going Global in the 10th Five Year Plan aimed to build a Chinese "go global" brand, followed by efforts in 2002 to establish China as an international cultural center (Liu, 2018). The development of the Chinese language is part of this international cultural agenda. Since the establishment of the first Confucius Institute (CI) in Seoul, South Korea, Chinese language teaching institutions have grown rapidly; China has established a total of 512 institutes. The Institute of Confucianism is expected by Beijing to be a solution to alleviate fears arising from negative Chinese news and aligns with China's goal of promoting a positive image and fostering peace and harmony.

Indonesia is one of the countries targeted by China's public diplomacy. Indonesia is seen as a nation with power and capability, serving as a forum for China to expand its positive image (Aswar, 2022). China's image is influenced by negative historical events in both the international community and Indonesian society. Globally, China was once perceived as poor and underprivileged (Xu, 2017). For Indonesians, China is associated with the negative impact of communist ideology during the G30S PKI event, which threatened the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) (Archellie, 2023). China is also aware that Indonesia has a large Muslim population, which relates to China's desire to improve its public diplomacy to create a positive image, especially among the Muslim community (Aswar, 2022).

Chinese public diplomacy toward Indonesia aims to correct negative perceptions and increase interest in Chinese culture, including the Chinese language. However, a key academic challenge is the lack of Chinese language journal publications. More journals available tend to be English-language and framed by Western media perspectives (Xu, 2017). Consequently, despite China's positive efforts, negative perceptions persist due to limited access to Chinese-produced academic materials (Odinye, 2015). The language barrier makes it difficult for academics to access China's perspective, limiting the international media's coverage of China's actions. Therefore, the Chinese government views disseminating the Chinese language as an urgent effort to improve China's image.

China exerts influence through food, cultural festivals, religious beliefs, and mass media. The increasing open access introduced by China aims to foster positive understanding. Chinese public diplomacy, closely tied to cultural diplomacy, is effective because it is supported by internal reforms to open and modernize the country, beginning with Deng Xiaoping's "open door policy" (Poluan, 2021). This policy opened opportunities for foreigners to visit China. While China offers many tourist attractions, public service deficiencies have drawn criticism alongside internal reform challenges. Although still ideologically socialist and politically communist, China's social and cultural development through public diplomacy continues actively. Recently, China has intensified its public diplomacy, particularly toward Indonesia.

Chinese public diplomacy to Indonesia predates the presidencies of Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping, but this study focuses on these two administrations. At the 17th CCP Congress in 2007, President Hu Jintao stated that culture is a source of social power growth and a key factor in increasing overall national strength (Filho, 2019). Hu emphasized promoting culture as China's soft power, underscoring the importance of seizing this opportunity. Concrete public diplomacy efforts during his administration included the internationalization of Chinese media, the spread of Chinese films, and the development of the Confucius Institute (CI).

President Hu Jintao was the first Chinese leader to highlight the role of public diplomacy

in shaping China's global image. In 2009, at the 11th Chinese Diplomatic Envoys Stationed Abroad conference, he identified public diplomacy as an essential element of China's foreign policy (Liu, 2018). He encouraged China to take initiative independently (*Zhōnghuá rénmin gònghéguó duōlúnduō zǒng lǐngshìguǎn*, 2012). Hu's speech marked a milestone in incorporating public diplomacy into national policy. He introduced the concept of a harmonious world view rooted in Confucian teachings, which guided Chinese society's values. The "Chinese Dream" concept also emerged during Hu's tenure and continued under Xi Jinping. Additionally, Hu established the headquarters 汉办 or Hanban in 2004 to promote Mandarin teaching.

Xi Jinping inherited the public diplomacy agenda from Hu Jintao but faced new pressures and challenges. Since Xi's presidency, Chinese public diplomacy has gained greater momentum, continuing Hu's initiatives. Manifesting Hu's vision toward Indonesia constitutes an additional responsibility for Xi. The "Chinese Dream," emphasizing peace, development, and win-win cooperation, is a key theme (Jiemian, 2015). In the 18th CCP National Congress report, Xi stated his commitment to advancing China's public diplomacy (*Zhōnghuá rénmin gònghéguó zhù nǐbó'ěr dàshǐ guǎn*, 2012). Under Xi, China has more actively promoted itself as a good neighbor and sought to spread positive news about China (*Zhōnghuá rénmin gònghéguó wǎ jiùjīnshān dài lǐngshìguǎn*, 2014).

While Presidents Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping have differed in their public diplomacy focuses, they share a common goal centered on cultural diplomacy. Cultural diplomacy is a crucial part of China's diplomatic strategy. The urgency of China's public diplomacy toward Indonesia derives from its desire to sow positive perceptions not only in culture, religion, and language but also despite China's continued communist domestic governance under Hu Jintao.

This research aims to provide a comprehensive comparative analysis of China's public diplomacy strategies toward Indonesia during the presidential administrations of Hu Jintao (2003–2013) and Xi Jinping (2013–present). The study offers multifaceted benefits, contributing to academic knowledge and practical applications. Academically, it enhances understanding of how authoritarian states adapt their soft power strategies to different international environments and technological contexts, advancing public diplomacy theory and China studies. For policymakers and diplomats, it delivers evidence-based insights into effective public diplomacy design and implementation, especially for developing countries managing relations with major powers.

METHOD

This research employed a comparative study method to analyze Chinese public diplomacy. International actors included not only states but also multinational companies, NGOs, IGOs, and civil society. The study focused on comparing Chinese public diplomacy during the administrations of President Hu Jintao and President Xi Jinping.

Data collection involved internet-based and document-based research techniques. Internet-based research gathered sources such as electronic books, official government websites, published journals, and news articles using keywords related to public diplomacy. Document-based research involved collecting books on public diplomacy theory and peer-reviewed scientific journal articles. Official documents were also used to identify relevant

theories for analyzing the collected data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Previous research has established important theoretical and empirical foundations that support and contextualize the findings of this study. Wang (2011) in "Soft Power in China: Public Diplomacy through Communication" demonstrated that China's public diplomacy strategy underwent significant transformation during the early 21st century, transitioning from reactive crisis management to proactive image building. This aligns with our findings showing the evolution from Hu Jintao's foundational approach to Xi Jinping's more sophisticated branding strategy. Similarly, Hartig (2016) in *International Studies Review* emphasized the importance of national image for national interests in Chinese public diplomacy, which supports our analysis of how both administrations prioritized different aspects of China's international image - Hu Jintao focusing on cultural dissemination and Xi Jinping on comprehensive branding.

Liu (2018) in the *Journal of Contemporary China* provided crucial insights into the institutionalization of Chinese cultural diplomacy through the Confucius Institute network, corroborating our findings that this institution served as the primary instrument across both administrations while adapting its programs and approaches. Furthermore, Huang (2021) analyzed China's conceptualization of public diplomacy through historical institutionalism, which reinforces our temporal analysis showing how institutional continuity and adaptation characterized the transition between the two presidencies.

Time

In carrying out its public diplomacy activities, China needs time according to the flow of the administration of each of its presidents. This time is used as a certain time limit that will be used by each government to target and use its objectives in achieving public diplomacy to Indonesia. Each period of government requires a different time. However, in the context of public diplomacy, of course, this time is in accordance with the period of the government that has been set.

Basically, President Hu Jintao served as General Secretary of the Communist Party of China (CCP) from 2003 to 2013, during his tenure Hu Jintao occupied the seat in two terms or in ten years. In this period, it was a great time for China to rise in its cultural strength. Hu Jintao did his best in those ten years to give the best to Chinese public diplomacy. As a leader who pioneered the beginning of Chinese public diplomacy, of course, the time it took for the Chinese President, in this case Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping to carry out their public diplomacy activities, was ten years. Describing from the framework of analysis Eytan Gilboa, the time that was carried out in many years by the two Chinese governments. So that the implementation of public diplomacy is included in the long category. Long public diplomacy by Eytan Gilboa indicates that the model of public diplomacy in terms of time or time is long or annual because it takes time to implement it in foreign societies.

Purpose

To carry out Chinese public diplomacy to Indonesia in the two administrations, the main goal must be to develop Chinese public diplomacy and the government, namely President Hu Jintao and President Xi Jinping. President Hu Jintao has a goal to put more emphasis on Chinese branding. At that time, China was faced with chaotic domestic conditions after the Tian'anmen Massacre. China's history also does not support its position to have a positive branding in the global world.

On the other hand, President Xi Jinping has since the beginning focused on being able to improve Chinese branding. Xi Jinping's efforts to improve are more towards continuing the public diplomacy agenda that has been set by Hu Jintao and triggering the Chinese Dream as China's main strategy. In the framework of analysis eytan gilboa, the focus of Chinese public diplomacy to Indonesia in the two eras of government is more on relationships. Relationships are a condition where the countries involved emphasize long-term relationships to build and create better relationships.

Media/Public Opinion

In carrying out Chinese public diplomacy to Indonesia, it is inseparable from the influence of the media that contains public opinion. However, unfortunately in a country with communist ideology, the mass media is expected to be the front door to convey the wishes of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) (Singh, 2012). There is no room for the public to express their opinions because it is controlled by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). The media in China carries and accepts public opinion, but the position of the media must support the party, the government, and be able to compete as a modern industrial company.

The media is also used to foster the government's propaganda needs. At first, the public understood that the media was used as a forum to obtain information about the development of party policies. In contrast to the understanding of the media in the democratic sphere which is used as a space to voice people's perspectives. The bamboo curtain state uses the media as a one-way communication tool from the lower society to the party executives. The government has concerns that opportunities and space for freedom of opinion which is also accompanied by the freedom of information flow can destroy political legitimacy and control its society (Luo, 2014). The Chinese government blocks sites that are considered subservient and undesirable. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has tight control over the mass media. The media serves as a tool to mobilize the masses to set a public agenda and guide public opinion (yulun daoxiang).

On the other hand, there is a debate that China already has attention to provide a forum for the public in the era of Hu Jintao, one of which is through the media. The increase in the activity of Chinese media began in 2004. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) under Hu Jintao launched three measures aimed at improving Chinese media and establishing a Central Leading Small Group that functions to oversee media content and maintain national security and stability. There are two policies set by Hu regarding mass media in China, namely "three foci of external propaganda work" and "a three-step plan for improving external propaganda" (Bachman, 2020). Regarding the Chinese media's policy towards foreign media, "a three-step plan for improving external propaganda" became the blueprint for the development of foreign

media in Beijing during the era of Hu Jintao's administration.

The media policy "a three-step plan for improving external propaganda" that had been set by Hu Jintao when Xi Jinping was in power began to diminish. Xi Jinping continued efforts started by his predecessors to make Chinese media directed to foreign parties to have international influence. However, there is a difference with the focus of Chinese media policy, which is to use Xi's initiative of "telling China's stories well", prioritizing government planning documents and consolidating Xi Jinping's typical propaganda. In the Xi Jinping era, he issued the "13th Five Year Plan (FYP)" in 2016 which discussed the importance of the media to be directed to foreign parties. In that part, Xi Jinping also called for the expansion of China's foreign communication network and diversifying its communication channels. sponsored by the government must use the party's last name, reflect the party's views, maintain party unity, create love, protection, and devotion to the party". The three objectives of Xi Jinping's external propaganda are to develop the influence of the international media commensurate with China's strength, to spread a positive and convincing picture of China in the global world and to improve the media and the internet

Although the policy outputs related to the media and public opinion in the era of Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping were different, the Chinese leaders had a consistent main goal. Xi Jinping took advantage of Hu's success to be able to increase China's external propaganda. This is in line with the condition that the media/public opinion of Chinese public diplomacy to Indonesia is building favourable conditions. The meaning of building favourable conditions is a form of activity carried out by both parties with outputs where the implementation can form a state in which the targeted parties can understand each other. So that there is a common understanding that can create closer cooperation or mutual understanding and mutual trust.

According to Beijing Global Media Influence 2022, Indonesia is among the countries that hold an important position in accommodating the spread of media and public opinion from China. The spread of media narratives carried out by China to Indonesia includes three things, namely building rapport building, building positive promotion about China, and criticism related to China's controversial policies. In the era of Hu Jintao, the spread of Chinese media narratives to Indonesia involved the government, namely the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a party that prioritized good relations with Indonesia. The Chinese media at that time was framing by the biggest festival in China, namely the Beijing 2008 Olympics (Hongmei, 2011).

China's public diplomacy to Indonesia related to the media in the era of Xi Jinping's administration emphasized the collaboration of the mass media. On May 30, 2018, there was a signing of an MoU on cooperation between Chinese Mass Media and Indonesia, namely Jishi Media and IMQ Antara Digital Media at Jishi Media's headquarters, Changchun, China. IMQ Antara Media Digital is a subsidiary of the Antara news agency company while Jishi Media broadcasts Antara news related to tourism and is broadcast through Jishi Media's television platform. Jishi Media Secretary Sun Yi stated that November to December is the peak for Jilin people to go to Bali for a vacation or even a wedding. So that the relationship that is established can increase the main interest for the people of Jilin.

In June 2019, Antara as Indonesia's state news agency signed a cooperation agreement with the Xinhua news agency. The agreement is known to have been extended in 2021. Indonesia's Metro TV media collaboration with Xinhua is called Metro Xinwen. A Chinese-language entertainment and news event service that promotes a positive narrative about China.

Metro Xinwen is an entertainment event based on the use of the Chinese language. In addition to mass media collaboration, there are also several aspects of public opinion carried out in mass media such as education, tourism, and religion.

From educational instruments, in the era of Xi Jinping's administration emphasized the increase of scholarships for students. With the aim of providing long-term educational experience to Indonesian students. In fact, there is a special scholarship program for NU members or students, namely the Xinjiang Brief Forum. This public diplomacy strategy has reaped success for students affiliated with NU and Muhammadiyah who have studied in China by publishing positive narratives. In March 2021, NU's Chinese branch vice president and Central China Normal University (CCNU) candidate Ahmad Syaifuddin Zuhri stated that "Islam in China has evolved" and argued that "issues related to Xinjiang as a whole are not like what western media publishes".

One of the universities based on Nadhlatul Ulama (NU) in Indonesia is Wahid Hasyim University. It is reported that a lecturer at the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Mr. Pramono Sugiarto, M.A., received a doctoral scholarship from the Chinese Embassy to carry out studies for four years (Unwahas, 2018). He got the opportunity to study in Shandong Province, precisely in Jinan City, China. At that time, he introduced Indonesian culture at Yu Wen Primary School of China (Unwahas, 2018). Mr. Pramono Sugiarto, M.A., organized by the Psychology Department Student Association together with the School of Philosophy and Social Development. On the other hand, it also collaborates with Castle of Love which is an organization of parents of elementary school children (Unwahas, 2018). The activity was attended by 32 children and their parents and carried the theme "Happy Day in Shandong University" and was held on January 17, 2017, at the Zhi Xin A Building in China (Unwahas, 2018). In the final session of the activity, the children showed enthusiasm and desire to one day visit Indonesia.

Not from Indonesian lecturers who can go to China, but there are also students from China who come to Indonesia. A total of four students from Tianjin University in China had the opportunity to come and study at Wahid Hasyim University (Tomi, 2019). Some of the courses studied are Indonesian, Culture, Pancasila, and Islam Aswaja. The Rector of Unwahas said that the arrival of the foreign students was due to the Nusantara Scholarship from the Nusantara Fellowship Program from Unwahas. The scholarship program is a follow-up to the collaboration between Unwahas and Tianjin University and the Chinese Consulate General in Surabaya. Lasting more than five years, the program was carried out with the aim of strengthening good relations between the two countries through people to people. In that case, the relationship with the media/public opinion that public opinion can be based on the conditions of exchange between the two parties. Exchange from the aspect of Indonesian education to China by sending lecturers, and vice versa. From China to Indonesia by sending its students.

Not only education, but there are also tours given by the Chinese government to Indonesia. This tourism was given to journalists from various Indonesian mass media who were members of the travel tour by Beijing. Then there was an agreement between the All China Journalists Association (AJCA) and the Indonesian Journalists Association (PWI) in 2018 as proof of the efforts of the two countries to be actively involved in reporting positive information. A total of 11 journalists from Indonesia and Malaysia were invited to visit

Xinjiang with the aim of finding out about developments in the region and how the Chinese government is implementing policies to counter extremism. This was highlighted by local news media

Lombok, which states that foreign media has spread fake news about China and opposes reports from other media regarding violence and coercion carried out by the Chinese Government against its citizens.

Not only collaborating with local news media, the Chinese Embassy in Indonesia also provides free travel tours for Indonesian social media influencers to Chinese cities. According to information from Southeast Strategies, the tour was organized in September 2019, each influencer who uploaded a post would be paid US\$500. One of the tour participants is former Miss Indonesia Alya Nurshabrina who uploaded a photo of the mosque and told her 86,000 followers with the caption "China welcomes religion" but the upload has now been deleted. In 2020, Alya also uploaded a series of photos showing good and positive experiences while in China. The similarity of Chinese public diplomacy to Indonesia during the reigns of President Hu Jintao and President Xi Jinping is that the media and public opinion are both conducted. During President Hu Jintao's tenure, Culture was held through the Beijing Olympics in 2008. Meanwhile, during the time of President Xi Jinping, mass media collaboration and increased the trust of the Indonesian people through the Uyghur ethnic event in Xinjiang.

Government

Public diplomacy carried out by China to Indonesia in the operationalization of Eytan Gilboa's long concept of Public Diplomacy is remotely linked. What is meant by remotely linked is the output of the relationship mechanism between China and Indonesia, but in its implementation, there are limitations of the role of the government. Public diplomacy is a more government-to-people process but also does not forget the government of the country that is the target of diplomacy. The shift in targets is due to the basic need of public diplomacy where a country tries to build public opinion and the country's image to be more positive so that it can raise its bargaining position in the international constellation. The government monitors the process to see whether it is in accordance with the setting agenda that has been set or not. In that case, the implementation of Chinese public diplomacy to Indonesia is monitored by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

For public diplomacy to run well and achieve its goals, the state can take advantage of the various forums available in public diplomacy, one of which is the government. The government is a government that becomes an agent of a country to be able to carry out its public diplomacy, especially in the context of Chinese public diplomacy. In the era of President Hu Jintao's administration, the policies issued specifically prioritized the alignment between Chinese constitutionalism and Chinese foreign policy. Hu Jintao made foreign relations the fundamental foundation of his constitution.

In anticipation of China's increasingly negative image in developing countries, there was a white paper published in 2005 on "China's Path to Peaceful Development". Then in 2006, Hu Jintao sought a foreign affairs work conference, which is a foreign affairs meeting that has never been held before cultural exchange with other countries because cultural exchange is a bridge that can connect the hearts and minds of the people as well as a way for a country to project its image.

The Chinese government promotes the "Peaceful Development" agenda in its foreign policy and collaborates with the "Scientific Development Outlook" as its constitutional formulation (Bui, 2014). Both aim to achieve a "Socialist Harmonious Society". The Scientific Development Outlook or "Kexue Fanzhanguan" is a contribution by Hu Jintao that was included in the constitution of the Communist Party of China in 2007. Hence, there are three main pillars developed by Hu Jintao, namely the Constitutional "Scientific Development Outlook", the Political "Socialist Harmonious Society", and "Peaceful Development" as his foreign policy strategy. From the era of Hu Jintao's reign, China began to pay more attention to cultural development. This was conveyed by Hu during his speech that China proposes the development of a harmonious society based on socialism because of the need for Chinese reform and openness and modernization.

In addition, in the era of the Hu Jintao administration, he also introduced the concept of "Peaceful Rise/Heping Jueqi" which was later revised to "Peaceful Development/Heping Fazhan" to be one of the benchmarks for the existence of culture which was used as the main factor or backbone of the development of Chinese public diplomacy. The use of culture is a tool and element for China to be able to realize its public diplomacy. All forms of public diplomacy activities that use culture are used by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) as the main agent and then the Chinese People's Institute of Foreign Affairs (CPIFA) to promote Chinese interests. In the era of Hu Jintao, the cultural aspect came in because there was a shift in China's domestic policy to be more open. According to Hu, there are currently opportunities and favorable conditions for the development of Chinese reform if it upholds the principles of peace, development, cooperation and calm in observing and understanding the international situation. In that regard, Xi stated "Enhancing China's Soft Power Matters through The Achievement of The Two: 100 years goals and the Chinese Dream". In a 2013 internal conference speech, President Xi conveyed his intention that 100 years is the goal of the Chinese state to be better. The 100 years were commemorated by China in 2020 and are targeted to be able to make China a fully developed country in 2049 as the 100th anniversary of the founding of China. Based on data from the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI), the term "Chinese Dream" became a popular keyword as many as 66,000 articles were published using the keyword by Chinese academics from 2012-2016.

The development of Chinese public diplomacy in the Xi Jinping era is also inseparable from the influence of civil society involvement. However, it should also be seen that in the Xi Jinping era, China has a lot of international pressure, especially related to the issue of the South China Sea Conflict which is evaporating in the international community and the Covid-19 Pandemic caused by the Wuhan region. This condition causes modern Chinese civil society today to have obstacles related to its internal dynamics. Because as an authoritarian country, China is certainly reluctant to share excessive political and legal authority with civil society in relation to achieving the goal of rejuvenation mentioned by Xi Jinping, namely "China Dream is the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation".

This study found similarities in the strategy of Chinese public diplomacy to Indonesia during the reigns of President Hu Jintao and President Xi Jinping. The Chinese government's policies lead to one main thing, which is openness to Chinese culture and make Chinese culture the main driving force of Chinese public diplomacy. But what distinguishes China's public diplomacy policy in the era of Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping is its international situation and

domestic goals. So that this produces different cultural product outputs. During Hu Jintao's time, the international situation occurred in the Tian'anmen violence, while in the Xi Jinping era, the South China Sea conflict and the Covid-19 Pandemic occurred. Furthermore, when viewed from its domestic goals in the Hu Jintao era, it is more towards the international aspect that is accepted by China through the use of technology such as the internet.

Public Diplomacy Instrument

In the aspect of public diplomacy instruments, according to Eytan Gilboa, there are three (3) things that will be discussed, namely branding, cultural diplomacy, and exchange. In this section, we will review how to compare the public diplomacy carried out by China to Indonesia in the era of President Hu Jintao and President Xi Jinping by looking at these three aspects.

a. Branding

The instrument of long public diplomacy from Eytan Gilboa that will be discussed first is branding. Branding is related to efforts or methods used with the aim of being able to influence people's thoughts and feelings about a country. The branding instrument in public diplomacy, Eytan Gilboa explained, is also used to form a positive idea about a country with the aim of influencing certain people's views of a country.

In branding, there is also nation branding which has a definition that there is a phenomenon when the government uses its power to be able to change the image of a country's nation by making it a branding tool. Public diplomacy branding also includes the existence of nation branding or the country's reputation and the communication relationship between a country and another country (J. Golan, 2015). Gudjonsson's definition added that nation branding of a country cannot be created on its own, so it is necessary to use branding tools that aim to be able to change attitudes, identity behaviors, and images of a country in a positive way. These branding tools are in accordance with how public diplomacy seeks to be implemented.

b. Cultural Diplomacy

The next instrument of long public diplomacy from Eytan Gilboa that will be discussed is cultural diplomacy. Cultural diplomacy is one of the branches of public diplomacy that utilizes the use of culture and language that will aim to foster mutual understanding. According to Milton Cummings, cultural diplomacy is defined as the exchange of ideas, information, values, systems, traditions, beliefs, and other aspects of culture that aim to foster mutual understanding. With regard to its efforts to captivate the hearts and minds of its destination countries, Beijing views cultural diplomacy as the most important instrument. President Hu Jintao said that cultural dominance is very important to maintain.

c. Exchange

The last instrument of long public diplomacy by Eytan Gilboa is Exchange. Exchange is an instrument that emphasizes exchanges between two countries. In this case, exchange leads to the definition of a series of activities carried out by sending one's own citizens to another country and accepting foreign nationals with a predetermined time span. Exchanges are usually involved in educational activities that will be taken in a certain time. Exchange also gives rise to mutual relations and mutuality (Pajtinka, 2014). In its development, exchanges also involve cultural activities. Exchanges can be used as a forum

for the two countries to create strategic relationships, leading to information to target citizens of certain countries to generate a response in the form of a specific policy.

CONCLUSION

This study compared China's public diplomacy strategies toward Indonesia during the presidencies of Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping, revealing shared reliance on cultural diplomacy but distinct approaches. Hu's administration focused on branding through international events and the Confucius Institute, while Xi's emphasized educational exchanges, media collaboration, and digital platforms involving both state and non-state actors. The evolution of relations, formalized by key agreements like the 2005 Joint Declaration and 2018 Presidential Regulation No. 57, provided a framework for these efforts. The two administrations differed in their use of instruments, agents, and media in public diplomacy. Future research could explore the impact of emerging digital technologies and grassroots initiatives on China's public diplomacy effectiveness in Indonesia.

REFERENCES

- Archellie, R. T. (2023). Reassessing China's Soft Power in Indonesia: A Critical Overview on China's Cultural Soft Power. *Journal Cogent arts & Humanities*, 1-14.
- Aswar, H. (2022). China's Public Diplomacy to Build a Positive Image among The Muslim Community in Indonesia. *Jurnal Studi Islam dan Sosial*, 60-83.
- Bachman, E. (2020). Black and White and Red All Over: China's Improving Foreign-Directed Media. CNA China & Indo-Pacific Security Affairs Division, 1-108.
- Buhi, J. (2014). Foreign Policy and the Chinese Constitutions During the Hu Jintao Administration. *Boston College International and Comparative Law Review*, Vol. 37., Issue.2., Article.2., 241-279.
- Dina, P. N. (2019). Diplomasi Publik Tiongkok Terhadap Kebijakan Luar Negeri Indonesia Dalam Proyek Jalur Sutra. *Jurnal Ilmiah Hubungan Internasional*, Vol. 1, No.1, 1-23.
- Filho, D. S. (2019). Chinese Cultural Diplomacy: instruments in China's strategy for international insertion in the 21st Century. *Revista Brasileira de Política Internacional (RBPI)*, 1-20.
- Hartig, F. (2016). How China Understands Public Diplomacy: The Importance of National Image for National Interests. *International Studies Review*, 655-680.
- Hongkong: Social Science Academic Press.
- Hongmei, L. (2011). Chinese Diaspora, the Internet, and the Image of China: A Case Study of The Beijing Olympic Torch Relay. In J. Wang, *Soft Power in China: Public Diplomacy through Communication* (pp. 135-156). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hooghe, I. (2015). *China's Public Diplomacy*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- <https://news.maranatha.edu/chinese-bridge-2023-siapkan-generasi-muda-bersaing-di-dunia-global/>
- Huang, Z. A. (2020). China's Public Diplomacy and Confucius Institute. *Public Diplomacy and the Politics of Uncertainty*, In press, 1-30.
- Huang, Z. A. (2021). Understanding the China's conceptualization of Public Diplomacy: a historical institutionalism approach. *Journal of Universite Gustava Eiffel*, 1-8.
- J.Golan, G. (2015). *International Public Relation and Public Diplomacy: Communication and*

- Engagement. New York: Peter Lang Publishing.
- Jiemian, Y. (2015). China's "New Diplomacy" under the Xi Jinping Administration. *China Journal of Liberty and International Affairs*, 80-89.
- Liu, X. (2018). China's Cultural Diplomacy: A Great Leap Outward with Chinese Characteristics? Multiple Comparative Case Studies of the Confucius Institutes. *Journal of Contemporary China*, 647.
- Luo, Y. (2014). The Internet and Agenda Setting in China: The Influence of Online Public Opinion on Media Coverage and Government Policy. *International Journal of Communication*, 1289–1312.
- Marsh, V., Morales, D. M., & Paterson, C. (2023, Januari 23). Global Chinese media and a decade of change. *International Communication Gazette*.
- Odinye, D. I. (2015). The Spread of Mandarin Chinese as a Global Language. *Nnamdi Azikiwe University Journal*, 1-13.
- Pajtinka, E. (2014). Cultural Diplomacy in the Theory and Practice of Contemporary International Relations. *Journal for Political Sciences, Modern History, International Relations, Security Studies*, 95-108.
- Linda. (2010). Meningkatnya Power China di Indonesia melalui Soft Power: Studi Kasus Chinese Bridge Competition. *Jurnal Hubungan Internasional Universitas Indonesia*, 29-47.
- Poluan, K. (2021). Public Diplomacy of People's Republic of China. Jakarta: FKMHHI Press. Quarterly of International Strategic Studies, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1-17.
- Singh, G. (2012). Media in China: An Irreversible Transition? IPCS Special Report, 1-12.
- Tai, T. (2018). Public Diplomacy: China's Newest Charm Offensive. *Journal E-International Relations*, 1-6.
- Tobin, L. (2018). Xi's Vision for Transforming Global Governance A Strategic Challenge for Washington and Its Allies. In S. D. Donald, & M. C. Burgoyne, *China's Global Influence: Perspectives and Recommendations* (pp. 1-56). Texas: U.S Department of Defense.
- Tomi. (2019, Agustus 26). 4 Mahasiswa Tiongkok Studi di Unwahas. Retrieved from <https://www.krjogja.com/semarang/1242542112/4-mahasiswa-tiongkok-studi-di-unwahas>
- Unwahas. (2018, Oktober 8). Dosen FISIP Kenalkan Budaya Indonesia di Cina. Retrieved from <https://unwahas.ac.id/unwahas-page18/>
- Wang, J. (2011). *Soft Power in China: Public Diplomacy through Communication*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Xu, L. (2017). Cultural Diplomacy and Social Capital in China. *Cultural Diplomacy and Its Role in Improving International Social Capital of China*, 1-7.
- Zacharias, G. (2021). China's Public Diplomacy: Evolution, Challenges, and the Greek Case.
- Zhao Qizheng, L. W. (2015). Annual Report of China's Public Diplomacy Development.
- Zhōnghuá rénmin gònghéguó duōlúnduō zǒng língshìguǎn. (2012, Desember 31). Address by Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi at the Inauguration Ceremony of the China Public Diplomacy Association.
- Zhōnghuá rénmin gònghéguó wǎ jiùjīnshān dài língshìguǎn. (2014, Januari 25). Wang Yi: Telling China Story, Spreading China Confidence, Bringing Benefits for the People Around the World.
- Zhōnghuá rénmin gònghéguó zhù nǐbó'ěr dàshǐ guǎn. (2012, November 18). Full Text of Hu

Jintao's Report at 18 Party Congress.

