

Islamic Attitude toward the Role of Culture in Expanding Countries' Sphere of Influence

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

Each geographic region and each country is defined by two factors: 1- Focal point or political center, 2- certain realm and domain. According to international regulations, all countries have certain territorial area which is recognized by International institutions and other countries that is displayed on the world political map. In addition to the official concept of realm, on the basis of Islamic attitude, it is possible to consider another domain for each country which is called sphere of influence.

Sphere of influence is a geographical domain theta country is able to control its existing environmental process in perceptible or imperceptible form. The sphere of influence of a country is the total of various political, economic, military, geographical and cultural factors. On the basis of this article, the cultural and soft factors and sources are considered as the most principal factors affecting countries' sphere of influence.

With respect to the this point, the present article emphasizes the Islamic attitude in the domain of political thought, and therefore, this research tries to study and discuss the role of cultural factor and soft sources of power in expanding sphere of influence of countries using the principals of Islamic-political thoughts.

In this relation, there is a question that is: "what is the sphere of influence and what factors does it have? In response to this question, a hypothesis is presented that is: "it seems that sphere of influence consists of a country's influence that exerts and the major index in specifying this sphere is the index of cultural authority.

Methodology

In this article which is consider as a type of correlation research, it was tried to prove the existence of real relation between two variables "cultural power" as an independent variable and "influence domain" as a functional variable , within the frame work of general law and proposition. This general relation can be applied in studying and evaluating the influence domain and scope of all countries and governments.

Information required by this research is collected from written deeds and documents like specialized books, publication and articles. Also, the historical, objective and viewpoints of clear-sight persons related to the subject was also the base of some of the analysis of this article. To evaluate the hypothesis of research and to prove correlation between the said two variables, information and findings of research using method of qualitative analysis were used.

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Result and Discussion

The power of influence and effectiveness of a country in the geographic space, resulting from the composition of various materialistic and non-materialistic factors and sources. In the opinion of writers of this article and on the basis of Islamic attitude, the scope of influence and effectiveness of a government is mostly depended to the ratio of legitimacy, public acceptance and also efficiency and capability of government in the political management and organization of a space. The result of said characteristics caused to type of cultural and software power. For this purpose, topics like ethical and intellectual attraction, piety and chastity, honesty, sympathy, justifiability, obligation towards law and scientific and managerial capability in category of characteristics necessary for the governmental agents and the organizational and functional nature of government in the political thought of Islam, possesses important and outstanding position. From the viewpoint of Islam only that type of government qualified for power, necessary influence and effectiveness in the political management which possesses the most ratios of ethical and intellectual attraction, power and cultural acceptability. Findings and evidences of this research include Koranic verses, speeches and viewpoints of Imam Ali (P.B.U.H), the event of appearance of Islam, occurrence of Islamic revolution of Iran and objective evidences and documents, shows that there is a direct and positive relation between an intellectual and cultural power of a government with the ratio and scope of influence and effectiveness and also in controversy, in proportion to decrease in the ratio of legitimacy and intellectual and cultural power of a government, the scope of its influence and effectiveness will be decreased severely. This correlation relation will be observed through study in the history of Islam and also functions of Islamic revolution of Iran and their spatial events.

Conclusion

In this article, the subject of effectiveness and effective influence of government and countries within the national and post-national limits with the approach of Islamic thought.

In this study, four of the following sources and evidences were used:

1. Verses of Holy Koran related to the subject.
2. A part of speeches and opinions of Ali (P.B.U.H) related to the subject.
3. Historical study of appearance of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula and its spatial events.
4. Study about the Islamic revolution of Iran and its geopolitical influence and effects in the Middle East and North Africa.

Study in the intellectual and political Islamic sources shows that the subject of power and intellectual attraction of a government and utilizing cultural and software methods in the social and political management, possess an important and outstanding place and basically the approach of Islamic thought towards the issue of government and power is mostly cultural characteristics. From the Islamic viewpoint, power and management capability of a government resulting from three legitimacy characteristics, public acceptance and its efficiency and all three also subject to ratio of intellectual power and cultural attraction with the public opinion inside and outside the domain. Studies preformed in the said sources and also present evidence shows following results:

1. Study in the religious text and also historical and experimental studies shows that, still there is a correlation relation between power and intellectual and cultural attraction of a government with the ratio of its influence and effectiveness.
2. Correlation between two variables of cultural power and influence is a common and

comprehensive proportion and role and is extendable to all countries and government and is utilizable in the evaluation and classification of all countries from the viewpoint of influence domain and power.

3. Although, the influence and effectiveness domain and region of a government resulting from the composition and process of materialistic and non-materialistic factors, but on the basis of viewpoint of this article and findings, among all factors and source of power, the cultural and software factors and sources plays a main and pivot role.

4. On the basis of results obtained from findings of this research, theorem of this article which emphasis on the priority and pivot of cultural power in determining the influence region of the countries, was tested and proved.

Keywords: Official realm, Sphere of influence, Islamic thought, Cultural authority, Soft power.

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