HW 18. Hard and Soft Power

12 Mark Exam Question
You would spend about 15 minutes on this in the exam

(b) Assess the extent to which emerging countries need both 'hard' and 'soft' power to extend their global influence.

Top tips
• The command here is 'Assess the extent to which'. This means you need to offer different points of view and come to an informed judgment at the end.
• Use named examples to illustrate your points (consider the South China Sea vs the Beijing Olympics for example).
• The focus of the question is emerging countries extending their global influence so don't waffle on about the USA and EU unless it is in the context of what emerging powers need to do. Your points must also address how hard and soft power help them extend their influence e.g. you must not just write about China's economic growth, growing military or membership of BRICS in isolation. What are the impacts of these things?
• Balance is needed between hard and soft power. An answer that is 75% about hard power and neglects discussion of soft power will not create a strong enough argument.
• You may wish to briefly define or at least differentiate between hard and soft power.
• On the next two slides are the examiners suggested content. This is not exhaustive e.g. you can (and should) make other points than those simply listed there. I have included them simply to give you an idea of the sort of things you could discuss.
• PEEL: Point, evidence, explain, link
• LINK: It is vital that when you have made a point, you explain the significance of it in relation to the question. One of the easiest ways to do this, and to ensure your answer stays on track, is to use language from the question in your answer e.g. 'This shows that' 'This illustrates that/how', 'Therefore it is clear that...'
• Consider how the experience and growth of emerging powers is different to existing/past powers. Do hard and soft power play the same role now?
Indicative content guidance
The indicative content below is not prescriptive and candidates are not required to include all of it. Other relevant material not suggested below must also be credited. Relevant points may include:

AO1
- Emerging powers can be defined by their characteristics (economic, cultural, demographic and access to natural resources)
- There is a range of mechanisms for the maintenance of power, from hard to soft power, which vary in effectiveness, and have also changed over time
- A number of emerging countries are considered increasingly important to global economic and political systems
- Hard power includes a range of direct and indirect mechanisms (political, economic, neo-colonial and military)
- Soft power includes cultural influences (arts, media, food) and has been an important part of western superpower influence. The extent to which this will be important for emerging powers could be discussed

AO2
- Rise of emerging countries such as China, India and Brazil and oil-rich Arab nations has been different to the experience of earlier patterns seen in the UK or USA.
- Wealth of physical resources (oil- UAE, timber and land - Brazil) and human capital (low cost labour in India/China) have provided the impetus for emergence to economic power rather than military dominance.
- Traditional “hard” power in terms of military numbers and spending is seen in China (largest standing army and growing regional projection of power via blue water navy and land reclamation, e.g. Spratley Islands) but this is less obvious in other emerging powers
- Investment by China and oil-rich nations in the west gives economic influence (e.g. ownership of property/retail/sport in the UK) or potential funding of Hinkley Point C nuclear power plant
- Rise of state-owned TNCs (e.g. Chinese National Bank and Sinopec) has provided finance (although Brazil has become ensnared by corruption allegations in Petrobras)
- Joint projects with western TNCs have encouraged further investment, e.g. Foxconn and Apple, a Taiwanese TNC with a US TNC, employing Chinese labour
These helped provide the economic funding for investment and status, e.g. land grabs in Ethiopia by Saudi Arabia

China has growing influence globally as a member of some International Organisations (e.g. permanent member of UN Security Council) but for other countries this is limited. BRICS group provides opportunity for discussion but limited influence beyond the group although this may evolve

China in particular has used wealth to buy in resources (e.g. oil, metal ore, land for food production) required to sustain further growth

Soft power has been crucial to UK and USA dominance in the 20th century but current patterns are less obvious as Chinese culture although popular (Europeanised food, ancient art, tourism) do not have similar global spread at present (lack of globally known brands/TNCs)

Lack of freedom of expression in China can be seen as stifling the development of film/music/media beyond the country’s borders. Also lack of a world-known language restricts influence

Indian films are globally far more significant (Bollywood the largest producer of films globally) and these have a global following beyond merely the Indian diaspora

India is challenging western dominance in space (e.g. first to put a satellite in orbit around Mars) which projects image of scientific excellence and skill

Each emerging power has a contrasting set of attributes and some do not seek to project power beyond their region at present

Future patterns are uncertain, but China is certainly showing influence beyond its immediate region via hard power mechanisms but seems unlikely to challenge US dominance of culture