



The American University of Beirut: A source of American soft power in Lebanon

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The American University of Beirut: A source of American soft power in Lebanon

Jared Rock

A Thesis in the Field of Government
for the Degree of Master of Liberal Arts in Extension Studies

Harvard University

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Abstract

This thesis examines the soft power potential of American international schools abroad by exploring American University of Beirut's (AUB) as a case study and assessing its impact on views of Lebanon toward the United States (U.S.). National soft power comes from a state's ability to influence another state's actions through mechanisms of attraction rather than through pressure or force. The national soft power sources identified and studied in soft power literature are a state's values, culture, and foreign policies. Attraction toward a state's national soft power sources come through soft power resources, such as universities and national institutions abroad. Most academic research to date on the impact of American schools abroad on U.S. national soft power has focused on AUB's historical soft power influence, and all has been confined to the impact on university stakeholders. This thesis expands the research by seeking to understand whether AUB, as a prominent institution in Lebanon, has a broader impact on Lebanon's views toward U.S. values, culture, and foreign policy. To better understand this, a case study was conducted using quantitative and qualitative data to determine if AUB has an impact on host society views of U.S. soft power sources. No statistically significant relationship was found between exposure to AUB and views of U.S. soft power sources. Therefore, AUB does not appear to impact Lebanese society's favorability toward U.S. national soft power sources. Despite the absence of a statistically significant relationship, responses show high levels of regard for AUB within the host society, and the university does not appear to suffer from its association with the U.S.

Dedication

To all my friends and family, to all who have touched my life and inspired me to be my best, and especially to my wife, Francis, whose support and love makes everything wonderful.

Acknowledgments

I am indebted to all who have worked in and written on the project of American-style liberal education across the globe, regardless of position, language, or nationality. The ideals of American education often represent, for me, our greatest hope in the abilities and decency of humankind, the promise of character and intellect to instill civic virtue, and the dream of a global liberal community. Despite the flaws of the people and schools that make up this project, I hope the higher ideals will continue to guide us.

In my formal education, I am particularly grateful for the guidance and patience of my thesis director, Dr. Nazanin Azizian, and my research advisor, Dr. Michael Miner. Without your help, I doubt I ever would have made it to the end of this process.

As formal education is never an adequate replacement for the larger education of life experience, I would like to thank all the teachers and students I have met across the globe, especially those who I spent my time with while living in Lebanon. It is to better capture and understand our experiences that I took up the questions of this thesis. I wish I had a better finding to share back something more for all you have shared with me.

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Chapter I.

Introduction

Scholars of political science are interested in the role soft power plays in international politics. Soft power is one actor's ability to co-opt another actor to move to more favorable positions through the mechanism of attraction rather than by force.¹ This contrasts with economic and military hard power that uses force or coercion to achieve outcomes.² There are three sources of a state's national soft power, as recognized and studied in the academic literature: its culture, values, and foreign policies.³ While these sources may be categorized into finer subsets, the study of soft power continues to treat these as the only three sources of a state's soft power. American international schools operating in countries abroad may increase the U.S.'s soft power by promoting favorable views of U.S. interests within their host countries. When American international schools gain widespread favorable reputations within their host societies, it may result in a positive impact on tenants of U.S. soft power within the host country. This thesis will assess the impact of the American University of Beirut (AUB) on the United States' (U.S.) soft power in Lebanon, as a case study. This research will specifically examine the correlation between levels of exposure to AUB and Lebanese views of U.S. culture, values, and foreign policy.

¹ Joseph Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (NY: Public Affairs, 2004), 4.

² Joseph Nye, *The Future of Power* (NY: Public Affairs, 2011), 84.

³ *Ibid*, 84.

In this thesis, U.S. soft power is measure by (1) U.S. culture, (2) U.S. values, and (3) U.S. foreign policies. These are three sources of national soft power derived from Nye's Soft Power Theory and are consistent with recognized measurements of a state's soft power, such as those used in the Soft Power 30 report which is widely cited in soft power literature.⁴ Assessing the extent to which changes in Lebanese views of these sources can be explained by one's exposure to AUB will provide an indication of AUB's impact on the strength of U.S. soft power in Lebanon. It is important to note that this approach differs from a study that treats a nation's culture, values, and foreign policies as independent variable sources of a nation's soft power; instead, this thesis will use the Lebanese levels of favorability to U.S. national soft power sources as a dependent variable outcome, roughly estimating the strength of U.S. soft power in Lebanon. Levels of exposure to AUB will serve as the independent variable studied to see if it can account for the outcomes of levels of favorability toward the soft power sources.

Political scientists have composed a large body of scholarly work around the study of power in international relations, with several major theories to account for power and its uses. The prominent twentieth-century American political theorist, Robert Dahl defines "power" as the ability of actor A to get actor B to do something that actor B would otherwise not have done if not pressured by actor A.⁵ The scholarly study of power exchanges is much older than Dahl's formulation, including the scholarly attention given it by Thucydides, Machiavelli and other classic contributors, but the definition set forth by Dahl has been a helpful standard for modern political scientists to point to when analyzing power in political systems.

⁴ *Ibid*, 84.

⁵ Robert A. Dahl, "The Concept of Power," *Behavioral Science* 2 issue 3 (1957): 204.

Stephen Walt, a professor of International Relations at Harvard Kennedy School, provides a concise overview of three theory paradigms that have taken hold as the main International Relations theories: realism, liberalism, and constructivism.⁶ The three models share an assumption of states interacting with one another within a condition of anarchy, setting states as the main actors and holders of power resources. It is against this backdrop that Joseph Nye and Robert Keohane, two prominent American political theorists, challenged the state-centric view of power in international relations by arguing for greater understanding of the significance of non-state transnational actors to influence international politics.⁷ This eventually led the political science community to more formally recognize of the power of both state and non-state transnational actors to meet goals by influencing others' behaviors through attraction and co-optation rather than by threat or force, what Nye eventually termed "soft power."⁸

Soft power contrasts with the hard power of tangible resources. Although political theory scholars had previously acknowledged power through attraction, their understandings had been primarily confined to the level of domestic power, and often with less rigorous focus, making Nye's contribution a significant leap for a fuller understanding of international political power.⁹

⁶ Stephen M. Walt, "International Relations: One World, Many Theories," *Foreign Policy* 110 (1998): 38.

⁷ Joseph S. Nye Jr. and Robert O. Keohane, "Transnational Relations and World Politics: An Introduction," *International Organization* 25, no. 3 (1971): 329-49, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2706043>.

⁸ Joseph S. Nye Jr., *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 1991).

⁹ Power through attraction is seen most clearly in Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Du Contrat Social, ou Principes du Droit Politique*. (Rousseau Online: 7 October 2012 [1762, original]): 252. Another domestic strand of such power can be extracted from the idea of cross-cutting cleavages, an idea that has increasing IR significance in a globalized world, see developed by for example in James Madison, "The Federalist no. 10" (1787) and Seymour Martin Lipset, "Some Social Requisites of Democracy," *The American Political Science Review* 53, no. 1 (1959): 69-105.

Nye conceptualizes power in international politics as analogous to a three-level chess game with vertical moves necessary to win, where level one is interstate military issues, level two is interstate economic issues, and level three is a nation's soft power.¹⁰ Nye's theory of soft power is comprised of three sources: a nation's culture, values, and foreign policy.¹¹ Soft power maps onto the three major international relations theories while adding nuance beyond merely analyzing the impact of a state's traditional military and economic resources. The place for soft power within international relations theory is contentious, and soft power considerations are valuable for all three of the field's main theoretical lenses. Li Ji, research affiliate of the Soft Power Analysis and Resource Centre (SPARC) at Macquarie University in Australia, points out that that soft power is still within the paradigm of the realist power tradition.¹² However, the extent to which soft power focuses on winning hearts and minds and in forming international civil society networks lends it to liberal and constructivist interpretations as well.

AUB is fertile ground for a study of American international schools as a soft power resource, given its place as a prominent institution within Lebanon. The prominence of AUB comes from its academic and social impact, as well as its longevity as a well-known university. Founded in 1866, the university is seventy-seven years older than the modern Lebanese state, whose independence was declared in 1943 and French withdrawal in 1946. AUB is the second largest employer in Lebanon after the Lebanese government.¹³ The university provides services beyond education, including medical

¹⁰ Joseph Nye, *Soft Power*, 4.

¹¹ Nye, *Soft Power*.

¹² Li Ji, "Measuring Soft Power" in *The Routledge Handbook of Soft Power* (NY: Routledge, 2017), 76.

¹³ Fadlo R. Khuri, "An Ambitious Agenda for the American University of Beirut," *Al-Fanar Media*, 4 April 2016, <https://www.al-fanarmedia.org/2016/04/an-ambitious-agenda-for-the-american-university-of-beirut/>.

services, neighborhood initiatives, and more. After four years of sustained crisis in Lebanon from 2019-2023, AUB has remained strong, recovering initial losses, and continuing to expand its programs.¹⁴ AUB is amongst the oldest of American universities abroad, three years younger than the oldest, Boğaziçi University in Istanbul (1863), which has since ceased to be an American international school.¹⁵ Arguably, the Near East School of Theology is truly the oldest American international school (a continuous institutional line can be traced back to 1835), yet its unique history entwines it with AUB through AUB's early years and its limited scope as a theological school makes its soft power reach less likely to broadly impact the host society, and thus it is less apt as the source for a case study.¹⁶ The unique position of AUB as the oldest continuously operating American university abroad makes it a worthy selection for a case study as its social position of long-term acceptance and stability in Lebanon could make it apt to serve as a conduit of U.S. soft power in Lebanese society.

AUB's ability to reach a cross-section of Lebanese society far surpasses other Lebanese universities, at least historically. The most recent published comparative data is outdated but reveals at least a background of unsurpassed religious pluralism within AUB's student enrollment, which has traditionally stood out against Lebanon's other sect-dominated schools.¹⁷ Indeed, the notable wartime Lebanese Minister of Foreign affairs, Elie Salem, specifically noted such pluralism at AUB as having a liberalizing

¹⁴ Fadlo Khuri, "AUB Opening Ceremony 2023-24," YouTube video, September 8, 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rWFbu0re8N8>.

¹⁵ "History of Boğaziçi University," Boğaziçi University, accessed June 15, 2023, https://www.boun.edu.tr/en-US/Content/About_BU/History

¹⁶ "Historical Sketch," Near East School of Theology, accessed June 15, 2023, <https://www.theonest.edu.lb/en/About-NEST/Historical-Sketch>

¹⁷ Adnan El-Amin, "Education Reform: Nine Principles and Five Issues," in *Options for Lebanon*, ed. Nawaf Salam (London: Centre for Lebanese Studies, 2004), 209-254.

effect on his life and work.¹⁸ Despite some early resistance from the Maronites, AUB drew its students from a variety of Christian and Muslim sects.¹⁹

Being comprised of a cross-section of Lebanon's sectarian groups has been a feature of the university since the nineteenth century, creating a sense of shared ownership in the institution, rather than one of exclusion.²⁰ Even at the height of the Lebanese Civil War, AUB remained a shared institution that was trusted by all factions, continuing to bring students from both East and West Beirut, and providing neutral and necessary medical services to all sides of the conflict.²¹ Bou Akar's detailed 2018 study of Beirut city planning reveals the extent to which many facets of everyday life in Lebanon remain driven by sectarian separation, underscoring the value and oddity of AUB's shared ownership opening up a pluralistic space in Lebanese society.²² AUB's level of prominence in the host-country (Lebanon) is probably unparalleled by any other American international school abroad. This makes AUB an ideal case to study the soft power effects of a highly visible American institution located in a foreign host country.

Research Questions

¹⁸ Elie A. Salem, *Violence and Diplomacy in Lebanon: The Troubled Years, 1982-1988* (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1995), 1-8.

¹⁹ Fadia Kiwan, "La Perception du Grand-Liban Chez les Maronites dans la Période du Mandat," in *Lebanon: A History of Conflict and Consensus*, ed. Nadim Shehadi and Dana Haffar Mills (The Centre for Lebanese Studies: London: 1988), 124-148.

²⁰ Brian VanDeMark, *American Sheikhs: Two Families, Four Generations, and the Story of America's Influence in the Middle East* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2012).

²¹ See VanDeMark, *American Sheikhs* and Gladys Mouro, *An American Nurse Amidst Chaos* (Beirut, Lebanon: American University of Beirut, 1999).

²² Hiba Bou Akar, *For the War Yet to Come: Planning Beirut's Frontiers* (Redwood City: Stanford University Press, 2018).

Education can be viewed as an area of U.S. soft power strength, as American educational institutions are consistently seen with high favorability around the globe.²³ Despite the favorable view of U.S. education institutions, it is not clear how much the attraction to American education influences favorable views of U.S. national soft power sources of foreign policy, culture, and values. Furthermore, it is not clear how diffusely a well-established national institution that is also an American international school may influence the views of its host country.

This thesis aims to tackle some key questions about the ways that an American international school may influence host country levels of favorability to U.S. soft power. In other words, can an American international school lead to favorable views of the U.S. that extend beyond just favorable views of American education. The social and cultural functions of schools may make foreign-affiliated universities potent soft power resources for their countries-of-origin, especially in the case where such a school attains high visibility in its host society. Using AUB as a case, this thesis will explore the relationship between a prominent American international school and its influence on U.S. soft power in its host country. Specific to AUB in Lebanon, this thesis will explore the impact of the institution on Lebanese society's views of U.S. values, culture, and foreign policy, the three sources of U.S. national soft power.

The first research question asks: does AUB's institutional standing affect U.S. soft power in Lebanon beyond impacts only on its immediate stakeholders of its students, alumni, board members, and employees? The thesis seeks to understand the affect AUB may have on Lebanese beyond just those who are affiliated with the university in the

²³ "United States: Compare Years," Soft Power 30, accessed July 27, 2022, https://softpower30.com/country/united-states/?country_years=2017,2018,2019

traditional sense of being students or employees. This thesis will answer this question by asking about two connections: (1) Is there a connection between one's exposure to AUB and favorable views of U.S. national soft power sources of U.S. foreign policy, U.S. culture, and U.S. values? This thesis will examine if Lebanese's levels of exposure to AUB (measured by the number of ways one interacts with the university through study, work, attending events, using services, and general awareness of the university) can predict opinions on the favorability of U.S. national soft power sources. (2) If exposure to AUB does impact one's views of U.S. national soft power sources, then one would question what the nature of the relationship is, as increased exposure could make one more favorable to U.S. soft power, less favorable, or views could be more favorable up to a certain point of exposure and then fall flat or become less favorable. This leads to the second question: Does increased exposure to AUB increase the level of favorability one has toward the U.S. national soft power sources? This thesis will examine if Lebanese who view AUB favorably also view U.S. soft power sources favorably.

This case study requires the following variables: (1) U.S. soft power in Lebanon as indicated by the levels of favorability toward U.S. (a) values, (b) culture, and (c) foreign policy; (2) AUB's valence in Lebanese society; and (3) Lebanese exposure to AUB through the number of ways that one interacts with the university and its services. Such indicators will be obtained through quanti-qualitative rating scales on a questionnaire. To obtain a measurement of U.S. soft power, this study adapts questions and a rating system similar to those used in the Soft Power 30 survey.

Hypotheses

To gain an understanding of whether AUB has an impact on U.S. national soft power in Lebanon, three hypotheses are posed to the study's research questions.

Hypothesis 1.1

The first research question asks if exposure to AUB affects one's views of U.S. national soft power sources of values, culture, and foreign policy. The thesis's hypothesis is that levels of exposure to AUB affect one's opinions of U.S. soft power sources of values, culture, and foreign policy (alternative hypothesis 1.1, H1.1_a).

Hypothesis 1.2

A second research question asks if increased exposure to AUB increases the level of favorability one has toward the U.S. national soft power sources of values, culture, and foreign policy. The thesis's hypothesis is that higher exposure to AUB will increase favorability towards U.S. soft power sources of values, culture, and foreign policy. (alternative hypothesis 1.2, H1.2_a). If hypotheses 1.1_a and 1.2_a bear out, it will demonstrate that, as a prominent American foreign-affiliated-university, AUB can enhance U.S. (country-of-origin) national soft power diffusely throughout its Lebanese host society, and that its soft power impact is not merely limited the effect it has on university stakeholders of students and employees.

Hypothesis 2

Another research question asks: does AUB promote U.S. soft power in Lebanon? This thesis's hypothesis is that the prominence of AUB and its ability to work credibly as an institution that benefits Lebanese society while retaining a strong connection to the

U.S. does promote U.S. soft power generally by making the U.S. seem more culturally accessible and desirable in Lebanon (alternative hypothesis 2, H2_a).

If one or both alternative hypotheses (H1.1_a and, or H1.2_a) to the first question are accepted, then a further analysis will help to determine some possible causal mechanism between an independent variable of exposure to AUB and dependent variable of favorability toward U.S. national soft power sources. If no significant correlation between the exposure to AUB and views of U.S. national soft power sources is found, then further analysis will help comment upon some potential limits of AUB's ability to as a U.S. soft power resource for future studies. Qualitative analysis and coding of open-ended questions in the questionnaire will help to establish possible causal explanations for any connection between views of U.S. soft power sources and exposure to AUB, or lack thereof. Finally, qualitative analysis will help explain what aspects of U.S. soft power sources (U.S. culture, values, and foreign policy) are most accepted by Lebanese society study participants. These descriptive outcomes will be linked to the other findings to build a more complete understanding of the case study.

Table 1. Hypotheses.

Alternative Hypothesis		Null-Hypothesis	
H1.1 _a	Levels of exposure to AUB affect opinions of U.S. soft power sources of values, culture, and foreign policy.	H1.1 ₀	Levels of exposure to AUB do not affect opinions of U.S. soft power sources of values, culture, and foreign policy.
H1.2 _a	Higher exposure to AUB increases favorability towards U.S. soft power sources of values, culture, and foreign policy.	H1.2 ₀	Higher exposure to AUB does not increase favorability towards U.S. soft power sources of values, culture, and foreign policy.
H2 _a	The way that AUB promotes soft power in Lebanon is by working credibly in its host-	H2 ₀	AUB does not promote soft power in Lebanon, or it does so through means other than

Alternative Hypothesis		Null-Hypothesis	
	country while retaining a strong U.S. connection.		its credibility as an actor in its host country while retaining a strong connection to the U.S.

Hypotheses and nulls listed.

Definition of Terms

American International School

A school, at any level, that is chartered in the United States, purports some American connection as part of its institutional character or culture, and is located outside of the United States.

AUB

The American University of Beirut.

Country-of-Origin

The country that founds and remains tied to a school abroad by sponsoring it, accrediting it, funding it, and otherwise managing it. For AUB, the U.S. is its country-of-origin and Lebanon is its host country.

Foreign-Affiliated University

A university that operates in a country other than the one by which it was established and is currently chartered. In this project only universities chartered in the United States of America but located outside of the U.S. (see American international school) will be

examined, though in the widest sense this term is not limited to American international schools.

Exposure to AUB

In this thesis exposure to AUB refers to the number of types of interactions one has with AUB and its services. It does not take into account the duration of interactions, level of affiliation, nor frequency of interactions.

Host Country or Host Society

The country, and its society, where a foreign-affiliated university is located.

National Soft Power Sources

This thesis uses Nye's widely accepted conceptualization that a country's soft power comes from three sources: its culture, its values, and its foreign policy.²⁴

Reverse Soft Power

Soft power practiced in the opposite direction than originally intended of an institution, program, or other instrument of soft power. In the case of foreign-affiliated universities, this refers to soft power in the direction of a host country influencing a country-of-origin's behavior.²⁵

²⁴ Nye, *Soft Power*, 33-72.

²⁵ Rasmus G. Bertelsen, "Private Foreign-Affiliated Universities, the State, and Soft Power: The American University of Beirut and the American University in Cairo," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 8, no. 3 (2012): 295.

Soft Power

The ability to get others to adapt some desired behavior without force, threats, or exchanges taking place. The adaptation of the desired behavior should be done through attraction to the behavior.

Soft Power Resource

This is a specific sector or institution that works as a conduit or promoter of soft power. For a country's soft power, resources are the conduits that promote national soft power. In this study, AUB is examined as a resource of U.S. national soft power to understand its ability to promote favorable views of U.S. soft power sources within Lebanese society.

Stakeholder

Anyone with a significant personal or professional interest in an institution, in this case AUB. This includes people employed by AUB, board members, people involved in AUB-run community projects, AUB students, AUB professors, and AUB alumni.

University Soft Power

Soft power practiced by a university influencing behavior of outsiders to one desired by the university but not necessarily serving a national soft power interest.²⁶

²⁶ *Ibid*, 295.

Chapter II.

Literature Review

The academic literature on soft power has developed the concept along two main parallel tracks: (1) the study of soft power itself, and (2) the study of soft power resources. In addition to Nye's base theory, further theories of soft power have conceptualized it through national branding and country reputation.²⁷

The field of soft power measurement is still growing. Despite gains in operationalizing soft power, both its subjective and intangible nature and its relative newness make it difficult and sometimes contentious to operationalize.²⁸ Within the study of soft power resources, broad measurements are becoming more refined but there is scarce literature on isolating the capacity of particular institutions (like a particular school versus a country's education sector broadly speaking) as soft power resources.

Soft Power 30 Report

The Soft Power 30 report was created by Jonathan McClory in collaboration with ComRes, Facebook, and Portland in 2015 to develop "the world's first composite index for measuring the soft power of countries."²⁹ This report has created an index that has

²⁷ See both Keith Dinnie, *Nation Branding: Concepts, Issues, Practice* (NY: Elsevier, 2008), 15 and Alexander Buhmann, *Measuring Country Image* (Germany: Springer VS, 2016).

²⁸ See both Ji, "Measuring Soft Power," 82 and Yun Seong-Hun, "An Overdue Critical Look at Soft Power Measurement," *Journal of International and Area Studies* 25, no. 2 (2018): 1–20.

²⁹ *The Soft Power 30 Report 2015* (Portland, 2015), 4. Accessed July 25, 2022, https://softpower30.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/The_Soft_Power_30_Report_2015-1.pdf.

significantly developed the study and measurement of soft power resources by measuring indicators of people flow, values rating, and cultural item ratings.³⁰

The Soft Power 30 report produces an index of thirty countries' overall soft power by measuring their soft power in objective quantitative categories and subjective qualitative categories. Objective quantitative measurements data account for 65% of a country's soft power score and is composed of data in the following six categories: government, digital, culture, enterprise, engagement, and education.³¹ Thirty-five percent of each country's soft power score in the report comes from subjective polling data.³² The remaining 65% of a country's soft power score is calculated from objective data is a combined result of seven to twelve quantitative indicators per category, drawn from existing data from a variety of sources, such as the World Bank, World Economic Forum, UNESCO, QS World University Rankings, and more.³³

The soft power score calculated from subjective data comes from polling results in a survey instrument designed by ComRes to assess levels of favorability towards countries by how attractive they were to international audiences in several aspects.³⁴ Polling data was collected from 50 different countries to assess international views of the countries whose soft power was measured, where participants were asked to rate all countries on each of the subjective aspects listed above on a 0-10 scale, where 0 represented a very negative opinion, and 10 represented a very positive opinion.³⁵

³⁰ "Soft Power 30," Soft Power 30, accessed July 25, 2022, <https://softpower30.com/>.

³¹ *The Soft Power 30 Report 2019* (Portland, 2019), 11. Accessed July 25, 2022, <https://softpower30.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/The-Soft-Power-30-Report-2019-1.pdf>.

³² *Ibid*, 11.

³³ "Appendix B: Metrics" in *The Soft Power 30 Report 2015* (Portland, 2015), 49-50.

³⁴ "Appendix A: Methodology" in *The Soft Power 30 Report 2015* (Portland, 2015), 48.

³⁵ *Ibid*, 48.

Annual Soft Power 30 reports rank countries on an overall country soft power index, and broken into six sub-indices.³⁶ In the latest report, the U.S. ranked fifth place in global soft power, continuing a downward soft power trend it had been experiencing since it held first place in 2016, and its lowest ranking since the initial Soft Power 30 report.³⁷ Nye interpreted this result as the consequence of loss of legitimacy in the view of official U.S. policies, while also pointing to civil society responses during the era as an attractive soft power counterbalance to U.S. official policy.³⁸ This accounts for the losses in the Government sub-index, while all other sub-indices remained the same or even rose from 2016 levels.³⁹

³⁶ “Overall Ranking 2019,” Soft Power 30, accessed January 20, 2024, <https://softpower30.com/>.

³⁷ “Results and Analysis,” *The Soft Power 30 Report 2019* (Portland, 2019), 47.

³⁸ Joseph S. Nye Jr., “American Soft Power After Trump,” *The Soft Power 30 Report 2019* (Portland, 2019): 49-50.

³⁹ “Results and Analysis,” *The Soft Power 30 Report 2019* (Portland, 2019), 47.

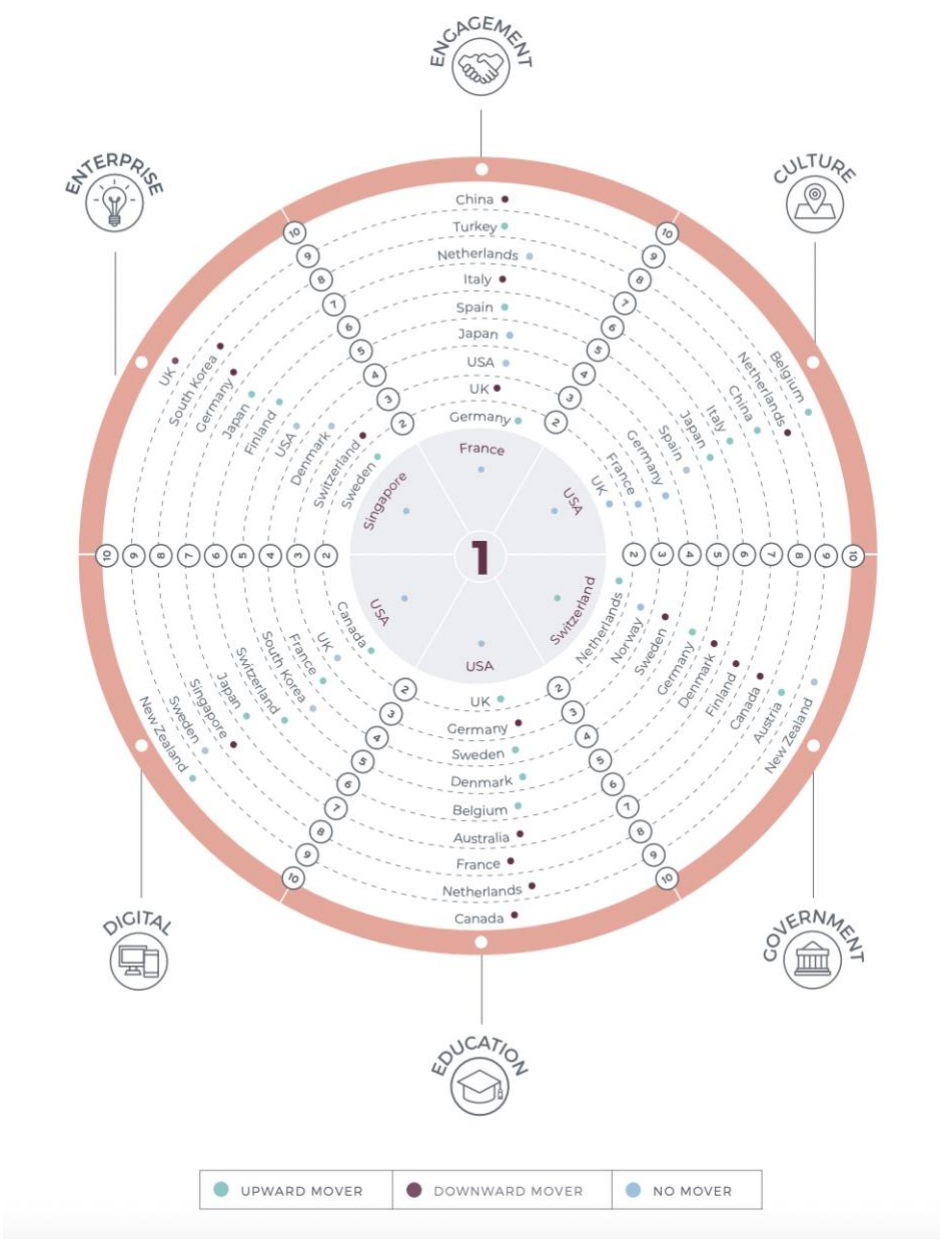


Figure 1. Latest Soft Power 30 Sub-Index Results.⁴⁰

Soft Power 30 2019 results for nations broken down into top ten rankings of the six report sub-indices, with indication on movement from previous report. The USA ranks in the top ten, without downward movement, for all sub-indices except for “Government.”

⁴⁰ Source: *The Soft Power 30 Report 2019* (Portland, 2019), 62.

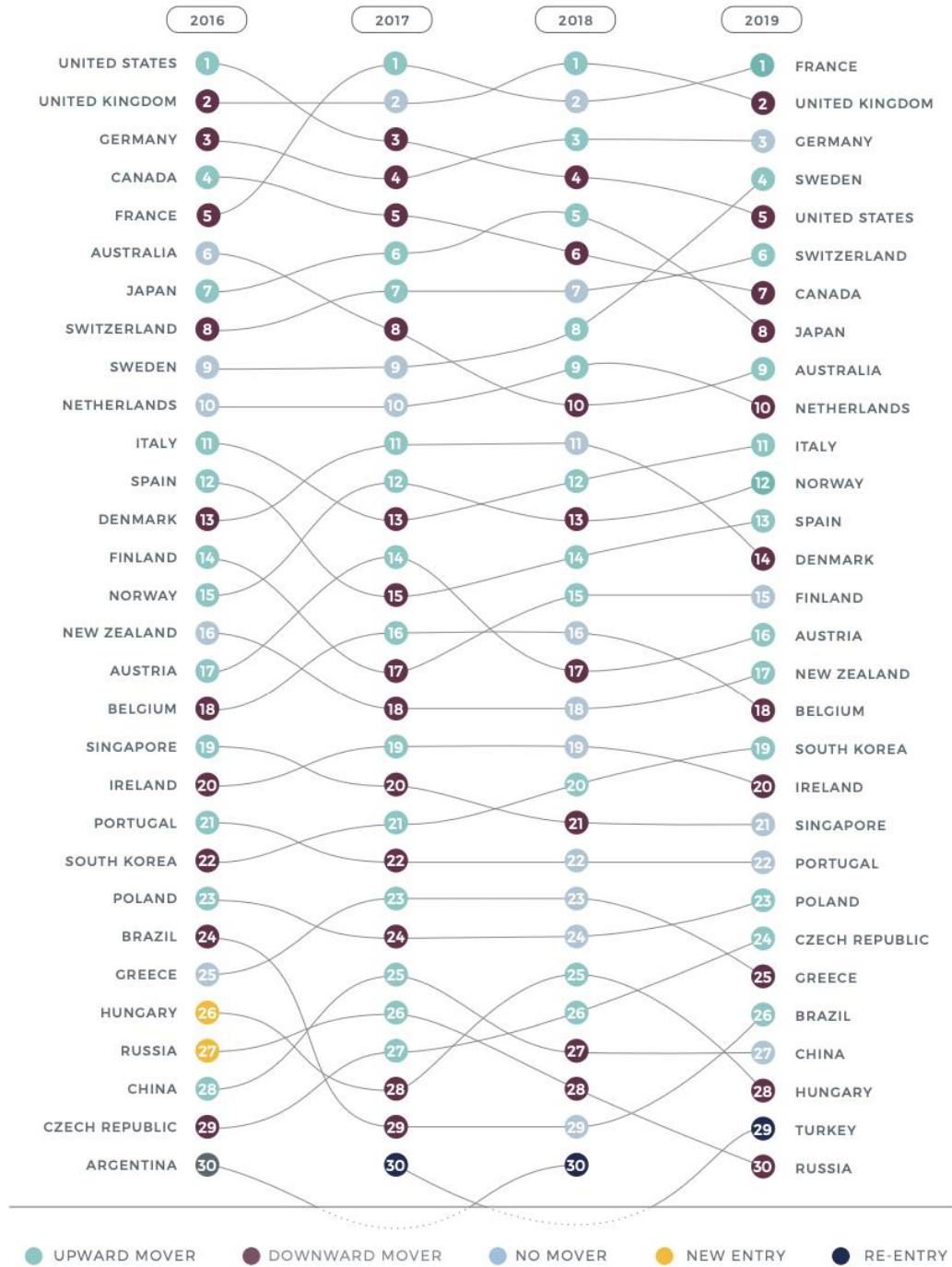


Figure 2. Latest Soft Power 30 Year-on-Year Comparison.⁴¹

Soft Power 30 2019 results for country soft power ranking, compared 2016-2019.

⁴¹ Source: *The Soft Power 30 Report 2019* (Portland, 2019), 40.

Considerations of Soft Power Research

The current soft power literature acknowledges that the subjective and intangible nature of soft power makes it difficult to operationalize.⁴² However, scholars have developed some rough measures of soft power that have been used in a growing body of academic literature on this concern. A review of existing instruments (soft power indexes from polling data for the most part) found none that apply well to this study's needs without adaptation, so I will design my own questionnaire.⁴³

“Power is conveyed through resource” and soft power is no exception.⁴⁴ The conversion process of soft power is of a resource influencing voluntary behavioral outcomes in agent-subject relationships.⁴⁵ The standard measurements of regular power sorts outcomes as *power successes* where desired behavioral change occurs and *power failures* where non-behavioral change occurs, but the intangible and unquantifiable nature of soft power makes this difficult compared to studies of hard power resources.⁴⁶ This case study tests for behavioral outcomes in the Lebanese public's responses to a questionnaire section on U.S. national soft power sources, to see if levels of exposure to AUB have a connection to Lebanese views on American culture, values, and foreign policy, the three sources indicated by Nye and standard within the current study of soft power.⁴⁷ If this research finds plausible connections (i.e. if the null hypotheses H1.1₀ and H1.2₀ are rejected), then AUB may be argued to be a resource for U.S. soft power.

⁴² Yun Seong-Hun, “An Overdue Critical Look at Soft Power Measurement,” *Journal of International and Area Studies* 25, no. 2 (2018): 1–20.

⁴³ This is mostly due to their natures as measurements of full resource or country brand indicators, not easily adapted to isolate a single institution as a resource.

⁴⁴ Joseph Nye, *The Future of Power* (NY: Public Affairs, 2011), 8.

⁴⁵ Nye, *The Future of Power*.

⁴⁶ Li Ji, “Measuring Soft Power” in *The Routledge Handbook of Soft Power* (NY: Routledge, 2017), 77.

⁴⁷ Nye, *Soft Power*.

The Potential of American International Institutions

The history of AUB reveals its potential as a resource for American soft power. As early as the 1920s, Paul Monroe recognized the potential for American international schools to act as soft power resources, though not by such a name, in “Western Education in Moslem Lands.”⁴⁸ Memoirs and other primary documents reveal a pattern of AUB’s soft power intent and mission, from proselytizing in founding era to creating stronger social and academic ties to America later on.⁴⁹ The effects are captured in memoirs, often revealing a respect for the society that created such an institution and for the pluralistic and liberal values it instilled.⁵⁰ At times these memoirs have served as a vehicle to relate Lebanese concerns and a sense of U.S. mission in Lebanon back to a U.S. audience.⁵¹ Memoirs by Lebanese alumni help reveal AUB’s significance as a national institution, for example alumna Wadad al-Maqdisī Qirṭās’s account of her constant admiration for AUB despite disillusionment with U.S. foreign policy and her own career in trying to promote Arab nationalism as head of another private school in Beirut.⁵²

⁴⁸ Paul Monroe, “Western Education in Moslem Lands,” in Monroe, *Essays in Comparative Education: Republished Papers* (New York: Teachers College Bureau of Publications, 1927), 125–36.

⁴⁹ A classic in this regard is Stephen B. L. Penrose Jr., *That They May Have Life: The Story of the American University of Beirut 1866-1941* (Beirut: The American University of Beirut, 1970). However, there are other prominent memoirs such as Daniel Bliss, *The Reminiscences of Daniel Bliss*, ed. Frederick J. Bliss (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1920) and Gladys Mouro, *An American Nurse Amidst Chaos* (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1999). A look at the broader American educational community centered around AUB can be found in Robert F. Ober, *Seeing Arabs through an American School: A Beirut Memoir, 1998-2001* (U.S.A.: Xlibris Corp, 2003).

⁵⁰ The most significant here is Salem, *Violence and Diplomacy in Lebanon*. This would also include some author statements found in Reem Haddad, *I Am IC* (Beirut: Librairie Antoine, 2019): 1.

⁵¹ See Leslie W. Leavitt, *With Youth on Phoenician Shores* (Wellesley, Mass: 1968) and John H. Chipman, “With Youth on Phoenician Shores,” (*Dartmouth Alumni Magazine*, 1969).

<https://archive.dartmouthalumnimagazine.com/article/1969/6/1/with-youth-on-phoenician-shores>.

⁵² Wadād al-Maqdisī Qirṭās, *A World I Loved: The Story of an Arab Woman* (New York: Nation Books, 2009), 46.

AUB exists today in an educational environment where the power of private schools to compete for the hearts and minds of its pupils in a larger geopolitical struggle is recognized by school leaders and academics. For example, studies of Shia schools in Lebanon show how they have sought to promote ideologies more in-line with concerns of the transnational Shia community, Hezbollah, and Iranian interests.⁵³ Obviously the ability of schools to recruit students to some favorable position is always limited, as seen by AUB prominent alumnus George Habash, and the case of Ziad Jarrah who attended a West-leaning Beirut private school, both of whom eventually worked against American interests.⁵⁴

The role of American schools to promote Western values and interests in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region was seen by John Waterbury, political scientist and fourteenth president of AUB. Waterbury saw the growing divide between unpopular American foreign policy in the Middle East and the popularity of American education there as an emerging important issue in winning favor for the U.S. in MENA countries.⁵⁵ He noticed that without addressing the deeper discontent with American political values and foreign policy, the branding value of schools as “American” institutions could become more superficial indicators of schools promising social advancement and less dedicated to building any deeper intercultural understanding.⁵⁶ Though he saw that favorable American education still offered footing for building

⁵³ See Roschanack Shaery-Eisenlohr, *Shi'ite Lebanon: Transnational Religion and the Making of National Identities* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008) and Sabah Dakroub, “Expansion of Shi’a Schools (1960-2009): Factors and Dynamics” (2015), 10.13140/RG.2.1.2938.0005.

⁵⁴ For George Habash see: VanDeMark, *American Sheikhs*, 131-133. For Ziad Jarrah see: Marcus Walker and James M. Dorsey “A Student's Dreams or Terrorist Plot? - Ziad Jarrah's Family, Friends Deny Zealotry; Hamburg Web Expands” *The Wall Street Journal*, 18 September, 2001.

⁵⁵ Waterbury, “Hate Your Policies, Love Your Institutions,” 58–68.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 58-68.

cooperation and counterbalancing the reputational harm of U.S. foreign policy, it was not clear if poor views of America would come to separate American education from all other aspects of American soft power sources, leaving it essentially as a stand-alone commodity. Since then, studies have shown that American branding of private schools in Jordan has decreased value for more recently established institutions that are perceived to be less authentically steeped in the American tradition.⁵⁷

The prominent status of AUB has inspired the publication of several institutional histories. Two indispensable histories of AUB are *The American University of Beirut* by Betty Anderson (2011)⁵⁸ and *American Sheikhs* by Brian VanDeMark (2012).⁵⁹ VanDeMark's work is the most current, concise narrative historical overview of AUB with reference to many valuable historical documents and provides a broad historical framework by which the soft power of AUB can be understood through its prominence as an American-affiliated national institution. Anderson's work is the most cited institutional history by current scholars, essentially appearing in every bibliography of the subject since 2012. While her work is more narrowly focused on the growth of Arab Nationalism within AUB and limits its historical scope by setting early Civil War time Lebanon as its end point, it is extremely valuable for developing a deeper sense of historical power exchanges through ideas, cultures, and networks. The narrative history that already exists points to AUB being fertile ground for a case study of U.S. soft power through an American university abroad.

⁵⁷ Linda Smail and Ginger Silvera, "American Universities in the Middle East: A Student's Perspective," *Cogent Education* 5, no. 1 (March 19, 2018): 1447228. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2018.1447228>.

⁵⁸ Betty S. Anderson, *The American University of Beirut: Arab Nationalism and Liberal Education* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011).

⁵⁹ Brian VanDeMark, *American Sheikhs: Two Families, Four Generations, and the Story of America's Influence in the Middle East* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2012).

Literature on AUB and U.S. Soft Power

It is only over the past decade that scholars have developed a soft power literature specifically on understanding and characterizing the soft power potentials of foreign-affiliated universities. Until recently, the scholarly field has mostly ignored the soft power resource role of American international schools, with the focus on education soft power resources falling on the role of U.S. universities' attraction for international students.⁶⁰ Much of this newer soft power literature on American international schools abroad has focused on American universities in the Middle East, given their number (presently and historically) and the current interest in international relations between the U.S. and the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA). AUB is specifically cited by Nye as an example of a soft power resource, as something of a go-to prominent exemplar in one of his seminal popular texts on soft power.⁶¹ The groundwork in this area is set by the work of Özlem Altan-Olcay, political science professor and researcher at Koç University, and Rasmus Bertelsen, international relations researcher at the Arctic University of Norway. Most of the work on foreign-affiliated universities, and AUB specifically, has been conducted through a historical framework in order to propose and test models of soft power at such institutions.

Altan-Olcay's interests lie mainly in transnational class formations.⁶² In particular, she is interested in the ways that elite international institutions can confer in-group class status to its host country members. Her interpretation of AUB's soft power is

⁶⁰ For example: Carol Atkinson, "Does Soft Power Matter? A Comparative Analysis of Student Exchange Programs 1980–2006," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 6, no. 1 (2010): 1–22.

⁶¹ Nye, *The Future of Power*, 85.

⁶² "Özlem Altan-Olcay Biography Page," The Graduate Institute Geneva, accessed September 1, 2022, <http://graduateinstitute.ch/home/research/centresandprogrammes/genre/people/researchers/ozlem-altan-olcay.html>.

best understood through the model of a network that allows access to an elite global class.⁶³ She concludes that soft power interests can be seen in network influences that connect American interests to Lebanese elites who are attached to AUB. Altan-Olcay claims AUB has soft power goals, especially for U.S. business and political interests, by outlining connections between prominent donors, business ventures, and politicians, while freely admitting “it is harder to assess what the philanthropist businessmen and women might have had in mind” with their contributions in this network.⁶⁴ Much of Altan-Olcay’s work examines studies of post-World War II U.S. government funding for political objectives of spreading U.S. culture as a tool of foreign policy, instilling liberal values in global networks.⁶⁵ Her study finds that AUB created a Lebanese elite with more cosmopolitan views, often more aligned with American values and policies, but also critical of the more imperial components of its foreign policy.

Bertelsen acknowledges U.S. government contributions to AUB networks but emphasizes AUB as an actor outside state control.⁶⁶ His stance seems skeptical of Altan-Olcay’s funding equals influence model. Bertelsen’s wider work reveals more general interest in the transnational soft power of foreign-affiliated universities. He uses historical accounts and interviews to model how U.S.-Lebanese soft power exchanges might occur through AUB. Altan-Olcay’s model is unidirectional, only examining U.S. soft power influence on Lebanon. Bertelsen creates a multidirectional model of soft power relationships, where the flow of influence can be any and all of the following: (1) U.S.

⁶³ Özlem Altan-Olcay, “Defining ‘America’ from a Distance: Local Strategies of the Global in the Middle East,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 44, no. 1 (2008): 29.

⁶⁴ Altan-Olcay, “Defining ‘America’,” 34-35.

⁶⁵ Altan-Olcay, “Defining ‘America’,” 36-37.

⁶⁶ Bertelsen, “Private Foreign-Affiliated Universities,” 307.

national soft power on Lebanon through AUB, (2) the *reverse soft power* of Lebanon exerting influence on the U.S. through AUB, and (3) the *university soft power* of AUB gaining favor from either society.⁶⁷ While Altan-Olcay's model would not deny such relationships, Bertelsen's model is less constrained than the relationships implied by the former's interpretation. Using Bertelsen's model, a researcher may refer to AUB's institutional soft power as the power it wields to attract any state to its own institutional goals. Under Bertelsen's framework, AUB is also viewed as a soft power resource for national soft power, moving in either from the country-of-origin to the host country, or from the host country to the country-of-origin. This multi-directional model is the product of applying Nye's work on soft power models as influence on culture, values, and foreign policy.⁶⁸ This multidirectional flow of influence has shaped the larger scholarly belief that AUB's reverse-soft-power (i.e. Lebanese soft power influencing the U.S.) has become a more significant soft power resource role for AUB recently.⁶⁹

No study has yet attempted to test the more diffuse soft power effects of AUB on people living in Lebanon, beyond just university stakeholders of its affiliated students and employees. In fact, if AUB is to be truly understood as a resource of U.S. soft power in Lebanon, then the extent of its influence needs to be better understood. The question of whether soft power influence is limited to university stakeholders or if a strong, stable, and reliable American institution abroad can increase U.S. soft power generally within its host society remains an open question. This thesis seeks to fill that gap by examining how levels of exposure to AUB impacts views of U.S. soft power in Lebanese society.

⁶⁷ Bertelsen, "Private Foreign-Affiliated Universities," 295-296.

⁶⁸ Nye, *Soft Power*, 33-72 and Bertelsen, "Private Foreign-Affiliated Universities."

⁶⁹ Nye, *The Future of Power*, 85.

Chapter III.

Research Framework and Methods

This chapter will describe the methods used to examine the following hypotheses:

(1) Levels of exposure to AUB affect opinions of U.S. soft power sources (H1.1_a), (2) Higher exposure to AUB increases favorability towards U.S. soft power sources (H1.2_a), and (3) AUB promotes soft power in Lebanon by working credibly in its host-country while retaining a strong U.S. connection (H2_a).

This study was conducted using a single exploratory case study design to assess the broader social impact of AUB on U.S. soft power in Lebanon.⁷⁰ This was done through the distribution of a custom-developed questionnaire. The questionnaire collected categorical data on participant exposure to AUB, ordinal data on participant favorability toward AUB and U.S. soft power sources, and open qualitative response data that offer insight into rationales for ratings. Credibility and trustworthiness are common measurements for perception of an actor's attractiveness in soft power.⁷¹ The survey design conceptualized AUB as an actor offering the resource of American education, with responses testing for the institution's credibility and trustworthiness. An accepted approach to measuring soft power is through individual valence (favor, disfavor) towards soft power resources, usually through instruments of surveys and questionnaires.⁷²

⁷⁰ John Gerring and Lee Cojocaru, "Selecting Cases for Intensive Analysis: A Diversity of Goals and Methods," *Sociological Methods & Research* 45, no. 3 (August 2016): 392–423.

⁷¹ Craig Hayden, *The Rhetoric of Soft Power* (Maryland: Lexington Books, 2012), 41.

⁷² Ji, "Measuring Soft Power," 84.

Ratings indicated in the questionnaire are used to characterize valence toward AUB as an institution and toward U.S. soft power sources. The quantitative data were collated, and an ANOVA statistical test was used to draw results by testing the hypotheses. The qualitative responses from the specially developed survey were used to help draw more nuanced findings of the statistical results.

Questionnaire

From the period of 14 July 2023 to 30 September 2023, the questionnaire was distributed to participants fitting the selection criteria. The questionnaire was sent to participants via Google Forms. The questionnaire was designed in Google Forms, for ease of distribution and data review. Both an English and Arabic version of the questionnaire was distributed, allowing participants to select the language in which they wished to complete it.

The questionnaire consisted of two parts, containing a total of twenty-two open and closed questions. Part 1 collected biographical information. Part 2 included fifteen questions separated into five sections to gain data on participants' levels of exposure to AUB (section 1), participants' views on AUB's influence on Lebanese Society (section 2), AUB's name connection to America (section 3), U.S. soft power in Lebanon (section 4), and AUB's impact on participants' views of the USA (section 5), respectively.

The full English version of the questionnaire is included in appendix 1. The Arabic version is the same in content as the English one, and participants were re-directed there if they chose Arabic as their language.

Sample Population, Inclusion Criteria

The target population is Lebanese citizens or residents of Lebanon. Anyone living in Lebanon, or who has lived in Lebanon for a significant amount of time, may be influenced by its institutions. Therefore, a sample from this population may reveal the impacts that an institution has on its views of U.S. soft power, if such an effect exists.

The sample included anyone over the age of 18 who have lived least five of the past ten years in Lebanon. The questionnaire was distributed to over one-hundred people who fit the target population, forty-six of whom took the questionnaire.

Questionnaire Versions

Two versions of the questionnaire exist, as the need for more participants opened the inclusion criteria to allow for participation from Lebanese citizens abroad who have lived in Lebanon for at least five of the past ten years after initial questionnaire distribution had already begun. A separate questionnaire was created for this group. The only differences in this survey are altered the information on the inclusion criteria and some relevant changes in the biographical section (Part 1) to allow participants to continue the survey after indicating that they are Lebanese living outside Lebanon who have lived in Lebanon for at least five of the past ten years. Part 2 of both versions is completely identical. Given the minor nature of alterations between the two versions that do not impact the data analyzed in this study, the second questionnaire version is not included in the appendix.

Measuring Exposure to AUB

Exposure to AUB was measured through categorical data entered to indicate the number of types of interaction a participant has with AUB, not duration or frequency of interactions. For every type of interaction the participant has had with AUB, an exposure point is awarded, with zero (0) being the lowest level of exposure and ten (10) the highest.

AUB's medical services differ from other university services as they are less directly connected to the university as an educational and cultural force. Roughly 360,000 people use AUB's medical services annually, and many may merely be choosing a high-quality or reputable provider of health services and not care much about its connection to AUB specifically.⁷³ Assuming many more people have had contact with AUB's medical services than other university services, and as these encounters may be qualitatively distinct, these points in the exposure are listed as distinct options in the questionnaire.

Adapted Soft Power 30 Questions

To get a measurement of levels of favorability toward U.S. soft sources, the questionnaire adapts some questions for the Soft Power 30 poll survey to make use of an existing instrument whose validity and reliability has been established.⁷⁴ The Soft Power 30 survey asks for a scaled favorability rating (0-10) on different metrics that help to measure a soft power favorability score.⁷⁵ A similar approach to measuring soft power is appropriate to the needs of this thesis, as it seeks to understand the relationship between

⁷³ "Why AUBMC?," AUBMC, accessed January 6, 2024, <https://aubmc.org.lb/aboutus/Pages/why.aspx>.

⁷⁴ This is the most widely consulted index and the only one recognized by Nye as an exemplar measure of soft power resources, see Yun, "An Overdue Critical Look at Soft Power Measurement," 2.

⁷⁵ See "Appendix A" in *The Soft Power 30* (Portland, 2015), 47-48.

an individual's exposure to AUB and subjective views of favorability toward U.S. soft power.

To adapt to my needs, the question wording was altered to ask only about U.S. soft power sources with a five-point Likert scale rating of favorability. The original Soft Power 30 poll asks participants to rank their perception of multiple foreign countries' contributions to global culture on a ten-point scale, where 0 represents a very negative opinion and 10 is a very positive opinion.⁷⁶

Questionnaire Sections

The questionnaire consists of two parts, containing a total of twenty-two questions. The questions are included below, broken into their parts and sections.

Part 1: Biographical Information

- Are you older than 18 years old? If you are younger than 18, please close the questionnaire now without continuing.
 - Yes
 - No
- What is your age? Please write in numerals (ex: 27 or ٢٧): _____
- Please select the option that best describes you. If you are not currently living in Lebanon, please close the questionnaire now and do not continue.
 - I am a Lebanese citizen currently living in Lebanon.
 - I am currently living in Lebanon, but I am not a Lebanese citizen.

⁷⁶ *Ibid*, 47-48.

- I am not currently living in Lebanon
- What is your gender? (optional)
 - Male
 - Female
 - Prefer not to say
 - Other: _____
- Have you ever lived outside of Lebanon?
 - Yes
 - No
- If you answered "yes" to the question above, please write which countries you have lived in other than Lebanon, and how long you lived in each. (optional)
- Which of Lebanon's Governorates do you feel most closely connected to (it does not need to be where you currently reside). (optional)
 - Akkar (عكار) Governorate
 - Baalbek-Hermel (بعلبك - الهرمل) Governorate
 - Beirut (بيروت) Governorate
 - Beqaa (البقاع) Governorate
 - Keserwan-Jbeil (كسروان - جبيل) Governorate
 - Mount Lebanon (جبل لبنان) Governorate
 - Nabatieh (النبطية) Governorate
 - North (الشمال) Governorate
 - South (الجنوب) Governorate

Part 2, Section 1: Exposure to AUB

Please check all the following options that are true for you:

- I have heard of the American University of Beirut.
- I know someone who studies or studied at the American University of Beirut.
- I know someone who works or worked at the American University of Beirut.
- The American University of Beirut sometimes comes up in conversations I have.
- I have attended events at the American University of Beirut.
- I have used services from the American University of Beirut, not including medical services.
- I have used services from the American University of Beirut Hospital, or other medical services from the university.
- I have seen American University of Beirut events outside of the university campus.
- I study or studied at the American University of Beirut.
- I work or worked at the American University of Beirut.

Exposure to AUB was measured through awarding one point for each of the above options that was selected. Zero (0) was the lowest possible score and ten (10) was the maximum possible score. Higher scores indicate higher exposure, as measured in this study.

Part 2, Section 2: Views of AUB

- To what extent do you agree with this statement? The American University of Beirut makes positive contributions to Lebanese society.
- To what extent do you agree with this statement? The American University of Beirut is an institution that Lebanese people are proud of.
- To what extent do you agree with this statement? I trust the American University of Beirut to conduct itself in a way that enhances the intellectual and social life of Lebanon.
- To what extent do you agree with this statement? The American University of Beirut fosters respect for different social, political, and cultural perspectives.

All questions were answered by selecting a response on a Likert scale of 1-5, with 1 being “strongly disagree” and 5 being “strongly agree.”

Part 2, Section 3: AUB Hypothetical Name Change

- How would you feel about the American University of Beirut changing its name to Beirut University? (note: this is not a real proposal, only hypothetical)
- Why did you answer as you did above?

The first question is answered by selecting a response on a Likert scale of 1-5, with 1 being “I would find this a very bad idea” and 5 being “I would find this a very good idea.” The second question is answered by typing out an open response.

Part 2, Section 4: Views of U.S. Soft Power Sources

- What is your perception of the United States of America?

- How much do you trust in the United States's conduct in global affairs?
- What is your perception of the United States's contributions to global culture?
- What is your perception of the United States's social and political values?

These questions are answered by selecting a response on a Likert scale of 1-5, with 1 indicating least favorable views and 5 indicating most favorable views.

Part 2, Section 5: Views on AUB and Perceptions of the U.S.

- The American University of Beirut increases intercultural understanding between Lebanese and Americans.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
- The American University of Beirut builds valuable global networks that benefit both Lebanon and the United States.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
- The American University of Beirut makes me think more favorably of the United States.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree

- Agree
- Strongly agree
- Optional: Add any additional comments about this survey, its topic, or its questions.

Methods of Analysis

The data collected through the questionnaire was tested by both statistical and qualitative analysis.

Statistical Testing

Stata 18 was used to perform an ANOVA (analysis of variance) statistical test to determine if a relationship between level of AUB exposure and favorability towards U.S. soft power sources may exist.

An ANOVA tests the difference between variance of distinct groups to see if there is a statistically significant difference of variance between groups greater than variance within groups.⁷⁷ By treating the rankings of favorability toward to U.S. soft power sources as the groups, the test examined the variance of levels of exposure to AUB scores to see if a statistically significant variance existed between groups.

The F-value of the ANOVA test results indicates whether there are significant differences between the group means. The F-value is calculated by dividing the between-group variability by the within-group variability.⁷⁸ High F-values indicate that between-

⁷⁷ Fred Pycszak and Deborah Mikyo Oh, *Making Sense of Statistics: a Conceptual Overview*, Seventh edition (New York: Routledge, 2018), 148-152.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 150.

group variability is greater than within-group variability, suggesting that there are significant differences among the group means. Low F-values indicate that the differences among group means are not significant. If the F-value is higher than the critical value, that indicates that a statistically significant between-group variance exists.⁷⁹

The ANOVA does not indicate the direction nor magnitude of differences between groups, nor does it reveal the nature of a relationship or its cause. The ANOVA test is useful as an initial hypothesis test for data collected in this thesis's questionnaire to see whether the observed differences among group means are statistically significant before moving forward to test for the nature of any possible correlation or cause. The ANOVA tested null Hypothesis 1.1₀, which states that levels of exposure to AUB do not affect opinions of U.S. soft power sources of values, culture, and foreign policy. An ANOVA finding of an F-value higher than the assigned critical value would reject the null hypothesis, and lead to further correlation testing to understand to better understand and describe the relationship between AUB and views of U.S. soft power. The correlation test would test for H1.2_a, that higher exposure to AUB increases favorability towards U.S. soft power sources of values, culture, and foreign policy, by indicating direction and magnitude of the correlation. Since the ANOVA did not reject the null hypothesis that levels of exposure to AUB do not affect opinions of U.S. soft power sources of values, culture, and foreign policy (H1.1₀) in this study, further study was not warranted.

⁷⁹ Upper Critical Values of the F Distribution," National Institute of Standards and Technology, accessed Dec. 20, 2023, <https://www.itl.nist.gov/div898/handbook/eda/section3/eda3673.htm>.

Qualitative Coding

Qualitative coding is a systematic close analysis of textual data to identify recurring themes or patterns. The open-response question in Part 2, sections 3 and 5 were coded using hand coding techniques to search for any repeated themes. Hand coding is a process of reviewing and categorizing data without the use of specialized software, and it is appropriate to the relatively small amount of text that this thesis works with in the open responses. The responses were read once, then coded by identifying and labeling meaningful segments with descriptive codes. The responses were read over again in a continually repeated process to have codes added to each response, as they were identified. This process of repetition and coding was continued until a point at which three consecutive readings of all responses produced no new themes. The identified codes were then organized into broader themes. The themes that emerged from the coded responses were used to add nuance in the interpretation of the results of the statistical data.

Ethics

This research upholds the basic ethical principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice that guide research with human subjects.⁸⁰

Respect for persons is upheld by including an informed consent coversheet in the survey that explains the purpose of the research, use of information, and reminds recipients that their participation is entirely voluntary and can be stopped at any time. It

⁸⁰ National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, "Part B: Basic Ethical Principles" in *The Belmont Report* (April 18, 1979), accessed Dec. 20, 2023, <https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/belmont-report/read-the-belmont-report/index.html>.

also includes the researcher contact information in case further inquiry is required. See appendix 2. All data was received in an anonymous format through Google Forms, with no personally identifying information collected.

Beneficence and justice are upheld as this research does not threaten to touch any controversial topics within the host society or university, and findings expand upon earlier research to include a population that extends beyond mere stakeholders. This opens an understanding of the question of AUB's impact on U.S. soft power to include the views of members of Lebanese society who had previously been overlooked in the existing research.

As this research involves human subjects and handling of data from questionnaire respondents, the Harvard University IRB reviewed the research procedures and approved them on July 12th. Nothing in the research design was altered following this approval.

Limitations

A major limitation of the study was time because the questionnaire was conducted in two months. In addition, the sample size of the survey was limited a selected group of people who met the inclusion criteria from a convenience sample, so the sample was neither large enough nor sufficiently stratified to allow for inference of society-wide views on the variables being measured. As the thesis conducts an ANOVA to test for relationship between exposure to AUB and U.S. soft power views, the sample is sufficient for establishing valid results on the impact of AUB on a person's views of U.S. soft power sources, however the results cannot be generalized to infer more about AUB's impact on Lebanon as a nation. Further research is required to explore the influence of AUB on the broader society of Lebanon.

Isolating AUB as the independent variable for any outcome amongst an unknowable number of confounding potential soft power resources was another limitation to the findings of this study. It could not be concluded from this research whether independent factors more impactful than AUB were primarily responsible for influencing respondents' answers to views on U.S. soft power.

Another limitation is that this study tests for a relationship between exposure to AUB and views of U.S. soft power sources at only one point in time. A null finding in this study may hide a deeper relationship that could only be detected if data were resampled at different times. Perhaps the length of time that one is affiliated with AUB correlates with changing views of U.S. soft power sources. If that were the case, such findings would be missed in this thesis.

These limitations are even more significant in a single case study but can be mitigated with future studies of AUB or comparative small-n (or large-N) studies that this thesis makes some progress in providing ground for.

Chapter IV.

Results

The data collected through the questionnaires were cleaned and analyzed.

Descriptive Results

A total of forty-six respondents took the questionnaire, but three were eliminated for not completing it entirely. Forty-two opted to complete the survey in English (97.7%), and one in Arabic (2.3%).

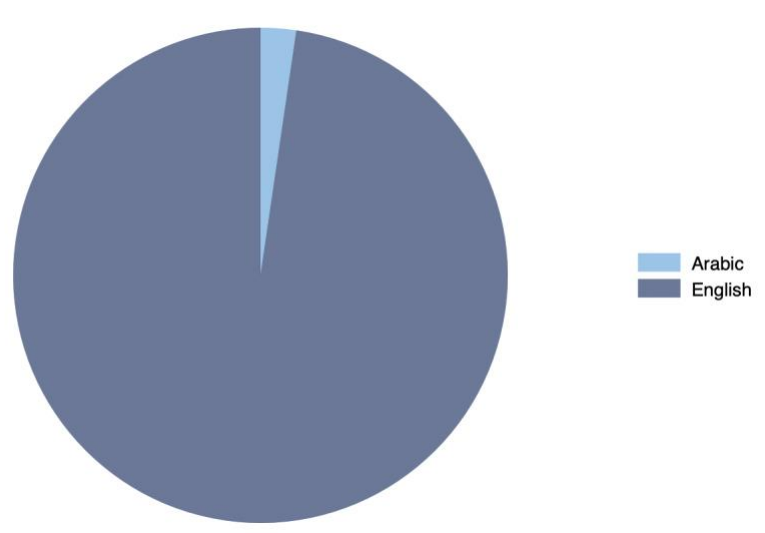


Figure 3. Participant Language.

Participants who completed the questionnaire in English versus in Arabic.

Out of the forty-three participants, twenty-six were female (60.5%), sixteen male (37.2%), and one trans-woman (2.3%).

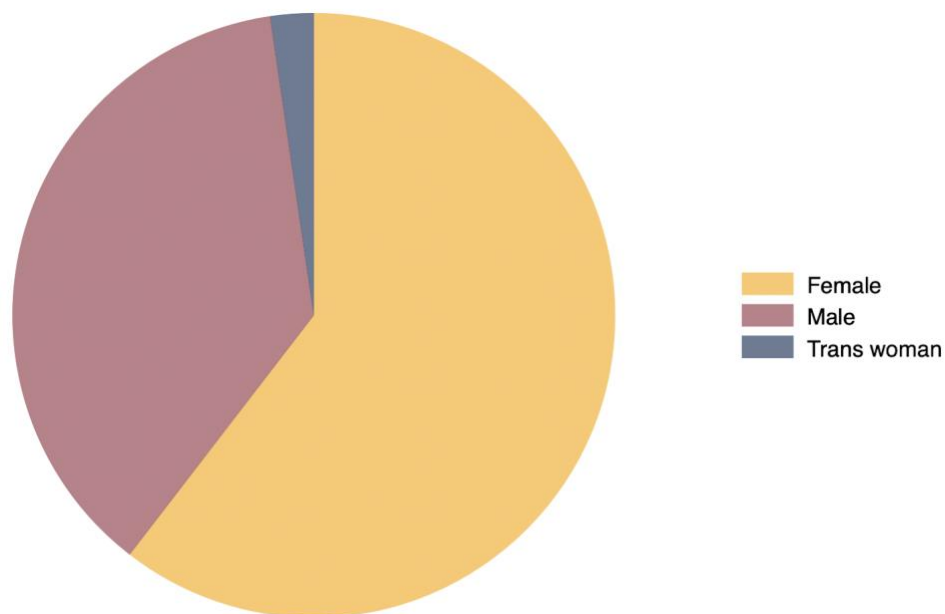


Figure 4. Participant Gender.

Graphic representation of participant gender; from female, male, or other in the questionnaire.

The average age of a participant was 32.6 years old, with a minimum age of 19 and maximum of 69.

Table 2. Participant Age.

Variable	Observations	Average age	Standard deviation	Minimum age	Maximum age
Age	43	32.63	15.12	19	69

Descriptive statistics information on participant age.

Of the total participants, thirty-five are currently living in Lebanon (81.4%) and eight are Lebanese citizens currently living outside of Lebanon after having lived in the country for a minimum of five of the previous ten years (18.6%). Forty-one of the respondents are Lebanese citizens (95.3%), and two are non-citizens who currently live in Lebanon (4.7%).

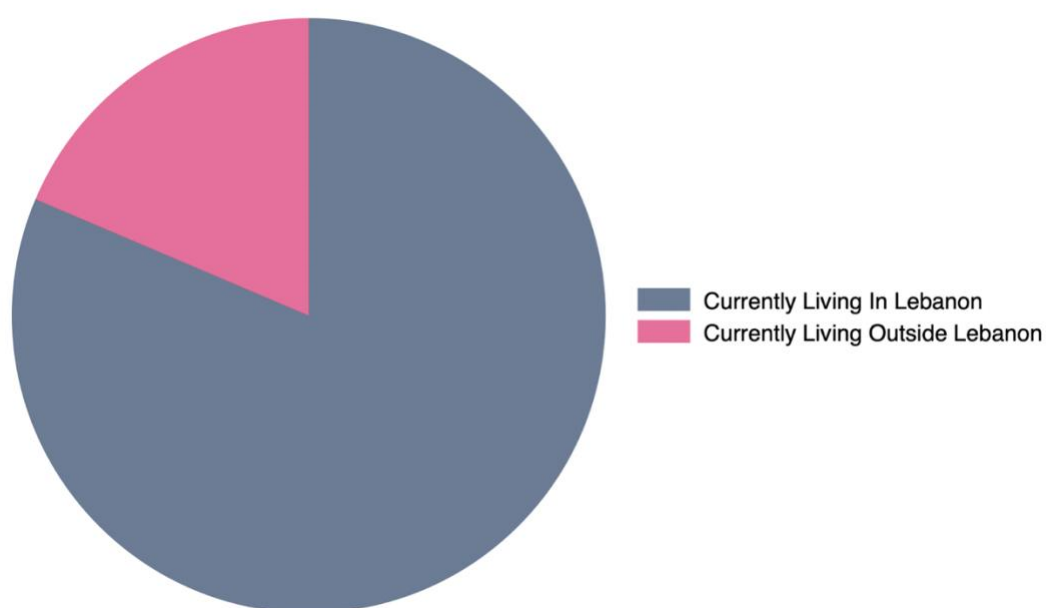


Figure 5. Participant Location.

Participants who are currently living in Lebanon versus those who are Lebanese citizens currently living abroad.

Table 3. Participant Lebanese Citizenship and Location.

Option (from questionnaire)	Lebanese citizen currently living in Lebanon	Currently living in Lebanon, but not a Lebanese citizen	Lebanese citizen currently living out of Lebanon	Non-Lebanese citizen currently living out of Lebanon
Number of Participants	33	2	8	0
Percentage of total participants	76.7%	4.7%	18.6%	0%

Number of respondents and percentage of whole sample break-down of citizenship and current living location in or out of Lebanon.

Twenty-one of the participants have lived outside of Lebanon at some point in their lives (48.8%), compared to 22 that have never lived out of the country (51.2%). Of the twenty-two who have lived outside of Lebanon, the countries they have lived in are: USA, UAE, UK, Canada, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Switzerland, Zambia, Cyprus, Bolivia, Iraq, and France, with several of the respondents having lived in multiple countries. The first five countries listed are the ones with the highest number of participants indicating that they have lived there.

The majority of respondent affiliations are concentrated in Beirut Governorate (28; 66.7%), followed by 11 in Mount Lebanon (26.2%), and 1 from each of the following: Keserwan-Jbeil (2.4%), Nabatieh (2.4%), North (2.4%). One participant chose not to specify an affiliation with any governorate.

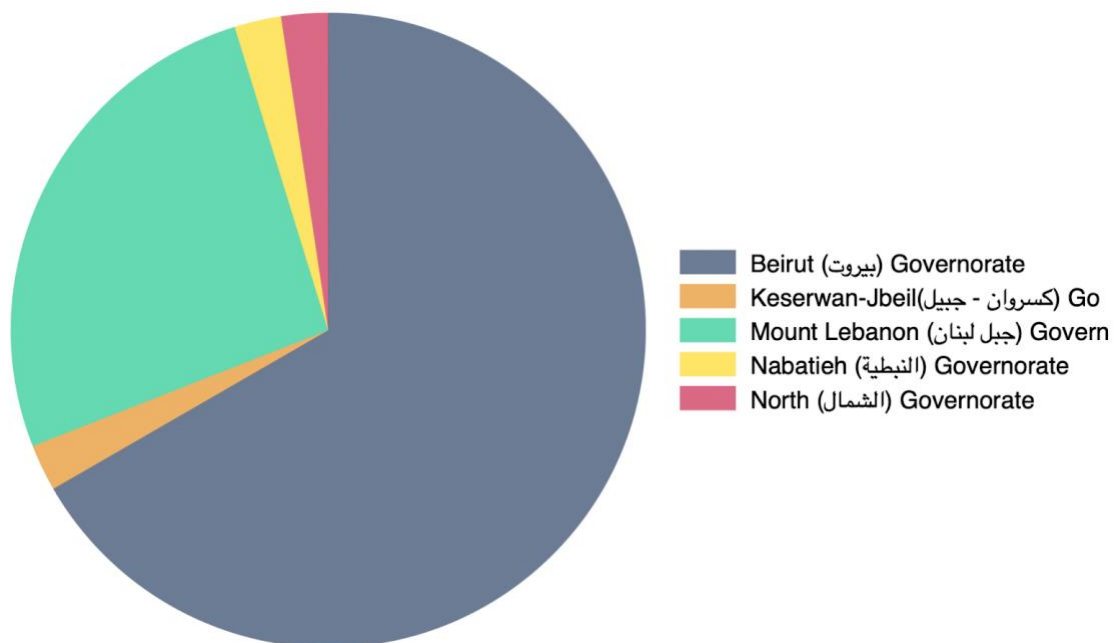


Figure 6. Participants by Governorate Affiliation.

Graphic representation of governorate affiliation selected by participants.

Description of exposure to AUB

The average level of exposure to AUB, as measured through number of types of interactions one has with the institution or its services, is 6.24 out of 10. The highest level of exposure is 10 out of 10, and the lowest is 1 out of 10. Seventy-five percent of the participants have an exposure level of 5 out of 10 or higher.

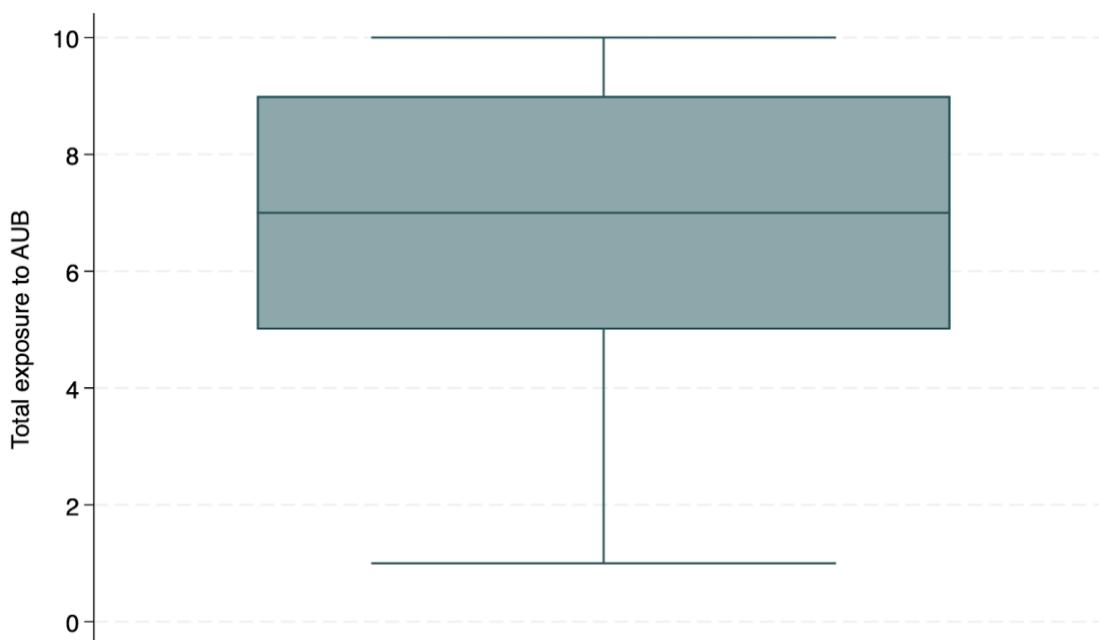


Figure 7. Participants Exposure to AUB.

Figure 5 shows the distribution of exposure to number of types of interactions with AUB amongst survey participants.

AUB and Lebanese Society

Responses to the statement “the American University of Beirut makes positive contributions to Lebanese society” indicate a high level of agreement, with 81.4% selecting “agree” or “strongly agree.” Responses to all other statement about the valence of AUB revealed overall agreement that it is a trustworthy and valuable institution, with at least 50% agreement (“agree” or “strongly agree”).

Table 4. Degree to which AUB is perceived as making positive contributions to Lebanese society.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral response	Agree	Strongly agree
Statement 1	0%	0%	18.7%	37.2%	44.2%
Statement 2	0%	2.3%	7%	30.2%	60.5%
Statement 3	2.3%	4.7%	16.3%	46.5%	30.2%
Statement 4	2.3%	2.3%	32.6%	30.2%	32.6%

Statement 1: The American University of Beirut makes positive contributions to Lebanese society; Statement 2: The American University of Beirut is an institution that Lebanese people are proud of; Statement 3: I trust the American University of Beirut to conduct itself in a way that enhances the intellectual and social life of Lebanon; Statement 4: The American University of Beirut fosters respect for different social, political, and cultural perspectives.

Rejection of University Name Change

The questionnaire responses indicated that the majority of respondents, 76.7%, do not want to change the name of AUB to drop the “American” from its title in favor of “Beirut University.” Only 7% of respondents favored such a name change.

Table 5. Degree of Favorability to Change AUB’s name to Beirut University.

	Strongly against	Against	Neutral	In favor	Strongly in favor
Statement 5	58.1%	18.6%	16.3%	4.7%	2.3%

Statement 5: How would you feel about the American University of Beirut changing its name to Beirut University?

This section of the questionnaire was designed to test the extent to which an American association with AUB is valued by Lebanese society. The name “Beirut University” was used as a proposed alternative as it best captured the mere subtraction of “American” from AUB’s current name. However, it should be noted that other names

that drop the explicit American connection may have garnered higher support.⁸¹ On the other hand, retaining a more autochthonous association in the hypothetical name does relate to the nationalist value of the institution as indicated by Anderson's historical research on AUB.⁸² This study assumes that the more Lebanese society values an American association for AUB, the more it would oppose a name change. However, the answers in this section could be influenced by many confounding factors.

An open-ended question solicited further reasoning from participants regarding their opinion on the hypothetical name change from AUB to Beirut University. Forty participants (93%) responded to this optional open question, shedding further light on the concerns that motivated their responses. The results of the open-ended questionnaire indicate that the top 3 reasons why respondents did not want to change the name of AUB are because of the name's marketing value (52%) and for the sake of maintaining tradition (40%). Questionnaire responses that cited marketing as a reason to maintain AUB's name emphasized that the American association in education has a draw for potential stakeholders and that AUB has built up its brand recognition as a desirable university under that name. Questionnaire responses that cited tradition as a reason to maintain AUB's name emphasized the stability and longevity of AUB as an institution in Lebanon as a reason to not upset the status quo with a name change.

In total eight repeated themes emerged from the qualitative coding of these responses: (1) tradition, (2) marketing, (3) American education, (4) liberal values, (5)

⁸¹ For example, International College, one of two American prep schools for AUB (the other being American Community School) situated on an old section of the university's campus does not have "American" in its name. Name changes that play into the university's history, such as Bliss University, may have been more appealing while also downplaying an explicit American connection.

⁸² Anderson, *The American University of Beirut*.

contribution to society, (6) credibility, (7) no difference, and (8) negative views of Western credibility. The themes listed 1 through 6 appeared in rationales that supported retaining the American association in the name, theme 7 expressed indifference about the explicit American association, and theme 8 appeared in rationales that favored a name change that removes an explicit American association in AUB's name. See appendix 3 for the full list of concerns that emerged during a coding of the responses.

Table 6. Concerns on Hypothetical Name Change to Beirut University.

Theme	Number of responses including this theme	Percentage of total responses including this theme
Tradition	16	40%
Marketing	21	52.5%
American Education	8	20%
Liberal Values	4	10%
Contribution to Society	7	17.5%
Credibility	8	20%
No difference	5	12.5%
Negative View of Western Credibility	2	5%

Themes that emerged from a coding of open-response answers in part 2 section 2 of the questionnaire, and frequency of appearance in the 40 responses.

Degree of Favorability of U.S. Soft Power Source

Analysis of the responses to the following 4 questions, “what is your perception of the United States of America?;” “how much do you trust in the United States’s conduct in global affairs?;” “what is your perception of the United States’s contributions to global culture?;” and “what is your perception of the United States’s social and political values?,” revealed that respondents did not hold majority favorable views of any American soft power source. Of the national soft power sources, U.S. foreign policy was

the one viewed most negatively, with 62.8% of responses expressing an unfavorable opinion of trust in the U.S.'s conduct in global affairs, compared to only 13.9% who held a favorable opinion.

Table 7. Degree of Favorability toward U.S. Soft Power Sources.

	Very unfavorable	Unfavorable	Neutral response	Favorable	Very favorable
Statement 6	2.3%	23.3%	41.9%	20.9%	11.6%
	Very low trust	Low trust	Neutral response	High trust	Very high trust
Statement 7	41.9%	20.9%	23.3%	11.6%	2.3%
	Very unfavorable	Unfavorable	Neutral response	Favorable	Very favorable
Statement 8	7%	20.9%	42.9%	27.9%	2.3%
	Very unappealing	Unappealing	Neutral response	Appealing	Very appealing
Statement 9	25.6%	23.3%	30.2%	16.2%	4.7%

Statement 6: What is your perception of the United States of America?; Statement 7: How much do you trust in the United States's conduct in global affairs?; Statement 8: What is your perception of the United States's contributions to global culture?; Statement 9: What is your perception of the United States's social and political values?

Regarding the degree to which respondents viewed AUB as a valuable conduit between Lebanese and American societies, the analysis concluded that while a high majority agree that AUB fosters intercultural understanding between Lebanese and Americans (69.8%) and that AUB builds valuable global networks that benefit both Lebanon and the United States (81.4%), the majority disagreed that AUB made them think more favorably of the U.S. (51.1%).

Table 8. Views on AUB as a Valuable Conduit Between Lebanese and American Societies.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Statement 10	4.6%	25.6%	53.5%	16.3%
Statement 11	0%	18.6%	58.1%	23.3%
Statement 12	2.3%	48.8%	34.9%	14%

Statement 10: The American University of Beirut increases intercultural understanding between Lebanese and Americans; Statement 11: The American University of Beirut builds valuable global networks that benefit both Lebanon and the United States; Statement 12: The American University of Beirut makes me think more favorably of the United States.

Open Responses

The optional final open response question was completed by ten participants. Of the ten responses to this question, four added no additional insight.

Six responses added more explanation to their questionnaire responses. Four participants acknowledged some level of contradiction to their questionnaire responses. Three explained that a contradiction resulted from being drawn to some American values (two specifically referring to “American liberal education”) while being repelled by American foreign policy. All three who noted problems with American foreign policy recognized that U.S. foreign policy in some way complicated their view of AUB. Two responses cited Lebanese influence on AUB as a negative, one by way of local corruption infiltrating the university and one by way of referencing the Lebanese mindset as an illiberal influence on the university. The two responses that directly expressed a positive opinion of American education juxtaposed this with negative views of U.S. foreign policy.

A one-way ANOVA test was used to test the initial hypothesis developed for this research. The alternative hypothesis “levels of exposure to AUB affect opinions of U.S. soft power sources” (H1.1_a) was tested by comparing an independent variable of exposure to AUB with a dependent variable of views of favorability to the U.S. soft power sources of foreign policy, culture, and values. An ANOVA determines if the null hypothesis “levels of exposure to AUB do not affect opinions of U.S. soft power sources” (H1.1₀) can be rejected, and if further testing is then needed for the other hypotheses.

Hypothesis H1.1: Levels of exposure to AUB affect opinions of U.S. soft power sources.

The one-way ANOVA results indicated that there was no statistically significant relationship between exposure to AUB and views of favorability to the U.S. soft power sources.

In this study, a statistically significant finding would require an F-value that exceeds the critical value threshold of 2.225.⁸³ The null hypothesis “levels of exposure to AUB do not affect opinions of U.S. soft power sources” (H1.1₀) was not rejected for views of any of the U.S. soft power sources.

The test failed to reject the null hypothesis “levels of exposure to AUB do not affect opinions of U.S. foreign policy” as the F-value for this relationship is 0.79, lower than the critical value of 2.225. This means there is no indication that the relationship between exposure to AUB and views of favorability toward U.S. foreign policy are not merely random.

⁸³ Upper Critical Values of the F Distribution,” National Institute of Standards and Technology, accessed Dec. 20, 2023, <https://www.itl.nist.gov/div898/handbook/eda/section3/eda3673.htm>.

The test failed to reject the null hypothesis “levels of exposure to AUB do not affect opinions of U.S. values” as the F-value for this relationship is 1.25, lower than the critical value of 2.225. This means there is no indication that the relationship between exposure to AUB and views of favorability toward U.S. values are not merely random.

The test failed to reject the null hypothesis “levels of exposure to AUB do not affect opinions of U.S. culture” as the F-value for this relationship is 1.31, lower than the critical value of 2.225. This means there is no indication that the relationship between exposure to AUB and views of favorability toward U.S. culture are not merely random.

Summary of Hypothesis H1.1: Levels of exposure to AUB affect opinions of U.S. soft power sources.

Table 9 summarizes the results described above from the ANOVA analysis. Given that the F-values for none of the three tenants of U.S. soft power came out above the critical values, one can conclude that there is not enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis that “levels of exposure to AUB do not affect opinions of U.S. soft power sources” (H1.1₀). Therefore, this study concludes that the number of types of interactions one has with AUB does not affect one’s views of U.S. values, culture, and foreign policy in Lebanon.

Table 9. Results of ANOVA Analysis.

Favorability toward U.S. Soft Power Source	F-Value	Critical Value	Null Hypothesis
U.S. foreign policy	0.79	2.225	Not rejected
U.S. culture	1.31	2.225	Not rejected

Favorability toward U.S. Soft Power Source	F-Value	Critical Value	Null Hypothesis
U.S. values	1.25	2.225	Not rejected

F-Values per views of favorability toward each U.S. soft power source on the one-way ANOVA test of exposure to AUB in relationship to U.S. soft power opinions.

Hypothesis H1.2: Higher exposure to AUB increases favorability towards U.S. soft power sources.

The null finding that there is no significant relationship between exposure to AUB and views of favorability toward U.S. soft power sources implies that the hypothesis “higher exposure to AUB increases favorability towards U.S. soft power sources” (H1.2a) is a moot question. No further testing was needed to determine the magnitude or direction of a correlation since no relationship was found between AUB exposure and views of U.S.

Hypothesis H2: AUB promotes soft power in Lebanon by working credibly in its host-country while retaining a strong U.S. connection.

Given that ANOVA test of H1 indicated a lack of significant correlation between exposure to AUB and views of U.S. soft power, the second hypothesis cannot be tested at this time.

Chapter V.

Discussion and Conclusion

This research sought to study whether AUB influences views of U.S. soft power in Lebanon. The finding suggests no significant relationship between exposure to AUB and host society views of any of the three U.S. national soft power sources.

Foreign policy was the most negatively viewed U.S. soft power tenant in the study, with 62.8% holding an unfavorable opinion (see Table 7). This corresponds with the *Soft Power 30 2019* report finding of decreased international favorability toward U.S. official policy and its low score in the “Government” sub-index.

Additionally, results of the study indicated a low connection between exposure to AUB and “U.S. values” as a tenant of soft power, with a highly negative view of this soft power source at 48.9% unfavorable (see Table 7). This result has a suggestive correspondence to the trajectory of *The Soft Power 30 2019* report’s finding of rapidly decreasing international views of U.S.’s soft power coming from the sub-index of “Government.” While values were one positive association repeated with AUB as an institution (see Table 6), qualitative comments revealed some survey participants struggled with or held a negative outlook upon what they viewed as U.S. hypocrisy in its values and the American association of AUB. This is in-line with Nye’s analysis that the clash between official political and social values in the U.S. creates a sense of diminished

legitimacy in U.S. official political values while civil society can provide some positive counterbalance.⁸⁴

The most favorably viewed soft power tenant, both relative to negative opinion and in absolute terms, was U.S. culture, where 30.2% held favorable views (see Table 7). It is worth noting that positive views of U.S. culture are almost balanced out by equally unfavorable views, so it is not the case that any of the U.S. soft power sources were viewed in a majority favorable way by questionnaire participants (see Table 7). Despite the national prominence of an American international school as a major institution in its host country, respondents' views of U.S. soft power remain much lower than the results of the last Soft Power 30 global views of U.S. soft power. This calls into question whether foreign-affiliated universities can effectively garner much favorability toward their countries of origin at all. Further study of other American international schools in different host countries could better address the larger question of the potential of such institutions as soft power resources.

Even though the research indicated that weak favorability of U.S. values, culture, and foreign policy, AUB's association with the U.S. did not appear to harm its standing within its host society. Most Lebanese would prefer to retain AUB's American connection while still holding mostly unfavorable views of U.S. values, culture, and foreign policy. While "American education" and "liberal values" were amongst reasons participants valued AUB's American name connection, these were far outpaced by concerns for "tradition" and "marketing" (see Table 6). This imbalance indicates that the qualities of American values, culture, and foreign policy that are more closely associated

⁸⁴ Nye, "American Soft Power After Trump," 49-50.

with traditional U.S. soft power are outweighed by concerns for the stability and prestige of the institution of AUB itself. This reflection of greater concern for the stability of the institution itself than as an American institution *per se* shows the relative strength of AUB as an independent institution in Lebanese society. This finding is in-line with Bertelsen's conclusion that AUB wields greater *university soft power* than it has potential to act as a conduit of U.S. soft power.⁸⁵ The largely positive host society views toward AUB should not be assumed to warm Lebanese views toward U.S. foreign policy, culture, or values.

However, this study used a convenience sample that was not representative of the target population, and therefore was one of the main limitations of the study. The sample included different age groups, genders, and governorate affiliations of the study population, but not fully representative of the population. A more representative sample may have revealed other trends or identified possible confounding variables that mask AUB's impact on Lebanese society's views of U.S. soft power sources. As the convenience sample was not sufficiently varied, there was not enough data to run other tests in search of compelling confounding variables that could have led to new testable hypotheses on the bigger question of AUB's impact on U.S. soft power in Lebanon.

The multifaceted sources that contribute to views of U.S. soft power make it difficult to isolate the impact that comes from AUB alone. While this study did not find any significant relationship between exposure to AUB and views of U.S. soft power sources, future studies that examine different specific types of interaction with AUB and soft power results may encounter some compelling mechanisms of AUB's impact on

⁸⁵ Bertelsen, "Private Foreign-Affiliated Universities," 295.

Lebanese's views of U.S. soft power. However, unless some specific relationship generalizes to Lebanese society at-large, it appears for now that any impact AUB may have on U.S. soft power in Lebanon is relatively limited in scope and does not have a diffuse effect on the host society.

Survey participants highly valued the intercultural understanding and global networks AUB facilitates, while rejecting the claim that AUB made them think more favorably of the U.S. This is consistent with the highly favorable views of AUB, and the low favorability of U.S. soft power sources expressed in the survey, suggesting that the value Lebanese see in AUB does not come from its ability to transmit U.S. norms into the host country. The perceived value of AUB's capacity for building global networks and intercultural understanding suggest wider support for Bertelsen's finding that AUB had more reverse-soft power potential than it did potential to enhance U.S. soft power in Lebanon.⁸⁶ This at least suggests that Lebanese society may indeed view reverse soft power as one of the major benefits AUB offers its host country. Further study is required to assess whether exposure to AUB impacts views on the potential for it to work as a conduit of Lebanese soft power in the U.S., and if this view is representative of Lebanese society overall.

Conclusion

Whether or not American international schools act as resources of U.S. soft power in their foreign host societies is both an interesting question and carries significant implications for the study of soft power. This thesis tested for a relationship between

⁸⁶ Bertelsen, "Private Foreign-Affiliated Universities."

exposure to AUB as a prominent American institution within its Lebanese host society and its potential to favorably influence views of U.S. values, culture, and foreign policy to find whether AUB had a diffuse impact on Lebanese society's favorability toward the U.S. national soft power sources.

Despite both its prominence and high favorability within the Lebanese host society, AUB does not appear to have a statistically significant relationship to Lebanese views of U.S. soft power. This case suggests that the connection between a country of origin and its foreign-affiliated universities may not be particularly strong or favorable in the eyes of the host society. At least in the case of AUB in Lebanon, Lebanese may simultaneously hold highly favorable views of an American institution and generally unfavorable views of all three U.S. national soft power sources. This does not discount the many other benefits that may arise from American international schools. In fact, AUB's relative dissociation with U.S. soft power may even be beneficial if downward trends in U.S. soft power do not negatively affect the university's standing within its host society.

Suggestions for Further Study

There may be avenues to research the value of cooperation and mutual understanding that arise from American international schools like AUB as an overlooked soft power resource, one that does not increase favorable views of a country of origin but does increase an understanding, perhaps even critical understanding, of its culture, values, and foreign policies. Favorability may not always be the best metric by which soft power is conceptualized. Perhaps there are cases when institutions that build deeper understanding foster greater intercultural dialogue, even between fairly opposed societies,

might be understood as a form of soft power. In fact, at times favorability of a nation's soft power sources may merely tell us how aligned two societies already are in their values, may be the result of more superficial understanding of another culture that precludes engaged critical dialogue with its policies, or may capture attraction to rather superficial elements of foreign country. To pursue research on whether American international schools build a kind of soft power that spurs civic and social criticism of the traditional U.S. soft power sources would require greater study and theoretical work on the soft power paradigm itself.

Appendix 1.

Questionnaire, English Version

(reformatted, original in Google Forms)

Part 0

1. Select the language in which you want to complete the questionnaire.

يرجى اختيار اللغة التي ترغب في استكمال الاستبيان بها

- English
- العربية

Part 1: Biographical Information

Please note, some of the following are mandatory, others are optional but will be helpful for the research study.

1. Are you older than 18 years old?

If you are younger than 18, please close the questionnaire now without continuing.

- Yes
- No

2. What is your age? Please write in numerals (ex: 27 or ٢٧): _____

3. Please select the option that best describes you.

If you are not currently living in Lebanon, please close the questionnaire now and do not continue.

- I am a Lebanese citizen currently living in Lebanon.
- I am currently living in Lebanon, but I am not a Lebanese citizen.
- I am not currently living in Lebanon

4. What is your gender? (optional)

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say
- Other: _____

5. Have you ever lived outside of Lebanon?

- Yes
- No

6. If you answered "yes" to the question above, please write which countries you have lived in other than Lebanon, and how long you lived in each. (optional)

7. Which of Lebanon's Governorates do you feel most closely connected to (it does not need to be where you currently reside). (optional)

- Akkar (عكار) Governorate
- Baalbek-Hermel (بعلبك - الهرمل) Governorate

- Beirut (بيروت) Governorate
- Beqaa (البقاع) Governorate
- Keserwan-Jbeil (كسروان - جبيل) Governorate
- Mount Lebanon (جبل لبنان) Governorate
- Nabatieh (النبطية) Governorate
- North (الشمال) Governorate
- South (الجنوب) Governorate

Part 2

Section 1: Exposure to the American University of Beirut

1. Please check all of the following options that are true for you.

- I have heard of the American University of Beirut
- I know someone who studies or studied at the American University of Beirut
- I know someone who works or worked at the American University of Beirut
- The American University of Beirut sometimes comes up in conversations I have
- I have attended events at the American University of Beirut
- I have used services from the American University of Beirut, not including medical services
- I have used services from the American University of Beirut Hospital, or other medical services from the university

- I have seen American University of Beirut events outside of the university campus
- I study or studied at the American University of Beirut
- I work or worked at the American University of Beirut

Section 2: Views on the American University of Beirut

1. To what extent do you agree with this statement?

The American University of Beirut makes positive contributions to Lebanese society.

1- strongly disagree 2 3 4 5-strongly agree

2. To what extent do you agree with this statement?

The American University of Beirut is an institution that Lebanese people are proud of.

1- strongly disagree 2 3 4 5-strongly agree

3. To what extent do you agree with this statement?

I trust the American University of Beirut to conduct itself in a way that enhances the intellectual and social life of Lebanon.

1- strongly disagree 2 3 4 5-strongly agree

4. To what extent do you agree with this statement?

The American University of Beirut fosters respect for different social, political, and cultural perspectives.

1- strongly disagree 2 3 4 5-strongly agree

Section 3: Views on the American University of Beirut Continued

Rate your response to the first question. Include the reasoning for your response to question 1 in question 2. Question 2 is optional.

1. How would you feel about the American University of Beirut changing its name to Beirut University?

(note: this is not a real proposal, only hypothetical)

1- I would find this a very bad idea 2 3 4 5- I would find this a very good idea

2. Why did you answer as you did above?

Section 4: Questions adapted from SoftPower30 questionnaire (with the exception of question 4*)

These questions are adapted from the SoftPower30 questionnaire, and are changed to a rating system with only one country, instead of a ranking system with multiple countries.

Question 4 is unique to this questionnaire.

Directions: For each question rate your response on the scale provided.

1. What is your perception of the United States of America?

1-very unfavorable 2 3 4 5-very favorable

2. How much do you trust in the United States's conduct in global affairs?

1-very low trust 2 3 4 5-very high trust

3. What is your perception of the United States's contributions to global culture?

1-very unfavorable 2 3 4 5-very favorable

4. *What is your perception of the United States's social and political values?

1-I find the United States's values very unappealing 2 3 4

5-I find the United States's values very appealing

Section 5: The American University of Beirut and perceptions of the US

Directions: Select to what extent you agree with the following statements.

Before clicking submit, please remember that you may end this survey at any time if you no longer wish to proceed. Once you click submit your answers will be used for the research study. All answers are entirely anonymous, even to the research team.

1. The American University of Beirut increases intercultural understanding between Lebanese and Americans.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

2. The American University of Beirut builds valuable global networks that benefit both Lebanon and the United States.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

3. The American University of Beirut makes me think more favorably of the United States.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

4. Optional: Add any additional comments about this survey, its topic, or its questions.

Appendix 2.

Questionnaire Cover Page

What is the purpose of this research?

This research is for a master's thesis paper on the American University of Beirut's effect on U.S. soft power in Lebanon. Some previous studies have examined soft power effects on university members. My study will extend on existing knowledge to see how much the university affects perceptions of the U.S. more broadly in Lebanon, not only for university members.

ما هو الهدف من هذا البحث؟

هذا البحث يهدف إلى إعداد أطروحة ماجستير حول تأثير "القوة الناعمة" للجامعة الأمريكية ببيروت في لبنان. وقد أجريته دراسات سابقة تتناول تأثير القوة الناعمة مع أعضاء الجامعة. سيقوم بحثي بتوسيع المعرفة الحالية لرؤية مدى تأثير الجامعة على تصورات الولايات المتحدة بشكل أوسع في لبنان، ليس فقط بالنسبة لأفراد الجامعة.

What can I expect if I take part in this research?

Complete a fifteen-question questionnaire, requiring approximately ten minutes. The questions will ask you about your familiarity with the American University of Beirut, views of the American University of Beirut, and views of the United States of America. Most questions ask you to rank qualities by favorability or agreement to statements. There are some optional open questions, and some biographical questions. All answers will remain fully anonymous.

The data collection from the survey will take approximately one month to complete for all participants and will end by September 2023.

You will only be asked to fill out one questionnaire if you decide to participate. All questionnaires are completed online through a Google Form that is set to be completely anonymous.

ماذا يمكن أن أتوقع إذا شاركت في هذا البحث؟

الرجاء إكمال الإستبيان الذي يحتوي على خمسة عشر سؤالاً، ومن المتوقع أن يستغرق حوالي عشرة دقائق.

ستتضمن الأسئلة استفسارات حول مدى معرفتك بالجامعة الأمريكية في بيروت وأرائك حولها، بالإضافة إلى آرائك حول الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية. تتطلب معظم الأسئلة ترتيب الصفات حسب الإعجاب أو الاتفاق مع العبارات. وهناك بعض الأسئلة الاختيارية المفتوحة وبعض الأسئلة البيوغرافية. جميع الإجابات ستظل مجهولة تماماً وغير معروفة.

يستغرق جمع البيانات من الإستبيان حوالي شهر واحد لاستكمالها من قبل جميع المشاركين وسوف ينتهي في شهر سبتمبر 2023.

سوف نطلب منك ملاً إستبيان واحد فقط إذا قررت المشاركة وسوف تتم ملاً جميع الإستبيانات عبر الإنترنت عن طريق محرك البحث "جوجل" وسوف تكون الهوية غير مكشوفة و مجهولة تماماً مع ضمان السرية التامة.

What should I know about this research study?

- Only participants 18 years or older may complete this questionnaire.
- Only people currently living in Lebanon may complete this questionnaire.
- Whether or not you take part is up to you.
- Your participation is completely voluntary.

- You can choose not to take part.
- You can agree to take part and later change your mind.
- Your decision will not be held against you.
- Your refusal to participate will not result in any consequences or any loss of benefits that you are otherwise entitled to receive.
- You can ask all the questions you want before you decide.
- You may end the survey at any time by simply exiting without submitting. If you do so, your answers will not be saved, and your information will not be used.

ما يجب أن أعرفه عن هذه الدراسة البحثية؟

- المشاركون البالغون من العمر 18 عامًا أو أكبر هم فقط من يمكنهم استكمال هذا الاستبيان.
- الأشخاص الذين يعيشون حاليًا في لبنان فقط هم من يمكنهم استكمال هذا الاستبيان.
- قرار المشاركة يعود لك، لك حق الرفض أو القبول.
- مشاركتك هي طوعية تمامًا.
- يمكنك اختيار عدم المشاركة.
- يمكنك الموافقة على المشاركة وتغيير رأيك لاحقًا.
- لن يتم اتخاذ قرارك ضدك.
- رفضك المشاركة لن يؤدي إلى أي عواقب أو فقدان أي فوائد يحق لك الحصول عليها.
- يمكنك طرح جميع الأسئلة التي تريدها قبل اتخاذ قرارك.
- يمكنك إنهاء الاستبيان في أي وقت ببساطة عن طريق الخروج دون إرساله. إذا فعلت ذلك، فلن يتم حفظ

إجاباتك ولن يتم استخدامها.

Who can I talk to?

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints, or think the research has hurt you, talk to the research team at jar7292@g.harvard.edu.

مع من يمكنني التحدث؟

إذا كان لديك أي أسئلة، مخاوف، شكاوى، أو تعتقد أن البحث قد تسبب لك في أي أذى، فيمكنك التحدث إلى فريق البحث عبر البريد الإلكتروني التالي: jar7292@g.harvard.edu

Please check if you have read the information above and consent to have your responses collected and used for this research.

If you do not consent, please close the questionnaire now without continuing.

يرجى التحقق مما إذا كنت قد قرأت المعلومات أعلاه وتوافق على جمع إجاباتك واستخدامها لأغراض هذا البحث.

إذا كنت لا توافق، يرجى إغلاق الاستبيان الآن دون المتابعة

- Yes, I have read the information above and consent to participate in the research study | نعم، لقد قرأت المعلومات أعلاه وأوافق على المشاركة في دراسة البحث

Appendix 3.

List of Concerns and Codes

Answer to Open Response Question in Section 3 of Part 2	Tradition	Marketing	American Education	Liberal Values	Contribution to Society	Credibility	No difference	Western Credibility (negative)
It would be terrible to put a chasm to such an old institution and possibly hinder its progress and historic significance. Changing the name to anything would, in my opinion, do this.	✓							
Half its brand is in its name and clout from American investors and American/liberal values, changing its name after so long wouldn't make sense.	✓	✓						
It is the American University of Beirut and I am proud as a graduate of the values that it strengthened in me. The American approach is what makes it special.			✓	✓				
We knew it as AUB since we were young. It's known around the world with this name and it shows that it's related to USA with its American system. Beirut University seems like Lebanese University.	✓	✓	✓					
It's a legacy	✓							
I would take a neutral position as I do not consider that the name would make a difference.							✓	
It is an American institution operating in Lebanon and the Middle East		✓						
Aesthetically AUB looks better than BU		✓						

<p>لان الجامعة الأميركية هي في بيروت وهي أميركية الثقافة إذا الاثنان مع تنوع الثقافات والبحوث</p> <p>[translation: Because the American University is in Beirut and it is American in culture, so both with the diversity of cultures and research]</p>	✓	✓						
<p>People would think AUB lost its connection to the US. This would imply it's now a pure Lebanese university, with no western supervision/rules/guidelines. In Lebanon lay people view the Western World as a more developed, advanced, safe region.</p>		✓			✓			
<p>On one hand, when I thought about what makes AUB American, I did not have a clear answer in mind. On the other hand, I realized that historically and culturally in Lebanon, AUB is known and (frequently) simply referred to as "الأميركية", so I felt that altering the name like this would be a very strange change. This balanced out to me choosing 3.</p>	✓	✓						
<p>The current name is a trademark recognized nationally and internationally, changing it would affect people's perception on the institution</p>		✓						
<p>Bad PR</p>		✓						
<p>It takes away the essence of the university and everything it has built (including contribution to society).</p>		✓			✓			
<p>The current name describes the university's concept much more than Beirut University. Beirut</p>		✓	✓					

University on the other hand does not describe that at all.								
Credibility						✓		
Although AUB identifies as an American institution, I personally would probably feel indifferent if the naming changed.							✓	
Because it goes way back and the university is part of the history, i dont think its a good idea to change its name	✓	✓						
It changes the perception of it		✓						
AUB is a well known institution in Lebanon particularly in Beirut. One cannot deny the American influence in this university, be it in its faculty, staff, rules, practices, support, funds and systems.	✓		✓		✓			
It changes its identity and its history	✓							
The history of AUB and its link to the US and to the standards, and practices of an American University make AUB what it is and what it stands for; Democracy, Justice, Equity, individual freedom of thought, freedom of speech, and the morals and values that provide a voice for all people regardless of race, religion, creed, or gender. AUB used to be the bastion of culture, open-mindedness and avant garde thinking. It bridged the gulf between the East and the West and represented an image that defied the stereotypes which vilified the Arabs, especially after 9/11. In return, it also defied the stereotype of 'The Ugly American'. AUB brought cultures closer	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		

and enhanced the intellectual and social interactions of different people.								
I have no real instinct as to whether or not that would be positive or negative change.							✓	
Because this is a part of the history of the institution and what a represent	✓	✓						
Even though the core of Beirut is AUB, it would be nice to leave the name as it is all those years	✓							
I am mostly neutral on the name; however a name change would be symbolic at best, and deceptive at worse, if decision making for the institution does not solely become the prerogative of Lebanese leaders that represent the student body.							✓	
Its built its name for all those years, and its not only about beirut especially with all the lands and projects they have outside beirut	✓	✓			✓			
It's known for decades as AUB, it would be confusing to change the name!		✓						
I feel like the name “American University of Beirut” has become a very strong identity and it’s deeply rooted and embedded in Lebanons society. Recently AUB decided to change its logo and motto and this already sparked some controversy and outrage among some of its students and some Lebanese citizens and therefore I feel like changing its name might cause some outrage to some extent. Also in my opinion I feel like if AUB would change		✓			✓	✓		

it's name to BU it would not get as much renown as AUB as it is already a very well known name throughout the higher education world.								
In my view, omitting "American" from "American University of Beirut" would diminish its significance and eliminate the international dimension it imparts to the university.		✓	✓			✓		
I don't think it would have a very big impact on the way the university is perceived							✓	
Having left Lebanon a while ago, I'm not well informed on current American influence on the university. However, Lebanon is not equipped to develop higher education and services internally with its current political landscape and still perhaps needs external aid to maintain its older, better reputation, even within private institutions like AUB. I may not agree with most US politics, but its relative stability and development can create a similar environment in the university at least.					✓	✓		
I think the American heritage gives the university credibility and somewhat influences which people apply to the university (which in turn influences the campus culture)	✓	✓				✓		
There is a stigma in Lebanon towards the Western world, especially American societies, while a lot of the west has helped Lebanon through difficult times, a lot of people blame the west for causing								✓

instability within the country. It may also help in increasing a more patriotic movement in Lebanon								
It hides the principles the college was founded on	✓			✓				
I think this would change what the university stands for. I think the fact that it has the word American in it makes it sound a bit more liberal (despite the fact that America has taken several steps backwards especially with the overturning of Roev Wade). I hate reinforcing the kind of discourse that foreign = liberal and that Beirut on its own wouldn't be able to withhold that value, but I believe having the word American in the name makes the university sound more globalised and therefore people expect to encounter more diversity in terms of religious beliefs and political opinions, and also believe that they are expected to respect the people they encounter.		✓		✓	✓			
I do not think it would matter much locally, people's habits change slowly. On an international level, I think it would alter the perceived "style" of the university. I feel that universities outside the US with American connections are seen as wealthier and private than local institutions.			✓				✓	
The American University system differentiates itself from university systems in other countries and is arguably better. The brand and history associated with the name of AUB also holds value	✓	✓	✓					

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