

**Abstract:** The New Colombo Plan is a flagship initiative of the Australian government for its educational diplomacy. Its primary focus is to send Australian students to countries in the Asia-Pacific. This initiative is perceived to be one of the most prominent strategies of the Australian government in asserting its soft power. Many scholarly works have analyzed the connection between the Australian government's emphasis on soft power dissemination and the education sector. However, only a few have researched the educational sector as the instrument to transform Australia's soft power trajectory in the 21st century. This study analyzed the emphasis of the Australian government on the education sector and its connection with transformation within Australia's foreign policy and diplomatic agenda, as well as acknowledging the opportunity that Australia has within the region through the regionalization of higher education. Through the analysis, this study would then uncover facts on the emphasis on the education sector, create a connection with the opportunity that Australia could explore, then further analyze said opportunity with the current political and educational landscape of Australia and the Asia-Pacific region.

**Keyword:** New Colombo Plan, Soft Power, Regionalization of Higher Education, People-to-people Relations, Australia, Asia-Pacific

**Abstrak:** New Colombo Plan adalah inisiatif utama pemerintah Australia untuk diplomasi pendidikannya. Fokus utamanya adalah mengirim pelajar Australia ke negara-negara di Asia Pasifik. Inisiatif ini dianggap sebagai salah satu strategi paling menonjol dari pemerintah Australia dalam menegaskan *soft power*. Banyak karya ilmiah telah menganalisis hubungan antara penekanan pemerintah Australia pada penyebaran *soft power* dan sektor pendidikan. Namun, hanya sedikit yang meneliti sektor edukasi sebagai instrumen perubahan arah *soft power* Australia pada abad ke 21. Studi ini menganalisis penekanan pemerintah Australia pada sektor pendidikan dan hubungannya dengan perubahan metode diplomasi yang dilakukan, serta mengakui peluang yang dimiliki Australia di Kawasan Asia Pasifik melalui regionalisasi pendidikan tinggi. Melalui analisis, penelitian ini kemudian akan mengungkap fakta-fakta yang ditekankan pada sektor pendidikan, membuat hubungan dengan peluang yang dimiliki Australia, kemudian menganalisis lebih lanjut peluang tersebut dengan kondisi Australia dan kawasan Asia-Pasifik saat ini.

**Kata-kata kunci:** New Colombo Plan, Soft Power, Regionalization of Higher Education, People-to-people Relations, Australia, Asia-Pacific