New Trend of Digital Diplomacy in Pakistan: Amelioration or Deterioration

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Abstract:

The study intended to focus on diplomacy as an essential component of the foreign policy established by the states for the magnification of international affairs. Advanced technologies have had a massive impact on foreign policy and have reworked the traditional diplomatic itinerary. The results were found using a qualitative research approach and an exploratory method. The research looked into how Pakistan uses the internet to modernize its effective foreign policy. How effective are new digital diplomatic strategies in Pakistan's foreign policy? The present study aimed to assess the model of digital diplomacy as part of Pakistan's foreign policy, which has focused primarily on the use of social media in the arena of diplomatic courses. It examines the benefits and drawbacks of digital diplomatic services and argues that states cannot justify digital diplomatic practices. The New Democratic government in Pakistan has a firm stance on digitizing the country's diplomatic trends. Digital diplomacy and Internet services (ICTs) have the potential to strengthen the state's foreign policy standing in the minds of regional and international audiences. A careful implication of the new trends in foreign affairs can diminish the bullying and deterioration.

Keywords: Digital diplomacy, e-policy, foreign policy, social media, twitter, electronic devices.

INTRODUCTION

"When people think of digital diplomacy, they think of government tweeting, it is not what it is. That is public diplomacy "(Jared Cohen)

Diplomacy is a common dealing tactic among world states in the realm of international relations, and it is frequently used in the context of dialogue and deliberations. Former US Secretary of State Colin Powell has succinctly defined diplomacy as follows:

"Diplomacy is listening to what the other guy needs. Preserving your own position, but listening to the other guy. You have to develop relationships with other people so when the tough times come, you can work together" (Martin, 2019)

Foreign policies are primarily based on two agenda items: first, national objectives, and second, ways to achieve them. The established objectives support states in a variety of ways to carry out their objectives (Said, 2006), (Manners, 2000). The perpetual subject of state-of-the-art ships is

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achieving these goals as every state formulates its foreign policy by selecting the best means. Diplomacy and international relations have been impacted by technological advancement and communication technologies. At this time, information is available at the common man's doorstep. It has an impact on political and economic practices as well.

Technology provides technological services to all without discrimination in all aspects of life (Coccia, 2010). Diplomats and the general public are constantly exchanging information and receiving prompt responses. The Internet has the potential to connect thousands of computers, laptops, and devices at any given time. It allows users to share and obtain information opportunities. According to estimates, there are 1.69 billion Facebook users, 330 million Twitter users, 210 million Snapchat users, and 1.5 billion WhatsApp users (Snider ,2021). Digital connectivity has transformed the world into a "global village," affecting the lives of billions of people (Yue, 2020). People have been enriched by the availability of information and the sharing of knowledge 24/7. It has provided consumers with a connectivity opportunity to explore the world of knowledge. Currently, modern states are linked via the Internet and weighing their policies against the policies of other nations. Few countries provide filtered information to their citizens, but many have no restrictions or security checks.

The use of social media has allowed unrestricted public information to be disseminated. States are actively engaged in digital diplomacy (Hallams, 2010). The current research study aims to investigate the concept of digital diplomacy as a component of Pakistan's foreign policy, how it can achieve the desired results, and how Pakistan can advance its foreign policy by utilizing modern technological tools. The new shift from traditional methods to digital devices is expected to build a positive image, but the extensive use of these platforms can be harmful due to a lack of cyber security and training for diplomats. The term "Foreign Policy" refers to a country's international objectives and strategy for achieving those objectives (Sadia,2020). Foreign policy architectures follow five steps in the policymaking process. Paddleford and Lincoln define it as follows:

"Foreign policy is the key element in the process by which a state translates its broadly conceived goals and interests into concrete courses of action to attain these objectives and pressure its interests" (Padelford,1976).

Feliks Gross defined the concept in the context of a liberal foreign policy outlook (Feliks.1998). According to him, if a state decides not to develop any kind of relationship with other states, it is also referring to foreign policy. It has mixed negative and positive effects when considering auxiliary its interests with no change in behaviour. However, it becomes positive when considering a change in the behaviour of other states to revise its national benefits. Foreign policy is characterized as a device that supports the entire international political system. Foreign policy is also intertwined with domestic policy (Sadia, 2020).

It has national interests that drive it to manage its international relations. Approximately all of the world's nations, whether developed or developing, determine the direction of their foreign policies within the confines of their realities and the potency of the outer environment. Non-political relations are also included in the scope of foreign policy. Diplomacy is the process of connecting with other countries through negotiations and discussions in order to achieve a mutually beneficial position. It does not, however, imply that diplomacy is a level playing field for all parties involved.

Even in diplomacy, there is always the possibility that a strong state will gain an advantage. It does, however, assist countries in persuading other countries' decisions through various communication channels. Diplomacy encompasses a wide range of activities, from meeting with national leaders to exchanging diplomatic messages on behalf of nations. Diplomats are government officials in charge of carrying out diplomatic letters.

These officials are trained and equipped with diplomatic manners to carry out the diplomatic process, and they use diplomatic powerful language as their most powerful weapon in communication. Diplomacy, which is divided into categories such as unilateral, bilateral, and multilateral, is used to replace hard power among world countries (Ghouri, 2021). The study discovered two research questions that looked into how Pakistan is using the internet to modernize its foreign policy. And, more importantly, how effective are new digital diplomatic strategies in Pakistan's foreign affairs?

SIGNIFICANCE OF DIPLOMATIC PRACTICES

Several precepts of what diplomacy is and what role it plays in foreign affairs influence the role of diplomacy in a state's foreign policy. Diplomacy encompasses more than just the support of diplomatic intercontinental relations in its broadest sense. It affects nonviolent, antagonistic, and all other types of relationships in its place. Thus, foreign relations encompass the advantages, course, and dimensions of sovereign State power (Kardas, 2020). It can also be viewed as a diplomatic alternative in which foreign policy is linked to theory and carries out diplomatic priorities in practice, prioritizing strategic measures, outfitted, and strategic diplomatic objectives, and adding up with foreign constraints. Crabb (1972) has pointed out that,

"Reduced to its fundamental ingredients, foreign policy consists of two elements: national objectives to be achieved and the means for achieving them" (Crabb, 1972).

The essential arbitrate rationale of diplomacy is to continue with institutional apparatus, embassies, ambassadors, and settlements, etc (Adesina, 1917). According to Faye (2000), ICTs provide opportunities to everyone, everywhere, and aid in the transformation of economic plans into advanced information economies capable of competing on the global market with highly developed economies (Ogunsola,2005). Technological advancement has increased globalization by providing communications for cross-border connections, and no single nation can or cannot miss out on the opportunities provided by these technologies. People of all ages and from all continents are using social media to share information. They are also interested in global and domestic politics because it is linked to their economic interests. Foreign ministries (MFAs) should develop a vision of technological tools that do not separate substance from skill and language (Olubukola,2016).

Diplomats must understand how digital diplomacy makeup rendezvous with how traditions, information, and transactions are standardized in software, such as algorithms that do not practice in one's goodwill. Diplomats should be critical of real-life actors behind software, of their intentions and how they pursue their aims, and with what effect, as diplomacy is increasingly enacted in a digital environment. Foreign affairs officials are capable of developing software for ambassadorial purposes. The mechanisms used to create digital technologies can also serve as a source of political and diplomatic interests. These personnel must make an effort to learn all of this and put it into practice in order to improve policy-making processes (Stanzel, 2018).

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The study's goal is to highlight the significance of digital devices and their beneficial use in diplomacy and foreign relations. The use of digital devices is increasing gradually, with diplomats and heads of state using them on a daily basis. The importance of using these IT devices can also be used by Pakistan's foreign diplomats to inform the people about the country's policies.

DIGITAL DIPLOMACY: A STEP TOWARDS REJUVENATION OF THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Digitization and its growing impact on diplomatic practices are becoming increasingly prominent in the world's diplomatic services.t is essential to coherent the politics following digital diplomacy. The digital apparatus appliances to modern practices are increasing the strength of the digital diplomatic rendezvous (Stanzel ,2018). Advanced media studies, which are required to comprehend current issues, provide information on diplomacy and help foreign ministries, diplomats, and officials plan modernized and effective diplomacy tactics (Tsvetkova, 2019).

MFAs, embassies, and diplomats have continued to use new digital tools and a podium to modernize the environment in which diplomacy can be practiced since the emergence of new digital technologies. Diplomats use digital tools to connect with new audiences, overcome the constraints of traditional diplomacy, collaborate with new actors, and endorse cross-cultural dialogue. The insertion of a normative aspect in "the digitalization of diplomacy" identifies the way in which culture can manipulate diplomacy. Digital diplomacy has the potential to enhance two-way communication (Saddiki, 2006). The internet has now become an essential tool for both public and private communication, while existing tools, such as social media, have drawn millions into peer-to-peer, face-to-face spaces. It provides mutually massive opportunities and challenges for states and international organizations seeking to employ new strategy spaces emerging from the Internet. States and international organisations are in need of new-fangled skills to revolutionize their organizations, as well as modern discourse of a shift toward global policy. Social media and popular networks are now accessible to everyone and an essential part of daily life. Currently, the platforms WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook are widely used as e-tools by common people, diplomats, foreign officers, and foreign ministries all over the world. These networks provide fast information sharing platforms. Twitter and Facebook handles enable their users to share societal opinions on a variety of topics, participate in discussions with others behind the screen, and explain their own point of view.

Andreas Sandre (Italian diplomat) used Twitter for Diplomats in 2013 and cited the tool as the most useful resource for the professional field (De Franco, 2020). Many other popular social media apps, such as LinkedIn, Pinterest, YouTube, Flickr, and Instagram, are being considered for sharing information on local and international issues (Hocking,2015). Different blogs are also extremely popular, such as wikis, which are currently used for domestic purposes such as knowledge sharing. The various digital tools are stored in digital devices with a competency that ambassadors and officials can use to join:

➢ Listening is the very initial expression. It is done by collecting knowledge.

➢ Cooperating with each other is a second most important task, whilst officers collect information; they gradually start collaboration both within their own organization and outside

their communities. They join the community by providing resources, such as asking particular and relevant questions, etc.

➢ Correspondence is the third step where the official person starts conversation. This dexterity embodies comprehension to extend the visibility.

➢ Generate is the next step which starts after collecting knowledge, cooperation, and correspondence, it makes the official person comfortable to reply by using different social media platforms, it enables him to create his online contents.

➢ Participation in Critique is the final step in which foreign officers or ambassadors gain social visibility, allowing them to make critical comments and participate in debate. It will teach them how to deal with and handle criticism.

HISTORY OF DIGITAL DIPLOMACY

The technological revolutions of the twentieth century altered the terrain of diplomatic communication (Bajola, 2019). The introduction of steamships and railways in the nineteenth century significantly increased the movements of diplomats. The invention of the telegraph made it possible to communicate directly with governments, foreign offices, and embassies. The twentieth-century technology of aircraft and information technology made it more responsive and faster (Christer, 2015). Few events in the world changed the diplomatic mode that existed in the 1920s and 1930s. The invention of radio and its broadcast services, the Bolshevik revolution (1917), Nazi power (1933), and the widespread use of radio services by Nazis and Bolsheviks (Adena, 2015). They used it for propaganda in order to support revolutions in neighbouring countries. It gave rise to public diplomacy, in which countries seek to achieve their foreign objectives by communicating with foreign audience (Ogunsola, 2016). The new revolution in communications that began after World War II and is still going on presently allows for the rapid dissemination of various types of information across continents. Radios, television, satellite broadcasting, jet transportation, and telefax made it easier for people to get and spread information that was previously difficult to do. Joseph Nye elaborated the term "soft power" in his famous book "Bound to Lead" (1990) in the then conformist view of the rejection of US power (Desbiens, 1990). After considering the financial power and resources of US armed forces, he concluded that a little was still lost, namely the ability to influence others through magnetism and influence rather than bullying and remuneration. He has used the term "soft power" to refer to a country's ability to influence others based on perceived value, social norms, and image. The "soft power" tactics are used to put pressure on others not through coercion, but through deception. The term "E-diplomacy" first appeared in 1992, when emails from civil society were used in negotiations at the "Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro," and in Malta, at the "Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies" (Kurbalija, 2013). It was the first-time computers were used in diplomacy.

The Arab Spring is regarded as the first step toward digital diplomacy (Akcay, 2021). Terrorists were being recruited for illegal activities via social media terrorist hidden pages. Al-recruitment Qaeda's tactics and online campaign predate the 1980s. Public diplomacy was initiated by then-President Bush's Undersecretary of State for Public Affairs. The State Department went to Facebook, and the United States established a departmental blog as well as the Digital Outreach Team, which was assigned and tasked with dealing with Al Qaeda's online hiring. The 2010 "Wiki

Leaks" scandal, which exposed 250,000 diplomatic messages and emails exchanged between the US mission and Washington (Sifry, 2011). It astounded the diplomats and made them aware that having online conversations in the digital age is a difficult task with cyber-attacks being conducted and important information being leaked to the public (Hocking, 2015).

DIGITAL DIPLOMACY USE AND DIPLOMATIC PRACTICES: A RISK FACTORS ANALYSIS

Advanced technological tools provide numerous benefits, but they also present numerous challenges to consumers. Because diplomats and other foreign officials are less adept at using social media, it can raise a number of issues. For example, they may face cyber security threats, hacking, and bullying from anonymous people anywhere in the world. This increased proximity to the public may cause commotion and impediment to their authorized duties. People can manipulate their statements and pictures, causing dishonor.

A lack of familiarity with new communication technologies, the internet, and social media can result in terrible consequences, severe conflicts, and even the removal of politicians from office. To avoid a crisis, the foreign office should train and equip their staff on how to use social media in a safe manner. It is necessary to keep foreign affairs restricted and separate from the public because the public can sometimes take matters in the wrong direction, causing problems for officials. The strategic use of digital technologies as a device to confront propaganda by specific governments and other actors seeking interests is becoming more widespread these days. The following dangers can result from unrestricted use of social media.

A) SECRECY TRADITIONS

The culture of secrecy is also a main obstacle to digital diplomacy where anyone can pose as an important figure and cause significant harm to a specific person whom he has targeted. It may result in a complex crisis as a result of the dissemination of some contradictory, even false information. Such misinformation spreads in seconds and harms a person's career as well as his country's image. Social media platforms are now dealing with abused comments and posts, so they must secure their pages to make it clear whether a post comes from a reliable source. The "Cambridge Analytical Data Scandal" has raised concerns about the dependability and authenticity of these social media tools (Boerboom, 2020). This firm has worked for the electoral team of US "President Donald Trump." It had access to information of about 87 million Facebook users without the account holders' permission.

B) FREE WILL FROM SOCIAL MEDIA

The negative and challenging situations are passively impacting the users of different social media apps. Terrorist and racist organizations attempt to mobilize and employ followers all over the world (Mirhaydari, 2018). It is also claimed to be a conduit for the spread of radicalism, violence, and the burden of foreign ideologies. Opponents of digital diplomacy see it as a risky act.

C) CYBER SECURITY

Hacking is becoming a more serious threat to the digital world. Fear of cyber-attacks on sensitive office accounts has transformed cyber optimists into cyber pessimists. It has been around since the invention of the internet. Many state heads, governments, and diplomats around the world have been victims of digital diplomacy, putting their jobs in jeopardy. Diplomatic adversaries, including

both state and non-state actors, are constantly attempting to breach government systems in order to obtain information for specific purposes. The issue is now a major discussion point in the diplomatic and political plans of the "UN, NATO, ITU, SARC, OECD, OSCE, Commonwealth, G7, and G20." National cyber security strategies and legislative laws exist in developed countries and major powers (Turaev, 2020).

D) CYBER BULLYING

The advancement of technology is sometimes equated with the advancement of human societies. Because of the widespread use of social media, terrorists and other groups, particularly female foreign officials, may be subjected to cyberbullying. These foreign officials can only be deterred by limited and purposeful use.

DIGITALIZATION AND DIPLOMATIC TRENDS: THE PAKISTAN OUTLOOK

Pakistan has 44.61 million internet subscribers, according to Hoot Suite's latest report from 2019. They accounted for 22% of all global users in January 2019, while authentic figures for mobile and fixed broadband increased to 65.13 million (31.19 percent) in January 2019. The spread of the Internet in Pakistan has been aided by its growth. The launch of LTE (Long Term Evolution) is a pivotal moment in the Internet's evolution. Pakistan's Internet user ratio is now significantly higher than the past (Jamil, 2020). It had crossed the figure of 76.38 million in the middle of 2020 and was expected to reach the figure of 12 million by the end of 2020. Pakistan's outlook has improved as up to 60% of people under the age of 25 are consumers, which means that more than half of the population is aware of and equipped with digital natives (Jamil, 2020).

These people in Pakistan use social media apps to persuade policy sound effects in the country, but they are not able to exert enough pressure on the administration to pass the Human Rights Bill and enforce employment laws. Pakistan's youth are unaware of the best ways to use the internet and the potential of these platforms. Different nations around the world are benefiting from it and earning money through social and political issues on Twitter, You-Tube channels, and Facebook. The involvement of youth in social media can assist the country in engaging them in learning activities, informing and promoting local culture both within and outside the country.

The developed and developing countries are planning how to engage their youth in digital affairs and convert governance into e governance, as well as foreign affairs on social media apps, in order to connect the world in such a broader context. Pakistan's digital engagement in public diplomacy is facilitated by its social media accounts and the general commitment of political leaders, foreign spokespersons, and diplomats to this platform. Pakistan has positions on all well-known social media platforms, the content of tweets, and the medium through which it spends time with accessible and predictable audiences.

The popular channels are managed by anti-Pakistan agencies such as RAW and MOSAD from India and Israel, and they present a negative image of Pakistan which endangers Pakistan's digital diplomacy outlook (Asim, 2017). The state's well-equipped and skilled leadership can play a critical role in the success of political government modern policy, as well as encourage foreign diplomats to improve their digital diplomatic posters. In modern Pakistan, foreign ministers maintain social media Twitter accounts and re-tweet posts, and although despite having 3 million followers, they

frequently discuss party and local issues. The "blame game tweets" are wreaking havoc on the state's image around the world.

Table 1: Social Media followers Statistics (Twitter) of Multiple Embassies Year 2020

Embassies	Twitter Followers	Embassies	Twitter Followers
US in Pakistan	317.7K	Pakistan in US	30K
UK in Pakistan	78.2K	Pakistan in UK	2,213
China in Pakistan	90.4K	Pakistan in China	No account
India in Pakistan	3.8M	Pakistan in India	9,336

Source: Author's contribution

Pakistan's digital diplomacy stance can be determined by calculating ambassadorial tasks of its foreign office diplomats and staff presence hours on social media. The absence of Pakistani embassies on Twitter in Russia, China, and Bulgaria, among other places, demonstrates their negligence and incompetence with their assigned tasks. On Twitter, the foreign office has 3 million followers, while the Sydney consulate has about 700 followers. These low figures represent a very isolated reflection of the account. Furthermore, many diplomatic interactions with social media accounts reveal that the consulate's posts are mostly retweets with no underlying basis for promoting cultural initiatives. This implies that accurate and targeted information is missing from these accounts (Boyle, 2020).

Table 2: Head of the States on Twitter and their Followers Strength Statistics Year 2020

Head of State	Twitter Followers	Head of State	Twitter Followers
US President	77.5M	Russian President	46.3K
UK Prime Minister	424.3K	Afghan President	693.6K
Indian Prime Minister	55.3M	Turkish President	15.6M
Pakistan Prime Minister	11.4M	Brazilian President	6.4M

Source: Author's contribution https://twitter.com/home

The use of digital devices for diplomatic purposes is extremely broad. There is no doubt that the implementation of digital diplomacy would necessitate a certain amount of resources. Aside from that, it is critical to create an indispensable but unified and well-constructed plan that provides an idea and a set of guiding principles for diplomats to maintain their online presence. Pakistan has a sizable following, and diplomats can easily communicate with their supporters both inside and outside the country about veracity and other international issues. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf

government has a digital Pakistan vision, for which it has established a digital media wing for social media defence. The government's policymaking practices for people will be present on social media, and it will promote the government's initiatives. It will engage in social media diplomacy, discredit fake news, optimize the digital media plan, and market campaigns for the government and related agencies. The government will implement a social media policy for its different department. The new digital team will monitor the policy's implementation status. The digital media team will consist of 23 people, including a general manager, consultant, digital communicators, video editors, videographers, photographers, graphic designers, uploading stuff writers, and a digital supply manager. The use of "Information Communication Technologies (ICT)" tools to achieve diplomatic goals is the primary focus of digital diplomacy. Diplomatic functions in Pakistan that have been irreversibly impacted by digital presence include:

1) MUTUAL RELATIONS

In the twenty-first century, social media has evolved into a mega platform where various nations and their representatives are busy promoting their image globally and gaining global positive recognition. Pakistan can also take advantage of this platform to promote the "China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)" project in multilateral trade agreements. It has geopolitical and economic ramifications for the South Asian region, and its extensive social media coverage provides a constant stream of information for concerned stakeholders and the rest of the world.

2) POSITIVE IMAGE BUILDING

State diplomacy strives to promote a positive and peaceful image in the world. Diplomacy is also used as a tool in foreign policy to enable and improve a positive image. Pakistan has been unlucky in being targeted on social media by Indian and Israeli agencies for promoting terrorism and violence across the border, and they have media teams for this purpose on Twitter and Facebook. The "Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations" is constantly uploading criticisms and responses to all Pakistan-related questions. It is the demand of modern world politics that Pakistan stay on these platforms and spread goodwill throughout the world, as well as project a very energetic image against terrorism and extremism. To share Pakistan's experiences and strategies for combating terrorism and radicalism, Pakistan can also fight for Kashmir's freedom by exposing India's illegal and violent policies in the region. It may support Pakistan's stance in support of the Kashmiri people's right to self-determination as outlined in the United Nations resolution.

3) CONSULAR SERVICES DELIVERANCE

In the age of the internet, consular services have become essential. A number of entrepreneurs have e-businesses and require digital diplomacy to improve their visibility. India is the best example of consular services and digital diplomacy being used to improve the state's image. Pakistan can also use these strategies to help entrepreneurs and the business community by providing services for investment in Pakistan, which will help the country's economy recover from its COVID-19 slump.

CONCLUSION

The Internet has revolutionized traditional diplomatic methods around the world, but the main goals and objectives remain the same. Diplomacy remained a critical component of a state's

intercontinental power expansion capability. Advanced technological tools have ushered in Innovations and ushered in a digital era for things and services, making diplomatic practices easier to carry out. Social media sites have transformed the communication from a monologue to a dialogue, allowing public officials to engage in two-way dialogue with other people. Many social media sites have made it possible for citizens and public officials to freely exchange and share ideas. However, social media platforms are not secure, and all diplomatic practices cannot be carried out on them to replace all aspects of diplomacy. Traditional methods of diplomacy and foreign policy remain important. It appears that digital diplomacy will escort the world in the near future. Pakistani diplomats and embassies must prioritize the effective use of new technological tools in order to modernize foreign affairs. The government has decided to form a 23-member media team to develop and direct a digital diplomacy strategy, and the cabinet has approved a supplementary amount of Rs42.791 million for the establishment of a digital media section under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in the current fiscal year. As a result, countries such as Pakistan must have a centralized social media strategy in order to communicate with the distant public face; it is also necessary to establish a digital diplomacy platform.

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