UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

DEPARTMENT OF DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN FACILITATING DIPLOMATIC ENGAGEMENTS IN EAST AFRICA. A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF KENYA AND RWANDA.

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DECLARATION

This Research is my original work and has not been submitted for any degree to any other University.

Signed......................................Date...08/11/2021...
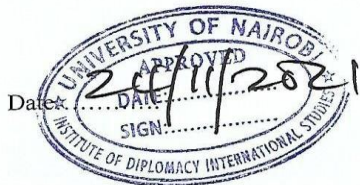
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This Research Project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the University of Nairobi Supervisor.

Signed...............................   Date.........................

Prof. Maria Nzomo

Supervisor

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this Research Project to my family, my parents and my colleagues for their love, encouragement and understanding throughout my course work.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

Digital diplomacy has been an emerging field having a huge impact on the discipline of International Relations. However not many previous studies have explored digital diplomacy targeting the public as content receivers. While most studies dwell on social media utilization in diplomatic circles on a wider global reach, very little has been written on the East African states' full utilization and harnessing of social media in diplomatic engagements. It is for this reason this study analyzes the role of social media in facilitating diplomatic engagements. The main objective of the study was to determine how social media acts as a tool in facilitating diplomatic engagements in East Africa's public diplomacy, especially during covid19 pandemic in Kenya and Rwanda. This study will help fill the gap, where the review indicates the lack of full involvement of the publics in diplomatic engagements. Having guided by the soft power and the actor-network theory, a descriptive survey design was employed in this study. The study targeted Presidency, officers at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Academicians, and journalists. Collection of data was done using a semi-structured questionnaire. The study findings indicate that social media is becoming an important tool for diplomats and publics engagement for political and economic developments especially during the covid19 pandemic without necessarily being physical, as it used to be in the past two decades of 21st C. Harnessing social media fully has undoubtedly enhanced effective communication and diplomatic interactions for the two countries. Able to exchange real-time information and virtual meetings on various issues of mutual interest without necessarily relying on the use of traditional diplomacy as it used to be. Although enhancing diplomatic interactions between countries, results shows that social media has its challenges, like fake news and cyber hacking that can cause diplomatic uneasiness between them. The study concludes, it is important to engage the public deeper to achieve ideas on promoting better economic growth for both countries. Despite the challenges, players need to be extremely cautious but continue to fully embrace and harness new technologies.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANT: Actor Network Theory

AP: Associated Press

BBC: British Broadcasting Corporation

CNII: Critical National Information Infrastructure

CNN: Cable News Network

DRC: Democratic Republic of Congo

EU: European Union

GPE: Global Partnership for Education

ICTs: Information and Communication Technologies

KCC: Kigali Convention Centre

MFAs: Ministries of Foreign Affairs

MICE: Meeting, Incentive, Conference, and Events

MINAFFET: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NGOs: Non-Governmental Organizations

OGS: Government Spokesperson

RDB: Rwanda Development Board

UK: United Kingdom

UN: United Nation

UNGA: United Nation General Assembly

USA: United States of America

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<center>**CHAPTER ONE**</center>

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction and Background to the Study

This study examines the role of digital media as part of public diplomacy as a platform of enhancing diplomatic engagements. The study explores the importance of social media as a tool to facilitate diplomatic engagements between Kenya and Rwanda. Moreover, it aims to find out whether harnessing social media can positively influence the conduct of diplomacy during and post covid19 pandemic in Kenya and Rwanda. The third objective provides empirical literature on main challenges on Kenya and Rwanda's prospects of utilizing technologies that are rapidly changing.

The internet's introduction and the quick emergence of new technologies have influenced numerous disciplines, including public diplomacy[1].Information and communication technologies (ICTs) have greatly shifted how communication and information exchange around the globe is done, and has in a big way impacted on the political, social, and economic landscapes.

With over 2 billion individuals utilizing Facebook, Twitter, Qzone, YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, and other social media platforms on a daily basis, digital connectedness has shrunk the world and impacted billions of people's lives[2]. Unmediated discussion and information sharing amongst people all over the world now takes place 24 hours a day, 365 days a year[3].

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[1]Sevin, Efe, and Diana Ingenhoff. "Public diplomacy on social media: Analyzing networks and content." International Journal of Communication 12 (2018): 23.

[2]Kent, Michael L., and Maureen Taylor. "Building dialogic relationships through the World Wide Web." Public relations review 24, no. 3 (1998): 321-334.

[3]Renken, Wiekke. "Social Media Use in Public Diplomacy A Case Study of the German Missions' Facebook use Thesis MSc in Strategic Public Relations." PhD diss., Thesis.(Lund University, 2014), 2014.

Although direct encounters between officials of sovereign states are still important in diplomacy, in the current interconnected world, not just governments, but also individuals and organizations, play an expanded role, thanks to technology and social media technologies[4]. The term "digital diplomacy" was coined because of this. Global interaction and more access to unfiltered information regardless of nationality or political standing, are the most significant changes that social media has brought to foreign policy. Furthermore, the growing number of mobile users in poorer countries democratizes information exchange even more. Due to this situation, countries citizens and civil society are becoming more capable of holding to account governments for their policies and pronouncements[5].

From questions and answers on Twitter to live Facebook events, social media has enabled ministries of foreign affairs or diplomats to be in direct engagement with audiences in countries where they do not have a physical diplomatic office. Instead, mostly open virtual embassies in engaging diplomatically to pass their message across and start a dialogue. As a result, governments are no longer reliant on foreign media to communicate their interpretations of events; instead, they may now do so through their own social media profiles[6].

The revolution in social media has led to substantial changed in how diplomatically is practiced globally. European Union (EU), United States of America (USA) and Japanese diplomats have indeed been inventive in their use of social media to assuage Chinese authorities' suspicions, and

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[4]Correa, D., Silva, L., Mondal, M., Benevenuto, F., &Gummadi, K. (2015, April). The many shades of anonymity: Characterizing anonymous social media content. In Proceedings of the International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media (Vol. 9, No. 1).

[5]Renken, Wiekke. "Social Media Use in Public Diplomacy A Case Study of the German Missions' Facebook use Thesis MSc in Strategic Public Relations." PhD diss., Thesis.(Lund University, 2014), 2014.

[6]Wolfsfeld, Gadi, Elad Segev, and TamirSheafer. "Social media and the Arab Spring: Politics comes first." The International Journal of Press/Politics 18, no. 2 (2013): 115-137.

as a result, they have been able to build open lines of communication with Chinese civilians, particularly in terms of agenda-setting and presence expansion[7]. In the United Kingdom, the proponents of the Brexit vote used social media to advance their goals, which led to the success of the Brexit vote. In the same breath, during the Scotland referendum in which they were to determine whether they should secede from Britain or not, the United States together with other European Union Powers prevailed upon the Scottish people through the social media against voting to secede from Britain. In countries such as Yemen, Egypt and Tunisia, social media provides an avenue for individuals to share uncensored public information. By allowing many people to connect and share information, social media enabled activist in the Arab Spring activists break down any psychological barrier of fear, and in certain cases, it aided in the organization of physical protests[8].

At the regional level, African diplomats' usage of social media platforms was mostly routine, and no different from that of regular people. However, African countries have been thrust into the deep end of the digital diplomacy pool as a result of COVID-19-inspired limitations slamming the brakes on physical engagement[9]. [10]. Ministries of Foreign Affairs (MFAs) have therefore migrated en masse to social media sites. Uganda's, Botswana's, Namibia's, Somalia's, and Ethiopia's foreign ministries all have Facebook pages, while Mali's, Kenya's, Niger's, Rwanda's, and the Democratic

[7]Chen, Po-chi. "Cyber public diplomacy as china's smart power strategy in an information age: case study of anti-carrefour incident in 2008." International Journal of China Studies 3, no. 2 (2017): 189-217.

[8]Sevin, Efe, and Diana Ingenhoff. "Public diplomacy on social media: Analyzing networks and content." International Journal of Communication 12 (2018): 23.

[9]Bjola, Corneliu, and Lu Jiang. "Social media and public diplomacy." Digital diplomacy: Theory and practice (2019): 71-88.

[10]Bjola, Corneliu, and Lu Jiang. "Social media and public diplomacy." Digital diplomacy: Theory and practice (2019): 71-88.

Republic of Congo's foreign ministries all have Twitter profiles. African foreign ministries appear to be just as proficient at exploiting social media as their Western counterparts. The Ethiopian embassy in the United States has over 30,000 Facebook fans, while the embassy in the United Kingdom has over 10,000 Facebook fans and 7,000 Twitter followers. As a result, social media has aided African states to strengthen their position strategically in the international diplomatic arena. The Foreign Affair Ministries who are active on Twitter, for example, may attract a large number of their peers. African countries will be able to more quickly distribute information to the diplomatic community and express their views on issues influencing the global agenda as a result of this[11].

In Kenya and Rwanda, the process of designing and implementing foreign policy goals has always been vested in the ruling elites such as the presidency, the military, parliament as well as countries embassies abroad[12]. Because of these, it has always advanced interests of upper class as well as the ruling elites and not the majority of the Kenyan and Rwandese masses. However, with the advent of social media, almost every citizen in the two countries has become an active player in the formulation, conduct and the implementation of the country's foreign policy goals. For instance, Kenyan government over indulgence of loans with the Chinese and other international lending bodies has caused a lot of clamor among Kenyans on social media. This study therefore seeks to carry a research in East Africa on the role of digital media, as a tool of public diplomacy that facilitates diplomatic engagements.

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[11]Kent, Michael L., and Maureen Taylor. "Building dialogic relationships through the World Wide Web." Public relations review 24, no. 3 (2019): 321-334.
[12] Ibid

This chapter therefore provides the background of the study, statement of problem, research questions, and research objectives, justification of the study, the empirical literature review, study hypotheses, theoretical framework, research methodology and the chapter outline.

1.2 Problem statement

Communication is an essential part of diplomacy due to the importance of dialogue and negotiation on range of issues and crises between different parties. In the past two decades of the 21st Century, diplomacy has changed from the initial involvement of only states to also include the general public and different non-state actors. The traditional diplomatic engagement has always been characterized by face-to-face interaction and closed-door activity only involving the major players to maintain its traditional diplomacy tenet. The secretive and restrictive nature of resultant communication between policymakers has left out the public and other stakeholders from participation and being informed of the process.

Traditional diplomatic engagements, that is physical interactions and bureaucratic communication, according to studies by Nweke[13] and Mintz[14]are not only slow and costly but also less engaging, with little efficiency, transparency, and effectiveness. In addition, the internationalization of bureaucracy and longer protocols inhibit effective oversight, coordination, and international policy planning across governments. There has also been reliance on the few players, the expertise of staff, missions, and confidential diplomatic communication, secluding the general public. With the outbreak of Covid19, the traditional diplomatic engagement was not spared either. Due to the

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[13]Nweke, Eugene N. "Diplomacy in Era of Digital Governance: Theory and Impact."
[14]Mintz, Alex, and Karl DeRouen Jr. Understanding foreign policy decision making. Cambridge University Press, 2010.

difficulties of meeting face to face due to confinement, social distance, and other sanitary measures, the traditional diplomatic business was affected.

Despite the fact that digital diplomacy is a relatively new field with numerous potential applications in international relations, few previous studies have explored digital diplomacy targeting the general public who are the content receivers. Additionally, while most studies dwell on social media utilization in diplomatic engagements on a wider global reach very little has been written on the East African states utilization and harnessing of social media in diplomatic engagements. This study will generate new knowledge and academic debate on diplomatic engagement in the region and serve as a future reference for scholars. This study therefore sought to analyze the role of social media in facilitating diplomatic engagements in East Africa: A comparative study of Kenya and Rwanda.

1.3 The Research Questions
This study seeks to answer the following research questions

i. What is the effect of social media as a tool in facilitating diplomatic engagements in East Africa's public diplomacy?

ii. Can social media be harnessed to positively influence the conduct of diplomacy during and post covid19 pandemic in Kenya and Rwanda?

iii. What are the main challenges and prospects faced by governments of Kenya and Rwanda in utilizing the rapidly changing technologies?

1.4 General Objective
The general objective of this study is to establish the role of digital media as part of public diplomacy as a platform of enhancing diplomatic engagements.

1.5 The Specific Objectives

This study is guided by the following specific objectives;

i. To determine how social media acts as a tool in facilitating diplomatic engagements in East Africa's public diplomacy.

ii. To assess whether harnessing social media can positively influence the conduct of diplomacy during and post covid19 pandemic in Kenya and Rwanda.

iii. To analyze the main challenges and prospects faced by governments of Kenya and Rwanda in utilizing the rapidly changing technologies.

1.6 Literature review

This section reviews literature on the role of social media in public diplomacy. Literature for this study is composed of both theoretical and empirical literature as listed below, and the empirical review has covered global, regional and local perspective on the role of digital media as part of public diplomacy as a platform of enhancing diplomatic engagements. Therefore, from the empirical literature review conducted, gaps that exist are identified which the current study seeks to fill.

1.6.1. Empirical Literature Review

This section explains the literature around the three objectives being investigated.

1.6.1.1 Social media in facilitating diplomatic engagements in public diplomacy

Social media use has expanded communications by government institutions and their audiences, for instance, the Renken[15]carried out research pertaining social media use in public diplomacy in

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[15]Renken, Wiebke. "Social Media Use in Public Diplomacy." (2014).

Germany foreign missions, and he established that although social media cannot be adopted as stand-alone communication channel. Its use aids growing on a daily basis and in future, it may be turned into the main channels of communications, this therefore means that all the states must consider seriously in social media adoption while conducting its foreign policy. The author was however quick to note that most governments are keen to follow what's going on in social media, but very few governments across the world such as Germany are willing to relay critical information with regards to foreign policy to their audience via the social media.

A study on Social Media Foreign policy was carried to analyze the use of social media by political class in America by Cullather[16]. The researcher established social media use has caused intergenerational divide in United States, he cites two cases where some acts of oppression have seemingly taken place in as such as the Guantanamo bay, and it's the young people on social media with the aid of the activists who have constantly condemned these inhuman acts. The author further reveals that on various issues of the day, there is always a sharp divide on the opinions of the old people as compared to those of the young people. This is partly because the young people are able to easily mobilize themselves through the social media, the author further gives an example of where the US government was forced to change its foreign policy towards Cuba through a surging force from the social media. This is because it was greatly used as a channel of Advocacy in addition, the author has pointed out that the dominant communities in the United States have got serious and active social media pages while these, which are less dominant and weak, are likely to possess a serious social media channel.

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[16]Cullather, Nick. "The foreign policy of the calorie." The American Historical Review 112, no. 2 (2017): 337-364.

A study on Foreign policy in Digital Diplomacy was carried by Olubukola[17] and the study established that the world has been revolutionized by social media use where he reiterated African states have no option but to read the signs of times. He therefore advocated for the states to rely so much on social media in getting to know perception of general public wants and as a way of executing the foreign policies with the external publics this will ensure that the foreign policy goals of their respective states are achieved within time. According to Nying'uro[18] in his publication entitled "The external sources of Kenya's democratization process", he observes that quite a number of external persons influences the behavior of the Kenyan government. He cites the developed countries which are active in lending Kenya foreign aid, secondly he mentions organizations such as the NGOs, Multinationals, international organizations such as the UN, Africa Union just to mention but a few. Although the writings of this author are still valid up to date, he did not mention anything to do with social media as one of the tools which impact Kenya's democratization process or the behavior of the Kenyan government towards the process of the formulation and conduct of foreign policy goals.

Most states in the African continent have always promoted a non-hierarchical communication, which does not adhere to any form of order[19]. This was during the advent of democracy and democratize wave of expansions in the continent. This was in the periods between 1960s and 70's. However, in the period between 1980s and 90's there was a huge democratic reversal in the African

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[17]Adesina, O. S., and J. Summers. "Foreign policy in an era of digital diplomacy. Cogent Social Sciences, 3, 1–13." (2017).

[18]Nying'uro, Phillip O. "The External Sources of Kenya's Democratization Process." Journal of Political Science 25, no. 1 (1997): 2.
[19]Wang, Zheye, and Xinyue Ye. "Social media analytics for natural disaster management." International Journal of Geographical Information Science 32, no. 1 (2018): 49-72.

continent whereby most African governments wanted to control the flow of information so as to ensure that there is no opposition to what the said governments thought were the national interests. Whereas the two scholars are making valid arguments on how most African states have been conducting their foreign policy goals, they do not tell us anything about social media as new instrument in influencing nation's foreign policy goals. However, their views help in analyzing African states historical sense.

Social networking sites have played a big role in regulating the relationship between the state and the market, which do not always see eye to eye. He further argues that as much as government bureaucracies are adamant in accepting social media as part of the foreign policy making, however they are still unable to ignore the influence that social media has in influencing their decisions[20]. Social networking sites have become tools of mobilization by the political leaders[21]. The said leaders according to the authors can mobilize their supporters to buy a certain line of thinking. They give an example of the civil society organizations and the political parties, which have exploited social media to set the foreign policy agendas of the respective states. Apart from advocating for public policy goals in the outside world, the civil society organizations have also used social media to demand for government accountability. This view differs with that of Barasa[22]who carried out a study on the efficiency of social media in advertising in Kenya. She found out that social media is a vital tool in modern era for advertising for any company, business organization or any brand, also that social media has revolutionized how a company communicates

[20]Ndavula, John O., and Hellen K. Mberia. "Social networking sites in Kenya: Trigger for non-institutionalized democratic participation." International Journal of Business and Social Science 3, no. 13 (2012).

[21]Hydén, Göran, Michael Leslie, and Folu Folarin Ogundimu. Media and democracy in Africa. NordiskaAfrikainstitutet; Transaction publishers, 2002.

[22]Barasa, Agnes M. "Social media as an effective advertising tool in Kenya." PhD diss., University of Nairobi, 2014.

with its market. Whereas her study concentrated on social media as an advertising tool her findings greatly informs the researcher conceptualization of the social media.

An empirical study on the impact of social media on engaging citizens on government matters was carried out in Kenya Tullar.[23] He found out that it is a significant channel in enhancing citizen participation; it opened a free medium of expression. However, the author warns that governments all over the world must not embrace social media in its raw nature, there has to be some level of intervention, which will restore order and sanity in society. He argues that freedoms come with responsibilities and therefore governments must be very keen on what goes in and out of social media. Filtration of information is good for the government. However, the results indicated that it greatly boosts the benefits and threats of social media in promoting citizen participation. Therefore, this study warns that incorporation of social media as foreign policy enforcing tool must be approached with an extreme caution. The findings of this study are further enhanced by that of Kimutai[24]who did a study on social media as threat to National Security. He found out an existence of direct impact as it contributed greatly in fanning ethnic animosity in Kenya. Whereas his study concentrated on social media and National security threats, his findings greatly inform this study about the dangers that social media may pose. Therefore, the two authors warn social media use has its own merits and demerits.

Tonui[25]carried out research on challenges of foreign policy implementation in Africa, Role of media Diplomacy in Kenya. He found and established media plays key part in the foreign policy

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[23]Tullah, Stephen. "Role of social media in citizen participation in transparent governance." PhD diss., University of Narobi, 2014.

[24]Kimutai, Julius K. "Social media and national security threats: A case study of Kenya." PhD diss., University of Nairobi, 2014.

[25]Kipngenoh, Tonui B. "Challenges of foreign policy implementation in Africa: role of media diplomacy in Kenya." PhD diss., University of Nairobi, 2017.

implementation; he therefore recommended that African States should establish a strong regional media network, an effective diplomacy strategy to bridge the gaps in foreign policy making, accesses and train diplomats on effective media relations. He also recommended for research into the new media impact on diplomatic engagements and on inquiry into the effective ways of strategizing on ways in which African governments can incorporate social media amongst their tools in implementing foreign policy. This study is simply a follow up on what the previous author had recommended. The study is also reinforced by that of Mwongela[26] who conducted research to establish the ways in which social media has revolutionized media houses processes in Kenya. The researcher revealed that media houses have incorporated social media in their day to day operations particularly in gathering news and dissemination; however the use of social media should be approached with precaution as most of the information in these platforms lack credibility which may hamper objectivity. That art of using social media without any fear of contravening professionalism is what this study is interested in.

1.6.1.2 Whether Harnessing Social Media can positively influence the Conduct Diplomacy During and Post Covid19 Pandemic.

The public's broad use of digital technology has a growing impact on international discourse, employing social media techniques to push and assist public diplomacy[27]. Some academics have had a simplistic view of digital diplomacy, a narrow sense, meaning utilization of social media in diplomatic efforts within public diplomacy to promote opinions of an individual in the area of international public. Social media has evolved into a powerful communicator's tool by providing a platform for unrestricted communication. International actors use a variety of social media

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[26]Mwongela, Ferdinand K. "A study on how social media have changed newsroom operations in Kenya: a case study of the standard group and nation media group." PhD diss., 2015.

[27]Chen, Po-chi. "Cyber public diplomacy as china's smart power strategy in an information age: case study of anti-carrefour incident in 2008." International Journal of China Studies 3, no. 2 (2017): 189-217.

platforms, but the most popular are Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat and Periscope. The government may use social media to engage directly with the people and quickly share information. When contextual information is re-uploaded by the public, information can be doubled[28].

A global epidemic poses a significant diplomatic issue. Many of the measures had quite direct implications for the practice of diplomacy as countries implement Covid19 measures to reduce infection rates and safeguard their citizens. Border closures, suspension of trips and international fora, as well as different lockdowns and physical separation measures, have pushed ambassadors to focus on corona-related issues and halted many regular types of diplomatic engagement.

Besides efficiently conveying information, the use of social media allows the public, who are the traditionally target of diplomacy, to be involved in it. Anyone who enters virtual space benefits from the variety of knowledge and the ability to move around freely. Users of social media are becoming more interested in seeking information and processing their data at a lesser cost. They have the ability to express themselves and open up new channels of contact in the public sphere. In order to maintain relevance and valued access, the government is beginning to create possibilities for public involvement in an open and organized environment.

This type of effort is profoundly ingrained in public diplomacy, in which the governments are required to properly manage their connection with the public in order to push policy goals and effect change. These initiatives will shift from offline to online when public diplomacy embraces social media, especially during Covid19. Many platforms have been created to communicate with

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[28]Banks, Robert. "A resource guide to public diplomacy evaluation." CPD perspectives on public diplomacy 19 (2011).

the public and influence public opinions in accordance with the objectives of the government. It is not easy to change people's minds in order to achieve the government's objectives. Because social media provides a perfect ground for the public opinions to be heard, it does not that it could be used to challenge government policies[29].

Manor and Segev suggest a restricted of digital diplomacy definition; State use of social media to garner international support and control its image internationally. They identify that there are two layers of digital diplomacy, namely, embassies around the world and the country's foreign ministries. The state can utilize these two levels to communicate its foreign policy and influence the public both at home and abroad. It can customize foreign policies and messaging to suit the needs and expectation of local audiences in terms of values, customs, culture and history. On the other hand, it can receive feedback and comments on their disseminated information and images.[30]

Because social media allows anybody to interact, diplomats are able to communicate so directly and efficiently with other diplomats and the general public at large regarding foreign policy by the use of digital diplomacy. Diplomats can use social media to among other things identify key influencers, collect information, and observe events according to Raschika[31]. Additionally, they provide a conventional channel for influencing netizens. They aid in the consultation process, policy formulation, and idea sharing. Netizens can use social media to (1) engage and share opinion and views on the very social media platform, (2) share their material, and (3) build a network. Websites and social networks, provide the public with essential information that appear simple to

[29]Bjola, Corneliu, and Lu Jiang. "Social media and public diplomacy." Digital diplomacy: Theory and practice (2019): 71-88.

[30]Renken, Wiekke. "Social Media Use in Public Diplomacy A Case Study of the German Missions' Facebook use Thesis MSc in Strategic Public Relations." PhD diss., Thesis.(Lund University, 2014), 2014.

[31]Arsenault, Amelia. "Public Diplomacy 2.0." In Toward a New Public Diplomacy, pp. 135-153. Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2009.

use[32]. Digital diplomacy, according to Lewis,[33] is the utilization of digital communication technologies (social media) by diplomatic community to connect with one another and the public at large.

The ability of every participant to communicate thoughts, views and ideas via social media makes it appear as if they are meeting in person, in particular when maximizing on video calls, podcasts, video conferencing, and webinars, among other things. Meanwhile, Smith[34] suggests that progressively, virtual space giving every person an opportunity to be a diplomat for themselves by seizing the platforms and freely participating and expressing themselves. Virtual diplomacy is hereby described as a behavior that was previously regarded as traditional diplomacy. Nonetheless, because of technological advancements, and the fact that it is now done by a larger number of people, as well as those who may not be professional diplomats, it is now a new activity.

1.6.1.3 Challenges and Prospects faced by Governments of Kenya and Rwanda in Utilizing the Rapidly Changing Technologies

Social media has got five major characteristics, namely; participation, openness, conversation, community and connectedness[35]. These characteristics may be of great benefit to any state or pose a serious challenge to the same state depending on how it is viewed. These characteristics are so crucial in influencing the foreign policies of states whether positively or negatively. For instance, through the attribute of participation, the practice of incorporating individual's contribution and

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[32]Hether, Heather Jane. "Dialogic communication in the health care context: A case study of Kaiser Permanente's social media practices." Public relations review 40, no. 5 (2014): 856-858.
[33]Lewis, Dev. "Digital diplomacy." Gateway House (2014).
[34]Dizard, Wilson P. Digital diplomacy: US foreign policy in the information age. Greenwood Publishing Group, 2001.

[35]Mayfield, Antony. "What is social media." (2008).

relying of feedback by the foreign affairs Ministry to people is promoted[36]. This means that social media offers a podium where public participation that allows all Kenyans to have a say in the formulation, conduct and the promotion of Kenya foreign policy. However, these public participations if not properly guided may pose a serious security challenge in cases where there is negative mobilization towards a negative course. For instance, the Arab spring where the social media was used to mobilize citizens of various states to overthrow their governments[37].

The second attribute according to Mayfield[38] is that of openness where by the services of social media are free to enter and exit. Therefore, there is nobody who has been denied that chance of making an input towards the formulation of Kenya's foreign goals. However, this openness should be limited pertaining matters of national security where existence of state is threatened. The third attribute is that of conversation. The author suggests that through social media, communication goes through all directions and the ideas emanate from any direction. However, filtration of this information is needed so that it may not turn out to incite communities against others, nations against other nations, or nations against other communities. A good example is South Africa where problem of xenophobia was spread using social media and it resulted to massive killings of many immigrants. The fourth attribute is that of the community whereby through the discussions on that platform, a community that shares same interests is quickly formed and it advances the foreign policy goals of a country[39].

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[36] Ibid

[37]Arsenault, Amelia. "Public Diplomacy 2.0." In *Toward a New Public Diplomacy*, pp. 135-153. Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2009.

[38] Ibid

[39]Adesina, O. S., and J. Summers. "Foreign policy in an era of digital diplomacy. Cogent Social Sciences, 3, 1–13." (2017).

However, the problem with most developing states such as Kenya and Rwanda is that most communities are formed along tribes, religions or sectarian interests. There is no community that can emerge or be formed around ideologies or philosophies. Finally, regarding the attribute of connectedness, the author notes that, most of the social media platforms make use of other links, online resources that makes it to access information and to further research. Whereas Mayfield's[40] research was meant to shed more light on what social media is, the attributes he gives i.e. participation, openness, conversation, community and connectedness can be very useful or at the same time disastrous in advancing any country's foreign policy goals. These ideas therefore help to improve the knowledge of interface linking social media and foreign policy making

1.7 Justification of the study

1.7.1 Academic justification

The practice of diplomacy engagement has always adhered to existing traditional tools such as the mainstream media, political class, the presidency and the bureaucracy. However, in the modern world, social media has come up as a tool of advancing diplomatic engagement goals in East Africa. Therefore, study results and recommendations would be useful to academicians and the students of law, politics, diplomacy and foreign policy, since it creates a platform of academic discussions, debates and the basis for further research.

Furthermore, much literature on the topic has tended to concentrate more on the role of media to the public in general. It would be interesting to expand knowledge and literature covering the role

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[40]Ibid

of media in fostering diplomacy in Rwanda and Kenya, and Africa at large, and including the emerging trends of communication such as social media, is becoming integral part of communication today. I would also be interesting to see how various members of diplomatic core are using them to enhance diplomacy. The research finding would be academically beneficial in this regard.

1.7.2 Policy justification

Traditional methods are now changing rapidly as technological innovations increase, which raises questions on the value of diplomacy. If both challenges and advantages are assessed, one will conclude that digitalization has enhanced diplomacy in current times. The policy value is that the bureaucracy that exists at the foreign affairs Ministry and diplomats have continued to rely on the traditional tools of diplomatic engagement and therefore, there has been a weak, slow and ineffective method of advancing diplomatic interests at the global level that needs to be harnessed. Therefore, this study identifies the legal and policy loopholes that exist which hinder the adoption of social media as a tool of diplomatic engagement, which will ensure that the views of as many Kenyans and Rwandese as possible are factored in during the trends, process of designing, implementing and analyzing diplomatic engagement goals in real time.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

This section discusses soft power theory and the actor network theory, which in one way or the other support, relates and are applicable to social media in enhancing diplomatic engagement. These two approaches are relevant tool in analyzing the role of social media in facilitating diplomatic engagements in Kenya and Rwanda's public diplomacy.

1.8.1 The Soft Power Theory

This study is anchored on Joseph Nye's[41] concept of soft power theory as prescribed in the early 1980s. The author first agrees to the fact that the main goals of a state is to promote its national interests which is survival and protection of its territorial integrity. Therefore, nations will have to acquire power and more power in the eyes of other nations. The author further argues that in order for a state to effectively pursue its national interests beyond its borders, the state needs to possess both the hard and soft power. Hard power in this case implies use of force including sanctions, wars and intimidation of other states. Soft power on the other hand refers to the use of persuasion and pacific ways of engagement to influence other states to do things according to the interests of the state in question. For instance, the state can use issues such as grants, aid, promotion of culture, values, ideals as well as creation of foundations just to mention but a few strategies[42].

Nye[43] argues that the major assumptions of the soft power theory includes but are not limited to; first, there has to be an existence of liberal democracy among the states, this means that these states must always be agents of peace and engage each other using peaceful means. Liberal democracy would also imply that these states observe human rights, and pay their allegiance to the global institutions, which are responsible to give directions when it comes to the interstate interactions. Again, the theory assumes that democracies do not go to war. Secondly, the theory assumes that there is maximum cooperation between states; this maximum cooperation is related to all fields that the states can afford to engage with each other. It is on this platform of cooperation that a state

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[41]Nye Jr, Joseph S. The paradox of American power: Why the world's only superpower can't go it alone. Oxford University Press, 2003.

[42]Keohane, Robert O., and Joseph S. Nye Jr. "Power and interdependence." Survival 15, no. 4 (1973): 158-165.

[43] Ibid

will be able to influence the behavior and the perception of other states through convincing and appealing ideas.

Thirdly, the theory assumes that there is a heavy existence of economic dependence between states, which makes one state to be in a position to influence another monetarily and through dependency. Finally, the theory opposes the possibility of war and instead encourages cooperation among states. This means that military power does not matter when it comes to interstate relations. Instead, it's the power of ideas which matters. Therefore, its these four assumptions that will pave the way for a state to use the power of the social media either to market itself, its products, its ideas, its cultures, its heritage among others to other states so that they are able to influence other states to cooperate with it. In summary therefore, this approach argues that Kenya and Rwanda are able to use soft power tools like social media and not through force, wars, intimidation and coercion to advance its foreign policy goals through their diplomatic engagements.

1.8.2 The Actor Network Theory (ANT)

The Actor Network Theory (ANT) is used as an explanatory framework for the concept of digital diplomacy by the researcher. Ziemkendorf[44]claims that the origins of ANT may be dated back to the mid-1980s, and it is closely associated with John Law[45]. In the study of socio-technical processes, the Actor Network Theory is very useful. According to Huxley, ANT has in previous years had huge influence in international relations, and in the organizational and state studies, in the previous few years.

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[44]Ziemkendorf, Mario. Actor-network theory. GRIN Verlag, 2008.
[45]Law, John. "Notes on the theory of the actor-network: Ordering, strategy, and heterogeneity." Systems practice 5, no. 4 (1992): 379-393.

Though ANT proponents have primarily focused on research and technological activities, science is not fundamentally distinct from social activities. In this regard, ANT is critical to this research since it recognizes both human and non-human actors within an organization. The actor and the actant are two main players in a communication setting, according to the notion. According to the argument, the actor is related to nonhuman features, such as machines, hybrids, and texts. Actors can also be defined as "identities," "objects," "relationships," or "networks" that have the ability to layer within other networks. As a result, "actors" are the agents, who can be individuals or collective bodies capable of forming or terminating relationships with other agents. Actants are mostly in charge of the aspect of association's creation.

The actors represented social media tools, while the actants represented all state agents assigned to the political and diplomatic affairs directorate, in accordance with the study's objectives. Within the confines of a narrow focus on diplomacy, the theory will assist the researcher in probing how diplomats, or rather the diplomatic fraternity, use social media to advance their countries' interests on the international stage. It is crucial to remember that states use foreign policy to achieve their interests and identities. In the context of this research, this will aid the researcher in examining Kenya's and Rwanda's foreign policy in light of diplomatic trends. It will also assist the researcher in determining how the systematic vicious cycle of communication or engagement seen in the delivery of diplomatic services has altered in the digital age.

1.9Research methodology

1.9.1 Research design
 Descriptive survey design was used in this study. This type of design is suitable for the research because it enables the researcher to acquire accurate information for a large number of people

using a small sample, to establish link among study variables, which then enables to paint a picture of the population. Secondly, the descriptive survey designs describing present occurrences and the prevailing conditions.

1.9.2 Target population

The study targeted officers at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, office of the president, Academicians, renown bloggers, Ambassadors and immigration officials Foreign Affairs specialized Journalists, as well as members of civil society organizations who are in charge of or involved in diplomatic issues as strategists or policy implementers. Questionnaires were distributed to the population under each cluster in order to obtain the perceptions of the study population of various variables under the study. The targeted population estimated to be 950 respondents from Kenya and Rwanda.

1.9.3 Sample size

A total of 190 people took part in the study. This percentage corresponds to 20% of the target population. Mugenda & Mugenda justifies this figure in the indication that theories on descriptive survey design that allows a huge population to be investigated with a relatively small sample captures the different respondent categories and remaining reflective of the target community's unique characteristics. The study interviewed at least 50 respondents, and distributed the questionnaires to the remaining 140 respondents in each category. Out of the sample size of the 190 respondents, at least 60 respondents will be of either gender, which is in line with the constitutional requirement of 1/3 gender rule. These members will be picked purposefully because they are better placed to give information pertaining to the topic under study.

1.9.4 Sampling design

For the sake of convenience and economy of time, Purposive sampling will be used in primary data collection. Purposive sampling technique allows the researcher the authority to choose whom to include in the study and whom to leave out. The purpose of employing this technique is to ensure that the study only contacts relevant respondents who will give the required information that this study seeks to obtain and to ensure that population is represented equitably. The researcher will distribute the questionnaires and the guiding questions to the intended respondents before the actual interview.

1.9.5 Methods of data collection

This study relied on mixed methods of data collection, whereby both primary data and secondary data will was utilized. Primary data included the use of both questionnaires and the interviews, while secondary sources relied on books, articles, academic publications, documentaries and speeches. The use of questionnaires is justified in that it enables the researcher to get the views of as many respondents as possible in a short period. While the interview guide assisted the researcher to have a sit down talk with a few of knowledgeable respondents who gave an in-depth insight on this issue.

1.9.6 Data analysis

1.9.6.1 Methods of data analysis

Since the study collected both quantitative and qualitative information, quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, whereas qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis. Data from secondary sources was analyzed with the interview responses, and used in drawing conclusions on the subject matter. Descriptive analysis similarly was used to enable the researcher to avoid generalizations in his findings beyond the sample.

1.9.6.2 Ethical considerations

The major ethical problems in this study are as follows; getting consent from the respondents, maintain high level of privacy in the conversation with the respondents, and maintaining the levels of confidentiality with each of the respondent's. Since in an ideal set up, all officers in relevant offices had to engage freely, the researcher therefore, collected an authorization letter from the university and held high levels of confidentiality on all information collected.

1.10 Chapter Outline

Chapter One: Introduces the issue and provides background information. It also establishes the overall background of the research project, as well as the issue statement, justification, literature evaluation, theoretical framework, hypothesis, and research methods.

Chapter Two: Discusses how social media is used in East Africa's public diplomacy to facilitate diplomatic relations.

Chapter Three: Assesses whether harnessing social media can positively influence the conduct of diplomacy during and post covid19 pandemic in Kenya and Rwanda.

Chapter Four: Analyzes and explores the primary obstacles and opportunities that Kenya and Rwanda governments have in implementing rapidly changing technologies.

Chapter Five: Gives data presentation and analysis.

Chapter Six: Presents the study findings, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

SOCIAL MEDIA AS A TOOL IN FACILITATING DIPLOMATIC ENGAGEMENTS IN EAST AFRICA'S PUBLIC DIPLOMACY.

2.1 Introduction

This study falls within the framework of diplomatic engagement and more precisely use of social media. Foreign policy is the primary focus of diplomacy as an institution. As such, the researcher finds it important to interrogate a case of Kenya and Rwanda diplomatic engagements in East Africa, the quest to find out how social media has been integrated in day-to-day diplomatic activities.

2.2 Use of Social Media in Kenya's Diplomatic Engagements

Usage of the internet has changed way modern diplomacy is being conducted. This is because it has improved on the communication levels between states as well as individual to individual.[46] The social media has managed to describe 21st Century digital diplomacy as a concept, which acts as a complementary to the existing foreign policy tools. Today, the use of social media has gone digital in the sense that almost each ministry of foreign affairs and government bureaucracy has got a twitter handle, Facebook page account, Instagram as well as snapchat and linked-in. This has revolutionized the way communication and interactions with the outside world is being done. It has also succeeded in narrowing down the gap, which has always existed between the states and its citizens in as far as the formulation, and conduct of foreign policy is concerned[47].

For instance, this increased communications and increased integration has been of great help to Kenya's economic diplomacy since most investors have been attracted to investing in Kenya.

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[46]Al Zaabi, Khulood Ali Jumah Al Jarman, and DuškoTomić. "new security paradigm—the use of social networks as a form of threat to the national security state." Annals of Disaster Risk Sciences: ADRS 1, no. 1. (2018): 27-33.
[47]Bakir, Vian, and Andrew McStay. "Fake news and the economy of emotions: Problems, causes, solutions." Digital journalism 6, no. 2 (2018): 154-175.

Again, quite a number of Kenyan citizens have been enabled to secure employment abroad[48]. Besides this, the social media has enabled Kenya to market its sports men and women globally, the masses culture and the Kenyan heritage to the potential tourists. This has not only increased foreign exchange to Kenya, but it has gone a long way in ensuring that the Kenya's cultural diplomacy is well promoted. Social media platforms have led to the revolution of government bureaucracy, in that there is staff reduction, changes of structures in government, and decision-making process in the ministries of foreign affairs of different states. The reason as to why governments had to change these structures is that from every information that has been disseminated, it's able to reach many people across the world in real time. It may cause reactions both positive and negative; it may make people to come up with different concerns. All these in one way or the other influence the thoughts of policy makers. It has also increased the levels of interactions among governments, states as well as non-sate actors globally[49].

That; social media is both a blessing and a curse to the governments. It is a blessing because it has enabled governments out there to provide sufficient information and strategies of solving various problems. For example, in the war tone areas, the affected individuals are able to share their experiences to the world by taking photos and posting about their plights. This makes the international players to come to the rescue of these victims of war. This is because in such places, traditional media and channels of information dissemination usually are shut down and experience power black outs and other acts of censorship of the press[50].

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[48]Mwongela, Ferdinand K. "A study on how social media have changed newsroom operations in Kenya: a case study of the standard group and nation media group." PhD diss., 2015.

[49]Kimutai, Julius K. "Social media and national security threats: A case study of Kenya." PhD diss., University of Nairobi, 2018.

[50]Rose, Chris. "The security implications of ubiquitous social media." International Journal of Management & Information Systems (IJMIS) 15, no. 1 (2018).

Kenya through the use of social media has been enabled to spread the agenda of peace not only in war tone areas, but in countries which it has actively participated in conflict resolution such as in South Sudan, Somalia, Sudan, DRC as well as in Ethiopia[51]. The use of social media is also a curse in the sense that it's not easily controlled, it can be misused as well as everybody has got an equal chance of engaging in those discussions. However, the blessings appear to override the curses. This therefore means that although most of the African states are afraid of embracing the use of the social media, they have no option but to embrace since this is how the modern world diplomacy works.

The use of social media has played a big role in promoting Kenya's foreign policy goals abroad. Although there has been a stiff resistance from the government bureaucrats, but the Kenyans on twitter have managed to shape and influence the actions taken by the government of Kenya in the formulation and the execution of the foreign policy goals. For instance, in the economic diplomacy, a number of Kenyans have been at the forefront in casting the Kenyan government over massive borrowing of the Chinese loans and other foreign loans such as the Eurobond, which they have argued that it is heavily being embezzled. In return, this has made the government of Kenya to be on toes in terms of seeking new loans and boosted the war against corruption, both internally and externally[52].

In addition, social media has played a significant role in improving government partnership especially during this Covid-19 period. A good example is 13 May 2021 event where His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta and Prime Minister Boris Johnson of the United Kingdom,

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[51]Kent, Michael L., and Maureen Taylor. "Building dialogic relationships through the World Wide Web." Public relations review 24, no. 3 (2019): 321-334.

[52]Kipngenoh, Tonui B. "Challenges of foreign policy implementation in Africa: role of media diplomacy in Kenya." PhD diss., University of Nairobi, 2019.

conducted virtual visits of Primary Schools in Nairobi, Kenya and England as part of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) initiative. President Kenyatta and Prime Minister Johnson took use of the trips to interact directly with students aged 9 to 11 years old and to create a high-profile moment for advocating education for everyone, with a special focus on technology and females' education. On July 28-29, 2021, Boris Johnson and Uhuru Kenyatta will co-host GPE's Global Education Summit in London, with the goal of raising $5 billion for GPE over the next five years.[53]

Most of the Kenyan government officials are not active on the various social media sites. To them, they would rather be in the office all the time and attend to office work without wasting their time by visiting these social media sites. Their way of communication and receiving of news was through the mainstream media, which includes, radios, televisions, newspapers as well as the internal communication they receive from their bosses through memos, note verbal's as well as briefs. This leaves huge information gap as one wonders how such officers promote Kenya's economic diplomacy abroad when they are this analogue. This has negatively affected almost all the Kenya's foreign policy pillars that would include diaspora, economic, peace, environmental and cultural diplomacies.

2.3 Rwanda use of Social Media in Diplomatic Engagements

At the beginning, Rwandans were not conversant with the modern ways of communicating. Social Network being one of them, many were still reluctant to join in and make their voices heard[54]. This resulted into the Rwandan story being told by mainly ill-intended westerners whose aim was to

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[53]Adesina, O. S., and J. Summers. "Foreign policy in an era of digital diplomacy. Cogent Social Sciences, 3, 1–13." (2021).

[54]Borau, Sylvie, and Samuel Fosso Wamba. "Social media, evolutionary psychology, and ISIS: A literature review and future research directions." In World Conference on Information Systems and Technologies, pp. 143-154. Springer, Cham, 2019.

tarnish the image of the country and attack the legitimacy of its leadership. They fed their followers with alternative truths in forms of inaccurate news about where Rwanda is now, its leadership, and its past. Theirs was a single source; Human Right Watch reports and other biased reports. These, crafted and shaped in a way what is meant to fit the authors hidden agenda, were full of lies, unfounded allegations and erroneous facts. These were recycled on Twitter and shared with the wider tweet sphere. They were also the basis to judge the country's leadership as proven in President Kagame's Twitter row with UK journalist Ian Birrell[55].

In 2011: In May 2011, President Kagame was involved in Twitter row over media freedom with UK Journalist Ian Birrell. The latter had tweeted that President Kagame is "despotic" and "deluded" when he said that the UN, the media, human rights movement had no right to criticize Rwandans nor him. The journalist was referring to a statement that the President had made earlier while being interviewed by the UK Financial Times newspaper. Birrells tweet drew the Presidents attention. He rebuked it and emphasized that the journalist had no moral authority to abuse and judge the Rwandan people. Minister Louise Mushikiwabo of Foreign Affairs was also drawn in the debate and highlighted that the journalist has no moral right to criticize a leader who saved lives[56].

In 2013; This was an era of overly negative tweets. Accusations that Rwanda was supporting eastern DRC based rebel group M23 had just gained momentum, and was a hot topic on Twitter. Hostile tweeters and self-appointed Great Lakes region experts had just gotten a hot sauce. Rwandans and Friends of Rwanda fought back, providing facts and quoting the official line. Facts,

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[55]Lindsay, Bruce R. "Social media and disasters: Current uses, future options, and policy considerations." (2019): 1-10.

[56] Ibid

figures and interviews with high-ranking government officials in different media outlets served as sources of engagement outlines for those who were willing to defend the country. This was the time when Rwanda started to claim its voice on Twitter. Young people had joined the platform. Although it was obvious that their prime interest was in entertainment, it did not prevent a big number of them to partake in the fight for truth to prove wrong those who were tarnishing the image of Rwanda[57].

In May 2013, the focus had already shifted to the United Kingdom's arrest of Genocide Suspects. The shift was sustained until the naming of baby gorillas in June. The accusations resurfaced in July when AP and BBC tweeted that Rwanda was accused of recruiting for the then east DRC based mutiny. The tweets were retweeted enormously and picked by various media houses affecting once again the image of the country and its diplomatic relations with Western countries. Seven months later, in November, the US announced that it was considering easing sanctions on Rwanda as it had seen proof that the country was no longer backing the eastern Congo mutiny. The announcement was tweeted by Al Jazeera English (@AJEN) and retweeted massively by well-intended tweeters from Rwanda and their friends across the globe. The US position caused an evident shift in the views of those who were willing to follow in their political allies' footprints[58].

2014: In 2014, was Rwanda's year on Twitter Rwandans started to own up the Social Media space, especially on Twitter. As Rwanda marked 20 years after the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, campaigns like #Kwibuka20 and #Kwibohora20 reached as widely as 6 Billion for the former, and

[57]Vasi, Ion Bogdan, and David Strang. "Civil liberty in America: The diffusion of municipal bill of rights resolutions after the passage of the USA PATRIOT Act." American Journal of Sociology 114, no. 6 (2019): 1716-1764.

[58]Walsh, James P. "Social media and moral panics: Assessing the effects of technological change on societal reaction." International Journal of Cultural Studies 23, no. 6 (2020): 840-859.

the latter reached millions of Tweeters. Rwandans at home and abroad and their friends used the platform to show to the world that Rwanda is alive and doing well, 20 years after it was judged to be a failed state. In April 2014, Rwanda marked the 20th Commemoration of the 1994 Genocide against Tutsi. Using #Kwibuka20, hundreds of thousands of Rwandans and their friends tweeted messages of remembrance, unity, reconciliation and nation rebuilding. Tweeters highlighted the resilience of the Rwandan people who choose to not be held by history and joined hands towards moving the country forward. Among local tweeters, a special emphasis was put on the three choices that Rwandans made in the aftermath of the Genocide: Staying Together, Being Accountable and Thinking Big. The choices were outlined and thoroughly explained in the President's address on the occasion. New York Times tweeted portraits of reconciliation narrating the story of forgiveness in the wake of a national tragedy[59].

The story displayed photos of survivors together with genocide perpetrators whom they have forgiven. It was tweeted to its then more than 12 Million followers and retweeted hundreds of times. In African Voices, CNN published images of the new Rwanda. The photos attracted multiple retweets as they portrayed the lives of young Rwandans 20 years after the Genocide. Other highly regarded media outlets worldwide also shared various #Kwibuka20 related content on their Twitter accounts attracting retweets from Rwandans and their friends across the globe. In July 2014, National Geography ran stories on Mountain Gorillas and the Gorilla Naming ceremony. The stories gained momentum on Twitter as the channels account tweeted them several times to their then, 7 Million followers. Attracting numerous retweets from Rwandans and Environment Conservationists, the stories trended for a couple of weeks.

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[59] Ibid

2015: This year was predominantly about the referendum, Burundi Crisis, the arrest of Rwanda's then Chief Spy Gen. Karenzi Karake in the UK, the BBC ban, the sentencing of Kizito Mihigo & Co, as well as the reintroduction of Lions to the Akagera National Park. A well-crafted communication strategy allowed various players to effectively explain to the external world that what was happening in Rwanda is the people's choice. Campaign like #Twahisemo successfully offered to the Twitter world a detailed account of the choices that Rwandans made in the aftermath of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. Different players in the public and private sectors, mostly the young generation took part in the #Twahisemo campaign on twitter, expressing their choices, thus making it reach even a bigger audience[60].

The reintroduction of lions in the Akagera Park was a well-received move among environment and conservation experts. The country was praised for, in addition to Gorillas, enhancing its conservation efforts and preserving its ecosystem. In July 2015, CNN tweeted a story on the reintroduction of lions in the Akagera National Park. Shared to its then, 4 Million followers, the tweet quickly rose among Twitter trends, as it was retweeted thousands of times. Picked by several other media outlets on their Twitter accounts, the story was among Twitter top trends for a couple of weeks, thus becoming one 2015 most popular tweets on Rwanda[61].

In 2016: Although 2016 began on the wrong foot, with various western countries expressing their disappointment vis-a-vis the just concluded Referendum, tweeters from around the world were quick to realize that this was the western powers wanting to impose their views on states/governments across Africa. Throughout 2016, Rwanda hosted big events, from the World

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[60]Rose, Chris. "The security implications of ubiquitous social media." International Journal of Management & Information Systems (IJMIS) 15, no. 1 (2018).

[61] Ibid

Economic Forum on Africa to the 27th African Union Summit, to the 28th Meeting of the parties to the Montreal Protocol. News about Rwanda hosting such events created a buzz on Social Networks. The Governments strategic messaging and Social Media engagement on the various events led the path to successful online campaigns and a positive Social Media coverage.

World economic Forum Africa marked a major milestone as Rwanda was ramping up its conference tourism strategy through the Meeting, Incentive, Conference, and Events (MICE) unit. This was also among the key facts highlighted on Social Media in a campaign led by the Rwanda Development Board (RDB). In July, all African eyes were on Rwanda as the country geared up to host the 27th Summit of the African Union. The inauguration of the Kigali Convention Centre (KCC) marked a landmark achievement both in branding the City of Kigali as a conference destination and in the lead, up to the continent's high-level gathering. Beautiful shots of the newly inaugurated KCC were trending on Twitter, Facebook and other platforms, dominating the country's Social Media coverage. The Centre's spiral dome beaming with various magnificent colours signaled, in the language of multiple Social Media enthusiasts; the birth of Africa's most expensive building.

2017 to date: In the last three years, Rwanda has been positively covered on Social Networks. Stories on President Kagame's multiple trips abroad were published in different media outlets worldwide. The latter also shared them on various online platforms including Twitter and Facebook. Worlds renowned media outlets like CNN, Reuters, BBC, AFP, New York Times and others tweeted stories on Pope Francis imploring God's forgiveness for the Churches roles in the 1994 Genocide against Tutsi. CNN story on Rwanda being among the top best destination for 2017 early that year trended for January as it was widely shared by Rwandans on Twitter and friends of Rwanda. Various local and regional tweeters discussed the surprising attendance of President

Kagame and First Lady Jeannette Kagame at the France-Africa Summit in Bamako, Mali mid-January as a step forward in France-Rwanda relations.

2.4 Social media use Challenges in Diplomatic Engagement

Social media is used to pass information from one source to the other and has its own challenges such as leaking of the same information, platforms being hacked and challenge of anonymous users. Another challenge is the issue of inter-state rivalries on different issues, which at times involves bitter exchanges[62]. This could also mean the rivalries, which exist between the state and the non-state actors including terror groups may not argue well to the public if some of these differences could play out in social media which is accessed by all. The culture of the anonymity of the users is another challenge, which was raised. The question of impersonation, the use of pseudo names, and adoption of different names as well as mimicking may have the danger of causing some form of mischief in the formulation and conduct of countries foreign policy goals[63].

In fact, almost each of the social media users has a story to tell on cyber bullying. For instance, the minister of foreign affairs of the republic of Sweden one Carl Bildt while attending the world economic forum in Davos had posted a tweet on one of the social media platforms that contained a controversial information, it led to the country Sweden to have many diplomatic controversies with so many other states. The tweet read as follows; "Living Stockholm and heading to Davos. Looking forward to World Food Program dinner tonight. Global hunger is an urgent issue especially to that country who come begging us! Davos!''. The minister was roasted on twitter since going to discuss hunger and having a scrumptious dinner do not rhyme. Again, labeling other

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[62]Lewis, Dev. "Digital diplomacy." Gateway House (2014).

[63]Arsenault, Amelia. "Public Diplomacy 2.0." In Toward a New Public Diplomacy, pp. 135-153. Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2009.

states as beggars caused a lot of protest from the developing states. The social media account of President Uhuru was also deactivated on March 22, 2019. He stated that he deactivated Twitter due to the constant insults and name-calling that flooded his timeline, saying he would rather sleep and engage First Lady Margaret Kenyatta than keep up with the social media platform.

2.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, Soft power use of persuasion and pacific ways of engagement to influence other states to do things according to the interests of the state in question, that both and Rwanda have well exhibited through the Actor Networking on Social Media. The government of Rwanda has a special institution working under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Cooperation and East Africa community: The Office of the Government Spokesperson (OGS), which his responsible for overseeing and coordinating effective communicating the story of Rwanda is both locally and internationally. OGS, in partnership with government institutions, intends to fully implement best practice using modern communications tools. OGS strengthens and maintains government communication capability by holding regular training and workshops across Rwanda, including at the provincial, district, and embassy levels, with a focus on the use of digital media.

The staff from the aforementioned institution are positively use Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and other platforms for the interest of promoting Rwanda's image. In addition, respondents use Facebook for responding people who criticize the Rwanda policy, mainly those ones with the genocide ideology. The majority of those who criticize the Rwanda policies are living outside of the country, reason why the staff of MINAFFET, mainly the communication officers in Rwanda's Embassies use that opportunity for explaining those people, what they said is wrong and they try to tell them the true image of Rwanda, and political will etc.

Today, Rwanda is reviewing its social media strategy including Facebook. In March 2017, in partnership with the Facebook Public Policy Management team for Africa, the Office of the Government Spokesperson conducted advanced Facebook Management training sessions for different categories of Communications Staff across government institutions. In collaboration with Facebook Africa, the Government of Rwanda is, bit by bit, enhancing its identity and improving its authenticity on the platform.

The effectiveness of Kenya's digital diplomacy will be determined by creating appealing content, then locating access points into existing networks and pushing it through them. However, because information is disseminated without the oversight of a regulatory agency, both truths and lies will be given equal weight. Diplomats must therefore be watchful and develop agendas for such meetings based on the truth, rather than sitting back and filing responses in the face of disinformation and misrepresentation.

In a welcome development, Google announced Project Loon in July 2020, a balloon-powered internet service that will bring 4G LTE internet coverage in Kenya's distant and rural areas. Thirty-five solar-powered balloons were launched into the stratosphere above eastern Africa to enhance internet connectivity. The effort is a significant boost for people-to-people diplomacy and will have a significant impact on Kenyan and African digital diplomacy.

Therefore, H1: Social media tools plays a significant role in the diplomatic engagements facilitation both in the public diplomacy in Kenya and Rwanda.

CHAPTER THREE

THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN SHAPING THE CONDUCT OF DIPLOMACY DURING AND POST COVID19 PANDEMIC IN KENYA AND RWANDA.

3.1 Introduction

This section analyses whether harnessing social media can positively influence the conduct of diplomacy during and post covid19 pandemic in Kenya and Rwanda. The section starts by analyzing how Covid19 has changed the diplomatic global governance. The next section delves on whether social media is the way to go in terms of diplomatic engagement in future.

3.2 Diplomacy and Global Governance after Covid-19

Whether Covid-19 epidemic is completely controlled in the short or medium term, there would undoubtedly be a long-term impact on countries diplomacy and global governance. Long-term trend concerning foreign policy management, international governance administration, as well as social media use have been accelerated by Covid-19.Covid-19 has accelerated the long-term trend of enhancing executive power over foreign policy administration and decision-making. The trend can be seen from the majority of nations, from the proportion of political appointees to career experts in ambassadorial assignments to the size of departmental budgets. It has obviously been more severe in certain countries than others, and ineffective communication techniques and social media have worsened it[64].

Virtual zoom sessions and document sharing software have largely replaced the days of long diplomatic travels in order to attend international general meetings. This came out clearly during the UN 75[th]General Assembly debate that saw global leaders spoke in September2020.Normally, this is the most important event on the multilateral calendar, with big delegations from the executive, foreign ministries, the media, and the UNGA General Debate leaders in attendance. Pre-recorded video and web presentations will be used this year as well, with only ambassadors

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[64]Adesina, O. S., and J. Summers. "Foreign policy in an era of digital diplomacy. Cogent Social Sciences, 3, 1–13." (2021).

already in New York participating. This will be referred as the second virtual General Assembly after last year's. The most likely question after this incident will be: "why haven't we been doing this for the last 20 years?"

In an all-in-person environment, wholesale adaption to an online environment results in cost savings that would be hard to achieve. Foreign ministries are less likely to resort to old patterns if they spend more time in the social media diplomacy arena. Over the next ten years, most foreign ministries are likely to encounter budget constraints.[65] There will probably be fewer travel and abroad nationals, implying a smaller support base. Because much of their work is hidden and/or difficult to link to performance indicators, foreign ministries have historically been targets for budget cuts. Even if things return to normal quickly, the patterns and changes that have already occurred will have an enduring influence. The use of social media by foreign ministries after a pandemic has the potential to reshape diplomacy and global governance.

3.3 Social Media Positively Harnessing Diplomacy after Covid19

Following the shock of Covid-19, the year 2021 will be a year of significant and rapid digital change. Lockdowns and other restraints have bred new behaviors while breaking old ones.

While many people want for a return to normalcy, the reality is likely to be quite different as we enter a world where the physical and virtual cohabit in novel ways. It may appear that the rise of social media and other forms of digital communication has tangibly simplified techniques of conversing and reaching agreements. When one takes a step back to look at the big picture, it is

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[65] Ibid

clear that thinking any significant development in world diplomacy and resolution of conflict in the last several years is challenging.[66]

Diplomacy has shifted to Twitter in a noticeable way, and it appears to be attempting to impress the audience rather than engage in direct discussions with the other party. Foreign embassies' official accounts now compete in wit and harsh language. The issue with Twitter diplomacy is the constant presence of a third party, observers who quickly express their support or discontent. As a result, foreign policy is strongly reliant on domestic policy, as well as the preferences of a non-professional audience.[67]

Many serious negotiating tracks, for example, have been discontinued in recent years, and backstage contact has substantially narrowed.COVID-19 aided this process even further because most international conferences and forums have been canceled or postponed until 2021 or later.

Zoom meetings do not allow for traditional backstage diplomacy. The more digital options people have, the less time they have for face-to-face engagement.[68]

In the public eye nowadays, traditional diplomacy resembles a series of ceremonies and attractive protocol images. The deterioration of global institutions necessarily affects diplomatic procedures, and the cause of this deterioration is not exclusively due to the rise of social media and information technologies. It is also linked to the quality of today's political leaders, the long and uncertain

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[66]Bjola, Corneliu, and Lu Jiang. "Social media and public diplomacy." Digital diplomacy: Theory and practice (2019): 71-88.

[67] Ibid

[68]Kent, Michael L., and Maureen Taylor. "Building dialogic relationships through the World Wide Web." Public relations review 24, no. 3 (2019): 321-334.

restructuring of the world order, and the emergence of new values among the younger population. Diplomacy must, of course, change in the age of current communication technologies.

Official diplomacy is likewise becoming more transparent and less secretive. Full transparency of debates, however, may result in dead ends in the most difficult and contentious problems due to the prevailing pressure from the networked society. The effectiveness of elite diplomacy and the importance of public opinion are always in tension, but the latter can be ineffective if it is motivated by hate and a strong desire for vengeance.

3.4 Covid-19 and Social Media Changing the Diplomatic World

Diplomats were forced to agree to hold all of their meetings online due to the need for social distancing and a reduction in human contacts. Technical glitches, authorities' digital illiteracy, and poor technical sound were not the only issues. Online conferences lack the chemistry that occurs in face-to-face meetings. There is no longer any body language, gestures, hugs, or handshakes. One cannot reveal one's attitude or even attempt to deduce what the other person genuinely thinks of one's proposals. As a result, many talks and meetings have been postponed until the unknown post-COVID period.[69]

Diplomats, politicians, and professionals benefit from international forums and conferences for more than just to gain new information and the ability to express themselves. They also offer networking opportunities, provide prospects for new projects, appointments, perspectives, and a better awareness of international processes. When it comes to online gatherings, governments must consider who owns the online platforms. Is it safe to use them? How do they handle personal information? Is privacy respected? Is it safe to conduct discussions in their own country using

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[69]Cullather, Nick. "The foreign policy of the calorie." The American Historical Review 112, no. 2 (2017): 337-364.

foreign platforms? Isn't it possible that their negotiations will be passed on to a third party? Zoom accounts can be hacked and put on sale by hackers who might as well leak private conversations which demonstrates how vulnerable we are to modern technologies and how unprepared we are for force majeure.

Not every country has the resources to create their own social media site for online negotiations, and there are currently no international accords or standards on the subject. In the new online reality, the time for firm norms on diplomacy appears to have arrived.

States and regional integrational programs are already developing strategies on digital communication, but no existing global control, new tensions and confrontations between countries are possible. Technology has devolved into a source of contention. In the not-too-distant future, technological competition between the United States and China may become a worldwide issue.

 The possible risk of this competition is that social media platform and application conflicts might bring instability in the entire international environment, not just in regards to bilateral relations between the United States and China. Today, the digital domain, like all other political and economic arenas, is regionalized. Even something as simple as the establishment of alternative shared venues for the world community and diplomatic meetings today appears to be far too idealistic. Regrettably, we have almost completely abandoned the practice of multilateral diplomacy.

If no attempts are made to reach an agreement on how to regulate the Internet area, the Internet may become a victim of regionalization.

3.5 Conclusion

Changes brought by rapid technological development, social media as soft power and digitalization of everyday life, prove Actor networking as inevitable of the same. Despite the fact that the Covid-19 pandemic is still present, official visits and face-to-face meetings have already been reinstated, albeit in a limited format and new protocol safeguards. Even if the Covid-19 virus pandemic is defeated, strict rules of operation will be required in the social media and digital spaces: how to help solve social media conflicts, how to hold private social media negotiations, how to combat hacking, finding and punishing Internet violators fixing technical malfunctions.

Non-state players are increasingly influencing international events, and with access to social media, NGOs, political, corporate, and intellectuals would participate in global from the comfort of their own homes. The coronavirus epidemic prompted not just the state, but also activist of civil societies and other non-governmental actors to actively participate in and harness the transforming process of societies.

One of the results is that true diplomacy happens when diplomats consider the outcome of negotiations and noticeable changes in international politics as the most significant outputs of their labor, rather than just informational effects and public applause, rather than the easy-to-imitate diplomacy in the digital space. It may garner likes and attention on social media, but it rarely results in material development in offline relationships. To this purpose, H1 2: The use of social media for diplomacy during and after the covid19 pandemic is unavoidable.

CHAPTER FOUR

CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS FACED BY GOVERNMENTS OF KENYA AND RWANDA IN UTILIZING THE RAPIDLY CHANGING TECHNOLOGIES

4.1 Introduction

Technology has conveniently facilitated international relations by connecting people globally. ICTs are responsible for the global revolution in technological development and Internet globalization. It creates a significant degree of interdependence in diplomatic ties across society, especially between the state and a non-state entity. Whether a leader, diplomat, or citizen, the technological platform has had a significant impact on all users, whether directly or indirectly, through reconfiguring access across the globe[70]. The utilization of these tools comes with some drawbacks, which will be discussed in this chapter.

4.2 Prospects of Changing Technologies in the Diplomatic World

Today, digital diplomacy is an important element of foreign policy. In the same online space, the world has become a battleground for power and influence between states and non-state entities. More than 3 billion people are hosted in that space, most of them accessing the Internet through mobile phones.[71] When properly utilized, digital diplomacy can be a more persuasive and timely; complementary that could assist the country in extending international reach, advancement in the foreign policy goals, and influence those who might not set their foot in any of the world's embassies. The benefit of social media is that it allows you to communicate with citizens from

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[70]Tullah, Stephen. "Role of social media in citizen participation in transparent governance." Ph.D. diss., University of Nairobi, 2014.

[71]Rose, Chris. "The security implications of ubiquitous social media." International Journal of Management & Information Systems (IJMIS) 15, no. 1 (2018).

different countries in real-time. Social media platforms facilitates increased interaction and diplomatic engagement, which helps diplomacy achieve its objectives.[72]

Many embassies and other government offices are turning to social media as a cost-effective alternative-to-alternative means due to the simplicity with which it can be accessed and the cheap cost of alternative methods. Several existing platforms allow for much more dynamic from sources such as photos, videos and links than the more traditional lecturing or circulating pamphlets.[73]

In public diplomacy, digital technologies are important in data collecting and processing, communications and consular activities during emergencies and disasters. International experience indicates that judicious use of digital diplomacy tools brings better dividends [particularly for those who invest. Furthermore, digital diplomacy does not always necessitate monetary expenditures. On the other hand, it is frequently used to cut expenditures. Most country's foreign ministries across the globe are still employing traditional diplomatic channels. For example, instructions to foreign embassies; private meetings and negotiations; collecting, providing information, and dissemination of relevant data; patient and slow development of constituencies of interest; and the resolution of many technical issues through formal intergovernmental procedures such as international conferences, international and regional organizations, or technical committees. As a result, digital diplomacy will not take the role of traditional diplomacy. Still, if used correctly, this tool can help the state increase its work in international relations and foreign policy in a more timely and cost-effective manner.[74]

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[72]Renken, Wiebke. "Social Media Use in Public Diplomacy." (2014).
[73]Nweke, Eugene N. "Diplomacy in Era of Digital Governance: Theory and Impact."
[74] Lindsay, Bruce R. "Social media and disasters: Current uses, future options, and policy considerations." (2019): 1-10.

4.3 The Risks of Digital Diplomacy

4.3.1 Freedom from the Internet and social media

Linkages, information about norms in other nations, and comparing regulations and best practices notes are all made easier by information globalization. On the other hand, both positive and negative implication have resulted from the new communication technologies.[75]Terrorist and xenophobic organizations use them to agitate and attract supporters. The Internet is also viewed as a platform utilized in the spread of terrorism, extremism, and foreign ideologies. Then, anyone, be it world governments diverse extremist organizations, can become a part of social networks, with the latter disseminating their standards, values, and purposes, whatever they are. Those who criticize digital diplomacy claim that independence from social media and Internet, such as the "Trojan Horse," is dangerous.[76]

The Internet increases the amount of interests and voices engaged in formulating international policy, making international decision-making more complicated and restricting a country's sole authority over the process. Distinct state and regime players, each with their own interests, ambitions, and values, put together different security scenarios. The states must address external dangers that could come from either other states or international actors which may include terrorists, and which must be addressed by a state

It must also maintain security in the wake of various threats from within the country, order, territory, or demographic integrity.

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[75]Lewis, Dev. "Digital diplomacy." Gateway House (2014).
[76]Gruszczak, Artur. "Intelligence Tradecraft in the European Union." In Intelligence Security in the European Union, pp. 67-94. Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2016.

To curb the spread of terrorism, Twitter shut down 1.2 million terrorist-linked accounts between August 2015 and December 2017. However, world government continue to put pressure on Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube on their inability to effectively manage their fight against terrorist propaganda.[77]

4.3.2 Lack of knowledge about the usage of the Internet and social media

On the Internet, there really are no secrecy in practice.

People's perceptions of the world and how we communicate, are altering because of the social media revolution. It has not only made it simpler for communication between governments and embassies and the public, but has also increased public awareness of the positive and negative effects such that a single word, Facebook, comment, tweet, image, or video can have in a short period of time. Foreign ministries must train their ambassadors in utilization of digital communication tools to counteract the perils of the digital era and prevent more damage. In their diplomatic missions, large countries can hire permanent employees who are experts in dealing with scientific and technology-related issues.[78] Today, users of digital diplomacy need continuous training and practice to be able to adopt any new digital technologies soonest, even if they are complicated, to be able to achieve the relevant knowledge in using them and preventing risk of this nature.[79]

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[77]Cullather, Nick. "The foreign policy of the calorie." The American Historical Review 112, no. 2 (2017): 337-364.

[78]Bhola, Corneliu, and Lu Jiang. "Social media and public diplomacy." Digital diplomacy: Theory and practice (2019): 71-88.

[79]Bakir, Vian, and Andrew McStay. "Fake news and the economy of emotions: Problems, causes, solutions." Digital journalism 6, no. 2 (2018): 154-175.

4.3.3 Disagreements

Because all governments and regimes must use whatever means possible, including use of force in enforcement of law, maintaining internal order, and protecting the state from external threats, all states are essentially austere. The global period of the twenty-first century, on the other hand, is marked by a sense that no one is in charge.[80] Even powerful state in the world cannot get its way into many issues. 1989 did not mark the end of history, but rather the start of a new era in state-people relations. Globalization is viewed as being driven by the Internet and services based on it. As a result, the globalized world's reproof is, in some ways, a rebuke to the digital world. Information on international incidents, which would normally take hours or days for government officials and media to disseminate, is now aired live throughout the world via radio and television, as well as the social media and Internet. The advent of social media cast doubts over diplomacy's aspect of "secrecy." Diplomats are not assured that their opinions will not leak to unintended audiences and making it difficult to remain anonymous.[81] The immediate dissemination of information regarding distant and nearby events is more likely to be a risk than a gain for policymakers.

The "period of concealment" appears to have been replaced by the "era of distribution," in which ordinary citizens spend hours each day reading, marking, and critiquing government programs, then expressing their opinions on the Internet and through social media. However, there is a lack of communication culture on digital platforms, where many diplomats and political players are

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[80]Al Zaabi, Khulood Ali Jumah Al Jarman, and DuškoTomić. "New security paradigm–the use of social networks as a form of threat to the national security state." Annals of Disaster Risk Sciences: ADRS 1, no. 1. (2018): 27-33.
[81]Adesina, O. S., and J. Summers. "Foreign policy in an era of digital diplomacy. Cogent Social Sciences, 3, 1–13." (2021).

subjected to insults as well as aggressive and dangerous messages, resulting in numerous disagreements. There is also a lot of information on the Internet that is of dubious origin.

Because of how they work, social media has a significant impact, and it would be beneficial to offer as much as possible when the truth emerges. The information disseminate, on the other hand, is characterized by lies and defamation. Digital frustration is directly connected to the lack of digital ethics.[82]

4.3.4 The Culture of Anonymity

Culture of anonymity is another digital diplomacy issue, which allows anyone to impersonate someone else and pose a danger to specific individuals. Moreover, the dissemination of inconsistent, even misleading information can lead to serious conflicts because of the culture of anonymity. The ability of leaders to manage the impending crises may be hampered by widespread misinformation on the Internet.[83] Due to abuse of social media, the pages have to be frequently updated to ensure post are coming from a reliable source. In the recent past, Facebook has been facing harsh criticism, the most serious in its 14-years history of privacy practices and how it manages user data, known as the "Cambridge Analytica Data Scandal." This analytical data firm partnered with US President Donald Trump's campaign team and the Brexit winning campaign to gather data from millions of American voters in order to construct a more sophisticated software program to that would forecast and influence2016 US presidential elections. Cambridge Without their knowledge, Analytical had access to the data of nearly 87 million Facebook users.[84]

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[82]Chen, Po-chi. "Cyber, public diplomacy as china's smart power strategy in an information age: a case study of anti-carrefour incident in 2008." International Journal of China Studies 3, no. 2 (2017): 189-217.

[83]Fitsanakis, Joseph, and Micah-Sage Bolden. "Social networking as a paradigm shift in tactical intelligence collection." Mediterranean Council for Intelligence Studies Yearbook, Greece (2012): 28-40.

[84]Kent, Michael L., and Maureen Taylor. "Building dialogic relationships through the World Wide Web." Public relations review 24, no. 3 (2019): 321-334.

4.3.5 Hacking

Many cyber optimists have become cyber pessimists due to the increasing digital world pervasiveness and future threats of accessing by sensitive organizations. Hacking has been a source of concern since the advent of Internet. A good number of heads of states and governments, as well as a good number of diplomats around the world have in a number of timed fallen victims to digital diplomacy, and their careers have rarely been jeopardized as a result. State and non-state adversaries attempt to hack into government networks in order to obtain information helpful to them aims. There is no success in managing information in the ICT era, but there is success in learning how to employ inefficient forms. When confidential communications becomes public, it has the potential to have an instant and profound impact on world politics by tarnishing the image of states and their leaders.[85]

The United Nations, NATO, the Commonwealth, the G7, and the G20 have prioritized cyber security in their diplomatic and political agendas. Most world countries have implemented strategies and regulations on national cyber security. Nonetheless, the threats are becoming more sophisticated. Black-hat hacking secret hackers have expanded the groups concerned about exploiting cybernetic vulnerabilities in well-organized terrorists as well as criminal groups, defense forces and government security service. To worsen the situation, most internet services and communication infrastructure are not in the hands of authorities, but in private ownership, with operators dispersed across multiple worldwide jurisdictions. In 2016, LinkedIn was hacked, which exposed 117 million credentials[86] The breach, which began in 2012, culminated in the

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[85]Lewis, Dev. "Digital diplomacy." Gateway House (2014).
[86]Rose, Chris. "The security implications of ubiquitous social media." International Journal of Management & Information Systems (IJMIS) 15, no. 1 (2018).

hacking of the majority of the accounts, with data including emails and passwords being sold on the dark web.

In 2018, Facebook was the victim of a cyber-attack that penetrated the system and revealed the personal information of over 50 million users. In addition, system software flaws, including Mark Zuckerberg, accounts where attackers gained system access through various social sites such as Instagram and Spotify. This was the largest breach in the 14 years of history since 2004, when it was created. This menace infringed on users' privacy and posed a significant threat to the economy and security of the country.[87]

The cyber-attack will have a negative influence on information integrity, as well as people, residential areas, businesses, and governments. The Critical National Information Infrastructure (CNII), which affects several government areas such as ICT, finance, and security and defense, has been disabled because of the increased awareness of the problem. To attain their goal in cybercrime, all of the criminals entrenched the talents of more effectively manipulating hardware and software and launched attacks against the benefit party. Cybercriminals may now breach any system and sabotage a stage from an unseen location without leaving a trace thanks to technological advancements and the Internet. Furthermore, through utilizing the ideology, internet aided criminal behavior such as scamming, propaganda dissemination, and terrorism recruitment.

In today's world, cybercrime is greatly considered among government's non-traditional threats. Usage of phishing practices to entice innocent victims to disclose personal and private data through email is one-way criminals utilize social media to harm victims. The phishing technique

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[87]Vasi, Ion Bogdan, and David Strang. "Civil liberty in America: The diffusion of the municipal bill of rights resolutions after the passage of the USA PATRIOT Act." American Journal of Sociology 114, no. 6 (2019): 1716-1764.

manipulates victims by making them believe the offenders are from a respectable business. Victims will reply by updating their personal account information by clicking the link once they have been contacted. The link will take users to a fake web that looks exactly like the real one (same algorithm and web interface).This is where the cybercriminal will save the victim's data, such as the username and password for the victim's secured accounts.[88]

4.3.6 As Image-making Tool

The need to maintain the medium is one of the few drawbacks of digital diplomacy. As a result, politicians and diplomats must guarantee that their social media profiles are updated on a regular basis. This is done to keep their audiences and viewers up to date on their actions and to show that they are willing to use social media as a platform to engage in diplomatic relations. Politicians and diplomats will be assumed to be utilizing social media as an image-making instrument to attract the attention of today's technologically savvy generation. One of the disadvantages of updating social media, aside from the time commitment, is a lack of resources. Diplomats believe that these two challenges need to be addressed if social media is to be maintained. Diplomats are now under pressure to find resources and information to share and publish due to the ongoing requirement to update in order to strengthen engagements.[89]

4.3.7 Misinterpretation and Judgment

Another problem of digital diplomacy is human misinterpretation.

The sensory part has combined tasks of having to recognize (to be aware of), organize (to gather and store information), and to interpret (to bond with knowledge learned) the gained information

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[88]Tullah, Stephen. "Role of social media in citizen participation in transparent governance." PhD diss., University of Nairobi, 2014.

[89]Walsh, James P. "Social media and moral panics: Evaluating the impact of technological change on the reaction of society." International Journal of Cultural Studies 23, no. 6 (2020): 840-859.

are referred to as perception. A group of people could provoke it or it could come from the person's heart. In this case, social media has served as a forum for forming positive or negative opinions on any related posting. Both perspectives will have an impact on users who develop a different type of thought, mostly followers of a well-known social media account. It can also be used as a technique to shape someone's perspective of something or someone.

The former First Lady of the United States, Michelle Obama, tweeted about the kidnapping by Islamic Boko Haram, of 276 Nigerian school girls. Using her hashtag, 'Bring Back Our Girls, 'she intended to draw attention to the issue and address a top priority for US foreign policy. On the other hand, her tweet enraged several readers and drew criticism from both her and the US government.[90]Users quickly mocked the US's use of drone strikes against suspected terrorists with the hashtag 'Bring Back Your Drones.' Therefore, ambassadors and governments must deal with the severe criticism from the outspoken public. On all of the updated posts, US President Donald Trump received a lot of harsh feedback on social media. Diplomats and state representatives would have to be immune to such netizen's opinions and must confront the ensuing crisis.

Aside from the headwear, social media may offer readers with incorrect and inaccurate information. For example, studies have demonstrated that during disasters, there was a circulation of incorrect information in a circle of social media platforms. During the disaster in Japan in 2011, many people shared and retweeted pleas for help, even after the victims had been rescued. During the disaster phase, tweets and postings about the incorrect place of hazard and emergency may also arise. This type of sharing and uploading can make things more difficult for performers, rescuers, and even the public, who rely on social media as a source of information. It could cause

[90]Vasi, Ion Bogdan, and David Strang. "Civil liberty in America: The diffusion of the municipal bill of rights resolutions after the passage of the USA PATRIOT Act." American Journal of Sociology 114, no. 6 (2019): 1716-1764.

delays in the rescue related missions, jeopardizing the safety of first-on-the-scene rescuers and the public at large

As a result, governments and other related agencies must build procedures and protocols to filter and analyze available information, excluding incorrect information posts that have caused concern among Malaysians and given her adversaries may use the opportunity to strike him via cyberspace. Internet technology has transformed international relations behavior and shaped the course of the state into a modern environment. Unlike the traditional way of thinking about states - the strategic and geopolitical approach - the development has created a new alliance structure as a significant participant in global politics - non-state actors. As technological and developmental advancement occur worldwide, states will continue comparing their levels with others to show their advantageous power concept by controlling the information.[91]

4.4 Conclusion

Since digital diplomacy does not necessarily require much financial investment and comes at a low cost comparing with other diplomatic methods, it is found attractive for governments, ministries of foreign affairs, and embassies due to the low budget damages. Digital diplomacy works in favour of all kinds states, but more advantageous to small states, that can help them achieve the intended goals internationally. On the other hand, Digital diplomacy has some negative implications especially in relations to threats and risks. The freedom that is generated by Internet and social media can enable sharing of different norms, regardless of being dangerous. That is the

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[91]Sevin, Efe, and Diana Ingenhoff. "Public diplomacy on social media: Analyzing networks and content." International Journal of Communication 12 (2018): 23.

reason many governments around the world condemn internet platforms for not doing more to stop the spread of terrorism, extremism, and the intentional imposition of anti-democratic ideology.

In addition, a lack of knowledge in use of digital technology, social media and the Internet, can have some implications such as disagreements and can lead to job terminations. A single remark, comment, twee, a like, or photo could have a negative implication, and therefore digital diplomacy users must take utmost care regarding what is posted, particularly on social media. People can now use digital media to express themselves. Nonetheless, they have a very low communication culture, with insults, aggressive, and threatening communications that cause various conflicts. As a result, this chapter concludes that H1: Both the Kenyan and Rwandan governments confront unique problems and opportunities in adopting fast changing technologies.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA ANALYSIS PRESENTATION

5.1 Introduction

The chapter gives a discussion of data analysis, interpretations and presentation. The analysis of quantitative data was done by use of descriptive statistics while analysis of qualitative data was done by use of content analysis. Presentation of data was done through frequency tables, percentages and frequency distributions in order to easily understand and interpret the findings. The study had a sample population of 190 respondents. The study targets Officers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the office of the president, Ambassadors, Renown bloggers, various Academicians, Immigration Departments, International Affairs Journalists, the Civil Society Groups from both Kenya and Rwanda are all in charge or involved in dealing with diplomatic matters either at the policy making or policy implementation level. Of the sample population 174 respondents completed their questionnaires making a response rate of 91.6%, which according to Mugenda & Mugenda (2012), these response rate is considered sufficient since a 50% rate of response is enough for analysing and also reporting, a 60% rate of response is good whereas 70% and over is considered excellent.

5.2 Demographic Information

This section presents participant's demographic information. Information analyzed under this section includes; gender age, period of service and institution that the participants worked with.

5.2.1 Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Respondents were asked to categorize themselves according to their gender. This was needed in order to ensure that both male and female participants were equally represented.

Table 5.1: Gender Group

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	107	61.5

	67	38.5
Female		
Total	**174**	**100**

Results show that majority (61.5%) of the participants were males whereas 38.5% were females. Based on the results, this study concludes that, the research ensured a fair involvement of both genders, thus implying that the study results were unlikely to suffer from gender bias.

5.2.2 Age Bracket

Respondents were asked to indicate their age bracket. This was sought in view of ensuring fair involvement of participants from various age groups.

Table 5.2: Age bracket

Age	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Below 25 years	35	20.1
26-35 years	62	35.6
36-45 years	42	24.1
46-55years	20	11.5
above 55 years	15	8.6
Total	**174**	**100**

Results show that 35.6% of participants were aged between 26-35 years, 24.1% of participants were aged between 36-45 years, 20.1% of participants were aged below 25 years, and 11.5% of participants were aged between 46-55 years whereas 8.6% of participants were aged above 55 years. Drawing from the results it is evident that majority of the participants were youth aged 26-35 years, however it is evident that participants from various age groups were fairly represented in this study.

5.2.3 Work Category

Participants were asked to indicate the institution they were affiliated to.

Table 5.3: Work Category

Work Category	**Frequency**	**Percentage**

Ministry of Foreign Affairs	22	12.6
Office of the President	11	6.3
Embassy/High commission	21	12.1
Academicians	40	23
Bloggers	10	5.7
Immigration Department	14	8
Journalists	20	11.5
Member of the Civil Society	36	20.7
Total	**174**	**100**

Results show that 23.0% were drawn from academicians, 20.7% were members of the civil society, 12.6% were drawn from ministry of foreign affairs, 12.1% were drawn from embassy/high commission, 11.5% were drawn from journalists, 8.0% were drawn from immigration department, and 6.3% were drawn from office of the president while 5.7% were drawn from bloggers. Drawing from the above findings, it is evident that there was fair proportionate of diplomatic group representation in this study.

5.2.4 Period of Service

Participants were required to clarify on how long they have worked with the institution

Table 5.4: Period of Service

Period of service	Frequency	Percentage
Below 1 year	36	20.7
2-5 years	68	39.1
5-7 years	26	14.9
above 7 years	44	25.3
Total	174	100

Results show that majority (39.1%) of the participants had served with the current institution for a period of 2-5 years, 25.3% of the respondents indicated above 7 years, 20.7% of the respondents indicated below 1 year while 14.9% of the respondents indicated 5-7 years. Results show that respondents had served in their current position for a relatively longer period meaning that the information given regarding the study is more credible.

5.3 Importance of Social Media as a Tool in Facilitating Diplomatic Engagements in Kenya and Rwanda Public Diplomacy

5.3.1 Use of Social Media for Diplomatic Engagements

Participants were asked to indicate whether they used social media for their country's diplomatic engagements. From their reports, it was established that social media has become an avenue for various diplomatic institutions in Kenya and Rwanda uses social media tool to promote communication and diplomacy in both countries. For instance, the need for diplomatic travel to attend International General Meetings has now been reduced and highly complimented by virtual zoom sessions and document sharing. The study further revealed that social media tools are currently used to advocate for social justice, governance, and discussion on contemporary issues within various regions. The study found that Covid-19 has forced foreign ministries to adapt and harness to digital technology. Diplomatic institutions such as the embassies/high commission, office of the president and ministry of foreign affairs were using various social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram, telegram and Snapchat.

5.3.2 Frequency in Utilization of Social Media Outlets

The study inquired on how frequent does the institution dealing with diplomatic matters used social media outlets.

Table 5.5: Frequency in Utilization of Social Media Outlets

Frequency of Social Media Utilization	Frequency	Percentage
Several times a day	106	60.9
Once a day	14	8
Several times a week	35	20.1
Once a week	9	5.2
Several times a month	10	5.7
Total	**174**	**100**

From the study findings, majority of the participants (60.9%) indicated several times a day, 20.1% of the participants indicated several times a week, 8.0% of the participants indicated once a day 5.7% of the participants indicated several times a month while 5.2% of the participants indicated once a week. This implies majority used social media outlets several times a day.

Further, the study inquired on reasons as to why they used social media. Interviewees reported that Social media platform is an effective interactive tool that diplomatic institutions can utilize to make diplomatic clarification that concerns the public interest. Descriptive reports also show that Social media was used by diplomatic institution to air out issues. Social media tools simplified ways of conversation and reaching agreements. Further, social media was used to acquire current information concerning contemporary issues thus enabling the institution to get real time information as opposed to dwelling on mainstream media.

The researchers wanted to see if using social media helps to improve a country's image, foreign policies, culture, public engagement, transparency and good governance. Descriptive reports from interviewees show that, proper social media makes states visible to the outside world. In addition, use of social media platforms is instrumental in promoting national heritage. In relation to good governance, interviewees reported that, the growth of social medial has enhanced the awareness amongst many citizens, this could be observed thought increased citizen involvement in governance process. Interviewees reported that concerns relating to accountability in managements can be raised and replied thus promoting transparency and public trust.

In a verbatim, one of the interviewee reported the following;

> "Social media is a medium for state recognition, it allows states to represent
> themselves in performative and persuasive ways to cultivate state identity, but in a

way that seeks the affirmation and recognition of others. Essentially, how a state represents itself and recognizes others takes place in an inter-subjective and fluid process facilitated by social media, and this process can legitimize or rule out foreign policy possibilities. Through the transcendence of social media beyond space and time limitations of traditional diplomacy, new opportunities for dialogue, mutual recognition, and unprecedented cooperation can be constructed by being attuned to dynamic representations of state identity."

5.3.3 Platforms which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and High commission/Embassies subscribed to

Interviewees were asked to clarify on platforms, which the ministry of foreign affairs and high commission/embassies subscribed to. Descriptive reports from interviewees show that, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and High Commission/Embassies had subscribed to Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Diplomats were forced to agree to have all of their meetings online due to social alienation and a loss in human contacts. From the interviews, one of the respondent stated the following:

"The use of social media platform challenges traditional notions of diplomacy according to which it occurs through formal channels of communication and informal face-to-face social engagements. Diplomats are increasingly relying on Twitter in their daily practice to communicate with their counterparts. These exchanges occur in front of a global audience, providing an added level of scrutiny that is unique to this form of communication."

5.3.4 Whether the President Have Social Media Handles

Respondents reported that both Kenya and Rwanda governments utilized social media platforms in their diplomatic engagements. The Rwandan president utilized social media accounts (twitter accounts) and actively. The study also revealed that the Kenyan President deactivated his social sites and his communication is done via the statehouse social sites. There is a state house twitter handle, which is managed by state house communication office, usually the account handled matters relating to presidential affairs.

Majority reported that, the manner in which the account was being handled is fair given that, once the communication is made, all the followers on twitter gets instant notifications, others added that the way in which the president responds to issues on social media demonstrates high sense of democracy and diplomacy. Social media is powerful, yet this potential is largely overlooked, thus a detriment of a deeper understanding of post-modern diplomacy.

The study inquired on whether the Ambassadors were being by passed by the use of social media phenomenon. From the reports, participants indicated that Ambassadors roles were being by passed to some extent. Majority reported that most of the Ambassadors have not capitalized on use of social media given that majority have inactive accounts. In verbatim, one of the respondents stated the following;

> "Ambassadors have failed to showcase what they advocate, there lacks consistency
> in communication on how states interrelate for instance, participants highlighted
> that very few citizens from both states can articulate on business opportunities or
> diplomatic progress made between Kenya and Rwanda."

However, some of the participants highlighted that the problem of Twitter diplomacy is everlasting presence of the third party spectators who immediately show their support or dissatisfaction. Others had no idea on how Ambassadors roles could be undermined through excessive utilization of social media platforms.

Interviewees reported that, locally the social media platforms helped governments engage with citizens directly. Through information exchange, the government could learn and gauge citizen expectations. Social media has played a key role in promoting public voice in governance and calling out to end bad leadership. Governments could make clarification on position that concern particular administrative issues.

At international level social media platforms helped states to promote regional integration and preservation of national cultures, also the international community can get to know what has happened locally. However, mixed results also emerged on effectiveness of social media tools in promoting states accountability at international levels. According to one of the participants, failure by the IMF-Africa to respond to Kenyans call to have the state denied the applied loan, raises concern on extent to which such tools can be embraced in diplomatic relations while factoring in interests of all stakeholders.

5.4 Whether Harnessing Social Media can positively influence the Conduct Diplomacy During and Post Covid19 Pandemic.

5.4.1 Usefulness with social media sites during Covid19 pandemic

The study sought to establish how useful the social media sites were during Covid19 pandemic.

Table 5.6: Usefulness with social media sites during Covid19 pandemic

Usefulness of social Media	Frequency	Percentage
To a greater extent	113	64.9

To a moderate extent	49	28.2
Not useful at all	12	6.9
Total	**174**	**100.0**

From the study findings, majority of the participants (64.9%) agreed that to a greater extent, that social media sites are indeed useful during Covid19 pandemic, 28.2% of the respondents indicated to a moderate extent while 6.9% of the indicated not useful at all. This implies that social media sites are of great value during Covid19 pandemic.

5.4.2 Whether social media changed the way traditional mode in diplomatic engagements

During and after the Covid19, respondents were questioned if social media had changed the way diplomatic contacts were carried out.

Table 5.7: Whether social media changed the way traditional mode in diplomatic engagements

Social Media Change	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	133	76.4
No	41	23.6
Total	174	100.0

According to the majority of respondents (76.4 percent), social media had affected the way diplomats conduct themselves during the Covid19, while 23.6 percent disagreed. This means that the way diplomatic engagements are carried out during the Covid19 has been changed by the nature of social media. Participants also explained that the Covid19 pandemic has ushered the whole world in new era that relies more on digital communication and while limiting tradition forms of communication. Therefore, for states to operate under common platform, each state has a duty to promote digital communication.

5.4.3 Whether the use of social media tool will continue after Covid19 Pandemic

Interviewees reported that moving forward; states have no option other than to embrace social media communication tools. Social media communication tools have made the world to look as a global village by limiting the geographical distance. It is cost effective as it reduces individual need to travel physically and attend government meetings, however this new trend subjects less developed states into a bigger challenge, as currently majority of lack adequate ICT infrastructure.

Interviewees reported that Social media utilities played a critical role in making it possible to hold an online meeting (zoom or Google's meet) that chatted the way forward in curbing the pandemic. Others added that social media pop-up massages were instrumental in sensitizing the public on the essence of taking precautionary measures that helped curb the spreading of the disease.

5.4.4 Availability of Affordable Gadgets and Internet Connectivity Devices

Respondents were asked to clarify whether there are available affordable gadgets and internet connectivity to the masses made social media accessible.

Table 5.8: Availability of affordable gadgets and internet connectivity devices

Affordable Gadgets	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	137	78.7
No	37	21.3
Total	**174**	**100**

From the study results, majority (78.7%) of the respondents agreed there were affordable gadgets and internet connectivity, which made social media accessible to masses while 21.3% were of the contrary opinion. This is an indication that availability of gadgets largely affected the usage of social media by the citizens.

5.5 The Main Challenges and Prospects Faced by Governments of Kenya and Rwanda in Utilizing the Rapidly Changing Technologies

Interviewees were asked to clarify who is responsible for the authenticity of the information disseminated on social media. Interviewees reported that Communication Commission of Kenya and Rwanda, Social site owners and account owners are responsible for all information being posted. However other also reported that there lack strict policies that govern and controlled information dissemination on social media sites.

Interviewees were asked to indicate some of the challenges encountered by their government in use of social media. From the study findings, Interviewees reported that lack of adequate user controls, inadequate communication infrastructure in remote areas, lack basic skills in ICT amongst some officials and cyber bullying that raised physiological healthy concerns amongst the users.

Descriptive reports also show that, trolling, website hacking and ability to quickly curb misleading information "propaganda" was also a common challenge that institution dealing with diplomatic engagements faced. Others reported that accounts could be hacked and put on sale by hackers who might as well leak private conversations, which demonstrate the vulnerability of modern technologies and unpreparedness for this dawn.

5.5.1 Measures employed to overcome Challenges encountered in use of social media

Interviewees were asked to indicate some of the measures applied by the different foreign policy makers and those responsible for information dissemination to overcome the above challenges. From their reports, Interviewees indicated that authentication of information was among the pre-caution measures put in place to limit social media challenges. This was made possible through

internal administrative controls also proper verification and content censoring which was always conducted before posting. This was done in view of limiting information bias. Other measures involved arresting the culprits and charging them in courts of law.

Interviewees were asked whether there are any explicit social media regulations governing the use of social media in government departments during the formation and conduct of Kenyan and Rwandan diplomatic relations. From their viewpoint, interviewees reported that those governments have put some regulations that seek to control the scope. Also the government continually keeps on holding advocacy campaigns that seek to thwart cyber bullying and strengthening institution that promote mental health. Moving forward the governments are putting more measures (at institutional level) that regulate handlers in order to reduce the danger propaganda that may mislead public and taint the institutions image.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The chapter gives a presentation of the research findings summary, the findings discussion, conclusion and recommendations. The study sought to determine how social media is a tool in facilitating diplomatic engagements in East Africa's public diplomacy, to assess whether harnessing social media can positively influence the conduct of diplomacy during and post covid19 pandemic in Kenya and Rwanda. To examine the primary challenges and opportunities that Kenya and Rwanda governments confront in utilizing constantly changing technologies. The research discussions are presented according to the study objectives.

6.2 Discussion

The study established that social media has rapidly transformed not only our social lives, but also political and international relations. Various diplomatic institution in Kenya and Rwanda were using social media tool to promote communication and diplomacy. The reasons for embracing social media were that, the platform is an effective interactive tool that diplomatic institutions can utilize to make diplomatic clarification that concern the public interest. Descriptive reports also show that Social media was used by diplomatic institutions in Kenya and Rwanda governments to use to air out issues, to advocate for social justice and governance and hold discussion on contemporary issues within various regions.

Descriptive reports show that, proper social media use, makes states visible to the outside world. In addition, use of social media platforms is instrumental in promoting national image and heritage. In relation to good governance, reports show that the growth of social medial has enhanced the

awareness amongst many citizens, this can be observed thought increased citizen involvement in governance process. Interviewees reported that concerns relating to accountability in managements can be raised and replied thus promoting transparency and public trust. The use of social media by Kenya and Rwanda defies traditional diplomatic techniques, which have typically been conducted through formal channels of communication and informal face-to-face social encounters. Diplomats are increasingly using Twitter to interact with their counterparts on a daily basis. These discussions take place in front of a worldwide audience, which adds an extra layer of scrutiny to this type of communication.

At international level social media platforms helped states to promote regional integration and preservation of national cultures, also the international community can get to know what is happening locally. However, mixed results also emerged on effectiveness of social media tools in promoting states accountability at international levels. According to one of the participants, failure by the IMF-Africa to respond to Kenyans call to have the state denied the applied loan, raises concern on extent to which such tools can be embraced in diplomatic relations while factoring in interests of all stakeholders.

The study established that social media sites are of great value during Covid19 pandemic. Social media acts as a significant platform for disseminating information on disease data, treatments, and prevention strategies, as well as nutritional guidance and virus transmission methods. However, conspiracy theories regarding the virus's origin, transmission, and widespread purchases of facemasks were among the negatives shared over social media networks.

Descriptive reports also show that, inability to quickly curb misleading information "propaganda" was also a common challenge that institution dealing with diplomatic engagements faced. Others

reported that accounts could be hacked and put on sale by hackers who might as well leak private conversations, which demonstrate how vulnerable modern technologies and lack of preparedness for force majeure are.

Reports show that authentication of information was among the pre-caution measures put in place to limit social media challenges; this was made possible through internal administrative controls also proper verification and content censoring was always conducted before posting, this was done in view of limiting information bias. Other measures involved arresting the culprits and charging them in courts.

6.3 Conclusion

Social media is becoming an important medium for diplomats to get information on political, diplomatic, and economic developments. Additionally, the globalization of the social media has created borderless states whereby diplomats transact their businesses including diplomatic engagements without necessarily traveling to those places physically, as it used to be in the past. Just like many other countries worldwide, Rwanda and Kenya use social media in the conduct of their diplomatic business and social media has undoubtedly enhanced effective communication and diplomatic interactions between the two countries. To understand the significance of media and communication, many countries in the world have established departments responsible for Government Communications, to among others, accelerate dissemination of information to targeted audiences.

Additionally, the widespread use of social media platforms has brought major transformation in diplomatic engagement, that are no longer limited through bilateral talks and discussions but

embracing the use social media technologies for diplomatic or other endeavors, especially during this COVID-19 pandemic where the usual physical diplomatic engagements are limited.

Social media has further facilitated interactions between governments including Rwanda and Kenya without necessarily relying on the Ambassadors or diplomats as an intermediary. In the current era of social media, countries, Rwanda and Kenya inclusive, have been able to exchange real-time information on various issues of mutual interest using social media (twitter, Facebook, etc.) without necessarily conveying those messages through Ambassadors or diplomats as it used to be in the past. Social media has also eased communication between Governments Whereby Governments have been able in some instances to obtain immediate response from other Governments on issues of concern without necessarily relying on the use of traditional diplomacy as it used to be.

In Rwanda and Kenya's context, the use of social media has been a critical component especially during these times of the COVID-19 pandemic whereby the two countries have been able to maintain diplomatic interactions by using social media platforms including video conferencing and other social media tools.

Although social media has played a big role in enhanced diplomatic interactions between countries, Rwanda and Kenya inclusive, it is important to note that social media has its downsides including the spread of fake news with potential to cause diplomatic uneasiness between states. Additionally, social media users including governments are prone to cyber hacking, where cybercriminals use computer technology to steal information for malicious and exploitative purposes, which could later result into diplomatic blunders, e.g. the case of WikiLeaks, which portends a big risk to the conduct of diplomatic business.

6.4 Recommendations

Diplomats must be prepared to respond quickly to the behaviors of states and societies with which they have dealt all along. Given that, the outside society is quickly shifting to use of new technologies. There is need to enhance the use of social media communication in the process of the formulation and conducting of Kenya's and Rwanda's diplomatic relations.

Given that there is laxity in implementation of policies that regulate social media communication and thus the need to strengthen regulatory institutions, Governments need to increase or embrace full utilization of social media communication platforms. It is important to engage public deeper to achieve ideas how to promote better economic growth for both countries.

Given that technology and social media can damage or repair trust, diplomats must ensure quality communication controls to avoid controversies. There is need to train government diplomatic staff on how to utilize social media platforms to avoid conflicts and more incentives must be put in place to promote affordability and embracement of social medial platforms.

6.5 Areas for Future Research

There is need to come up with comprehensive statistical data that could support qualitative information, the research should consider broadening the issue of social media to capture all other platforms such as the Twitter Facebook and Instagram and YouTube.

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APPENDICES

Appendix i: RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

Introduction

Dear Respondent,

I am Derek Muaka, a Master of Arts (Diplomacy) student at the University of Nairobi carrying out research project.

This interview guide is meant to collect data for academic research on '**THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN FACILITATING DIPLOMATIC ENGAGEMENTS IN EAST AFRICA, A COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY OF KENYA AND RWANDA'.** The research will be in the fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the Degree of Master of Arts in Diplomacy.

Your input is greatly appreciated and the information obtained shall be treated with utmost confidentiality it deserves. This questionnaire can also be found online google chrome using this link; https://forms.gle/wnWXKyimsgDfAxRd7

Contacts;muakaderek1@students.uonbi.ac.ke or dmuakas@gmail.com 0732949872, 0722325969

INTERVIEW GUIDE/QUESTIONNAIRE

Kindly answer the following questions as honestly as possible to the best of your knowledge and this interview is voluntary.

Demographic Information

1. What is your gender?

Male ( ) Female ( )

2. What is your age bracket?

Below 25 years ( ) 26-35 years ( ) 36-45 years ( ) 46-55years ( ) above 55 years ( )

3. What category are you in?

Ministry of Foreign Affairs( )   Office of the President ( )   Embassy/High commission ( )

Academicians( ) Bloggers( )Immigration Department()Journalists ( )   Member of the Civil Society ( )

4. For how long have you worked in this institution?

Below 1 year ( ) 2-5 years ( ) 5-7 years ( ) above 7 years ( )

How Social Media is a Tool in Facilitating Diplomatic Engagements in Kenya and Rwanda Public Diplomacy.

5. Do you use Social Media for diplomatic engagements?

……………………………………………………………………………………………… ………………………………………………………………………………………………

6.In your order of preference, which of the social media networking sites below do you use quite often?

 Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, others specify

 1……………..... 4………………..

 2………………. 5……………….

 3………………. 6………………..

7. What is the frequency of your use of the above social media outlets?

Several times a day [ ]   Once a day [ ]

Several times a week [ ] Once a week [ ] Several times a month[ ]

8. Why use Social Media?

……………………………………………………………………………………………… ……………………………………………………………………………………………… ………………………………………………………………………………………………

9. Does Kenya and Rwanda government effectively use social media?

……………………………………………………………………………………………… ………………………………………………………………………………………………

10. Does the use of social media promote your country's image, national culture, foreign policies, public participation, good governance, and transparency? If yes, comment.

………
………
………

11. Which platforms is your Ministry of Foreign Affairs and High commission/Embassies subscribed to?

………
……

12. Does the President have social media handles?

………
……

13. Does the President engage himself or has handlers?

………
……

14. If yes how is it carried out effectively?

………
……

15. Are Ambassadors being bypassed by the use of social media phenomenon?

………
……

16. How does the use of social media affect the governance of Kenya and Rwanda on local and international arena?

………
……

Whether Harnessing Social Media can positively influence the Conduct of Diplomacy During and Post Covid19 Pandemic.

17. How useful were the social media sites during Covid19 pandemic?

To a greater extent [ ] To a moderate extent [ ]   Not useful at all [ ]

18. In your opinion do you think social media has changed the way diplomatic engagements are carried out during and after the Covid19?

Yes [ ]   No [ ]

19. If yes above, do you think this trend will continue even after Covid19 Pandemic? Kindly elaborate a bit.

……
……

20. What aspects of social media has made it the best avenue of diplomatic engagement during Covid19?

……
……

21. Is availability of affordable gadgets and internet connectivity to the masses made social media accessible?

Yes [ ]   No [ ]

The Main Challenges and Prospects Faced by Governments of Kenya and Rwanda in Utilizing the Rapidly Changing Technologies.

22. Who is responsible for the authenticity of the information disseminated on social media?

……
……

23. What are some of the challenges encountered by your government in use of social media? Please explain.

……
……

24. What measures, if any have been employed by various foreign policy makers or those responsible for dissemination of information to overcome the above challenges?

……
……

25. Is there any specific social media policies guiding the application of social media in the government departments in the process of formulation and Conduct of Kenya's and Rwanda's diplomatic relations?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………

26. Please give any recommendations to enhance the use of social media communication in the process of the formulation and conduct of Kenya's and Rwanda's diplomatic relations.

…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………

27. Give your general comments or recommendations on the research topic……………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………

Appendix ii: RESEARCH LICENSE

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: 758006

Date of Issue: 08/September/2021

RESEARCH LICENSE

This is to Certify that Mr.. Derek Mnaka of University of Nairobi, has been licensed to conduct research in Nairobi on the topic: THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN FACILITATING DIPLOMATIC ENGAGEMENTS IN EAST AFRICA. A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF KENYA AND RWANDA. for the period ending : 08/September/2022.

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