

Digital Diplomacy: Dimensions and Applications

الدبلوماسية الرقمية: الأبعاد و التطبيقات

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Abstract :

This study, employing both the analytical method and the case study approach, aims to explore how digital diplomacy contributes to the activation of international relations. This is achieved by examining the concept of digital diplomacy, its various applications, and the challenges it faces, supported by exemplary case studies. The study highlights the pivotal role of digital diplomacy in recent years—particularly during global crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic—in facilitating negotiations, resolving conflicts, and coordinating joint efforts to address international challenges. The use of digital platforms and modern technologies in the diplomatic field reflects a fundamental transformation in the way international relations are conducted. These tools contribute to establishing more transparent and efficient channels of communication.

Keywords: Diplomacy. Digital Diplomacy. Digitization. International Relations. Digital International Relations.

ملخص:

تهدف الدراسة باستخدام المنهج التحليلي و منهج دراسة حالة ، إلى التعرض إلى كيفية مساهمة الدبلوماسية الرقمية في تفعيل العلاقات الدولية ، وذلك من خلال معرفة مفهوم الدبلوماسية الرقمية و مختلف تطبيقات الدبلوماسية الرقمية ، و كذلك تحديات الدبلوماسية الرقمية ، مع الإستعانة بأمثلة نموذجية. لقد بينت الدراسة الدور المحوري لهذه الدبلوماسية السنوات الأخيرة، -خاصةً خلال الأزمات العالمية مثل جائحة كوفيد-19، في تسهيل المفاوضات وحل النزاعات وتنسيق الجهود المشتركة لمواجهة التحديات الدولية. إن استخدام المنصات الرقمية والتقنيات الحديثة في المجال الدبلوماسي يعكس تحولاً جذرياً في الطريقة التي تُدار بها العلاقات الدولية، حيث تسهم هذه الأدوات في بناء قنوات تواصل أكثر شفافية وكفاءة.

كلمات مفتاحية:

الدبلوماسية ، الدبلوماسية الرقمية، الرقمنة، العلاقات الدولية، العلاقات الدولية الرقمية.

Introduction:

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In recent years, there has been a radical shift in the practice of diplomacy, with digital technology becoming a central element in enhancing international relations and achieving the strategic objectives of states. Digital diplomacy is a natural evolution in light of the accelerating technological revolution, where countries are increasingly seeking to invest in digital platforms and social media to strengthen their international standing, interact with populations, and address cross-border challenges such as climate change and humanitarian crises. With the aid of artificial intelligence tools, big data analytics, and interactive educational platforms, governments and diplomatic institutions have been able to expand their influence and achieve their goals more efficiently and innovatively. These applications go beyond mere communication; they include promoting culture, negotiating, managing crises, and tracking negative media campaigns. Thus, digital diplomacy has become an essential element in achieving the integration of politics and technology.

The study will explore the topic of digital diplomacy by posing the following main question: How does digital diplomacy contribute to activating international relations? This main question is further subdivided into the following sub-questions: What is the concept of digital diplomacy? What are the applications of digital diplomacy? What are the challenges of digital diplomacy?

To answer these main and sub-questions, the study is divided into three main sections:
Section I: The Concept of Digital Diplomacy.
Section II: Applications of Digital Diplomacy
Section III: Challenges of Digital Diplomacy

I. The Concept of Digital Diplomacy:

Digital diplomacy is considered one of the modern concepts that emerged from the significant advancements in information and communication technology, as well as the advent of the internet and social media platforms. These developments have led to a fundamental transformation in the way international relations are managed. A number of researchers have approached this concept from various perspectives, contributing to the expansion of its understanding and the clarification of its dimensions."

I.1. Definition of Digital Diplomacy:

I.1.1 Definition by Bjola & Holmes:

Digital diplomacy is the use of information and communication technologies, particularly the internet and social media, to achieve the objectives of traditional diplomacy and develop relations between states (Bjola & Holmes, 2015, p. 12).

I.1.2 Definition by Ilan Manor:

Digital diplomacy refers to the adoption of digital communication tools by states and institutions to enhance communication with global audiences and achieve foreign policy goals (Manor, 2019, p. 45).

I.1.3. Definition by Melissen, J:

"Digital diplomacy is the interaction between states, international institutions, and global audiences through digital technologies, allowing for the innovative management of foreign policy" (Melissen, J. (2011). P. 15).

The above definitions share the following common elements:
-Element of Usage: The definitions emphasize the use of digital technology to achieve diplomatic goals.-Element of Audience: They highlight the new role of diplomacy in communicating not only with governments but also with the people.-Element of Speed and Transparency: The definitions reflect the increasing importance of transparency and immediate interaction in the digital age.-Element of Evolution: Digital diplomacy is considered an extension of traditional diplomacy, not a replacement for it.

While the definitions vary depending on the academic or official context, they all agree that digital diplomacy serves as an effective tool for enhancing international relations in the age of technological globalization.

I. 2. Dimensions of the Concept of Digital Diplomacy:

Digital diplomacy represents a modern development in the field of international relations, where states leverage digital technology and social media to promote their foreign policies and achieve their strategic objectives. These tools provide innovative methods for engaging with peoples and governments, opening new dimensions of influence and interaction on the global stage. This article will examine the key dimensions of digital diplomacy and its growing impact.

I.2.1 A Tool for Communication

Digital diplomacy allows states to communicate directly with people and international communities via the internet, bypassing traditional media, thus enhancing their ability to disseminate political and diplomatic messages effectively and quickly while promoting transparency and openness. Social media platforms serve as the main outlets for broadcasting official state positions and engaging directly with the public. These platforms allow diplomats and government officials to release statements and positions in real time, thus strengthening communication with both local and international audiences, and increasing transparency and clarity in foreign policy. Additionally, these platforms enable building direct relationships with followers, contributing to the rapid and interactive spread of diplomatic messages (Manor, 2019, p. 45).

I.2.2 Enhancing the Country's Image

Digital diplomacy is used to enhance the reputation and image of countries on the international stage, a concept known as 'digital soft power.' Through digital platforms and social media, countries aim to spread cultural, political, and economic messages that contribute to improving their image globally. According to Melissen (2011), this digital soft power allows countries to influence international public opinion and garner support by promoting their values and principles, thus enhancing cooperation and international relations without resorting to military or economic power" (Melissen, 2011, pp. 45-47).

One of the fundamental applications of digital diplomacy is the dissemination of culture, values, and national achievements through targeted digital content. Via the internet and social media, countries can present a positive image of their culture, history, and achievements both domestically and internationally. This includes:

-**Cultural Content:** Presenting art, music, literature, and festivals to introduce the world to the country's culture and promote interaction with international audiences.

-**National Values:** Spreading messages about humanitarian values such as democracy, human rights, or sustainable development that reflect the country's priorities.

-**National Achievements:** Showcasing national development projects or successful economic and social initiatives through comprehensive digital content like videos, articles, and blogs.

These strategies help strengthen the positive image of countries, contributing to the building of strong international relations and increasing their influence via "soft power."

I.2.3 Crisis Management

Digital diplomacy facilitates the management of international crises through fast and effective communication with stakeholders. In crisis situations, such as conflicts or natural disasters, digital communication is a vital tool for ensuring the rapid flow of information without delay (Bjola & Holmes, 2015, p. 12).

-**Real-Time Interaction:** Governments and diplomats can use online platforms and social media to announce their positions, provide vital information, and clarify strategies or actions in real time

-**Transparency:** Digital communication helps mitigate the spread of rumors and misinformation by offering official channels to present facts and trustworthy data.

-**International Coordination:** These tools enable swift coordination between states and international organizations to address common crises, whether political, health-related, or environmental.

-Global Audience Reach: Social media enables countries to reach a global audience, ensuring international support and effectively managing crises.

This ability to communicate swiftly and effectively enhances the response of states to crises and helps minimize their negative impacts on the international level. Digital diplomacy provides direct information to the public during emergencies or conflicts, helping provide guidance and immediate notifications that can be critical during such times (Seib, 2012, p. 45).

-Immediate Guidance: Through platforms like Twitter and Facebook, authorities can quickly issue warnings or direct instructions to citizens and international audiences regarding current situations, such as road closures, safe zones, or necessary actions to be taken.

-Continuous Coverage: Social media offers continuous updates on the developments of crises, such as political events or military attacks, helping the public understand the current situation and make informed decisions.

-Public Engagement: Governments and international organizations can interact directly with the public, answering questions or providing clarifications on their positions or policies, thus increasing transparency and reducing public anxiety.

-Wide Reach: This information can reach a global audience, enabling humanitarian organizations and other countries to coordinate faster in providing aid or support in the event of conflicts or disasters.

Through these digital tools, the world is able to interact in real time with emergency events, improving states' and organizations' responses to crises more effectively.

I.2.4 Enhancing International Relations

Digital diplomacy is used to engage with international communities and partners to strengthen cooperation, as it helps build quick and effective communication bridges between countries and international organizations (Melissen, 2011, p. 123).

-Enhancing Partnerships: Through platforms like LinkedIn and Twitter, countries and institutions can enhance their international partnerships and collaborate in areas such as trade, education, and scientific research.

-Direct Interaction: Governments and international institutions can engage directly with global audiences by sharing ideas, policies, and joint projects, which fosters cooperation and coordination opportunities.

-Digital Negotiations: Modern technologies allow for online meetings and negotiations, making it easier to reach international agreements more quickly and effectively, thus promoting cooperation in addressing global issues such as climate change or cybersecurity.

-Supporting Common Causes: Digital communication tools can be used to promote shared causes among multiple countries, such as human rights, sustainable development, or issues of peace and security, enhancing mutual understanding and cooperation among diverse parties.

Thus, digital diplomacy contributes to strengthening international cooperation and facilitates coordination among various stakeholders in the contemporary world. Digital diplomacy enables meetings and negotiations through visual communication technologies, which helps expedite negotiation processes and reduce geographical barriers between countries (Bjola & Holmes, 2015, p. 112).

I.2.5 Ease of Access and Interaction

Technologies like Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google Meet allow leaders and diplomats to hold direct meetings from their different geographical locations, enhancing real-time interaction and discussions.

-Reducing Costs and Time: Compared to traditional meetings, these technologies save travel time and costs, accelerating decision-making and intensifying interaction between involved parties.

-Expanding Participation: A wide range of participants from all over the world can join meetings, enhancing the diversity of perspectives and contributing to comprehensive solutions.

-Visual Communication: Video communication technologies provide non-verbal cues, such as body language, which improve the effectiveness of communication and help build trust between negotiating parties.

-Keeping Up with Modern Developments: These tools allow for effective interaction during times that require quick responses, such as during crises or multilateral negotiations.

In short, visual communication technologies offer digital diplomacy a powerful tool to hold international meetings and negotiations in a flexible and timely manner.

I.2.6 Public Diplomacy

Digital diplomacy engages with people directly, not just through governments, opening the door for more inclusive and transparent communication. This type of interaction occurs through social media, digital forums, and online content that can reach a broad audience directly (Melissen, 2011, pp. 56-58).

-Public Interaction: It allows states to reach citizens and local groups worldwide, enabling them to express their views and positions, thereby enhancing understanding of public sentiments and political attitudes.

-Engagement with Civil Society: Non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, and civil groups can also engage with governments and diplomats, enhancing the involvement of civil society in political dialogues and social development.

-Participation in Global Dialogues: Digital platforms offer opportunities for people worldwide to engage in public discussions on issues such as human rights or environmental concerns, without the need for official intermediaries.

-Transparency and Credibility: Direct interaction with the public makes international policies and positions clearer, enhancing the credibility of governments and fostering trust between governments and their populations.

Thus, digital diplomacy contributes to expanding the scope of interaction, thereby enhancing public participation in international affairs.

Digital diplomacy offers an effective means to spread political and diplomatic messages to a global audience. Through the use of the internet and social media, governments and diplomats can quickly and cost-effectively direct their messages to various audiences around the world (Manor, 2019, p. 45).

-Widening Access: These platforms enable access to a diverse global audience in real time, allowing countries to communicate their official positions and policies without relying on traditional media such as newspapers or radio broadcasts.

-Influencing Public Opinion: Through digital campaigns and interactive content, countries can influence global public opinion, engaging with the populations of other countries on issues such as security, human rights, or climate change.

-Targeted Messaging: Messages can be tailored to specific audiences, whether they are governments, international organizations, or the general public, making it easier for countries to spread their messages in a more impactful and appropriate manner for each group.

-Transparency and Rapid Response: Digital tools also provide governments with the opportunity to react quickly to news or international events, enhancing transparency and allowing immediate responses to emerging issues.

Therefore, digital diplomacy enables countries to effectively and rapidly communicate their political and diplomatic messages on a global scale, enhancing their presence and influence in the international arena.

II. Digital Diplomacy Applications

Digital diplomacy applications involve the use of modern technology and social media as tools to enhance communication between countries and achieve foreign policy goals. These

applications include the use of the internet to interact with both domestic and international audiences, as well as fostering cooperation between governments and global organizations. In this section, we will discuss the key practical applications of digital diplomacy.

II.1 Managing International Crises

II .1.1 Utilizing Digital Platforms for Rapid Communication During Emergencies

Digital platforms have become essential tools for communication during humanitarian crises and natural disasters, contributing to accelerating responses, coordinating international efforts, and providing accurate information.

II .1.1.1 The Role of Digital Platforms in Emergency Situations

-Immediate Communication with Affected Populations: Digital platforms enable the rapid dissemination of warning messages or guidelines to populations in affected areas. For instance, emergency applications are used to send alerts about hurricanes or earthquakes. (*UNDRR, 2021*)

-Field Data Collection: Governments and organizations can leverage digital platforms to gather direct data from affected individuals through user reports or interactive maps.

-Humanitarian Response Coordination: International organizations such as the Red Cross and the United Nations rely on digital platforms to coordinate aid efforts among various entities, including governments, charities, and volunteers.

-Managing and Disseminating Information Globally: Platforms provide regular updates on situations, such as casualty numbers, urgent needs, and avenues for donations or support.

-Countering Misinformation and Disinformation: Governments and organizations use digital platforms to disseminate reliable information and combat fake news that could complicate crises further. (*Melissen, 2011, pp. 95–97*)

II .1.1.2 Practical Examples of Digital Platforms in Emergencies

II .1.1.21. The 2023 Earthquake in Turkey and Syria:

-Platforms like Twitter and Facebook were used to share emergency calls and locate people trapped under rubble.

-Tools such as Google Maps and community maps assisted in identifying urgent needs.

II .1.1.22. COVID-19 Pandemic (2020–2021):

-Governments and health organizations utilized digital platforms to share information about vaccinations, travel restrictions, and preventive measures.

-Applications such as *Corona Warn* in Germany and *Aarogya Setu* in India helped track cases and raise awareness.

II **.1.1.2.3.**Hurricane Katrina (2005): Among the earliest crises to witness significant digital platform use, blogs and emails played a vital role in sharing information.

-*ReliefWeb*: A specialized UN platform provided continuous updates on humanitarian disasters, including tools for data analysis and prioritization.

II **.1.1.2.4.**The UN's Digital Campaign During the Syrian Refugee Crisis: The Syrian refugee crisis, which began in 2011 due to the ongoing conflict, prompted a significant digital response from the United Nations. The organization used digital platforms to highlight the crisis, mobilize funding, and garner global support (*UNHCR, 2016, p. 22*).

II **.1.1.2.4.1.**Goals of the Digital Campaign

-Raising Global Awareness: Highlighting the plight of Syrian refugees and their urgent humanitarian needs.

-Mobilizing Funding and Aid: Securing financial support for refugees in neighboring countries like Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey to meet essential needs such as food, shelter, and healthcare.

-Empowering Refugees to Share Their Voices: Showcasing refugee stories to foster solidarity with their plight.

II **.1.1.2.4.2.**Key Digital Initiatives

-#WithRefugees Campaign: Launched by UNHCR to support Syrian and other refugees, this campaign included a petition advocating for refugee protection and rights, gaining participation from millions worldwide. Platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram were instrumental in spreading supportive messages and facts about refugees (*UNHCR, 2016, p. 45*).

-The Search for Syria Campaign: A collaborative initiative between UNHCR and Google, this interactive platform provided information on Syria before and after the crisis. It compiled data and statistics to help a global audience understand the scope of the crisis (*UNHCR, 2016, p. 45*).

-Refugee Storytelling via Videos: YouTube was utilized to share videos highlighting Syrian refugee experiences, such as *Zaatari Stories*, which documented life in Jordan's Zaatari refugee camp (*UNHCR, 2014, Zaatari Stories: Life in the Refugee Camp, p. 30*).

-Online Fundraising: Platforms like *GivingTuesday* were used for refugee funding campaigns, targeting Western audiences for financial support (*IRC, 2024*).

II .1.1.2.4.3.Campaign Outcomes

-Global Support Mobilization: The campaigns attracted worldwide attention, including support from celebrities and major institutions.

-Increased Donations: The digital campaigns contributed to raising billions of dollars to support Syrian refugees through UN and partner efforts.

-Shifting Global Narratives: The campaigns helped present a humanized image of Syrian refugees, countering negative stereotypes.

II .2 Soft Power

Digital campaigns have become an effective tool for promoting national culture and values, enabling countries to enhance their soft power both regionally and internationally. These campaigns rely on various digital platforms to reach a diverse global audience and creatively highlight national identity. (*Melissen, 2011, pp. 95*)

II .2.1 Objectives of Cultural Digital Campaigns

-Highlighting Cultural Identity: Introducing the world to unique national traditions and values.

-Enhancing National Soft Power: Building a positive image of the country on the international stage.

-Engaging with Diasporas and Expats: Strengthening the connection of national communities residing abroad with their home countries.

-Attracting Tourists and Investors: Using national culture and values as tools to draw visitors and foster economic partnerships.

II .2.2. Examples of Digital Campaigns for Cultural Promotion

-International Yoga Day – India: India launched global campaigns to celebrate "International Yoga Day," which was adopted by the United Nations in 2014, using hashtags such as *#InternationalYogaDay* and educational videos on the benefits of yoga. These initiatives helped promote India's image as the cradle of spiritual culture. (*The Soft Power 30 Report, 2018, p. 45*)

-Visit Japan Campaign – Japan: Japan focused on cultural and tourism promotion through its "Visit Japan" campaign, targeting international tourists with digital content showcasing Japanese festivals, traditional cuisine, and advanced technology. The campaign utilized platforms like Instagram and YouTube for wide-reaching engagement (*Japan National Tourism Organization, 2021*).

-Soft Power 30 Program – United Kingdom: The UK launched the "Soft Power 30" program to analyze and develop its soft power in collaboration with research institutions such as "Portland Communications." The program used digital tools and analytical content to enhance global understanding of British soft power. (*The Soft Power 30 Report, 2016, pp. 12-14*)

II.2.2.1. Objectives of the Campaign

-Enhancing the UK's Global Standing: Reinforcing the role of the UK as a global power with significant influence through soft power tools.

-Promoting British Culture and Education: Highlighting the role of cultural institutions such as the British Council and renowned universities like Cambridge and Oxford.

-Encouraging Dialogue on Soft Power: Providing a platform for analyzing and evaluating the impact of soft power on international decision-making.

II.2.2.2. Components of the Digital Campaign

-Annual Digital Report: The report includes a global ranking of countries based on their soft power, with assessments using criteria such as culture, education, digital engagement, and public diplomacy. The report is available online with interactive materials to engage interested audiences.

-Interactive Online Platform: Provides details about the leading countries in soft power, along with analyses of how digital tools are used to enhance national images.

-Intensive Social Media Presence: Twitter and Instagram accounts are used to promote the annual report, using hashtags like #SoftPower30.

-Visual Content Sharing: Infographics and videos highlighting countries leading in specific soft power domains.

-Partnerships with Media and Academic Institutions: The campaign promotes discussions about the importance of soft power through articles and panel discussions hosted by global institutions.

II.2.2.3. Digital Campaign Tools

-Official Campaign Website: Contains resources such as full reports, statistical summaries, and interactive tools to measure countries' performance.

-Promotional Videos: Short videos showing how countries influence through soft power, with examples from British culture such as cinema, literature, and music.

-Blog and Podcast Engagement: Providing analyses and discussions on the role of soft power in addressing global challenges.

II.2.2.4. Outcomes of the "Soft Power 30" Campaign

-Enhancing the UK's Image as a Global Soft Power: The campaign emphasized the cultural influence of the UK, the role of its language, and institutions like the BBC and the British Museum.

-Creating a Global Soft Power Benchmark: The "Soft Power 30" report became a reference for countries seeking to enhance their international presence using soft power tools.

-Fostering Academic and Diplomatic Dialogue: The campaign contributed to the ongoing conversation about the importance of cultural and educational values in international relations.

II .3. Virtual Education and Cultural Exchange

Cultural exchange is one of the most important tools of soft power, enhancing understanding and cooperation between nations. In the digital age, open online education platforms such as Coursera and edX have become innovative means of supporting this exchange, thanks to their ability to reach a diverse global audience and provide educational content that highlights the cultures and values of different peoples. *(Coursera, 2024)*

II .3.1. Importance of Digital Educational Platforms in Cultural Exchange

-Access to Learning for All: Platforms like Coursera and edX offer courses from world-renowned universities such as Harvard and Oxford, allowing learners around the world to explore diverse cultures through education.

-Enhancing Global Cultural Understanding: These platforms provide courses on the history, traditions, languages, and arts of various peoples, fostering cultural understanding among users.

-Creating Interactive Communities: Forums and interactive activities give students the opportunity to discuss educational content with peers from different cultural backgrounds.

-Encouraging Language Learning: Many language courses, such as Arabic, Chinese, or Spanish, help users learn a new language while gaining insight into the culture of the speakers. (*Language Learning Market, 2023*)

II .3.2. Examples of Cultural Exchange Initiatives Through Educational Platforms

-Language and Culture Courses: edX offers courses such as "Mandarin Chinese for Beginners," where learners acquire language skills while getting to know Chinese culture. (*edX, 2020, Mandarin Chinese for Beginners*)

-History and Arts: Coursera offers courses such as "The Changing Landscape of Ancient Rome," providing learners with insights into Roman history through artifacts and arts. (*Coursera, 2021, Module 3*)

-Teaching Global Values: The "Cultural Diversity and Globalization" program on edX focuses on the concept of cultural diversity and its impact on shaping shared global values. (*edX, 2021, Unit 5*)

-Cultural Exchange Through Technology: Coursera launched courses that highlight how technological innovations influence cultural interaction, such as the "Technology and Society" course. (*Coursera, 2020, Section 4*)

II .3.3. Benefits of Using These Platforms to Support Cultural Exchange

-Bridging Cultural Gaps: Teaching cultures directly from their source helps remove barriers caused by cultural ignorance.

-Empowering Individuals to Interact with Others: Through forums and collaborative activities, participants can interact with peers from other countries, exchanging ideas and experiences.

-Promoting Cultural Dialogue: Educational content that encourages critical thinking can deepen understanding of other cultures.

Despite these benefits, there are challenges to cultural exchange through digital platforms, such as the digital divide, where individuals in less developed areas may struggle to access these platforms due to weak digital infrastructure. Additionally, most courses are available in English, which may pose a barrier for non-English speakers. Moreover, while interactive communities are valuable, virtual interactions are still less impactful than face-to-face engagement.

II .4. Virtual Negotiations

Digital platforms became vital tools for conducting negotiations and international agreements during the COVID-19 pandemic, in light of travel restrictions and social

distancing measures. These platforms played a pivotal role in maintaining diplomatic and economic cooperation, highlighting the importance of digital diplomacy in crisis management. (*Corneliu Bjola & Michaela Coplen, p. 74*)

II .4.1 Importance of Digital Platforms in Negotiations During Crises

-Continuity of Diplomatic Work: Digital platforms ensured the continuity of negotiations and agreements that could not be postponed, such as those related to public health or trade. (*Bjola & Coplen, 2022, pp. 62-92*)

-Reducing Costs and Time: Video communication technologies reduced the need for long and costly travel.

-Increased Inclusivity: Digital platforms enabled greater participation from relevant stakeholders, including non-governmental actors and experts. (*Bjola & Holmes, 2015, p. 145*)

II .4.2. Examples of Digital Negotiations During the Pandemic

-2020 G20 Virtual Summit: The first-ever virtual G20 summit was held on the Zoom platform, bringing together leaders from major countries to coordinate efforts against the pandemic. The summit resulted in financial commitments to support the global economy and public health initiatives.

-World Trade Organization (WTO) Negotiations: Digital meetings were used to discuss facilitating international trade amid lockdown restrictions. Special technologies were adopted to secure data and communications. (*Bjola & Coplen, 2022, p. 74*)

-COVAX Vaccine Distribution Agreements: The COVAX platform for equitable vaccine distribution relied on digital meetings to coordinate distribution efforts between countries and international organizations. (*Bjola & Coplen, 2023, p. 56*)

-India-China Border and Trade Negotiations: During the pandemic, India and China relied on virtual negotiations to address border issues and trade disputes.

-Virtual Climate Agreements: Digital meetings within the framework of the Paris Agreement allowed countries to continue discussing climate change issues despite the pandemic. (*Bjola & Coplen, 2022, p. 68*)

II .4.3.Key Platforms Used in Digital Negotiations

-Zoom and Microsoft Teams: The most commonly used platforms for conducting both formal and informal meetings.

-BlueJeans: Offers high security for conversations and is preferred for sensitive negotiations.

-Custom Platforms: Some countries have developed specialized systems for digital negotiations, such as the secure system used by the World Trade Organization.

-Digital Signature Platforms (Adobe Sign and DocuSign): Used to securely sign agreements.

Digital negotiations have faced several challenges, including information security, as there are concerns about leaks or breaches during sensitive meetings. There is also the issue of differing digital infrastructure between countries, with disparities in internet quality and technology that may hinder the negotiation process. Additionally, the absence of direct communication reduces the ability of parties to read non-verbal cues, such as body language. Another challenge is the difficulty in determining suitable meeting times between countries in different time zones. (Lucas Hibbeln, 2021, p. 35)

II .5. International Public Relations

In the digital media age, influencers and media platforms have played a significant role in shaping public opinion and enhancing the soft power of countries. Governments and official institutions have been working to build strategic partnerships with influencers and digital media platforms to promote a positive image of the state and to strengthen national values and culture globally. (Cull, 2013, p. 15)

II .5.1.The Importance of Building Strategic Relationships with Digital Media and Influencers

-Reaching a Broader Audience: Digital media and influencers have a large and diverse following that transcends geographical boundaries, allowing states to deliver their messages to a global audience.

-Personal Interaction with the Audience: Influencers have a personal connection with their followers, which gives their messages credibility and significant influence.

-Enhancing Soft Power: Using digital media to promote national culture and values portrays the state as an attractive destination for tourism, investment, or education (Cull, 2013, p. 20).

-Crisis Management and Improving International Image: Digital media and influencers can play a role in correcting misconceptions about the state during crises (Seib, 2012, p. 98).

II .5.2. Strategies for Building Relationships with Digital Media and Influencers

-Collaborating with Local and International Influencers: Choosing influencers who align with the target message, such as travel influencers to promote tourism or educational influencers to attract international students (Freberg et al., 2011, p. 91).

-Providing Creative and Engaging Content: Offering unique stories and information about the state that encourage influencers and media figures to share them with their audience (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 60).

-Organizing Promotional Trips and Events: Inviting influencers to visit the state and experience the local culture, with coverage of their experience on their digital channels (Hudson & Thal, 2013, p. 163).

-Establishing Partnerships with Major Digital Media Platforms: Collaborating with major digital media outlets such as BuzzFeed, Vice, and National Geographic to produce content that reflects the beauty and values of the state (Seib, 2012, p. 105).

-Launching Digital Promotional Campaigns: Using influencers to support national campaigns such as promoting tourism or investment through social media platforms (Freberg et al., 2011, p. 94).

II .5.3. Successful Examples of Countries Using Digital Media and Influencers

-United Arab Emirates: Launched campaigns like "My Dubai" in collaboration with global and local influencers to promote Dubai as a tourist and cultural destination, which helped boost Dubai's presence on social media platforms and attract millions of visitors.

-Japan: Collaborated with travel influencers and YouTubers to showcase unique aspects of Japanese culture such as festivals, traditional food, and video games, which helped generate global interest in Japanese culture (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 61).

-Spain: Its partnership with platforms like Instagram helped promote cultural and tourist landmarks through impactful images and videos, increasing international tourism (De Veirman, M., Cauberghe, V., & Hudders, L., 2017, p. 51).

-France: Through the "Influence for France" program, the government collaborated with fashion and art influencers to enhance France's image as the capital of culture and innovation, which helped improve its global cultural and tourism reputation (Seib, 2012, p. 110).

III .Challenges of Digital Diplomacy

Countries are increasingly facing new challenges in managing their foreign policies and enhancing their international influence online. These challenges range from cybersecurity issues to the impact of media on global public opinion, as well as concerns about privacy and data protection. In this section, we will address some of these key challenges and explore their effects on digital diplomacy.

III.1.Cyberattacks as a Global Political Tool

Cyberattacks have become an integral part of global politics in the digital age. These cyberattacks can target critical infrastructure, such as energy networks or government institutions, or even disrupt electoral systems in democratic countries. Such attacks significantly undermine a nation's ability to execute its digital strategies, further complicating the practice of digital diplomacy. Cyberattacks can disrupt diplomatic interactions and lead to a crisis of trust between nations. For example, one country may launch a cyberattack against another to influence specific elections or to sabotage vital government operations. These attacks not only cause material or economic damage but can also have severe political ramifications. (Sanger, D. E. 2018. pp.123.144)

III.2.Social Media and Information Warfare

Social media platforms have become essential for transmitting information in international relations. However, they also represent fertile ground for spreading misinformation or targeted propaganda. This challenge has substantial consequences for international relations, as these platforms can be used to sway global public opinion in particular directions. The spread of fake news and disinformation online can erode trust between nations and hinder international cooperation in various fields. For instance, certain states may exploit platforms like Twitter or Facebook to disseminate distorted narratives about the internal situation of another country, aiming to undermine its foreign policy or influence elections. (Pomerantsev, P. 2019.. pp. 56-78)

III.3.Privacy and Data Protection in the Digital Age

Privacy and data protection are highly sensitive issues in the digital era, especially when countries are dealing with cross-border data flows. Regulations such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in the European Union may impose restrictions on how personal data is transferred and processed between states. Legal challenges arise from the varying national legislations on data protection. Some countries, such as the United States, do not have as stringent data protection laws as the European Union, creating a complex legal environment in international relations regarding data exchange. (Kuner, C. 2020. pp. 67-89)

III.4.Complications in Digital Diplomacy Negotiations

Traditional international negotiations typically require face-to-face interactions, making online negotiations complex, especially when dealing with sensitive issues or international disputes. A lack of trust, difficulty in verifying the identities of parties involved, and security threats can negatively affect the negotiation process. In some cases, digital platforms can expedite the pace of negotiations, but in others, advanced technologies may be required to ensure the confidentiality of discussions and protect them from breaches. (Choucri, N. 2012. pp. 143-157)

III.5.Digital Power and Its Global Implications

Digital power extends beyond technological supremacy to include the ability to leverage these technologies as tools of political and economic influence. Countries that dominate internet technologies, such as the United States and China, may use this power in areas such as international trade, media, and even national security

Digital power can lead to significant disparities between major and smaller states. For example, major states can exert substantial influence over the policies of smaller nations through their control over digital technologies, creating incentives for digital hegemony at the international level.(Mueller, M. L. 2017. pp. 101-118)

III.6.Impact of Technological Dependence on Diplomatic Relations

An increased reliance on technology in diplomacy may amplify the influence of major powers at the expense of smaller nations. Larger states can use their digital technologies to influence both domestic and foreign policies of smaller countries. This exacerbates the digital divide and profoundly impacts the balance of power in international relations.

Digital diplomacy is both a tool of power and policy in the contemporary world, but it carries many challenges that require advanced strategies for resolution. Cooperation between states on various legal, technical, and security levels will be critical to addressing these challenges and ensuring the sustainability of balanced relations in the digital age

Conclusion:

We can say that digital diplomacy, amid the rapid developments in the world of technology and communications, has become one of the fundamental pillars that enhance communication between countries and peoples. Recent years, especially during global crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, have highlighted the central role of this diplomacy in facilitating negotiations, resolving conflicts, and coordinating joint efforts to face international challenges. The use of digital platforms and modern technologies in the diplomatic field reflects a fundamental shift in the way international relations are managed, as these tools contribute to building more transparent and efficient communication channels.

Findings:

- Digital diplomacy has accelerated interaction between states and international organizations on various issues such as public health, security, and the environment.
- Digital platforms have facilitated international meetings and negotiations, leading to reductions in both travel costs and time.
- Digital diplomacy has enhanced the soft power of states by improving their image on the international stage, through the dissemination of their cultures and values via influencers and digital media.
- It has contributed to the early detection of misinformation, particularly during crises, through artificial intelligence tools.

Recommendations:

- **Enhancing Digital Security:** States should strengthen information security and data protection during digital negotiations to ensure that sensitive information is not leaked or compromised.
- **Developing Digital Skills:** It is essential to develop diplomats' skills in using digital technologies to ensure effective communication and engagement with international counterparts.
- **Strengthening International Cooperation:** Cooperation between states should be enhanced in the development of shared digital platforms that facilitate understanding and conflict resolution.
- **Investing in Artificial Intelligence:** States should invest in artificial intelligence technologies to monitor and analyze digital content more accurately and effectively, contributing to countering negative media campaigns.
- **Ongoing Technological Development:** As technology continuously evolves, states and international organizations must stay updated on the latest technological innovations to consistently refine and enhance digital diplomacy mechanisms.

In conclusion, digital diplomacy represents a vital tool in addressing complex global challenges. States should leverage this tool to achieve political and economic goals, while ensuring the protection of human values and digital security.

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