

**SOCIAL MEDIA AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IN INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS: A CASE STUDY OF DONALD TRUMP'S ADMINISTRATION
(2017-2021)**

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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this work to the best of our knowledge was carried out by
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DEDICATION

With deepest gratitude, I dedicate this project work to God, for his unwavering blessing and guidance.

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Introduction

The emergence and growth of social media in the international community have been nothing short of transformative, impacting various aspects of the international society. It has connected people, facilitated businesses, empowered activists, influenced political discourse, and even reshaped diplomatic practice. One cannot deny but agree that social media are becoming more and more relevant for contemporary societies, this is because they constitute the main sources of information for an increasing number of citizens. They have risen to become essential communication tools for governments, diplomatic personnel, international organizations, and all actors populating the current international system.¹ States use it as tools to project power, by spreading manipulated information or fake news or to libel individuals or institutions working in crucial sectors. Both authoritarian and democratic leaders tend to utilize social media quite often especially in this age of advanced technology and interconnectedness.

Social Media has also been categorized as those “forms of electronic communication (such as websites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content.”² A subset of social media includes messaging platforms and apps such as Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp, Telegram, Viber, Slack, Line, etc. These platforms and apps allow message senders to reach a vast audience through the spread of

messages along social networks, or virtual public spaces like Facebook wall or Twitter board.³ It is important to emphasize that among other areas of human endeavors, the use of social media has found its way into the conduct of diplomacy.⁴ As platforms like Twitter (X), Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok become embedded in everyday communication practices worldwide, they are also becoming powerful instruments of interaction between states. This interaction can take various nature of which diplomacy is a popular coinage.

This Diplomacy is defined as the practice of managing international relations through dialogue, negotiation, and communication between representatives of states or other international actors.⁵ It is a core tool of foreign policy used by countries to pursue their national interests, maintain peace, build alliances, resolve conflicts, and promote cooperation without resorting to force. In its short form, diplomacy is the entire process through which states conduct their foreign relations.⁶ It is the means for allies to cooperate and for adversaries to resolve conflicts without force. Diplomacy is the vehicle through which a state asserts itself and represents its concerns to the world and also it is also one of the principal means for conciliating competing national interests. There are three main functions of diplomacy intelligence gathering, image management, and policy implementation.

Among the known types of diplomacy, public diplomacy is now a popular kind of diplomacy as it gets the public and foreign audience involved on national and international discuss. Public diplomacy refers to the ways in which a government

communicates and engages with foreign publics—rather than foreign governments—with the aim of shaping their perceptions, influencing their attitudes, and ultimately advancing the country's foreign policy goals.⁷ Unlike traditional diplomacy, which is conducted behind closed doors between state officials, public diplomacy operates in the public sphere and relies on openness, persuasion, cultural appeal, and mutual understanding.

The role social media play in public diplomacy strictly focusses on how government, stakeholders, diplomats, and international; organization utilizes digital media especially social media to discuss affairs foreign public and advanced national interest in the global arena. In fact, it is true to state that it was for the help of social media that public diplomacy which is diplomacy of the people became more pronounced and effective. This has occasioned a transition from interstate relations to relations between state society, state-individual, inter-people, international organizations and individuals. One major impact occasioned by the use of social media in public diplomacy is the fact that it has transformed the landscape of international relations and public diplomacy and also brought a shift in diplomatic practices.⁸

This study is conducted to examine how Donald Trump use of social media occasioned a shift in American public diplomacy. It is important to first understand that traditionally, public diplomacy was conducted through carefully curated messages disseminated via official diplomatic channels. However, during the first elective administration of President Donald Trump (2017–2021), a significant shift occurred in how the United States engaged with foreign publics and international actors. Through

frequent and often unfiltered use of social media—especially Twitter—President Trump bypassed conventional diplomatic institutions and introduced a highly personalized communication style in conduct of international diplomacy.⁹ This without doubt came with its own challenges such as frequently generated controversy, miscommunication, and diplomatic tension, raising questions about the efficacy, risks, and sustainability of Trump Popular "Twitter diplomacy."

This study therefore proceeds to properly examine social media and Public Diplomacy in International Relations: a case Study of Donald Trump's Administration (2017-2021).

Aim and objective of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine social media and Public Diplomacy in International Relations: a case Study of Donald Trump's Administration (2017-2021).

The Specific objectives are to;

1. Examine a brief history and origin of social media in the global space
2. Examine the concept and operations of Public Diplomacy
3. Examine how Donald Trump's administration utilized social media platforms as tools of public diplomacy.
4. Examine the impact of Trump's social media communication on diplomatic relations
5. Examine the challenges arising from using social media in public diplomacy

Scope of the Study

This work focuses on the use of social media in public diplomacy by Donald Trump, the period of the study span from 2017 to 2021. The study began in 2017 as it was the year Donald Trump came into office as the 45th President of United State of America after taking over from Barack Obama. The study terminates in 2021 as it was the year Donald Trump Tenure came to an end, when he handed over to Joe Biden.

Research Methodology

The study adopts the historical methodology. The secondary data sources will be used in the study. This will include information from Textbooks, Articles in Learned journals and Internet materials.

Literature Review

Several works by scholars on the subject of public diplomacy, social media, and digital diplomacy are reviewed in this session to support this research work. The first work is that of Andreas M. Kaplan and Michael Haenlein, *Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media*,¹⁰ is of great importance to the research on social media, this is because these authors have provided the most common definition of social media used today among scholars. They noted that social media comprises of activities that involve socializing and networking online through words, pictures and videos. Specifically, Kaplan and Haenlein defined social media as a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web2.0,

and that allows the creation and exchange of user-generated content. It depends on mobile and web-based technologies to create highly interactive platforms through which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss and modify user-generated content.¹¹ Though this work discusses social media in general, it did not focus on discussing the use of twitter as a social media platform for communication. The work only restricts the use of social media to marketing, managerial, and business angle and not to diplomatic engagement. This is the justification for carrying out this study that specifically discuss twitter as a social media tool in diplomatic communication.

In line with the above Geneva Overholser in his work *Swimming in the ocean of social media*,¹² stated that social media introduced substantial and pervasive changes to communication between organizations, communities and individuals. The author described the social media as an ocean due to his large coverage and enormous use. This choice of words only shows how social media have grown so wide in the daily operation of people. This work only focusses on the use of social media by journalist, and not on diplomatic engagement. Also, the work of Joseph Chukwudi Nwazor and Chinwe Constance Maduikwe *Social Media and Academic Performance of Business Education Students in South-East Nigeria*,¹³ found that social media's most distinctive aspects are that it has the potential to transform from a way of pushing content outward to a way of inviting conversation, of exchanging information, and of invoking unparalleled individual, industrial, societal, and even global changes. The availability of high-speed internet broadband connection with massive use of desktop computer, laptops, e-readers,

facebook, youtube, and smartphones enables millions of people to actively engage in social media, text messaging, content sharing, online-learning and much more.¹⁴ These works only discuss social media in a general sense but not in line with public diplomacy, however, it gives us some insight into understanding the impact and usage of social media. These authors only examine social media in the academic sector, it uses four selected universities as sample. Though the work discusses the current impact of social media, it did not address Trump's use of social media in diplomatic communication.

Fatih Değirmenci and Elifnur Terzioğlu titled *A Digital Diplomacy Irony: Donald Trump*,¹⁵ the author used qualitative research method to discuss the main challenges that accompanied the digital form of diplomacy adopted by Donald trump in his first tenure. The work established that one cannot deny the place and impact of digital media on world politics and foreign policy emphasizing that diplomacy has undergone several changes since its inception and the use of social media for diplomatic purposes encompassed in changes to public diplomacy. The authors added that one of such notable changes is the erosion of protocols, creating a platform in which everyone takes an active role.¹⁶ In fact, States and related government institutions now see digital diplomacy as a guide to complete their digital transformation. Specifically, the work revealed that the nature of language used by Trump to communicate his message through social media was the major problem that other stated had with Trump's use of social media. They emphasize that Trump exhibits a racist attitude and uses hate language with tweets he sends to both himself and other countries' citizens and administrations on Twitter.

Though this work discuss Trump use of Twitter it did not analyze the content of the tweets posted by Trump, it also did not discuss the impact of the use of twitter by Trump in Diplomatic discussions which this study aim to fill.

Shadrack David's work *Advantages and disadvantages of Facebook*,¹⁷ present a narrow approach to the discuss on social media. Rather than discussing social media in a generic form, the author singled out facebook and present an extensive work on the role and impact of facebook as a social media platform as well as the disadvantages associated with the platform. According to the author, Facebook functions primarily to connect and network with friends and family. Using search and connection tools people find it easy to find current or long-lost friends and to share content with friends and view content offered by them as well. Content includes anything from a post on their page (known as a wall) to photos, videos and a personal bio. A user has the option to share little or as much with friends as he/she desires. These interactions offer users the opportunity to stay in touch with people, often some of whom the users would not be otherwise connected with on regular basis.

The work added that Users of facebook can create groups and event pages for special gatherings or topics. The primary purpose of these groups usually is to create (or bring) awareness to causes, such as in the aftermath of natural disasters, to provide information on how to donate money to help victims.¹⁸ A group may also be made up of a circle of friends or as a means to promote an upcoming event or gathering. A user can make his/her created pages private or public to allow the information to be seen by only

those he/she prefer or anyone that has access. Furthermore, facebook offers many types of games that can be played with friends and other users. These interactive games may offer a user the opportunity to pretend to run everything from a farm to his own mafia. This can be an interaction to share with current friends, meet new ones or simply pass the time. Many other applications also exist for entertainment purposes that offer everything from surveys to one's biggest fan. This work only concentrates on facebook as a social media tool, it did not discuss Twitter.

The publication by McKinsey Global Institute *Lions Go Digital: The Internet's Transformative Potential in Africa*,¹⁹ established that a mature Internet "ecosystem" where competition is fostered, innovation is encouraged, human capital and Internet infrastructures are developed, and Internet access is boosted enables a country to secure the maximum possible benefit in raising living standards. The report revealed that a few indicators have been identified as relevant for policymakers to improve the supply of the Internet and optimize the Internet impact. They can be classified into environmental characteristics, such as physical infrastructure (e.g. electricity access and cellular network coverage) and business environment (e.g. ease of starting a business and accessing credit), and stakeholder characteristics, such as citizen (e.g. education, literacy levels and poverty rates) and business demographics (e.g. local competition and cluster development). This work only gave the importance of using social media in this transformative age and encouraged other states to make use of it, but did not address its use by Donald Trump specifically

Desmond Chikamdinaka Patrick in his work titled *Digital Diplomacy and Russo-American Relations Under President Donald Trump (2016-2020)*,²⁰, discussed how Donald Trump used social media in conduct diplomatic practice specifically towards Russia. The author stressed that countries are becoming more involved in the use of social media but must also be aware of the challenges it creates when used for diplomatic purposes. The work in order to present a clear understanding of what digital diplomacy entails, explained the concept of traditional diplomacy which existed before the use of social media in diplomatic practice. According to the author the term traditional diplomacy was used to defined the relations among states immediately after the cold war. This form of diplomacy only involves direct state-to-state relations which facilitated engagement between the officials of both states through face-to-face dialogues and negotiations, deliberately excluding the general public from the diplomatic discourse.

The work added that this form of diplomacy did not involve intermediary organizations, representatives, or any other authorities apart from the state officials of the respective nations during diplomatic interactions. Moreover, this model was marked by its inherent secrecy; discussions between state officials from the participating countries were typically kept confidential and were not disclosed to the broader public. Tracing the origin of social media in diplomatic practice, the work reveals that Digital Diplomacy which involve the use of social media only began at the end of the 20th century. Donald Trump became more interested in the relations with Russia as he perceives Russia as an important counterweight to quickly-growing China and a potential partner in dealing with

religious fundamentalism. This work only focusses on how Trump used media platform to relate with Russia, however, this study gives a broader picture of Donald Trump use of Twitter to countries not limited to Russia.

In Sofia Eliodori's work titled *Trump's populism and the Twitter diplomacy*,²¹, the author discusses the long-term implications of Donald Trump's foreign policy through the lens of populism and digital communication. The work explored how Trump's distinct brand of populism—marked by nativism, anti-globalism, and isolationism—reshaped American foreign policy and projected a potential withdrawal from common global practices. A key innovation in this reshaping, Eliodori argues, was Trump's use of Twitter diplomacy, a direct and disruptive communication tool that bypassed traditional bureaucratic and diplomatic channels. The author portrayed Trump's foreign policy as less institutional, more impulsive, and increasingly shaped by his personal communication style—particularly on Twitter which Fatih Değirmenci and Elifnur Terzioğlu in their work *A Digital Diplomacy Irony: Donald Trump*,²² referred to as racist attitude, abusive, and hate language. One aspect of the author's work that must be appreciated is its discussion of how Trump's direct use of social media subverted both the press and governmental institutions, pointing to a new form of personalized, real-time diplomacy. Sofia Eliodori's work discuss the nature and application of trump tweets in communicating with other world leaders, it present and trace the historical development of social media and its eventual adoption by Trump.

Marine Changiani's work titled *The Foreign Policy of Donald Trump's Administration in Transcaucasia*,²³ helps us to understand a broader perspective of Donald Trump's Foreign Policy. The work focused on the military cooperation, economic relations, and democratic operations in Transcaucasian countries which include Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. This goes to show that apart from utilizing social media in diplomatic communications, the Trump administration maintained active bilateral relations with other nations despite shifting global priorities. The author added that the reason for Donald Trump's interest in this region was due to the fact that the democratic effort of the U.S was challenged by Russian influence, especially following the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh war. Though this work is useful for understanding the strategic priorities and limitations of U.S. foreign policy in regions often overlooked in broader Trump-era analyses, it doesn't address the use of social media for diplomatic communications. However, it contributes to understanding Donald Trump Policies in a geopolitical sense. Marine Changiani's work was limited to the Transcaucasia region, it only discuss foreign policy on Trump but not its use of social media.

Surowiec, P. and Miles, C. in their work titled *The Populist Style and Public Diplomacy: Kayfabe as Performative Agonism in Trump's Twitter Posts*,²⁴ investigate how Donald Trump's Twitter use during his presidency can be understood as a reconfiguration of public diplomacy rooted in populist political performance. The article argues that Trump's communication style is not just unorthodox—it represents a shift in how political power is expressed and performed in the digital age. The author uses the

concept of “kayfabe” which is a term from professional wrestling that denotes staged but emotionally resonant conflict. This metaphor provides a framework for understanding how perceived authenticity and manufactured conflict become tools of political legitimacy in the populist era. “kayfabe” refers to the maintenance of dramatic illusion where the audience knows the conflict is staged, but willingly suspends disbelief. The author emphasized that Traditional public diplomacy involves engagement, persuasion, and relationship-building between states and foreign publics, but argue that Trump’s populist style rejects multilateral norms and replaces dialogue with confrontational messaging, and emphasizes direct communication with the public. Surowiec, P. and Miles, C. discuss trump digital policy n more of political terms rather than diplomatic communication, this work looks into how Trump twitter usage was for diplomatic commination.

Adaora Osondu-Oti, John Oluwaseun Agesin and Oluwatomilade Olominu in their work titled *The Impacts of Twitter (X) Diplomacy on Contemporary International Relations*,²⁵ reveal that Contemporary diplomacy is characterized by a greater frequency of communication and a wider dispersal of information through social media. It is obvious that States have been employing social media as part of a more interactive engagement with foreign publics, thereby changing the space within which diplomacy unfolds. The author’s statistics show that at least 97 percent of all 193 UN member states are currently active on Twitter (now rebranded as X), and they are increasingly eliciting public interest. The attention the public gives to world leaders’ tweets illustrates not only

the political power of Twitter but also how Twitter challenges conventional diplomatic practice. Adaora Osondu-Oti, John Oluwaseun Agesin and Oluwatomilade Olominu treats their work as impact without presenting the historical emergence of build up of social media and twitter in particular.

Just like the work of Desmond Chikamdinaka Patrick that discuss Digital Diplomacy between America and Russia, the work of Jennifer Offeibea Dodoo titled *The Use of social media in Public Diplomacy in US and China*,²⁶ focus on such digital relations between America and China. The author examines how the United States and China utilize social media platforms for public diplomacy, highlighting the transformative impact of digital communication on international relations. Jennifer Offeibea Dodoo explores how these global powers deploy distinct strategies shaped by their political ideologies, media environments, and strategic goals to engage with foreign publics and shape international perceptions. Just like other scholars, the author agree that the emergence of social media brought about a shift in the conduct of diplomacy which was once confined to closed, elite-to-elite communications, to a more inclusive interaction characterized by direct engagement with global audiences via platforms like Twitter, Facebook, WeChat, and Weibo. Though this work is very relevant and helpful to our study, it only presented a limited discuss on the subject matter by focusing just on America and China. While the work of Jennifer Offeibea Dodoo is only specific to relations between America and China, this study gives a broader perspective.

The work of Bridget Verrekia titled *Digital Diplomacy and Its Effect on International Relations*,²⁷ also investigates the use of digital tools and social media in diplomacy—and examines its impact on international relations. The study is grounded in qualitative research, including four in-person interviews with diplomatic professionals and a review of 20 academic sources to analyze both the benefits and challenges of this evolving diplomatic practice. The author is of the opinion that social media platforms have eroded the traditional role of diplomats. With the new development a person can now be both a producer and a consumer of information, diplomats have lost their monopoly on being able to report about what is happening in other countries. The crucial point the author noted is that, this shift positions diplomats more as analysts and interpreters rather than exclusive information brokers. The work also cited the advantages of this shift to include widespread communication across borders in a very fast manner, Governments can engage directly with international audiences, and even smaller or less powerful states can gain visibility and influence through strategic digital engagement.²⁸ This work gives a wide view of digital diplomacy which include social media but did not address how Donald Trump used it in foreign policy. Bridget Verrekia discuss her work in a more broader sense by looking at digital diplomacy in general, this study specifically focus on Donald Trump Twitter usage.

Kolapo Imam in his work “*Exploring the Application of Digital Diplomacy in the 21st Century*,”²⁹ uses several theories like the Skeptical Theory of Digital Diplomacy and the Progressive Paradigm of Digital Diplomacy to explain the concept and operationality

of digital diplomacy. The author emphasized that the use of social media is only a scope of the wider digital diplomacy which encompass other tools than social. This work gives a clear view that digital diplomacy is not all about the use of social media. The author discuss that Governments use digital channels to launch targeted public diplomacy campaigns aimed at promoting their cultural heritage, values, and policies to foreign audiences. These campaigns often include multimedia content such as videos, infographics, and interactive websites.³⁰ As part of the operations, powerful nations leverage social media platforms such as X (Formerly Twitter), Facebook, and Instagram to communicate directly with foreign audiences, disseminate information, and shape narratives about their policies and positions on international issues.

This according to the author has become a quick way to communicate and discuss on an issue of national and international concern. The work drew a connection of this practice to the era of Covid 19, citing that digital diplomacy became prominent due to the covid 19 incidence. Starting from the era of COVID-19 and beyond, virtual summits and conferences have become commonplace in diplomatic interactions. Powerful nations organize and participate in these digital gatherings to discuss key global challenges, negotiate agreements, and strengthen bilateral and multilateral partnerships. Similarly, the last COP28 event which was held in Dubai made adequate provisions for online attendees across different countries and organizations of the world.³¹ The work also discusses the benefit of engaging in digital diplomacy but did not discuss how Donald Trump got involved in such practice, which this study hope to discuss. Just like Bridget Verrekia, the

work of Kolapo Imam also presents a broader discuss on digital diplomacy without specifically looking at twitter utilization by Donald Trump.

Muhammad Alfian Maulana and Nur Rachmat Yuliantoro in their work titled *Donald Trump's Foreign Policy: Withdrawal from International Regimes and Organizations*,³² gave a broad spectrum of the nature of foreign policy adopted by Donald Trump. It was revealed prioritized public communication with international audience rather than secret discussions with other states. This made Trump initiated a transformative shift in United States (US) foreign policy which focused on withdrawals from crucial international agreements like the Paris Agreement, TPP, UNHRC, UNESCO, and UNRWA. Daniel Mills and Steven Rosefielde in their work *The Trump Phenomenon and the Future of U.S. Foreign Policy*,³³ added that President Trump pursued a nationalistic foreign policy prioritizing U.S. national interest over international obligations. Muhammad Alfian Maulana and Nur Rachmat Yuliantoro therefore noted that this was the reason Trump became more concern with the general public in diplomatic discourse rather than on secret agreement. According to the author President Trump policy was anchored on his strong commitment to preserving the promises he has made to the citizens of the United States of America throughout his tenure as president. He emphasized the need for a government that prioritizes the interests of its citizens and aims to enable Americans to achieve their dreams, ushering in a new era of American greatness.³⁴ Trump advocated for reducing foreign aid to shift resources towards the security and well-being of Americans while calling on other countries to take greater

responsibility in the face of global challenges. However, the work did not include how Trump adopted and used social media in communicating with the foreign audience.

Viona Rashica in her work *The Benefits and Risks of Digital Diplomacy*,³⁵ noted that digital diplomacy is a product of globalization and as a fruit of the new public diplomacy, the author added that digital diplomacy became possible and pronounced in the twenty-first century due to two major factors which she identified as the internet and social media. This has undoubtedly reduced traditional diplomatic elements. Through the work of this author, we are able to understand the benefit and risk associated with the use social media in public diplomacy. The author noted that the associated benefit includes Strengthening international relations, Proximity with audiences, Fast and effective communications, Low financial cost, and favoring small states. On the other hand, the challenges according to the author include lack of knowledge about the usage of the internet and social media, Disagreements, The culture of anonymity, and Hacking. The work also failed to address Trump's involvement in social media to conduct diplomatic relations.

In spite of all these literatures published on digital diplomacy, there is remain a huge gap that needs to be filled. Most of the existing literatures focus on digital diplomacy in general without specifically discussing Twitter as a social media platform, other literature discusses social media as a communicating tool without looking at its utilization by Donald Trump. Those who discuss Donald Trump usage of twitter, discuss it in a more political sense. With the identified shortcomings that exists in the reviewed

work, this study is conducted to specifically discuss the use of social media by Donald Trump in the conduct of diplomatic relations in public diplomacy. The study will examine a brief history and origin of social media in the global space, the concept and operations of Public Diplomacy, how Donald Trump's administration utilized social media platforms as tools of public diplomacy, the impact of Trump's social media communication on diplomatic relations, as well as the challenges arising from using social media in public diplomacy.

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CHAPTER TWO

EVOLUTION OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN DIPLOMATIC PRACTICE

Introduction

Before diving into how social media became prominent in diplomatic practice, it is good to examine what diplomacy really is, and also to look into the historical origin of diplomacy among states. Just like many other concepts, there is no general definition of diplomacy which can be all embracing or consensual. Consequently, there are various definitions of the concept as there are writers on the concept of diplomacy that tends to capture its original, manifestation, and changes over the years. It is however unanimously agreed that it is one of the major statecrafts and also part of the oldest instruments used by state in the conduct of their relations with other states and actors in the international system.¹

Definitions of Diplomacy

Popular Writers on the concept of diplomacy include Ernest Satow who defined diplomacy as the application of intelligence and tact to the conduct of official relations between government of independence States.² This definition does not fit properly into the modern sense of the concept, due to the growth and changes in diplomatic practice over the years. It however revealed that a diplomat must be intelligent and tactful enough to be able to maneuver negotiations to an advantage position. At the point when Ernest Satow gave this definition, diplomacy was predominantly seen as a tool used by official state, but as diplomacy began to expand in line with the expansion that came upon the

international system, diplomacy is no longer seen as a tool for state but also for other entities. It is on this note that the definition of Ernest Satow is considered Limited in the modern sense.

Harold Nicolson, another writer with experience in diplomatic practice defined diplomacy as the management of international relations by negotiation.³ He added that it includes how state representative like ambassadors and envoys manage the relations in International Affairs. Random House Dictionary defines diplomacy as: the conduct by government officials of negotiations and other relations between nations; the art or science of conducting such negotiations, skills in managing negotiation, handling of people so that there is little or no ill-feeling.⁴ This definition just like the ones presented by Ernest Satow is also seen as Limited, this is because the definition limits the concept of diplomacy to an art only between States which also makes it a limited definition. Furthermore, The Oxford English Dictionary defines diplomacy as the management of international relations by negotiations; the method by which these relations are adjusted and managed by Ambassadors and Envoys.⁵ Adam Watson also agrees that diplomacy is an instrument for international Society, this point though capture other actors in the international community like international organization, he did not capture the fact that diplomacy can even be used in a local arrangement, within a state or by individuals acting on their own capacity as in the case of personal diplomacy.

Hedley Bull defines diplomacy as “the conduct of relations between states and other entities with standing in world politics by official agents and by peaceful means.”⁶

Diplomacy is also seen as “the application of intelligence and tact to the conduct of official relations between the governments of independent states, and between governments and international actors”.⁷ In 2015, Berridge defines diplomacy as “the management of international relations by negotiation; the method by which these relations are adjusted and managed by ambassadors and envoys; the business or art of the diplomat.”.⁸ A more encompassing definition comes from the United Nations which definition diplomacy as the “the art of conducting negotiations and managing relations between nations, groups, or individuals through dialogue, representation, and communication.” Whatever the definition postulated by the various writer one thing is common to all that diplomacy is an act of communication deployed for negotiating agreement. This form of communication has existed since the ancient time of antiquity, this is why scholars and writers agree that diplomacy is an aged long practice that dates back into history.

Some writers hold that diplomacy began with God and his messenger called Angelo which means Angels. This belief holds that diplomacy began when God sent his Angel from Heaven to Earth to communicate his message. However, in the human sense, the word diplomacy took root in the Greek etymological word “diploun” which means “to fold”, this developed into another word “diploma” during the Roman Empire.⁹ Diploma was used to refer to a stamped document carried around as a pass for the purpose of traveling through the Empire's Road. Sufficient evidence exist that shows that

the Greeks engaged in diplomatic practice among the city-states. Thucydides documented several diplomatic engagements of the Greek city state as far back as the 5th century BC.

In 432 BC there was a diplomatic dialogue to decide the proper action to be taken against Athens. Apart from the Greek city states, there were also diplomatic record and engagement recorded in the ancient near East between Pharaoh and other region like Babylon, Canaan, and Palestine in the 14th B.C. In 1274 BC there was a diplomatic treaty signed after the battle of Kadesh between Pharaoh and the Hittite Empire, this evidence show that diplomatic practice and communication is an aged long phenomenon as already established earlier.¹⁰ The stage of diplomatic relation moved from the Greek city states, to the Roman, to the Italian, to the French diplomatic system, to the European system and then to the modern system, these stages also witnessed the changes in pattern of communication, distance, representatives, as well as the engagement tools employed in diplomatic communication. It is in this modern sense that the idea of social media is now connected and used in the art and practice of diplomacy especially in public diplomacy.

It is important to stress that there are, there are different types of Diplomacy such as Bilateral Diplomacy which happens when the actors involved are only consisted of two actors which could be states or non-states actors. There is also the Multilateral Diplomacy which happens when the actors involved consisted of more than two actors. It is usually manifested through international organizations, regional organizations, or specifically-aimed organizations where states are the members. There is also the Shuttle diplomacy where the action of an outside party in serving as an intermediary between (or

among) principals in a dispute, without direct principal-to-principal contact. There is also the Coercive diplomacy or "forceful persuasion" which is the "attempt to get a target, a state, a group (or groups) within a state, or a nonstate actor to change its objectionable behavior through either the threat to use force or the actual use of limited force".¹¹ Other form of diplomacy includes Dollar diplomacy which was a form of American foreign policy to further its aims in Latin America and East Asia through use of its economic power by guaranteeing loans made to foreign countries. Another type is the gunboat diplomacy (or Big Stick diplomacy in U.S. history) which refers to the pursuit of foreign policy objectives with the aid of conspicuous displays of naval power – implying or constituting a direct threat of warfare, should terms not be agreeable to the superior force. Conference Diplomacy, Economic Diplomacy, Personal Diplomacy, and Public Diplomacy are also forms of diplomacy used in the international system and even at local levels.

Diplomacy as an art of Communication

As demonstrated above, diplomacy takes many forms of definitions, but one thing is central to these definitions is an art of communication. Since the practice cannot exist without the exchange of messages, signals, and symbols between states. Communication enables the transmission of intentions, the negotiation of agreements, and the management of crises. In classical diplomacy, communication was often conducted through face-to-face meetings, written correspondence, and later through telegraphic and telephonic means. At every stage, the effectiveness of diplomacy has been shaped by the

quality, speed, and reliability of communication tools available to statesmen and diplomats. Diplomacy cannot exist where there is no communication.¹² In fact, Communication is the essence of diplomacy, determining its purpose and operational modes. Each phase in the long evolution of diplomacy has therefore been marked by the need to adjust to and seek to shape the dominant features of the communication and information environment. Harold Nicolson in 1939 notes three developments in the nineteenth and twentieth century which have had significant impact on the theory and practice of diplomacy. These are the growing sense of the community of nations; the importance of public opinion and the rapid increase in communication.¹³

Today, diplomacy is not only about direct state-to-state interaction but also involves communication with foreign publics. This practice, referred to as public diplomacy, is aimed at shaping perceptions, building goodwill, and influencing foreign audiences in ways that advance national objectives. Communication thus serves a dual role: (1) as the medium for negotiation and conflict resolution between governments, and (2) as the channel for projecting national identity, culture, and values on the global stage.

Overview of Public Diplomacy

In international relations, public diplomacy or people's diplomacy, broadly speaking, is any of the various government-sponsored efforts aimed at communicating directly with foreign publics to establish a dialogue designed to inform and influence with the aim that this foreign public supports or tolerates a government's strategic objectives.¹⁴ As the international order has changed over the 20th century, so has the practice of public

diplomacy. Its practitioners use a variety of instruments and methods ranging from personal contact and media interviews to the Internet and educational exchanges. Public diplomacy deals with the influence of public attitudes on the formation and execution of foreign policies. It encompasses dimensions of international relations beyond traditional diplomacy; the cultivation by governments of public opinion in other countries; the interaction of private groups and interests in one country with another; the reporting of foreign affairs and its impact on policy; communication between those whose job is communication, as diplomats and foreign correspondents; and the process of intercultural communications.

Alan K. Henrikson, Professor of Diplomatic History noted that Public diplomacy may be defined, simply, as the conduct of international relations by governments through public communications media and through dealings with a wide range of nongovernmental entities (political parties, corporations, trade associations, labor unions, educational institutions, religious organizations, ethnic groups, and so on including influential individuals) for the purpose of influencing the politics and actions of other governments.¹⁵ In a general sense, the practice of diplomacy in the 21st century has expanded beyond closed-door negotiations to include highly visible, immediate, and interactive forms of communication. Specifically, Public diplomacy that traditionally represents actions of governments to influence overseas publics within the foreign policy process has expanded today – by accident and design – beyond the realm of governments

to include the media, multinational corporations, NGO's and faith-based organizations as active participants in the field.¹⁶

This evolution is most clearly evident in the adoption of social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram, which allow governments and diplomats to bypass traditional media filters and directly address global audiences.

Evolution of social media in Public Diplomacy

The emergence of social media simplified the whole process of communication because they are easier to use.¹⁷ Throughout history, advancement in technology has been a decisive factor in shaping any endeavors of humankind including diplomatic communication and practices. Each major advance in communication technology has redefined the speed, scope, and style of diplomatic interaction. The eventual incorporation of social media into diplomatic practices is simply a process of development from one state to another. In early civilizations, diplomatic messages were transmitted by messengers who physically carried sealed letters or oral instructions between rulers. This process was slow and vulnerable to delays or interception, which often limited the effectiveness of diplomacy. With the invention of the printing press in the 15th Century, there came a change that revolutionized the spread of political and diplomatic ideas.¹⁸ For the first time, treaties, manifestos, and policy positions could be widely circulated, shaping public opinion and international awareness. Furthermore, the 19th Century witnessed a more advanced technology with the coming of Telegraph and Telephone. These technologies dramatically increased the speed of diplomatic

communication. Negotiations that once took weeks due to slow correspondence could now be conducted within hours. The telegraph, in particular, enabled real-time coordination during conflicts and crises, marking a turning point in diplomatic history.

The introduction of Broadcast Media like Radio and television in the 20th Century introduced new ways for states to engage foreign publics. Leaders could broadcast messages globally, shaping international perceptions during wars, ideological struggles, and peace processes. Public diplomacy during the Cold War, for example, heavily relied on radio services like the BBC World Service and Voice of America to project soft power. In the 20th Century, the rise of the internet allowed for instantaneous communication and expanded access to information.¹⁹ Governments established official websites, digital archives, and online press rooms to communicate with foreign audiences more transparently. Social media which came in the 21st Century, represents the latest stage in this evolution, enabling not just fast communication but also interactive engagement. Unlike earlier technologies, social media allows for two-way communication, immediate feedback, and public participation in international discourse. Diplomats and foreign ministries can now directly interact with foreign citizens, journalists, NGOs, and other governments without mediation.

Social media is a means of interaction among people in which they create, share and exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks.²⁰ Furthermore, social media depends on mobile and web-based technologies to create highly interactive platforms through which individuals and communities share, comment, discuss and

modify user-generated content. As defined by Kaplan and Haenlein, social media is a group of Internet-based application that are built upon the ideology and technology of web 2.0 and allow the generation and exchange of its content. They refer to the internet-based social websites like the Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, etc. which allow users to interactively communicate with one another.²¹ Social media can also refer to those “web - based and mobile-based technologies which are used to turn communication into interactive dialogue between organizations, communities and individuals.”²² On the social media, the users are not passive like in the case of Television, Radio, and Newspaper; rather they are active in the formation and exchange of information. This has giving it a great advantage and acceptance as a means of interaction.

Social media has been characterized in various ways, irrespective of the different definitions, it gives the comparative impression that the social media is an approach to associate with other individuals by methods for the distinctive correspondence frameworks through online media.²³ Social media involves a few stages and channels that empower system administration, exchange and sharing of data.²⁴ It refers to content distributed through social interactions. These media utilize various platforms that offer services or tools to help customers and firms build connections.²⁵ According to Zeeshain and Hussain, social media is the usage of web-based and mobile technologies to create, share and consume information and knowledge without any geographical, social, political or demographical boundaries through public interaction in a participatory and collaborative way.²⁶ Social media encompasses a wide range of online word of mouth

forums including blogs, company-sponsored discussion boards and chat room, consumer to consumer email, consumer product or service ratings websites and forums, internet discussion boards and forums, moblogs (sites containing digital audio, images, movies or photographs) and social networking websites, to name a few.²⁷

Using various social media like social networks, sharing websites, blogs and a lot of other channels people can interact online with whomever they want without any restrictions in terms of quantity or quality.²⁸ This great opportunity has allowed people to share valuable information and experiences. As at January 2012, there were more than 800 million active Facebook users, with over 250 million of them logging in everyday. Additionally, over 3.5 billion pieces of contents such as blog posts, web links and news stories are shared on this social network.²⁹ Social media is an important tool for all, because it allows everyone to communicate with, listen to, and learn from other people in a way they have never been able to do before.³⁰

The first small step that might be considered to be the first building block of the way to power worldwide was made in 1971. Ray Tomlinson has successfully exchanged a message between two computers set close to each other. Later, in 1978, one could observe the construction of the first social media, built by Randy Suess and Ward Christensen. It was called the Bulletin Board System (BBS). After a presentation, these two men have created the first post about the event. That occasion is thought to be the beginning of a virtual community. In 1994, people could use GeoCities, the first service for web hosting. John Rezner and David Bohnett created this service. It allowed users to

create their websites.³¹ In 1995, one could observe a launch of TheGlobe.com and Classmates. They were created for private needs like communication with friends, publishing of content and other means of interaction.

The year of 1997 was marked by engagement of a new constituent called SixDegrees. SixDegrees was named after six degrees of separation concept. It allowed users to list friends, family members and acquaintances and see their connection with any other user on the site. It was one of the first manifestations of social networking websites in the format now seen today. This service made it possible to create a profile and add friends to it. Sixdegrees closed in 2007. At its height, the website had about a million users.³²

A real breakthrough at that time happened in 1999. Two more services saw the world – LiveJournal and Blogger. These facilities ensured a possibility to communicate with friends, share information or write some data through a journal or blog. In 2002, one could observe Friendster – a means of communication with people around the world. A year later, in 2003, the world of technologies was expanded by three more participants: LinkedIn, MySpace, and WordPress. MySpace was launched after e-universe employees with Friendster saw its potential and mimicked the more popular features of the social networking sites. MySpace became the most popular social networking website in the United States in 2006.³³ The 100thmillion accounts were created on August 9, 2006.

In 2003, LinkedIn was created, as a business-oriented social network. Members invite people to connect instead of friends. LinkedIn is a contact management system as

well as social network, and has a question and-answer section similar to Yahoo! Answers. After that, in 2004 Mark Zuckerberg who studied at Harvard University presented its creature called “The Facebook”. It aimed to provide the necessary information for the needs of college students. Facebook is the most popular social networking website with its users running into billions globally. The original concept of Facebook came from the colloquial name for books given out at the start of the academic year by universities to help students get to know one another better.³⁴ Facebook is an online site, which requires users to register themselves and create a personal profile.

YouTube came next. It is the creature of Chad Hurley, Steve Chen and Jawed Karim. It was presented to the public in 2005. The primary function of this service is uploading and sharing of videos. After YouTube production, in 2006, a new social network penetrated the life of users. It was named Twitter. The users got an opportunity to exchange and share messages, including 140 symbols, which were called “Tweets”. In 2011, a big Google corporation presented Google +, a new product, which offered a chance exchange not only information but also to run your own video chats. The year 2012 was a start for Pinterest – the first social scrapbooking. It allows users to create and share albums with your pictures.³⁵

The more recent social media platform making the wave especially among younger generation (gen Z) is tiktok. The story of TikTok began in 2016, when Chinese company ByteDance launched an app called A.me that allowed users to create and share short videos. It was renamed Douyin three months later. In 2017, ByteDance began

expanding Douyin outside of China, under the name TikTok. Later that year, ByteDance acquired Musical.ly, a similar short-form video app based in Shanghai, with a US office in Santa Monica, California. Musical.ly let users record lip-syncing videos, and it had an established user base in the United States.¹⁵ ByteDance folded some of Musical.ly's features into TikTok and used the acquisition to expand the app's reach to include the US. During this time, the Douyin logo remained much the same. Created by an unnamed designer, the original logo started off as a simple "d" shape that resembled a musical note.

Use of social media in Public Diplomacy

It has been established earlier that according to Alan K. Henrikson, Public diplomacy may be defined as the conduct of international relations by governments through public communications media and through dealings with a wide range of nongovernmental entities (political parties, corporations, trade associations, labor unions, educational institutions, religious organizations, ethnic groups, and so on including influential individuals) for the purpose of influencing the politics and actions of other governments. According to Nye, public diplomacy plays a vital role in cultivating "soft power"—the ability of a country to shape preferences and gain influence through attraction rather than coercion.³⁶ Looking at this definition, one cannot help but conclude that such vast coverage of communication can only be possible by a tool possessing the ability to reach a very large audience across borders at the same time. This is where the concept of social media is deeply appreciated.

Before the rise of social media, the major tools of public diplomacy included cultural programs, academic exchanges, and international broadcasting services such as the BBC World Service, Voice of America, and Radio Moscow. While these methods were effective in projecting narratives, they were primarily top-down and one-directional, offering limited opportunities for interaction. The advent of social media radically altered this model, providing states with a platform for two-way engagement and real-time communication. The rapid expansion of social media platforms since the early 2000s such as Facebook (2004), YouTube (2005), Twitter (2006), Instagram (2010), and TikTok (2016) opened unprecedented opportunities for governments to communicate directly with global audiences. Unlike traditional media, social media enables immediate and unmediated communication, allowing leaders, ministries, and embassies to bypass journalistic filters and address foreign publics directly.³⁷ The implication is that Social media has revolutionized public diplomacy by transforming it from a one-directional, elite-driven practice into a participatory, interactive, and immediate form of global communication. It enables states to project soft power, shape narratives, and engage directly with foreign publics in ways that were previously impossible. While challenges such as misinformation and digital inequalities persist, social media has become an indispensable tool for 21st-century public diplomacy. The states that master digital engagement are likely to wield greater influence in shaping international perceptions and outcomes.

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CHAPTER THREE

AMERICA PUBLIC DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BEFORE 2017

It is very important to explore and understand the nature and manifestation of America Public Diplomatic Relation before Donald Trump so as to recognize and appreciate the shift that came with the presidency of Donald Trump. Before the era of Donald Trump as American President, America's foreign policy has been marked by several indices as revealed under American past president. Historically, America's diplomatic relation prior to the second world war was anchored on the policy of isolationism and non-interference, however with the outbreak of the second world war and the new order that was created, there came a need to intentionally preserve world peace and ensure security of state in the global system, this prompted several developments such as the creation of the United Nations as well as several alliance system like NATO and WARSAW PACT.¹

The primary implication of this order for the United States was a change of his diplomatic relations and foreign policy from Isolationism to what can be best described as involvement and protectionism. Leffler in his work aver that this shift was orchestrated by the realization that whatever happens in the international arena or in any country can leave an effect for another country far away. This generated America's sense of global responsibility to prevent economic and political crisis at the global stage. During this period, America diplomatic relations became ideologically geared towards the spread of democracy.²

The arrival of the Soviet Union created another bloc that seems to struggle with America for Global dominance, while America was known as ideologically for democracy, Soviet Union became known for communism. The global world therefore was a manifestation of two power bloc working hard to stop the other. The United States in this regard adopted the containment policy while initiating several Alliances that see to stop the spread of communism. The creation of NATO in 1947 became a much-needed tool for this agenda, the Marshall plan was also initiated in 1948 to project America as the Big Brother they could trust.³ Brands in 2016 cited that in the period known as the Cold War from 1945 to 1991, America utilized the twin approach of diplomacy and military might in relating with issues involving her interest. The military effort where manifested in the Korean War and the Vietnam war.⁴ Nye in 2022 called this the manifestation of soft power and Hard power. He added that the soft power includes diplomacy and economic sanctions while the Hard power refer to deployment of military might.⁵

America also abducted multilateralism in diplomatic approach that culminated in the creation of United Nations, International Monetary Funds, World Bank, and several organizations established to address common concern of state both in political and economic affairs. With the end of the Cold War, and the disintegration of Soviet Union, America emerged the global power and strongest on the world stage. The need to protect global peace and security became more intensified. The United States information agency which had been founded in 1953 became very instrumental in disseminating public

communication. It was utilized to project a positive Image for America while keeping the public aware of the policies and actions undertaken by America.⁶

In the opinion of Cull in 2008 this was also used to spread the culture of America to the outside world. This is what Scholars have come to refer to as the Americanization agenda.⁷ The role of the Voice of America (VOA) greatly support that America had for long used digital technology in diplomatic relations and public diplomacy. The Voice of America (VOA) was established in 1942 and used as a tool for propaganda to fight against narcissism. This was why though it was an American broadcast Media, the Voice of America (VOA) was broadcast in German language, this means the German population was the main target of the broadcast.

As part of his public diplomatic responsibility, the Voice of America (VOA) was a tool that updated the public with factual occurrence about the Second World War, their slogan and focus was that the medium must always state the truth no matter whether it favors the American country or not. After the Second World War the Voice of America (VOA) became used in the Cold War forming part of the State department and later in the United States information agency in 1953.⁸ The major component of the multilateral diplomacy of America were rule of law, human right, and democracy. The use of movies, popular television program, and American music were also employed to promote and spread this American culture and ideology.

The 11th September event of 2001 brought a new shade of diplomatic relation and foreign policy pursuit by the American state. George Bush who was the then America

president initiated a robust policy that seek to address insecurity, terrorism, as well as advocate for democracy. This was captured in what became known as “The Bush Doctrine”.⁹ This doctrine stipulate that America will adopt the technique of preemptive strike in a case where there is suspicion of threats or intending strike from the opponent. The policy added that the American would not fail to act alone if it is necessary to establish peace and promote security. This suggest that America will not be captured by the web of delay in trying to get other States before action is carried out for the purpose of protecting her interest.

Scholars believe that this new doctrine brought a shift from diplomatic engagement which America had adopted since the end of the second world war to that of unilateral diplomatic approach. A manifestation on this policy was in the Invention of Afghanistan in 2001 and other countries that were believed to be harboring terrorist. In 2003, America also invaded Iraq for what they believed to be aiding terrorism. However, this move was greatly condemned by other European major countries. It must be stated here that as at this point, the people and the general public were still not fully involved in diplomatic affairs. Public opinion at the time did very little to determine how is state should act.¹⁰

George Bush in a bid to act alone, withdrew from multilateral organizations whose operation seems to reduce the power or action of America to art unilaterally as they have adopted. However, some multilateral arrangement where also strengthened and sustain when it aligns with America's projection. In your opinion of Dadder and Lindsay,

it was the issue of 11th September 2001 that moved George Bush to shift from his promise to only concern himself with domestic affairs to that of International Affairs.¹¹ It became clear that even if a state focused on his own domestic affairs, issues happening in other state can still pose a threat to a state far away, this is because the world has become a global village.

In response to this reality America under George Bush intervened in the crisis in Vietnam, Georgia, and Philippines to assist the government in fighting against terrorism. Many people criticized this move and admitted that it was a deep reflection of his inexperience in foreign affairs. George Bush himself alluded to this when he assembled a group of advisors named Vulcans to assist him in world affairs. It is important to stress that the diplomatic relation of America under George Bush was solely unilateral in nature.¹² The administration gave priority to unilateral approach rather than multilateral approach. It negotiated agreement more on bilateral basis like the agreement with China in 2001.

George Bush also withdrew from numerous agreement and negotiation which the previous administration had initiated. A careful assessment of the administration will reveal that both unilateral and multilateral approach were adopted but for the point where it favors America interest. What this suggest is that America acted unilaterally in some cases and multilaterally in other cases only at his favor its interest and policy. The George Bush administration coincided with the rising spread of social media especially as it involves the public. Though technology was still rising in public diplomacy, the

administration utilized it for gathering of data and surveillance.¹³ In 2002, the United States created the Department of Home Security and also the United States of America Patriot Act, both of these creations brought about the increased use of technology for information gathering and surveillance. Technology was also utilized to monitor communication, internet, and data sharing among government and non-state actors.

It is also believed that it is in the George Bush period that cyber security began to gain root. In 2008, the administration launched the comprehensive national cybersecurity initiative, this was to ensure safety for United States digital information. One of the factors that made the United State military to become more sophisticated was the incorporation of digital and technological equipment into military operations and Intelligence gathering.¹⁴ These equipments include drones, missiles-controlled GPS, satellite, and others. When myspace was launched in 2003, Facebook in 2004, and YouTube in 2005, a new era for public communication also emerged in the period. These platforms became very instrumental in subsequent election and also to show opinion on government as well as public issues.

In 2002, the E-government Act was established which brought government services to be more accessible online. This initiative coupled with others laid the foundation for adopting digital Technology into governance and diplomatic relation. for example, in 2004 election, digital Technology was greatly used for digital campaign and fundraising. Several government websites were created and the public was brought closer

to the government through these media platforms.¹⁵ The implication of this was that government control over information and public opinion became weekend.

After the George Bush administration ended in 2018, the Barack Obama administration came in 2009. This new administration also signaled a shift from George Bush policies. It seemed that there will always be a shift from the old pattern when a new President takes over. As George Bush shifted from Clinton's diplomatic policy, Barack Obama shifted from George Bush policy. The policy of Barack Obama was anchored on multilateral dialogue and cooperation. This was a sharp contrast from the American policy operated in the previous administration.¹⁶ Obama was known for smart power that juxtaposed military strength with negotiation. He brought back strained relationship between America and other countries orchestrated during the past administration.

Scholars believe that the full-fledged use of digital media came under Obama, this is why he is referred to as the first American digital president. His administration used social media to engage with the public for communication and information sharing. This goes to show that do Donald Trump was not the one that initiated the use of social media in American governance. David Unger point out that before the back Obama election, many websites and platform created for campaign and election purposes where in immediately dismantled after the election, but Barack Obama brought a new trajectory by not only using social media for campaign and election but also incorporating it into governance.¹⁷

Furthermore, records shows that the online campaign championed by Obama produce a robust communication with over 10million people. During this period, YouTube was greatly used to publish opinion and support for Obama. For example, a popular singer Amber Lee published a song on YouTube that projected Obama as a good candidate to be chosen for Leadership. This brought massive support for Obama with over 2.5 million people viewing the video.¹⁸ The use of social media by Obama resonates with his promise to pursue a policy of engagement both with other government and with the people.¹⁹ Other forms of media like the radio and television were also utilized by Obama especially during the campaign. However, it was the digital and social media usage that brought in more coverage and impact.

To appeal to the black population, the media was greatly used to describe Obama as a fulfillment of the prophecy and “I have a dream” speech which was delivered by Martin Luther King Jr in 1963.²⁰ The Obama campaign speech was also portrayed to possess the same hope, Vigor, Vision, and impact. In fact, the title of the speech was tagged “Obama and the Martin Luther King speech, I have a dream” and it was circulated by YouTube to millions of viewers. Bolton and Olisson added that this gave Obama a great advantage in the presidential election in 2008. The Photographic image from the 1 minute 27 seconds speech of Obama filled the media space and generated a belief that Obama was the perfect candidate for the presidency.²¹

During Obama regime, America marked a prominent shift to digital television which was planned to be unveiled on 17th February 2009.²² This transition which has

been prepared since 1990s mandated manufacturers to produce television that possess digital tuners which signaled the eradication of analog system into a more digitalized system. This reveal that the adoption of social media in America public diplomacy was not spontaneous but gradual. Harris postulates that there is a divide of opinion as to who is actually the media president between Obama and Donald Trump.²³ It seems from record that every American President usually locate a new digital opportunity to gain advantage. In the era of the television in 1960, John F. Kennedy was the first to win presidential election through television debates. This came as a shift from the party system era where communication system was predominantly channeled through political parties.

After this age of television came the age of Internet. This brought about a more inclusive approach for the public in the issue of governance. However, according to Enli in 2017, there is yet a new age characterized by social media.²⁴ Though social media has not replaced all the system that existed before it, it has brought a new revolution on how things are done and how communication is carried out. It is important to note that Obama use social media for campaign and communication but majorly during election and campaign. Report show that Obama did not craft his social media message by himself. Enli believed that this strategy gave Obama “election advantage” over other candidates.²⁵ The coming of Donald Trump took the use of social media in America public diplomacy to another level by focusing and using Twitter for his major communications.

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CHAPTER FOUR

SOCIAL MEDIA PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: DONALD TRUMP'S SOCIAL MEDIA DIPLOMACY

There is hardly an area of human endeavor social media has not impacted, whether in political, economic, cultural, or diplomatic relations, all have felt the full-fledged impact of technology and social media. Degirmenci and Terzioglu put it this way that information goes everywhere with the speed of light where internet technology has reached.¹ This development has made it possible for communication to be faster than the traditional method, and opinion to be generated without delay. In the area of public diplomacy, this has orchestrated a transition from traditional diplomatic system that involves state to state relation to a digitalize diplomatic system that cut across States, individual, and international organization.²

What this means is that, today, international relations have gone beyond relations among States only, to a more inclusive networks that involves the public. The structure has given rise to new practice like e-diplomacy, digital diplomacy, Twi diplomacy, among others. This has crept into governance even in the United States as adopted and used by its 45th president of America Donald Trump who was elected in November 2016. Though there had been great use of social media in campaign, election, and diplomatic affairs before the era of Donald Trump, it was Donald Trump who made Twitter a popular tool for diplomatic relation and issues of governance both in the domestic and international context.³ This is supported by the fact that unlike other president who

employed online media personnel to oversee and handle social media communications, Donald Trump was known for handling and communicating with the public by himself especially through his Twitter handle *@realDonaldTrump*.⁴

One major contribution to be appreciated is that prior to Donald Trump's use, social media in Foreign Relations was majorly a tool for state department as regards information dissemination, it was Donald Trump who made it a personal tool to communicate his own opinion on public issues.⁵ Scholars believe that Donald Trump adopted the use of Twitter to display his frustration with political leaders on public issues.⁶ Most of the choice of words, language, and approach he adopt in a tweet does not conform to the lay down diplomatic standard.⁷ It is on this note that several scholars and leaders criticize the use of Twitter by Donald Trump for his informal style of communication.

Careful analysis of this style of communication reveal that Donald Trump adopted the unilateral diplomatic approach rather than multilateralism. This suggests that Donald Trump was quick to take action on his own accord which were usually reflected in his own tweet rather than consulting with other states for a collective action. Surowiec and Miles aver that Donald Trump bothered less about the White House Press Office which was the major outlet created to disseminate information on public diplomacy, this revealed that Donald Trump gave priority to his own personal channel of communication over state established institutions.⁸ Wang noted that as at 2019, Donald Trump was the most populous president on Twitter having about 60 million followers, this speaks in

support of the predominant presence and use of Twitter by Donald Trump.⁹ Adding to this, Cohn and Wolfe declared that he was also the leader with the highest tweet which amounted to over 20,000 tweet that drew the highest level of interaction on Twitter.¹⁰ In fact, by 2021, Donald Trump twitter handle had grown from 60 million followers recorded in 2019 to 88.9 million followers in 2021.¹¹

Confirming Donald Trump's unilateralism over multilateralism, Maulana and Yuliantoro noted that Donald Trump withdrew from several international agreement like the Paris Agreement, UNHRC, UNRWA UNESCO and TPP which had existed in previous administration.¹² Although it is believed that this withdrawal became necessary since the terms of their agreement were not suitable to the current regime, scholars believe he withdrew to only orchestrate a renegotiation. Lipton added that the reason behind the withdrawal was that America instituted its own domestic policies that were not in congruent with the Paris agreement.¹³ This goes to show the extent to which Donald Trump decided to act unilaterally without considering the position or opinions of other state. Kapautsis and Volkema noted that the frequent use of Twitter by Donald Trump, the adopted language, and the choice of words were all influenced by his personality trait which is described as narcissistic.¹⁴ Narcissism is a behavioral trait that makes a person think too highly of himself over others, this also account for the reason and manifestation of a decision to disregard other people's opinion and act on his own accord.

Evidence abounds that Donald Trump used Twitter for communication before his election in 2016, however, it was his willingness to contest for presidency that gave his tweet a more public concerned. During the campaign leading to the election, Donald Trump began to use Twitter to draw international attention into America domestic affairs. For example, on 27th July 2016, Donald Trump made a post to draw foreign countries particularly Russia into the issues between him and his opponent Hillary Clinton in regards to the 2016 election. This post was orchestrated by the accusation of Hillary Clinton deleting images, as a result Donald Trump called on Russia and other countries to come and investigate Hillary Clinton. He sarcastically stated that 30,000 email were missing.¹⁵

Though this action was criticized on the ground that it negates diplomatic norms, it however reveals that Donald Trump was not concerned about the normal method of relations. It signaled a level of interference in America domestic affairs which is most times viewed as breached of sovereignty. Through this post and the eventual; reactions it attracted, Donald Trump successfully displayed Twitter as a channel by which responses and opinion can be drawn immediately into domestic affairs and where international debates can be instigated. In line with this, many scholars referred to Twitter as a transnational phenomenon. In 2016 Donald Trump addressed the issue of global warming in his Twitter handle, through his tweet Donald Trump accused China of contributing negatively to the climate change,¹⁶ many scholars claimed that this was an old issue

which Donald Trump had discussed in 2012 but only re-engineered it in 2016 for political advantage during his campaign.

Donald Trump used this tweet to assure the American population that he would challenge the act of climate change orchestrated by the Chinese government to stop the competitive power of America especially in area of manufacturing. This tweet left large impact for America diplomacy; it signaled a sense of economic competition rather than corporation. It also brought a strain on the United States and China diplomatic relationship, this goes to show that a mere tweet can either strengthen or damage diplomatic relationships. During the campaign era, Donald Trump circulated his campaign slogan “Make America Great Again” through his twitter handle which generated large support as it revived the American dream in the heart of the public.¹⁷ This also communicated that he would be primarily concerned with the domestic policies of America, this became situated properly in the affirmation that Donald Trump foreign policy were simply in pursuant of his domestic policies.

The goal was not only to promote American policies but also a return to nationalism in America. The “Make America Great Again” campaign slogan became a brand strategy for Donald Trump. It painted a picture of the fact that America had fallen short of his glory days and therefore need restoration. This message circulated by Twitter appealed to a large number of people in America who wanted to see America better than what it was. Scholars believed that during this period, the Twitter platforms served several proposes as part of the electioneering campaign. First, it was used to unify trump

supporters for the purpose of the election, it was also used to castigate and attack opponent and elites, it was used to project the ideology that America comes before any other thing.¹⁸ The result of the approach was that it appealed to the emotions of the public which greatly mobilize a great deal of support for Donald Trump, this goes to show that social media as exemplified by Twitter can be a great force for governance campaign and election. This can be the reason why about 2/3 of the word leaders now used Twitter regularly for communication.

The message of Donald Trump on 31st December 2016 reflected his sarcastic mode of communication. On Twitter, Donald Trump posted “Happy New Year to all including my enemies and those who fought me and lost”. While this seems like a celebrated messages for seeing the new year, it was used as a tool for mockery to the opponent of Donald Trump which he referred to as “enemies”. This leaves a wrong impression about his view of election, rather than pursuing a collaborative approach to governance even with those who lost the election, Donald Trump presented a view that he is the winner and his opponents are losers,¹⁹ this created is situation where Twitter became a two to show personal victories on state matters. It is therefore true that such tweet portrayed him as a leader that is not Humble, and created more enemies than friends for the period of governance under Donald Trump.

On 26 December 2016, Donald Trump posted about the United Nations position on the decision and action of Israel. As a close ally, America had supported Israel on his settlement activities in 2016, this was opposed by the United Nations. Donald Trump

therefore displayed a public resentment to the position of the United Nations for not considering America's position on the matter. According to the tweet Donald Trump stated that "The United Nations has great potential but it is so sad that it has turned into a club where people just come to sit and talk"²⁰

This tweet revealed that Donald Trump was more interested in taking unilateral action that favor her interest rather than multilateral agreement that favor global interest. This also signal is commitment to protectionism and nationalism on American issue. The impact of this was that it created a friction and level of distrust between United Nations and America's government, it exposed Donald Trump as a leader who acts alone without regard to established agreements.²¹ After the election of 2016 that brought Donald Trump to power, he began to take steps to make friends with countries that were considered enemies to America, this was a diplomatic move which was brought to public awareness through his Twitter page. On 14th November 2016, Donald Trump tweeted "Just had a nice conversation with Putin".²² This tweet revealed to the world that Donald Trump had changed diplomatic gear from hostility and confrontation to that of openness and friendliness. This was also a sharp contrast with traditional diplomatic norms where discussion and consultation will be made by his cabinet and then an official statement released by the state house.

This greatly support the argument that from the onset Donald Trump acted unilaterally without necessary consultation or collaboration. This trajectory gradually empowered Donald Trump's personal approach to issues over institutional channel. This

tweet sparked international and domestic debate about the attitude of Donald Trump as well as United States-Russia relations. One thing that must be appreciated is that Donald Trump through his Twitter usage introduced a faster way of communication reducing delay and time-consuming debate,²³ it however overrides institutional diplomacy with personal diplomacy, it also brought in global audience into discussion and awareness of global and domestic issues.

It is popularly believed that Donald Trump's use of Twitter diplomacy became intense from 2017 it was from this point that his tweet had the greater impact on international relations. scholars believe that this was possible because Twitter no longer became a tool for campaign, but a tool he used to communicate important matters not as a candidate seeking election but as the actual present of America. One of the earliest issue Donald Trump attended to as American president was the issue with Mexico.²⁴ Prior to the election, America had developed a strain relationship with Mexico over immigration laws, Donald Trump had promised during his campaign to prevent Mexico moving into America without control as this would lead to economic burden and national security issue. One would have expected a press statement to address this issue from the state house communication channel after bilateral negotiation must have been completed. On the contrary Donald Trump turned to his Twitter handle and posted that "a great wall will be built along the southern border and Mexico will bear the consequences".²⁵ The international community as well as the public got this message from Twitter and offered reaction in diverse manner.

Mexico reacted by cancelling all bilateral scheduled meetings with America as relationship between the two countries became more tensed. Nicholas cull in 2019 interpreted such action by Donald Trump as an act that under mutual respect. This incidence also unveils the repeated pattern adopted by Donald Trump of taking domestic issue and throwing them into the public space, it also signed the repeated pattern of bypassing established diplomatic channels. On February 2nd 2017, Donald Trump also tweeted his opinion concerning the action of Iran.²⁶ Prior to the tweet, Iran tested a ballistic missile which was seen by America as an action capable of provoking war. The best diplomatic approach would have been to call for consultation among American leaders and then respond to the issue through the state department, contrary to this and in line with his pattern Donald Trump responded through Twitter message issuing a warning to Iran.

The tweet read “Iran has been put on notice for firing a ballistic missile”. This choice of word used in this tweet by Donald Trump signaled an act of retaliation or sanction which is judged to be capable of deterring Iran for any further provoking action. Scholars agreed that this warning would have been given to Iran in a private and confidential manner,²⁷ but through Twitter Donald Trump made it public. In the strength of public diplomacy, the act of Iran would have been what state will deliberate upon as it borders on an international agreement which several states are party to, rather than adopting this multilateral approach which the previous government would have adopted, Donald Trump utilized his unilateral approach to act alone. The tweet however,

demonstrated America's power to intimidate her enemies. The tweet came with his own consequences, it lacked a detailed explanation as to the action of Mexico and the intended response offered by America, it bought a level of confusion on how states should respond to issue of global concern. Scholar claim that this act supported the fact that the use of social media in international relation can erode diplomatic coherence.²⁸

Another manifestation of top Twitter diplomacy came in 9th February 2017 when Donald Trump tweeted "see you in court the security of our nation is at stake". This tweet followed the verdict of the United States federal court to nullify the travel ban placed by Donald Trump on Muslim majority countries. The proper response would have been to issue a legal response, but Donald Trump took his response to Twitter and made it public. While this ought to be a domestic matter between Donald Trump and the court it was made public and garnered reactions from foreign countries and individuals who expressed dissatisfaction over Donald Trump decision.²⁹

Through the tweet Donald Trump portrayed himself as one who is trying to fix the entrenched system inside America. On the international plane, most countries saw this as a direct attack on Islam itself. This without doubt created a strong resentment for the person and policies of Donald Trump. Another message came in 17th March 2017 when trump posted that "North Korea is behaving very badly and China has done little to help". just like the case of Iran, Donald Trump responded to North Korea for testing its missiles. America accused China of being part of the conspiracy. Donald Trump added that the action of North Korea is undermining the power of America, and claimed that he won't

tolerate the humiliation which has been melted to America in the past administration.³⁰ In the choice of words, Donald Trump categorized China as an enemy for aiding the action of North Korea. This revealed the diplomatic stands of Donald Trump while he built cordial relationship with countries like Russia, he developed a strain relationship with China and North Korea.

In response to this act by Donald Trump, the Chinese government began to advocate that diplomacy is not conducted on Twitter. this was to discredit the style of trump in using Twitter to address sensitive international domestic issues. this tweet produces a major effect between the relationship of China and they North Korean. China did not give full sanctions imposed on North Korea by other countries. Another use of Twitter on diplomatic issue came on 19th February 2017 when Donald Trump tweeted “we should have kept the oil”.³¹ This was the response to the withdrawal of military operation in Iraq. Donald Trump noted through the tweet that they ought to have seized Iraq oil as a full compensation for the involvement in the world. It however proved that America withdrew from the war without thinking of the benefits which the Iraq oil could have brought.

In the concluding part of the tweet, Donald Trump states that “America would have another chance to actualize this interest”. This post unveils a new view that any foreign intervention a country must engage should be able to produce a good reward for the engaging state. This also demonstrated the business mindedness of Donald Trump by comparing impute to output. This was however interpreted by States as an act of America

imperialism and domination which was not in line with the doctrine of democracy which America had projected.³² After the election. Donald Trump began to the build relationship with Japan, he made a public tweet on the visit of the Japan Prime Minister on 12 February 2017. Donald Trump posted “thank you to minister Abe for a wonderful visit”. This exposed to the public that America was entering a cordial relationship with Japan, it showed a deep sense of warm appreciation which was a reflection of his goodwill and his need to strengthen alliance. One thing that must be understood is that Donald Trump entered into relationship that suit his interest why he refuted countries that he felt does not align with his political goals.³³ One major take home from the Donald Trump Twitter diplomacy is that it brought a closed rapport with the general public rather than keeping the public out of global or domestic issues. It also created an avenue for the public to state their direct opinion on decisions made by the administration.

In the middle of 2017, it became clear that Twitter was the major social Media platform used by Donald Trump to discuss issues, scholars believed he used twitter more than any other social media platform. It was a tool to project America as a powerful nation, and also to shape global narrative as well as informed and negotiate in public. On the 8th of August 2017, Donald Trump commented again on the issue of North Korea, he revealed that he was going to adopt a more military approach to tackle the threat from North Korea. In his tweet he stated “North Korea best not make any more threat than United States, they will be met with fire and fury”. This tweet revealed to the world that America was not scared of any threat North Korea was to deliver,³⁴ and that America is

ready for a military action towards North Korea this tweet was in response to the Intercontinental ballistic missile test carried out by North Korea. Trump on this occasion refused to adopt the former method of diplomatic consultation he brought the issue to the public domain through his tweet and gave a military threat towards North Korea.

The choice of words used in this tweet signaled that America had the strength to counter any action from North Korea, this was also to show the international community of America's military might. In response to this tweet, the German government warned against any action or statement that will lead to provocation. This implies that the tweet from Twitter especially the ones from Donald Trump was capable of raising international responses. As tension increased between the two countries, North Korea referred to Donald Trump as an old lunatic.³⁵ Trump again took to his Twitter handle and posted on 12th November 2017 that North Korea president is calling him old when he had not called the president short and fat. This was also to this A display of the sarcastic nature of Donald Trump communication. In fact, scholars believe that the Twitter communication was greatly used towards North Korea in 2017. This continuous provocation through Twitter laid foundation for the meeting of the two presidents in Singapore in 2018.³⁶

After North Korea foreign minister addressed the United Nations in 2017, Donald Trump responded on Twitter for also calling him an "evil president". In his tweet, "just heard foreign minister of North Korea speak at United Nations, if he echoes thoughts of little rocket man, they won't be around much longer". In this tweet Trump threatened the North Korea government and presented it before the public as a government without

popular support, he added that they may displace North Korea very soon. This on the other hand projected Donald Trump as a president that had the capacity to perform his threat.

Commenting on the issue of Jerusalem, Donald Trump posted on 6th December 2017 that “it is time to officially recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. I have determined that it is the best interest of United States and in pursuit of peace”.³⁷ While such a sensitive issue was supposed to be discussed with other states, Donald Trump's personal tweet demonstrated his unilateral approach over multilateral method. It yet signaled a breakaway from the pattern of diplomacy adopted under the previous government. His statement “to the interest of United States” also demonstrate the American first ideology which trump has advocated even from the campaign period. On the international scene, this with generated resentment especially in the Arab world as protest mounted against recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. Continuously undermining the White House statement and utilizing personal Twitter platform did not go down well with people even from within America, this generated internal enemies for the American government for the period.³⁸

Throughout the period of his tenure Donald Trump formalized the use of Twitter for communication in an informal way outside the prescribed diplomatic Channel. In 2018, Donald Trump announced that his meeting with North Korea leader will hold in Singapore on June 12th, this announcement came to live on his Twitter page on May 2018. The announcement soon filled all the news and media, though it was delivered through

social media it was a potent information that everyone took seriously. This goes to show that social media can indeed be a channel to pass viable information to a large audience instantly.

In response to the NATO meeting at Brussel, Donald Trump posted “our NATO allies must pay their fair share”. This tweet came live on July 11 2018, it demonstrated a system of pressure on NATO members for financial commitment that was not negotiated or discussed on a collective agreement.³⁹ It reveals the will power of Donald Trump to make a decision all by himself and enforce it. On the other hand, it demonstrated the concept of American power to command obedience, makes threat, and enforce it. In 23rd March 2018, Donald Trump revealed to the world his policy approach towards China, he declared in a tweet “China had been taken advantage of America no more”. This tweet exposed to the public how tensed the relationship have grown between the two countries. In a bid to protect America economy and Industry, Donald Trump imposed a high tariff on Chinese goods to curb the flow of Chinese goods into America.⁴⁰ The choice of words in the tweet revealed that Donald Trump was taking a decisive action to stop China. This tweet projected China as a manipulative country that seek to take advantage over other countries economy.

Criticisms of Donald Trump social media Diplomacy

A lot of criticism came up against Donald Trump to describe him as someone who is unfit, this was as a result of his mode of communication that defiled diplomatic channels. In response to this trump, Donald Trump on 6th January 2018 that “I am a very

stable genius”, this projected an image of a man who knows exactly what he is doing without any influence. This opportunity was also used by Donald Trump to assert his personal strength in the issue of America governance. the use of the word “stable genius” reveal that the leadership style of trump was more personally oriented, it was more about his own branding strategy rather than projecting the American presidency.⁴¹

The relationship between America and China further deepened when the coronavirus broke out in 2019. Donald Trump in his tweet posted on 16th March 2020 referred to the virus as “China Virus”. This was considered by many leaders as a damaging remark on a sovereign country as it projected China in a bad light before the public, this also created enemies for China. Several scholars believe that this is one of the most damaging digital comments made by Donald Trump in his Twitter page.⁴² This statement was rejected by the Asian countries who claimed that it was xenophobic in nature, the implication of this tweet shows that, a statement made online can repair or destroy a country’s image or individual’s reputation. It can make the general public believe in narrative whether true or false, in a heavier note, it can create a strong level of animosity.

During the 2020 American election Donald Trump’s tweet was used to attack the American system of election. He posted on 5th November 2020 “stop the count” ⁴² alleging that there was malpractice in the election that favored his opponent, this generated controversy and a believe that the institution in America were used to favor Joe Biden in the presidential election. Through the tweet Donald Trump faulted the

democratic process in America and claimed that it was partial in the election, in the public space this expose America as a corrupt state that did not uphold the democracy tenet which it advocated.

The continued use of twitter to accuse the America system of rigging the election in favor of his opponent led to several violent demonstration by his supporters, one of such occurred when his supporters attacked the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021. Twitter responded that Donald Trump was capable of inciting further violence with his tweets, as a result Donald Trump twitter account was temporary suspended on January 6, 2021, but later after internal review by Twitter's team, the account was permanent suspended on January 8, 2021.⁴³

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CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Summary

This study is divided into five chapters that were properly structured to capture the issues and discussion of the research.

Chapter one introduced the general background of the study. Providing a literature review of related publication of the subject matter while identifying the observable gap yet to be filled. The chapter discussed the growth of social media in international relation and its transformative, impact on various aspects of the international society. Indeed, there is a more intense global connection among people today because of the role played by social media platforms like as Facebook WhatsApp, Telegram, Viber, Slack, Line, Twitter (X), Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and more. These tools have become an integral part of daily communication which is also reflected in diplomatic practices.

Chapter two presented a conceptual analysis Definitions. postulated by popular diplomatic scholars like Ernest Satow, Harold Nicolson, and Hedley Bull. This chapter established that the origin and practice of diplomacy dates back into the ancient biblical times and evolve overtime as evident among the city-states, the Roman Empire. The practice of diplomacy has metamorphosed from one form to another, changing from direct state-to-state interaction to include a complex network of communication between states, non-states actors, organization, individuals and the general public. The chapter show that the emergence and use of social media channels in diplomatic communication

has not only expanded the scope of diplomatic practice but has also made it more open and transparent

Chapter three discuss the Public Diplomatic Relations in America before the election of Donald Trump. This prepared the ground for understanding the use of social media in public diplomacy. This chapter highlighted America's transition from one system of foreign policy to another, From Isolationism, Unilateralism, and Multilateralism. It was revealed that in some cases America had also utilized a mixture of these policies but only as it suits the interest of America. The chapter stipulates that from the Second World War, America engaged actively in public diplomacy establishing communication channels like the Voice of America. It is also evident that the adopted of digital and technological equipment were adopted before the era of Donald Trump for information dissemination, military operations and Intelligence gathering.

As a follow up, Chapter Four specifically discuss how Donald Trump utilized social media especially Twitter in diplomatic practice. The chapter reveal and analyze some of the popular tweets posted by Donald Trump in addressing issues of both domestic and international concern. Through this chapter it was revealed that the massive followers of Donald Trump on Twitter amounting to over 88.9 million in 2021 presented an opportunity for a huge platform for Donald Trump to communicates his thoughts and decision on a global stage. It was also discovered that Donald Trump withdrew from several international agreement like the Paris Agreement, UNHRC, UNRWA UNESCO and TPP especially those that did not favor America operations under the regime. This

exposed Donald Trump commitment to unilateralism over multilateralism. The chapter submits that Donald Trump tweets and action were often criticized on the ground that it negates diplomatic norms. This does not however deny the fact that it also brought numerous benefits to diplomatic practice.

Conclusion

According to the analysis and discussion of the available data used in this study , it was found that social media has become an integral part of modern communication affecting various aspect of human communication including diplomatic engagement, this agrees with the work of Weronika Knowska who assert that the use of social media has found its way into the conduct of diplomacy.¹ Geneva Overholser also agrees to this by noting that social media introduced substantial and pervasive changes to communication between organizations, communities and individuals.² It was also found that the use of twitter by Donald Trump as a diplomatic tool marked a break from the traditional diplomatic norm, this align with the work of Maja Šimunjak and Alessandro Caliendo who postulate that the language he uses on Twitter does not adhere to diplomatic norms.³ It was also revealed that Donald Trump diplomatic approach shifted from institutional diplomacy to personalized digital diplomacy.

The study also found that the use of twitter by Donald Trump weakened the credibility of America's diplomatic engagement,⁴ most leaders never saw him as a serious leader they could engage with in long-term meaning agreement, so even labelled him a lunatic. This suggest that while Donald Trump could easily reach the global

audience through social media, his statements and policies were not taken seriously. This brought a negative effect for diplomatic engagement.

The study found that Donald Trump twitter engagement greatly erode the opportunity for negotiation and collaboration among states which were possible in previous administration.⁵ This is aggravated by the fact that Donald Trump acted unilaterally rather than multilaterally, this led to high level mistrust and tension towards the America government. The study also found that it was Donald Trump's administration that introduced or emphasized the leader centric approach to diplomatic engagement, this explains a situation where the personal opinion, emotions and behavior of the leader becomes the vehicle by which the state action is driven.

The study found that the use of twitter by Donald Trump's administration goes beyond the concept of public diplomacy, it introduced a new concept known as Twi diplomacy,⁶ which is the diplomatic engagement conduct through twitter characterized by immediacy, emotional appeal, and personalization.

This study found that among all the social media tools used in diplomatic communication, Twitter is the most widely used tool, this aligns with the findings of Osondu-Oti, A., Agesin, J.O. and Olominu, O. who revealed that Twitter is seen as the most common e-diplomacy tool.⁷

On the basis of these findings, the study therefore concludes that the use of social media by Donald Trump's Administration in the conduct of Public Diplomacy is a two-edge sword. While it is a fast process of communication, engagement, and response with

foreign public, it also undermines the established institutionalize norms and channels of diplomatic communication which signaled a system of mistrust and tension among states.

Contribution to Knowledge

This study provides a deep understanding to the concept of diplomacy, it helps to understand that diplomacy is an ancient phenomenon which keep changing over time due to the increase in technological advancement. This study show that diplomacy is a dynamic and not a static concept. This study also aid how diplomacy can be studied and understood in the 21st century taking note of the new realities that have sprung up. The study offers a preview of the opportunities and risk involved in relying on social media for diplomatic engagement with a view to better utilize social media for maximum result.

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