

New Media and Public Diplomacy. Assessing The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ghana's Efforts at Using New Media for Public Diplomacy

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Abstract

This research study assessed the efforts of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ghana in using new media for public diplomacy. A qualitative research approach, utilizing an observatory research strategy of enquiry were used for the study. Data was gathered from primary sources to answer the research questions. Data collected from the observation of media accounts of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were presented on graphs and charts. Findings were interpreted through narratives and argumentative forms. These formed the sample technique for the research work. The study found that the Ministry and its foreign missions have primarily relied on websites to inform their audiences about their activities, announcements, and showcase relevant photos and videos. However, the study revealed a lack of emphasis on social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, which offer more reach, ease of access, and lower operational costs. Based on the findings, the researcher recommends that the Ministry adopt a structured social media program to support its public diplomacy efforts and provide resources and technical support to its foreign missions to enhance their presence on social media. Additionally, the researcher recommends conducting well-funded research to explore successful strategies used by foreign missions in other countries to improve public diplomacy efforts.

1. Introduction

Public opinion is critical to diplomacy in international relations as the practice of diplomacy itself. Tracing the roots of image forming and its other activities such as propaganda are no new elements in diplomacy. Diplomatic activities aimed at foreign publics has existed as far as the origins of the act of diplomacy. As far back as the bible days, international relations conducted in the ancient states of Greece, Rome and Italy were deliberately crafted and had been engineered to address and build a conscious relationship with the publics of foreign nations. In fact, public diplomacy is no new discipline in international relations – it has only taken on new dynamics and character – but the motive remains as ancient as the business of diplomacy.

The relationship with foreign states remained unchanged through the exchange of dignitaries and appointed officials up until the fifteenth century where the invention of printing presses brought a new dynamic to how official communications were conducted between officials of states. Notable amongst nations that took a strong footing to disseminating information by press through diplomatic services was the French, who under the ancient regime took to a more aggressive effort to, as it were consciously shape their country's image abroad – investing a lot more in managing the reputation they had built of themselves abroad. What would have been described in today's 21st Century world as “image projecting” and “branding of a nation” took its highest rise under Louis XI. In like manner, other countries as Turkey followed suit in the aim of giving their countries good images as far as foreign publics was concerned.

Political leaders have strived harder than ever in the 21st century states to win the hearts and minds of foreign populace with deliberate and well invested programs and methods – understanding that, in the world of international relations, no nation stands alone.

Public Diplomacy, in itself is a rather potent soft power mechanism. Long before the current debate on public diplomacy and its relevance in international relations, it had gained an extensive level of importance, firmly adopted in the diplomatic architecture of many states. Communications with the rest of the world became a key concern post first world, bringing to the bear that; both traditional diplomacy and public diplomacy had become closely linked and parallel to each other. This consciousness also revealed that the effectiveness of traditional diplomacy was largely becoming dependent on public diplomacy.

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During the period of 1917 – 1918, the diplomatic community became conscious of the fact that, there were inherent challenges with how foreign publics of countries were engaged rather than the usual engagement with its officials. The norm had always rested diplomacy as an activity which largely hovered around international dialogues of foreign dignitaries. The clear distinction that is argued between traditional diplomacy and public diplomacy is that, traditional diplomacy is more concerned with the relationship between officials of states whilst public diplomacy is concerned about reaching the general public and societies of other countries with the aim of creating a good and favorable impression of the state on the minds of the people. Communication has become increasingly complex yet more easily accessible in the 21st century compared to the last 2 decades. This has given rise for states to easily engage, one with another without the much traditional approach at banquets and official meetings at conferences. Public diplomacy has become a necessary evil that states have come to embrace. Public Diplomacy can then be largely considered as an extension of traditional diplomacy.

1.1 Problem Statement

Diplomacy as an act, is constantly dynamic, adjusting to the increasingly changing world environment. Sevin (2015) asserts that with the concept of Public Diplomacy, “both practitioners and academics define and interpret the concept differently”. In the conduct of international relations, how a state adopts policies and practices of public diplomacy reveals the motives of the state (Hyden, 2012). The broad aim of public diplomacy is to deepen ties with the public of another nation and be able to influence their opinion (Servin, 2015). Public diplomacy can be an effective tool in achieving a country’s foreign policy objectives. Public diplomacy involves a multiplicity of actors – both state and non-state. State actor led public diplomacy is achieved when a government, through its appointed agency interactively communicates with an international audience. Simons (2015) suggests that, for government to hold an interactive communication with publics of another country or better still an international audience; that could be seen as persuasive and influential, then, that mode of communication must be a two way rather than a one way arrangement.

In the last 3 decades, the African Continent has seen a surge in its media build up which has to a very large extent influenced the participation of its electorates. Gone are the days where governance was held in secrecy. The media has become the revealing light, opening up the dealings and intents of both office seekers and office holders in a political setting.

Media – particularly traditional media gained popularity in Africa and in context Ghana, in the earliest days where radio, print media and television have been frequently used by political actors to advance their course. Politics and Media share a very symbiotic relationship albeit the two are mutually independent.

The international audience, in more specific terms citizens all over the world have become internet media active (McCoy, 2016). Internet media technologies (including social media and other digital media) collectively grouped under the description “new media”, have become an ultimate choice for public engagements world over. New Media (Mass media, social media and digital media) have the potential to facilitate more efficiently a country’s effort at “government to people” communication. In modern day, Governments all around the world are exploring cost effective and efficient means of reaching international audiences – most of which have been done through new media platforms – websites, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Ghana joined the United Nations on the 8th of March 1957, shortly after independence. As the 82nd member of the United Nations, Ghana has established diplomatic relations with over 170 countries. Since then, Ghana has 66 consulates, embassies, High Commissions and permanent mission currently. This means that these 66 consulates and embassies represent the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ghana in the respective countries or states that they are hosted in. These embassies, consulates and high commissions are hence tasked with the duty of maintaining friendly relations and influencing the opinions of the audiences in their host countries. Evidence from Ghana, has seen the embassies of foreign states present here such as The French Embassy in Accra, The United States Embassy in Accra, The Australian High Commission in Accra, The Netherlands Embassy in Accra, The Canadian Embassy in Accra, have all adopt to social media platforms such as websites, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter to influence and engage in public diplomacy with local Ghanaians.

The proliferation of social media, and its usage has created the opportunity for diplomats to go past the press and directly engage with the public – online. The intention of this research work is far from investigating the content analysis of communications between the Government of Ghana through its appointed ministry; The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ghana through its embassies and consulates with its international audience – in the countries they are hosted in. Mainly, the problem identified to which the researcher is interested in is; what has been the efforts made by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ghana to make use of New Media to influence its Public Diplomacy efforts?

1.2 Research Questions

For the purpose of meeting the research purpose, the researcher intends to address the following questions:

1. How many embassies and consulates has the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ghana established in other countries to promote Public Diplomacy (government to people) with its international audience?
2. What are new media approaches and platforms has the embassies of Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ghana adopted to enhance their public diplomacy (government to people) efforts in other countries?
3. What is the level of reach of the efforts of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ghana to its international audiences through its public diplomacy (government to people)?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Concept of Public Diplomacy

Public diplomacy is a prevalent term in contemporary diplomatic activities, frequently featured in the strategies and programs of state ministries of foreign affairs, organizational structures of diplomatic bodies, and official foreign policy documents (Cowan & Cull, 2008; Watson, 1991; Pajtinka, 2019). While widely used among diplomats and politicians, its precise meaning and actions it entails often vary or remain ambiguous (Mai'a & Melissen, 2013).

Historically, public diplomacy was considered the opposite of secret diplomacy, akin to open diplomacy negotiations conducted under public scrutiny. This understanding aligns with President Woodrow Wilson's post-World War I advocacy for public control over diplomacy (Berridge & Lloyd, 2012). In another interpretation, public diplomacy encompasses all actions and statements shaping a nation's international image, whether positive or negative. Schneider (2004) describes it as a nation explaining itself to the world, and Ross (2002) sees it as a public facet of conventional diplomacy.

A more specific definition limits public diplomacy to efforts by state and non-state actors to enhance a country's soft power. Batora (2005) highlights these activities as essential for promoting a favorable national image. The fourth interpretation sees public diplomacy as state-led initiatives aimed at influencing foreign public opinion to achieve foreign policy objectives. This form of diplomacy supplements traditional government-to-government negotiations by focusing on public engagement abroad.

Public diplomacy differs from traditional diplomacy by engaging with non-governmental entities and the broader public. Tuch (1990) emphasizes its open dialogue approach, contrasting with the confidentiality of traditional diplomacy. Gilboa (2001) adds that public diplomacy encompasses informational, cultural, and educational activities intended to persuade foreign governments via their citizens.

Academics agree that effective public diplomacy seeks to transmit comprehensible and accepted messages to build positive international relationships and enhance a nation's global image. However, public diplomacy often carries an element of intentionality, sometimes veering into propaganda defined as biased communication aimed at persuasion.

2.2 Concept of New Media

The term "new media" encompasses all digital communication methods involving the internet and the interaction of technology, images, and sound. As defined by the New Media Institute, it includes the varied use of images, words, and sounds, distinguishing it from older formats like printed newspapers. PC Magazine describes new media as digital communication modes accessed via computers and mobile devices. This evolution allows authors to communicate through websites, articles, press releases, videos, photos, and infographics.

The advent of computers and the internet transformed information gathering and publishing, blending text with visual elements like cartoons and animation. This shift is crucial in an era where 75% of internet users engage with social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter for news. According to a 2015 Pew Research Center study, a significant portion of users on these platforms relies on them for information.

New media has profoundly impacted economics, politics, and idea sharing in the 21st century. Digital communication tools enable smaller groups to connect, share, and trade information globally, enhancing local and international discourse. The inclusive nature of new media, with its archived content and participatory format, offers a sense of immediacy and relevance.

Despite concerns like espionage and the impact of platforms like WikiLeaks, new media serves as a bridge between governments and the public, fostering better governance. While traditional media's influence wanes due to perceived biases and declining trust, new media's credibility grows. The rise of internet users since 1995, driven

by affordable technology and robust economies, underscores this shift. Between 1998 and 2006, online news consumption tripled.

New media's fragmented nature contrasts with the structured, resource-intensive traditional media, offering greater interactivity and public engagement. It resists government control more effectively, promoting freedom of expression and reducing self-censorship, thus gaining acceptance in civic society. The internet's uncensored nature allows for diverse perspectives and democratized news production.

2.3 New Media and Public Diplomacy Practice in Africa

There has been a dramatic alteration in the media landscape of Africa in the past two decades. Most of the new developments have been occurring and signaling the liberalization of political and diplomacy space in myriad of countries within the continent as military rule and single-party faded and multi-party structures took hold. According to Fatoyinbo (2000:6), the African media has long been subjugated and controlled by Africa's leaders and their partners, international organizations.

They have been used to sway choices and disseminate misleading information to civil society at various periods, however they have also been effective in the establishment of democracy in Africa. According to Fatoyinbo (2000:6), the African media has slowed the rate of progress because they have always prioritized profit, selfishness, and self-enrichment over the responsibility and faith they owe to the people.

Africa's media environment is rapidly evolving. In only five years, people's reliance on digital sources for information has doubled, with more than one-third of respondents by virtue of an Afro barometer study from 18 countries saying they get news from the Online and social media at least a few times a week. Whereas radio is the most mainstream medium on the continent as a result of its reach and accessibility, digital media is dramatically altering news landscapes and, as a result, politics. Simultaneously, governments' connections with the media are evolving, mostly in manner that concern proponents of democratic governance. Governments are passing new restrictions constraining who can produce and broadcast news as violence against journalists and media organizations becomes increasingly widespread (Alfandika & Akpojivi, 2020; Conroy-Krutz, 2020; RSF, 2020). Governments are increasingly imposing "social media levies" and shutting down the Internet completely or partially (Guardian, 2019; CIPESA, 2019).

There is, nevertheless, a palpable apprehension about these new media. They are viewed by the majority as aiding the dissemination of misleading information and offensive speech. And efforts by the government to prevent the distribution of messages thought to be harmful are widely praised. Numerous Africans appear to be authentically hesitant about these new media environments in this way: most say they desire unlimited digital media whereas still backing limitations on potentially hazardous content.

2.4 New Media and Public Diplomacy in Ghana

The scarcity of current telecommunications infrastructure, nevertheless, limits the usage of new media technology among the general Ghanaian populace, despite tremendous progress in past years. As of 2015, there was slightly over one fixed line per 100 residents, indicating that the fixed line network is highly insufficient.

Ghana's public diplomacy has been profoundly impacted by the rise of new media and general digital technology. Institutions and individuals in the private and public sectors can utilize Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube, and other social media platforms to engage in worldwide contacts. Foreign ministries and agencies have begun to employ digital diplomacy to communicate with other nations and control their reputation internationally. The internet has unquestionably changed the way diplomacy is currently carried out.

According to the data available, the Ghanaian government communicates with other nations via social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Telegram, WhatsApp and Instagram. These social media platforms have been widely used by the Ghanaian Foreign Affairs Ministry, the Ghanaians in Diaspora and other institutions that manage Ghana's reputation and position on foreign issues. The President of Ghana, for example, has a Twitter account and a Facebook page via which he engages with his peers throughout the world. The president has often tweeted other leaders from Europe, Africa, America and Asia, and with whom he has diverse encounters.

In a similar vein, the Ghanaian Foreign Ministry and Ghanaians in the Diaspora have sent out a series of tweets to their colleagues in other nations for diplomatic purposes. The diplomatic spat between the Ghanaian government and Nigeria, which erupted when the Nigerian High Commission in Ghana was razed, is one example. Numerous dialogues were conducted on social media between Ghanaian and Nigerian foreign agents. Conversely, a diplomatic dispute between the two nations over Nigerian firms in Accra, when the Ghanaian government shut down stores operated by Nigerians, was partly resolved through social media.

2.5. Theoretical Assumptions Guiding the Study

The study is underpinned by 3 main theories, Mediatization Theory, Realism theory and International Liberalism Theory of Public Diplomacy.

2.5.1 Mediatization Theory

The Mediatization Theory explains the need to incorporate new media technologies since its emergence in the mid 2000's in different facets of daily lives of people (Pamment, 2014). The assumptions of the theory highlight that, the integration of media into day-to-day life gives way to have very radical configurations of practices that explain identities and their relationships. Mediatization theory supports the argument to enhance the operations of institutions by adopting strategic and purposeful new media techniques in improving operational outcomes of the institution. The theory is useful to this research because it gives the fundamental argument that supports the objectives of the research. Now more than ever, media has become ultimately important in all dealings of individual, private and governmental affairs.

2.5.2 Realism Theory

The theory of realism has since the origins of Public Diplomacy been used as a basis to describe and predict state behavior. Realism holds the assumptions that states act as the unitary actors in the conduct of international relations. Consequently, realists are interested in the survival of the state – achieving national interests. The realist is heavily concerned with achieving security and hence would do anything possible to achieve security for the state.

Because realists focus on state power, they are very much interested in the framing of public image is very critical and important for the realist. Realists hold the view that Public diplomacy started from the war propaganda – basically after world war 1 and 2 – the ideological war. Realists are confident that, to trace the roots of Public Diplomacy will be linked to the United States of America. The American approach to public diplomacy was to make direct efforts at winning the minds of foreign states through economic social, political military and trade.

The realist theory holds firmly that, because state security is the focal point, powerful states will adopt to creative means of shaping and influencing the opinions of foreign publics to ensure their own interests are achieved.

2.5.3 International Liberalism theory

Liberalism points to the notion that, in the conduct of international relations, states are actors – but not the only actors in the international system. The international system accommodates different state and non-state actors who have different roles to play in the international system. Keohane (1977) suggests that, in the international system, globalization has changed how states were perceived, giving less attention to the reliance on hard power as the sure means by which states can achieve their interests. Soft power has become more instrumental in the conduct of international relations. Soft power elements like the culture of a country has increasingly been used to frame the power of states around the world. Equally important to note is that, the liberalist views communication as important both in content and the manner in which it is conveyed to the publics. The liberalist conveys soft power in the bid to achieve its interests, because to the liberalist, hard power is not the only element in the conduct of international relations.

3. Findings on Research Questions 1:

Research question 1 sought to identify the number of embassies and consulates established in other countries by the ministry of Foreign Affairs Ghana to advance its interests in other countries. The researcher found the following.

Table 4.1 Ghana Missions Abroad

<u>Mission</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Host Country</u>
Ghana Embassy	Lome	Togo
Ghana Embassy	Cotonou	Benin
Ghana Consulate	Lagos	Nigeria
Ghana High Commission	Abuja	Nigeria
Ghana Embassy	Abidjan	La Cote D'voire
Ghana Embassy	Ouagadougou	Burkina Faso
Ghana Embassy	Niamey	Niger

Ghana Consulate	Port Louis	Mauritius
Ghana Embassy	Dakar	Senegal
Ghana Embassy	Monrovia	Liberia
Ghana Embassy	Freetown	Sierra Leone
Ghana Embassy	Conakry	Guinea
Ghana Embassy	Malabo	Equitorea Guinea
Ghana Embassy	Bamako	Mali
Ghana Embassy	Kinshasa	D. R. Congo
Ghana Consulate	Brazzaville	Congo
Ghana Embassy	Luanda	Angola
Ghana Embassy	Nairobi	Kenya
Ghana Embassy	Rabat	Morocco
Ghana Embassy	Algiers	Algeria
Ghana Embassy	Valetta	Malta
Ghana Embassy	Cairo	Egypt
Ghana Embassy	Addis Ababa	Ethiopia
Ghana Embassy	Harare	Zimbabwe
Ghana Embassy	Windhoek	Namibia
Ghana High Commission	Lusaka	Zambia
Ghana High Commission	Pretoria	South Africa
Ghana Embassy	Tripoli	Libya
Ghana Embassy	Riyadh	Saudi Arabia
Ghana Consulate	Dubai	United Arab Emirate
Ghana Embassy	Tel Aviv	Israel
Ghana Consulate	Jeddah	Saudi Arabia
Ghana Embassy	Tehran	Iran
Ghana Embassy	Kuwait City	Kuwait
Ghana Embassy	Doha	Qatar
Ghana Embassy	Abudhabi	United Arab Emirates
Ghana High Commission	London	United Kingdom
Ghana Embassy	Brussels	Belgium
Ghana Embassy	The Hague	Netherlands
Ghana Embassy	Berne	Switzerland
Ghana Permanent Mission	Geneva	Switzerland
Ghana Embassy	Paris	France
Ghana Embassy	Berlin	Gemany
Ghana Embassy	Oslo	Norway
Ghana Embassy	Madrid	Spain
Ghana Embassy	Moscow	Russia
Ghana Embassy	Prague	Czech Republic
Ghana Embassy	Rome	Italy
Ghana Embassy	Copenhagen	Denmark
Ghana Embassy	Ankara	Turkey

Ghana Consulate	Istanbul	Turkey
Ghana Consulate	Vatican	Italy
Ghana Embassy	Vienna City	Austria
Ghana Permanent Mission	New York	U.S.A
Ghana Embassy	Washington	U.S.A
Ghana Embassy	Ottawa	Canada
Ghana Consulate	Toronto	Canada
Ghana Embassy	Havana	Cuba
Ghana Embassy	Brasilia	Brazil
Ghana Embassy	Tokyo	Japan
Ghana Embassy	Seoul	South Korea
Ghana High Commission	New Delhi	India
Ghana Embassy	Beijing	China
Ghana Consulate	Guangzhou	China
Ghana High Commission	Canberra	Australia

Source: *Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ghana, (2022)*

3.1 Findings On Research Question 2

Table 4.2 New Media Platforms of Ghanaian Embassies and Consulates

	Mission	Location	Website	Social Media
1.	Ghana Embassy	Lome	www.ghanaembassy-togo.com	None
2	Ghana Embassy	Cotonou	www.ghanaembassy-benin.com	None
3	Ghana Consulate	Lagos	www.gcglagos.com	None
4	Ghana High Commission	Abuja	www.ghanahighcommission-nigeria.com	None
5	Ghana Embassy	Abidjan	www.abidjan.mfa.gov.gh	None
6	Ghana Embassy	Ouagadougou	www.ougadougou.mfa.gov.gh	Facebook @Embassyof GhanainBurkinaFaso
7	Ghana Embassy	Niamey	www.niamey.mfa.gov.gh	None
8	Ghana Consulate	Port Louis	www.foreign.govmu.org	None
9	Ghana Embassy	Dakar	www.dakar.mfa.gov.gh	None
10	Ghana Embassy	Monrovia	www.monrovia.mfa.gov.gh	Facebook @ghanaembassymonrovia
11	Ghana Embassy	Freetown	www.freetown.mfa.gov.gh	None
12	Ghana Embassy	Conakry	www.ghanaembassy-guinea.com	None
13	Ghana Embassy	Malabo	www.ghanaembassy-equatorialguinea.com	None
14	Ghana Embassy	Bamako	www.bamako.mfa.gov.gh	None
15	Ghana Embassy	Kinshasa	www.ghanaembassy-drc.com	None
16	Ghana Consulate	Brazzaville	None	None
17	Ghana Embassy	Luanda	www.ghanaembassyangola.com	None
18	Ghana Embassy	Nairobi	www.nairobi.mfa.gov.gh	None
19	Ghana Embassy	Rabat	www.ghanaembassy-morocco.com	Facebook @ghanaembassymorocco

20	Ghana Embassy	Algiers	www.algiers.mfa.gov.gh	None
21	Ghana Embassy	Valletta	www.ghanahighcommission-malta.com	None
22	Ghana Embassy	Cairo	www.ghanaembassy-egypt.com	None
23	Ghana Embassy	Addis Ababa	www.addisababa.mfa.gov.gh	Facebook @Ghanainethiopia
24	Ghana Embassy	Harare	www.ghanaembassy-zimbabwe.com	Facebook: Ghana Embassy Harare Zimbabwe Instagram ghanaembassyharare
25	Ghana Embassy	Windhoek	www.windhoek.ghanagovernmentmission.com	Facebook @GhanaHighCommissionNamibia
26	Ghana High Commission	Lusaka	www.ghanahighcommission-zambia.com	None
27	Ghana High Commission	Pretoria	www.ghanahighcommission-southafrica.com	Facebook @GhanaConsul
28	Ghana Embassy	Tripoli	www.ghanaembassy-libya.com	Facebook @ghanaembassylibya
29	Ghana Embassy	Riyadh	www.embassy-saudiarabia.com	Facebook @GhanaEmbassyRiyadh Instagram Ghana Embassy Saudi Arabia
30	Ghana Consulate	Dubai	www.ghanaconsulatedubai.com	Facebook Consulate General of the Republic of Ghana Dubai Instagram @ghanaconsulatedubai
31	Ghana Embassy	Tel Aviv	www.telaviv.mfa.gov.gh	Facebook @GhanaembassyinIsrael
32	Ghana Consulate	Jeddah	www.ghanaconsulatejeddah.com	None
33	Ghana Embassy	Tehran	www.ghanaembassyiran.com	None
34	Ghana Embassy	Kuwait City	www.ghanaembassy-kuwait.com	Facebook @embassyofghanainkuwait
35	Ghana Embassy	Doha	www.dohaembassy.gov.gh	Instagram @ghanaembassyqatar
36	Ghana Embassy	Abudhabi	www.abudhabi.mfa.gov.gh	Facebook @ghanembassy.abudhabi
37	Ghana High Commission	London	www.ghanahighcommionuk.com	Facebook @GhanainUk Twitter @GhanainUk Instagram @Ghanainuk
38	Ghana Embassy	Brussels	www.brussels.mfa.gov.gh	Twitter @GhanaianBelgium Facebook @Ghanainbeluxeu
39	Ghana Embassy	The Hague	www.thehague.mfa.gov.gh	Facebook @Ghanaembassynl

40	Ghana Embassy	Berne	www.berne.mfa.gov.gh	Facebook @GhanainBerne
41	Ghana Permanent Mission	Geneva	www.geneva.mfa.gov.gh	Facebook @ghanaingeneva Twitter @ghanaingenva Instagram @ghanaingeneva
42	Ghana Embassy	Paris	www.paris.mfa.gov.gh	Twitter @GhEmbassyFrance Facebook @GhanaEmbFr
43	Ghana Embassy	Berlin	www.ghanaemberlin.de	None
44	Ghana Embassy	Oslo	www.ghanaembassy-norway.com	Instagram @ghembassyoslo
45	Ghana Embassy	Madrid	www.madrid.mfa.gov.gh	Facebook @embassyofGhanaSpain Twitter @GhanaSpain
46	Ghana Embassy	Moscow	www.ghanaembassy-russia.com	Facebook @Ghana Embassy Russia
47	Ghana Embassy	Prague	www.prague.mfa.gov.gh	Facebook @GhanaEmbassyPrague
48	Ghana Embassy	Rome	www.rome.mfa.gov.gh	Facebook @Ghana Embassy Italy
49	Ghana Embassy	Copenhagen	www.ghanaembassy-denmark.com	Fcaebook @EmbassyofGhanainDenmark
50	Ghana Embassy	Ankara	www.ankara.ghanagovernmentmission.com	None
51	Ghana Consulate	Istanbul	www.ghanaembassy-turkey.com	None
52	Ghana Consulate	Vatican	www.ghanaembassyholysee.it www.rome.mfa.gov.gh	Fcaebook: @ghanaembassyitaly
53	Ghana Embassy	Vienna City	www.ghanaembassy.at	Fcaebook: @ghanaembassyvienna
54	Ghana Permanent Mission	New York	www.newyork.mfa.gov.gh	Facebook: GhanainNewYork Twitter GhanainNewYork
55	Ghana Embassy	Washington	www.ghanaembassydc.org	Facebook Embassy of Ghana in Washignton DC Twitter @GhaEmbassy_DC Instagram Embassy of Ghana in Washington,DC
56	Ghana Embassy	Ottawa	www.ottawa.mfa.gov.gh	Facebook: @ghanacomcanada Twitter: @ghanamissionca

57	Ghana Consulate	Toronto	www.toronto.mfa.gov.gh	Facebook: @ghanacomcanada Twitter: @ghanamissionca
58	Ghana Embassy	Havana	www.ghanaembassy-cuba.com	None
59	Ghana Embassy	Brasilia	www.ghanaembassy-brazil.com	None
60	Ghana Embassy	Tokyo	www.tokyo.mfa.gov.gh	Facebook: @GhanaEmbassyTokyo
61	Ghana Embassy	Seoul	www.ghanaembassy-southkorea.com	
62	Ghana High Commission	New Delhi	www.ghana-mission.co.in	Facebook @GhnaHigh Commission New Delhi
63	Ghana Embassy	Beijing	www.ghanaembassy-china.com	None
64	Ghana Consulate	Guangzhou	www.ghanaconsulategz.com	None
65	Ghana High Commission	Canberra	www.ghanahighcom.org.au	Facebook: @GhanaConsulateGeneralA ustralia Twitter: @GhanaHighCommissionC anberra

Sources: Authors Compilation (2022)

Evidence from data gathered suggests that:

The categorization of New Media within the context of this research were Websites, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. The data gathered from the observation suggest the following:

Table 4.3 Summary of Findings

Type of New Media	Number	Percentage (%)
Websites	64	98.5%
Facebook	33	50.8%
Instagram	8	12.3%
Twitter	10	15.4%
None of Them (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)	29	44.6%

Source: Authors Compilation (2022)

3.2 Discussion on Findings

3.2.1 Websites

Websites are fundamentally used by both private and government organizations as the first point of call for information. Websites, depending on the level of sophistication websites can be interactive and provide live chats for users. The embassies and consulates of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ghana were observed to have owned and controlled websites. Out of the 65 embassies and consulates, 64 of them had functioning websites. Further two types of websites were identified, the first category was directly linked to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ghana and the other was independently owned by the embassy or consulate.

3.2.2 Facebook

Facebook is the most widely used social media network both by individuals, groups, corporates and even governments. Facebook allows for easy access to information concerning an organization, a continuous interactive communication that is enhance by the sharing of data and information via the web page.

The findings suggest that, 33 out of the 65 agents of the Ministry of foreign Affairs Ghana have a facebook account registered in the name of the embassy or consulate. In most cases the location of the embassy is affixed to the account name. 33 out of 65 represents 50.8% of the total number of embassies and consulates that Ghana has opened in foreign countries.

3.2.3 Instagram

Instagram is a social media applications that enables users to share info graphic images, videos, and all manner of graphic media to communicate to an audience. Subscription to Instagram is free of charge. World over, many multinational, national and private companies have used Instagram to reach targeted audiences in specific locations with purposefully tailored messages and influencing ideas.

The data shows that, out of the 65 embassies and consulates that have been established only 8 of them have Instagram accounts. This represents 12.3% out the total number of embassies and consulates that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ghana has established in foreign countries

3.2.4 Twitter

Twitter is a social media application that is widely used by individuals, corporations and even governments. Agenda framing and publishing is relative easy with the dynamics of twitter. Twitter also allows for image sharing, text sharing reaching millions within a geographical area with the desired message – for free. Heads of states of powerful nations like the President of the United States, The Prime Minister of the United Kingdom all use twitter to solicit international support on key decisions they take and announce their foreign policy agenda.

On account of the data gathered from the study, out of the 65 embassies and consulates under study, 10 of them have a twitter account to facilitate their public diplomacy efforts. 10 twitter accounts in contrast to the total represents 15.4%. That means, only 15.4% of Ghanaian embassies and consulates abroad are on twitter.

3.2.5 None

This category referred to the number of embassies and consulates who were not subscribed to any social media application – namely Facebook, twitter and Instagram. The data gathered shows that out of the 65 consulates and embassies, 29 of them were neither on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. The total number of foreign missions that do not have any social media account constitute 44.6% of the total number of foreign missions the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ghana controls.

3.3 Conclusion

The chapter presented the data findings of the study specifying the Ghana Missions abroad, how many have websites and social media accounts mainly Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. The chapter summarized the findings into groupings and percentages for discussion.

4. Summary

The research work attempted to assess how the Ministry of foreign Affairs can has made efforts at integrating New Media technologies into its Public Diplomacy efforts. The research studied the embassies, consulates and high commissions of Ghana in other countries. The scope of the work was limited to the following: First the researcher attempted to identify the presence of the Ghanaian embassies and consulates on the following new media platforms: websites, Facebook, Instagram and twitter.

All the embassies and consulates of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were studied for this research. The researcher observed all the social media of these embassies and consulates, gathered them and made an analysis of their presence and how likely they influenced public diplomacy efforts.

In summary, the studied found that the growing shift from traditional media to new media calls for the integration of new media into the daily affairs of organizations – of which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ghana is no exception. However, it appears, that the Foreign Affairs Ministry, Ghana and its foreign embassies and consulates have not taken a good advantage of emerging social media networks to advance its public diplomacy efforts. This is evidenced by the low presence that was observed during the study.

While the foreign missions own websites, which is a good effort at new media, websites come at a cost compared to social media accounts which come at no cost and are more preferred than websites by the growing new media community. The cost and complexity of hosting and maintaining a website offers more challenges for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ghana than social media accounts do.

5. Conclusions

Taking into account the research objectives and questions, measuring them against the evidence gathered from the research, the research concludes that, New Media has been a part of the operational architecture of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since the early 2000's. Websites were the most popular of these media technologies adopted by the Ministry to primarily inform its audience on the activities of the Embassy, announcements and showcase relevant pictures and videos.

It does not betray the evidence gathered to suggest that, in the space of internet mediated applications – social media; Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, the Ministry and its foreign missions have not been somewhat deliberate about these forms of media as it has been in the area of websites. Quite interestingly, these platforms rather offer more mileage, ease of access and lesser operational cost to the foreign missions who have to engage their foreign audiences.

Foreign embassies present in Ghana have engage the Ghanaian citizens more aggressively through social media as compared to websites – typical examples are the Australian High Commission in Ghana, The French Embassy in Ghana and the American Embassy in Ghana.

6. Recommendations

Based on the evidence from the research, the researcher recommends the following:

1. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ghana should adopt a carefully structured social media programme that will support its Public Diplomacy efforts. The individual Missions abroad must be resourced and given the necessary technical support to advance its presence on social media.
2. A well-funded research should be launched to explore the alternatives and available modules that successful foreign missions in other jurisdictions have adopted to enhance their Public Diplomacy efforts with other countries – taking lessons from China, Germany, France and the United States of America.
3. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ghana must commit to financial resources that is aimed at providing training, education and educational resources to its staff to specifically address the issues of new media – incorporating new media into the daily activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its foreign Missions.

7. Areas For Further Study

Public diplomacy in Ghana has not been widely explored by researchers. Hence many gaps existing in the field. The researcher believes that more research into the study field will make the discipline better and provide direction for policy. The researcher recommends the following areas to be explored: Evaluating the public diplomacy policy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ghana. The effects of New Media on Ghana's international image framing. Public Diplomacy, Propaganda and the international audience.

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