THE BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF ELECTRONIC DIPLOMACY (E-DIPLOMACY) TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: THE CASE OF GHANA

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LEGON
MARCH, 2016
DECLARATION

I, hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of an original research conducted under the supervision of Dr. Ken Ahorsu and that all references have been duly acknowledged. This dissertation has not been presented either in whole or in part to any other educational institution for any purpose.

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DATE

DATE
DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Senya who since my early years have instilled in me the value of hard work and good education.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank God Almighty for bringing me this far in my academic journey. I also express my sincerest appreciation to my parents, friends and loved ones who have supported me in various ways throughout the production of this study. I wish to acknowledge my supervisor Dr. Ken Ahorsu for the supervision of this dissertation. I am immensely grateful for the contributions of the Director and staff of the ICT Unit as well as the Assistant Director of the Information and Public Affairs Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration of Ghana.

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ABSTRACT

Electronic diplomacy (E-diplomacy) has been described as the use of the internet and new information communication technologies to help achieve diplomatic objectives. The rapid development of information and communications technology (ICT) in the twenty-first century has had a significant impact on diplomacy. It has created a new form of diplomacy which is facilitated by digital technology. This is evident in the creation of virtual embassies on internet-based spaces, and the creation of websites of Ministries/Departments of Foreign Affairs and Diplomatic Missions. It is also manifested in the increasing presence of diplomats and other government officials on social-media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter and the creation of private networks known as intranets within foreign affairs departments or ministries. Some developed countries have harnessed these tools in the conduct of their diplomacy in order to accelerate the realisation of their foreign policy objectives. They are currently making considerable strides in this venture even though they face some challenges especially in the area of security. This study looks at the case of developing countries with emphasis on Ghana. The study examined the extent to which Ghana has applied ICT to the conduct of its diplomacy and the benefits and challenges which the adoption of ICT tools in diplomatic practice incurs with regards to communication. From the study, it is evident that communication plays a major role in diplomacy and information and communication technology serve to enhance this role. Findings from the study also indicate that Ghana has made minimal use of ICT in its diplomatic practice as a result of resource, change management and security challenges. It has however reaped some benefits in the form of faster and more efficient communication channels that can reach a wide audience. The conclusion made based on these findings is that Ghana’s diplomatic practice will improve with the adoption of ICT if it is able to resolve its security and resource challenges. In order to enable Ghana resolve its e-diplomacy challenges, the possible solutions recommended are a strategic e-diplomacy plan, adequate training and further research.
CHAPTER ONE

RESEARCH DESIGN

1.1 Background to the study

The advent of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has vastly improved the ability of human beings to communicate. In addition to this, ICT tools have enabled the creation of a digital culture in the 21st Century where almost every activity of human beings can be linked with ICT. Rouse defines ICT as “An umbrella term that includes any communication device or application, encompassing: radio, television, cellular phones, computer and network hardware and software, satellite systems and so on, as well as the various services and applications associated with them, such as videoconferencing and distance learning.”

In the world of diplomacy, ICT tools are being actively used in diplomatic engagements or to achieve diplomatic objectives. This ICT-driven diplomacy has been termed electronic diplomacy or e-diplomacy. From social media to virtual embassies to specialised software applications, diplomats and players in international affairs are advancing their respective causes through technology-savvy means. For instance, the Bureau of Information and Resource Management (IRM) of the United States Department of State created an “Office of eDiplomacy” in 2003. The mission of this particular office as stated on the department’s website is “advancing diplomacy by providing effective knowledge-sharing initiatives, guidance on the convergence of technology and diplomacy, and first-class IT (Information Technology) consulting.” Thus the “eDiplomacy” office creates information technology-based initiatives for use within the department and by American diplomats in the pursuance
of United States foreign policy. In 2012, The United Kingdom’s Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) adopted a “Digital Strategy” with two main visions. The first is to use digital technology in every aspect of its foreign policy work and the second is to provide default digitalised services.\(^4\) In line with this digital strategy, the FCO created a digital transformation unit in 2014.\(^5\)

Another example is the Stockholm Initiative for Digital Diplomacy (SIDD). This was a conference/workshop organised by the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs from 16\(^{th}\) to 17\(^{th}\) January, 2014. The meeting brought together diplomats and ICT experts to discuss the emerging importance of information and communication technology to diplomacy.\(^6\) This is an ongoing process where future meetings are scheduled towards crafting a definition of digital diplomacy and the creation of a digital diplomacy document or guideline as to how foreign services and other actors may use digital diplomacy in their work. Participants came from Brazil, Sweden, the United Kingdom, the United States, France, Finland and the European External Action Service (EEAS) amongst others.\(^7\)

The ease and speed of communicating with ICT provides governments with efficient means of communicating with relevant stakeholders in international affairs, their missions all over the world as well as with the domestic public. In the particular case of developing countries such as Ghana, ICT may prove to be an efficient means of enhancing their diplomatic practice especially in this digitally inclined age. This study investigates how far Ghana is taking advantage of these new technological innovations in order to enhance the country’s diplomatic practice and the benefits and challenges associated with pursuing this “high-tech” diplomacy.
1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Developing countries need to use ICT in their diplomatic activities in order to enhance their diplomatic presence in this ICT-driven era. With the convergence of television, audio-visual and computer networks and with constant innovations by ICT manufacturers, ICT tools are becoming increasingly efficient and can fill in for the limitations of the inadequate human resources employed in several tasks in both their Ministries/Departments of Foreign Affairs and in their overseas missions. The practice of e-diplomacy in developing countries is however severely constrained by limited resources. Many developing countries are on the disadvantaged end of the digital divide and as such, they are not able to deploy the required ICT infrastructure for the practice of e-diplomacy. In addition to this, developing countries are not originators of technology.

Generally, developing countries often adopt ICTs and software which are designed in the developed world and which are introduced to them through technology transfer programs. This means that developing countries need the required skilled human resource in order to be able to integrate these technologies to suit their respective contexts. However, developing countries lack the needed skilled human resources to make this possible. Security is another cause for concern to developing countries in their adoption of e-diplomacy. They lack the expertise to protect their data and information systems and they do not have the financial resources to purchase security equipment for their communication systems. Individual hackers, for instance, pose a great threat as some of them can easily break into ICT networks of government agencies and steal information or wreak havoc on the networks.

The intelligence-seeking activities of technologically advanced countries also prove problematic to developing countries in their practice of e-diplomacy. This is because these
developed countries have heightened research and development in internet tools and other new information and communications technology and can spy on anyone anywhere in the world through electronic means. The Snowden affair for instance points to this fact. The affair involved the disclosure of previously unknown details of a global surveillance system run by the United States’ National Security Agency (NSA) together with the United Kingdom’s Government Communication Headquarters (GCHQ). This exposure was done by Edward Snowden, former system administrator of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in the United States.

In view of these issues, developing countries are thus faced with the veritable dilemma of how best to adopt e-diplomacy because of its benefits on one hand and on the other hand the vulnerabilities they face in terms of security and limited resources. With these issues in mind and with Ghana as a specific case, my research seeks to find answers to the following questions:

- What is the extent to which Ghana is using ICT tools in the conduct of the country’s diplomacy?
- What are the benefits Ghana has reaped from the use of ICT in the conduct of its diplomacy?
- What are the particular challenges Ghana has encountered in the use of ICT in the conduct of its diplomacy?
- What are the possible ways by which Ghana may counter the challenges of practising an ICT-driven diplomacy and at the same time increase the benefits?
1.3 **Scope of the Research**

The study covers the influence and effects of advanced information and communication technology on diplomatic practice in Ghana.

1.4 **Objectives of the study**

The study aims to

- Look at the role of communication in diplomacy and how over the years emerging information and communication technology (ICT) have enhanced this role.
- Examine the extent to which Ghana has incorporated the use of ICT in the conduct of its diplomacy.
- Identify the benefits and challenges associated with using ICT in the conduct of Ghana’s diplomacy.
- Make recommendations regarding the possible ways by which Ghana may counter the challenges of an ICT-driven diplomacy and also increase its benefits.

1.5 **Hypothesis**

The adoption of e-diplomacy by Ghana will improve its diplomatic practice if the country is able to reduce its resource and security vulnerabilities.

1.6 **Rationale of the Study**

E-diplomacy shows us that conventional modes of diplomatic practice are gradually being supplemented with modern practices that are influenced by the internet, social media networks and new information and communication technology. Developed countries have proven to be at the forefront of e-diplomacy efforts and have made considerable strides.
There is therefore the need to investigate the case of developing countries. This study thus focuses on developing countries with Ghana as a case study and presents both the positive and negative impacts of practicing e-diplomacy. Lessons learnt from this study will provide useful information to other small and developing countries considering the adoption of e-diplomacy. The study would engender the development of appropriate policies in order to enhance ICT-driven diplomacy in developing countries including Ghana. This study also seeks to serve as a source of information for related research work or projects.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

This study is premised on Marshall McLuhan’s Media Ecology Theory which is also known as Medium Theory\textsuperscript{11}. The theory was first named “Media Ecology Theory” by Neil Postman in 1968 though McLuhan developed the theory.\textsuperscript{12} Joshua Meyrowitz named it “Medium Theory” in his 1985 book “No Sense of Place: The Impact of Electronic Media on Social Behaviour.”\textsuperscript{13} “Media Ecology Theory” is however the more widely used term especially since the creation of the Media Ecology Association (MEA) in 1998.\textsuperscript{14} Media ecology theory posits that media (or technology) environments influence the affairs of the human society or shape the human society.\textsuperscript{15} Media Ecology in the words of Lance Strate is “the study of media environments, the idea that technology and techniques, modes of information and codes of communication play a leading role in human affairs.”\textsuperscript{16} Based on this, McLuhan divides man’s history into four eras according to the main means of communication of that era. The four eras according to McLuhan are the oral or spoken word era, the written word or literate era, the print era and the electronic era.\textsuperscript{17}

According to McLuhan, a medium is any “extension of our selves or any new technology.”\textsuperscript{18} He defines technology as “extensions of our physical and nervous system to increase power
and speed.” In essence, McLuhan points to the fact that man creates technology because man recognises a need to extend his abilities beyond what he is naturally capable of. In McLuhan’s analysis therefore, wheels extend the human foot, television extends the human eye and ear and the telephone extends the human voice. From McLuhan’s point of view, pre-electric technology was an extended version of man’s physical body whereas electric technology was an extension of man’s nervous system.

McLuhan classifies media into two categories. That is hot and cool media based on the level at which the medium engages the observer. Hot media according to McLuhan are those media which require little mental effort or participation on the part of the observer in order to comprehend the media’s elements. This is because such media intensely highlight particular senses of the observer. He cited the radio (which in his estimation highlights the auditory sense), books (highlights the visual sense according to McLuhan) and a lecture (highlights both the auditory and visual senses in McLuhan’s view) as examples of hot media. Cool media from McLuhan’s point of view do not provide the observer with a lot of information since they do not intensely highlight the observer’s senses. Thus they require a conscious mental effort on the part of the observer in order to fully understand the media’s elements. Examples of cool media, according to McLuhan, are the telephone, a seminar and a dialogue.

There are three main concepts put forward in the Media Ecology theory. The first concept is that man is constantly influenced by media. The understanding which could be drawn from this is that since in McLuhan’s view man invents media in order to extend his capabilities, media would inevitably be linked to man’s every act and action. In addition to this, the media would have an impact on those acts and actions. McLuhan advanced this idea further
in his 1988 book, *Laws of Media; The New Science* jointly written with his son Eric McLuhan. In this book, they use a tetrad to analyse the effects which media have on the human society. The tetrad refers to a set of four questions, which the authors believe may serve as a basis for analysing the effects which media have on man.

The questions are: “What do media enhance or intensify? What do media obsolesce or displace? What do media retrieve that was previously obsolesced? What do media reverse?”

The idea of the tetrad was a result of the authors’ observation of the effects of media on the human society. They observed that media enhanced a prevailing process while rendering another process obsolete and at same time retrieving a process that was previously obsolete. They also observed that media could reverse its effects when overused. In their opinion, these alterations do not take place sequentially but rather they take place simultaneously.

The next concept advanced in the theory is that “media shape our perceptions, attitudes, experiences and behaviour.” McLuhan summarises this in his well-known metaphorical phrase “the medium is the message.” What McLuhan attempts to put across by using this phrase is that in his view, media are able to shape the human society, and hence tell us about the human society they are shaping aside the content they convey. In simple terms, the media affect us more powerfully than the content they carry. Therefore, in his estimation, it is the effects which media have on its users which should be regarded as the true message they bear. McLuhan believes this is the case because from his observations, media either introduce new behavioural patterns into the human society or they alter the scale or pace at which certain actions were previously performed.

The third concept underpinning the Media Ecology theory is that media interconnects the world. McLuhan predicted that the age of electronic technology would enable human
beings connect with each other anywhere in the world. According to him, this would transform the world into a “global village.”\(^{34}\) What this means is that electronic communication technology due to their ability to connect people anywhere on the globe would turn the world into a small place where everyone knows of any event happening around them almost as soon as it happens.\(^{35}\) Here distance no longer matters since information moves around within a very short period of time. Human beings are then able to react to events much quickly. In McLuhan’s view, this is made possible because electronic technology “is an extension of man’s central nervous system.”\(^{36}\) The understanding which can be drawn from this is that like man’s central nervous system which disseminates information throughout man’s body, electronic media also serve as the world’s electronic nervous system (in figurative terms) by disseminating information all over the globe. This enables human beings to be constantly aware of things taking place around them.

McLuhan made this observation over fifty years ago and we see this phenomenon today, with the advent of the internet, social media and advanced communication devices. We hear more breaking news than “dead” news. We can communicate with anyone anywhere in the world via Skype and other audio-visual technology. This constant flow of information and communication in McLuhan’s view has “increased man’s sense of responsibility to a high degree”.\(^{37}\) For instance, following the abduction of over 200 school girls by the terrorist group Boko Haram, a viral campaign via social media especially Twitter (i.e. the #bringbackourgirls campaign) rallied people from all walks of life including the diplomatic community in an effort to bring back the girls.\(^{38}\) This shows how media can increase people’s sense of responsibility.

There are several critics of McLuhan’s theory. A major criticism of the theory held up by most critics is that the theory has a technologically deterministic slant. Technological
determinism refers to the idea that technology can autonomously effect changes in the human society.\textsuperscript{39} Raymond Williams for instance in criticising McLuhan’s theory, refutes the idea that technology by itself can influence the affairs of the human society.\textsuperscript{40} In his view, technology can only have an effect on human affairs if humans adapt technology to suit their affairs.\textsuperscript{41} He further rejected McLuhan’s concept of a global village. This is because in Williams’ view, in talking about the global village enabled by instant electronic communication, McLuhan had turned instant electronic communication from a technical tool enabled by purely technical processes into a social process.\textsuperscript{42} He further argued that in putting forward the idea of a global village, McLuhan failed to recognise the fact that it is the society which influences electronic media.\textsuperscript{43}

Michael Zimmer, another critic, holds the opinion that McLuhan’s metaphorical phrase “the medium is the message” is an example of hard technological determinism. Umberto Eco also refutes the concept that the “medium is the message.” He believes that the content the medium carries and not the medium is the actual message. He also holds that the observer of the medium can interpret the message contained in a medium in any way that suits him. He also rejects the notion that a medium can effect some changes in the affairs of its user.\textsuperscript{44}

The theory is relevant to this study because it explains how technology (specifically communication technology) influences different aspects of the human society. In my opinion however, this theory is riddled with some complexities and it is nuanced in such a fashion that it is difficult, though not impossible to draw the necessary inferences that McLuhan intends to postulate. It is however worth noting that McLuhan’s ideas are indeed very unique and he introduces an enlightening perspective on how to assess the influences of media on our society.
1.8 Literature Review

Saddiki in his article titled “Diplomacy in a Changing World,” examines how developments in information and communication technology (ICT) and the emergence of new actors on the international scene threaten the practice of traditional diplomacy. In his view, diplomacy always interacts well with new ICT and introduces new dimensions to the practice of diplomacy such as virtual diplomacy and public diplomacy. He goes on to say that in classical diplomacy, nation-states were the dominant diplomatic actors however over the last few decades new non-state diplomatic actors have emerged.

He concludes by suggesting (as a response to these trends) that states should train traditional diplomatic actors on how to use ICT in their daily diplomatic work and on how to effectively interact with the new diplomatic actors. This article is relevant to my study because the study involves an investigation of the extent to which a developing country like Ghana can effectively apply new ICT tools to its diplomatic activities so that the country can effectively engage with new actors on the international scene and also address or adapt to emerging global trends.

In Chapter 10 of 21st Century Diplomacy: A Practitioner’s Guide, Rana looks at the use of ICT in Diplomacy. He observes that countries are not fully exploiting the possibilities that ICT provides in the area of diplomacy and the administration of foreign ministries. He also identifies some dangers of ICT that come about as a result of some government officials holding on rigidly to information since they regard it as a source of power. He however warns that ICT is not a magic bullet but a tool which when applied within a proper institutional framework, will enhance the efficiency of that institution.
Rana concludes by leaving some points for reflection. The first is on how foreign ministries can share their mutual experience on the use of ICT and whether it can be done within regional groups. The second is on the impediments to distance learning for foreign ministries. The final point for reflection is on the aspects of ICT technology which are most useful for foreign ministries and how best to use them.

This work is relevant to mine because my work will study whether a developing country like Ghana is fully exploiting ICT tools to enhance the conduct of diplomacy as well as to improve the administration of the country’s foreign ministry.

In “Overview and Analysis of Cyber Terrorism,” Steve Saint-Claire writes on the threats that Cyber Terrorism poses to developed or technologically advanced countries especially the United States. He defines cyber terrorism as “the use of computing resources against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.” The author holds the opinion that some acts of cyber terrorism are dangerous while others are not. He differentiates terrorists who combine physical acts of terrorism with online attacks from pure cyber terrorists who exploit computer technology to make certain demands or cause destruction among the world’s population, or to deliberately spread wrong information and distort computer systems.

Saint-Claire also identifies potential players in the world of cyber-terrorism which include terrorist groups, terrorist sympathisers and in the case of the United States, “Anti-U.S” hackers. Other potential players include thrill seekers, racist and extremist groups, groups that give directions for bomb making, weapons use and those that supply hit lists. In view of these
threats, some governments notably the United States are taking steps such as adopting policies to censor and patrol the internet. These measures have however proved futile. The author’s work is relevant to this study because he points out cyber-terrorism as a threat to the use of ICT by developed countries. What makes this threat even more serious is that efforts by such countries especially the United States to deter such acts have proved mostly unsuccessful so far. This implies that, less technologically advanced or developing countries like Ghana have even less of a chance at dealing with this menace. This is a potential threat to the use of ICT in diplomatic practice especially by a developing country like Ghana.

Watney examines whether states face real consequences under international law for intruding into the cyberspace of other states for achieving objectives other than war, in his article, “The consequences of State-Level Intrusions: A Risk Worth Taking?” According to Watney, a state-level intrusion that constitutes a crime within the victim state’s internal laws must be dealt with at the international level. He continues by stating that at the international level, it will be determined whether the intrusion is prohibited under international law or otherwise and the consequences a state may face will depend on whether the intrusion constitutes a prohibition under international law. The author suggests that cyber intrusions which amount to state interventions, the threat of or use of force and an armed attack are prohibited under articles 2(1), 2(4) and 51 respectively of the United Nations Charter. Watney however detects a void under existing international law. He states that international law does not indicate specific cyber intrusions which fall within the above prohibited categories.

In view of this, the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence (CCD CoE) published the Tallinn Manual on International Law Applicable to Cyber Warfare in 2013. Watney however questions the validity of the manual as a source of international law since certain non-western countries did not endorse the manual. This is because they believed the
manual was a product of western practices. Furthermore, the manual did not indicate whether cyber intrusions constituted an armed attack or not. He suggests that international law in general does not adequately deal with offending states and also does not adequately compensate victim states. In addition to this is the absence of a central legal authority to ensure compliance with international law.

Watney concludes by stating that states should not spy on other states just because it is possible in cyberspace. He however believes that states may continue to pry on other states in cyberspace since international law insufficiently prohibits these activities. He also suggests that acceptable cyberspace behaviour should be established for states under international law in order to prevent cyber intrusions.

The author’s work is relevant to my study because he emphasises the fact that international law does not deal adequately with state-on-state cyber-attacks. This reveals a challenge that Ghana may face in the use of ICT in its diplomatic communications. For instance, according to Watney, cyber espionage is not prohibited under existing international law. Thus in the event where the country’s electronic communication systems are hacked by prying states, it means that Ghana may be unable to claim reparation under international law. This leaves the country vulnerable to cyber espionage and other cyber-related attacks.

Heine and Turcotte in “Tweeting as Statecraft: How Against All Odds, Twitter is Changing the World’s Second Oldest Profession” look at the impact of social media especially Twitter on diplomacy. They observe that some diplomats and government officials now actively use Twitter in their official duties because Twitter is dynamic, interactive, quick and available on most mobile communication devices. They describe this phenomenon as “Twitter
Diplomacy.” They also observe that the increase in new communication media has led to the increase in the practice of public diplomacy and network diplomacy. 64

According to Heine and Turcotte, though Twitter Diplomacy has some benefits, some of its drawbacks are that it provides avenues for spreading wrong information, insurgence and interception of communication. 65 The authors conclude on the note that Twitter Diplomacy demonstrates an attempt by diplomats to digitise diplomatic practice. However, like Rana, they caution that digital technologies are not a panacea but are only means which enhance diplomacy. They predict that a future challenge for diplomats will be how to effectively manage these technologies in the performance of diplomatic activities. 66

Heine and Turcotte’s article is relevant to this study because this study looks at the extent to which Ghanaian diplomatic practice has been digitised through the use of electronic communication tools which include social media. The research will also look at some of the benefits and drawbacks of this process.

Nweke writes on the positive and negative impacts of electronic diplomacy (e-diplomacy) and tries to find a theoretical explanation for the concept in “Diplomacy in the Era of Digital Governance: Theory and Impact.” 67 He observes how the use of digital technologies has collapsed previously existing barriers to inter-state relations by facilitating communication between states. 68 He adopts the Actor-Network theory as his theoretical framework for explaining the concept of e-diplomacy. In this theory, state agents, individuals or organisations (identified under the theory as actants) form a systematic cycle of input and output engagement with the internet and other digital devices (identified under the theory as actors) required for the delivery of diplomatic services. 69
According to Nweke the positive impacts of e-diplomacy are the quick and free flow of information and the broadening of diplomatic presence online. On the other hand, the negative aspects are the lack of interpersonal relations which leave embassies vulnerable to attack by unknown assailants and the risk of leaving sensitive material in the hands of technicians. He also adds that e-diplomacy creates a digital gap among persons who have low competence in the use of the internet. He concludes by asserting the fact that the emergence of new technologies will bring benefits, as well as inevitable yet amenable challenges especially in the case of developing countries such as those in Africa.

The author’s work is relevant to this study since the study will analyse the potential benefits and challenges that the introduction of e-diplomacy will bring to a developing African country like Ghana. The theory he adopts as his framework of analysis however focuses mostly on e-diplomacy as a social relationship between digital technology and the practice of diplomacy. This study in addition to examining this relationship will also look at how the technologies themselves impact diplomacy.

In “Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Diplomacy: A Conceptual Overview” by Ehiane and Mosud, the authors examine whether ICT has improved the practice of diplomacy and whether it has reduced the importance of conventional diplomacy. They also examine the implication of the advent of ICT for the training of new diplomats. They observe that developments in communication technology have had a great impact on the world system and on the conduct of diplomacy. They also note that having realised this change in the international system, countries now favour persuasive and subtler means of achieving their foreign policy objectives (soft power) instead of coercive means and that information and communication technology holds the key to this soft power.
The authors identify some positive impacts of applying ICT to diplomacy. In their view, ICT provides fast and inexpensive means of communication through multiple channels. Diplomats can easily communicate progress on their work to their foreign ministries. It also promotes easy dissemination of information between members of diplomatic teams.\textsuperscript{74}

Ehiane and Mosud conclude by asserting that the information and communication technology revolution has greatly influenced the international community as well as diplomacy. They remark that developed countries are already exploiting its potential in the delivery of their diplomatic services and suggest that developing countries should review ICT training programs available for diplomats.\textsuperscript{75} They maintain that despite the misuse of ICT for unscrupulous purposes by some individuals and states, its benefits to diplomacy are still numerous.\textsuperscript{76} The authors’ study is relevant to this research since the study will also look at the impact of the introduction of ICT into the practice of diplomacy with Ghana as a specific case.

Geers writes on cyber security in “Pandemonium: Nation States, National Security and the Internet.”\textsuperscript{77} He notes that internet security has become a concern for many states and it now plays a major role in national security affairs. He then examines incidences of cyber-attacks and cyber conflicts in some selected countries across the globe. His conclusions from the analysis is that due to the wide spread nature of hacker infrastructure across the globe, it makes it easy for hackers to easily change their point of attack from anywhere on the planet.\textsuperscript{78} He further concludes that though the internet is meant to help mankind have a peaceful future, international relations in cyberspace is closer to pandemonium than to paradise because nations now use cyberspace to promote their national interests and to defend their sovereignty and power.
He also predicts that the size of the international cyber stage and the actors upon it will also grow. Geers believes that the world will get to a point where an international cyber arms control regime and an international non-aggression pact for cyberspace will be adopted. He observes that some states have already started cooperating with each other in order to build their cyber defences. For instance, the United States and Russia have signed an agreement to create a cyber-hotline similar to the one used during the Cold War.

Geers highlights the security threats that states face and also pose in the use of the internet to achieve their national objectives which is relevant to this study because the study also examines how such threats affect Ghana’s use of ICT including the internet, in its diplomatic communications.

The above reviewed works are relevant to my study however none of them examines how the application of new information and communications tools to diplomacy by a developing country like Ghana might improve its diplomatic practice and the other challenges associated with its use. This study thus attempts to fill this gap.

1.9 Methodology and Sources of Data

The study adopted a qualitative approach. Sources of data were through interviews and documentary sources. Interviews were unstructured and they were in the form of a series of open-ended questions. This was to enable the respondents provide detailed information relevant to the study which was previously not considered. The method was preferred because it is less restrictive compared to structured interviews and enabled respondents share their personal experiences regarding the subject of the study. This type of interview was easy to conduct and it provided the opportunity to seek further explanations where necessary. Respondents were contacted beforehand and a time and venue for the interview was arranged.
Purposive sampling specifically expert sampling was used in selecting respondents for the interviews. This is because the nature of the research required specific first-hand information from professionals in the field of Ghana’s diplomacy whose work was directly linked to the subject of the study. Hence persons interviewed included the Director and a staff member of the Information and Communication Unit at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, the Assistant Director of the Information and Public Affairs Bureau of the Ministry, a staff member of the Diaspora Affairs Bureau of the ministry and two retired Ghanaian diplomats. Sample size was rather small because e-diplomacy in Ghana is still in its embryonic stages and thus gathering a sizeable amount of first-hand information was not achievable.

Documentary sources were used to supplement data gathered from interviews. Such documents included some official and unpublished documents, books and journal articles from the Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy (LECIAD) library. Internet sources were also extensively used. These included online books, journals, articles, websites and blogs among others. Documents and internet sources were selected based on their relevance to the study and their accessibility.

1.10 Ethical Considerations

Permission was obtained from persons to be interviewed after explaining to them that the interviews were strictly for academic purposes. This notwithstanding, it was quite a task obtaining certain important information from them. This was because they did not want to breach the ethical standards governing the sharing of certain kinds of information specific to their profession. Some respondents preferred to remain anonymous and they were guaranteed the utmost confidentiality in order that their positions were not compromised.
1.11 Limitations

The study was constrained by insufficient time and resources and also by some respondents becoming suddenly unavailable at critical points in the collation of information for the study. This was due to the sensitive nature of the information they were required to provide. One respondent gave certain relevant details in order to clarify previous information given. However, the informant preferred that such details were not included in the dissertation. This severely constrained the study because permission was not granted to use the information given.

1.12 Arrangement of Chapters

This study is divided into four chapters. Chapter one covers the research design. Chapter two reviews the role of communication in diplomacy and how innovations in ICT have enhanced this role. Chapter two also includes a brief explanation of the concept of e-diplomacy. Chapter three encompasses e-diplomacy in Ghana, specifically the extent of its adoption and also its benefits and challenges to the country. Chapter four gives a summary of the findings of the research, conclusions and recommendations.
Endnotes


7 Ibid.


10 Ibid.


12 Ibid, p.4.


16 Ibid.


18 Strate,”Understanding MEA,” op. cit., p.7.

19 Ibid., p. 98.


21 McLuhan, Understanding Media; op. cit., p.3.

22 Ibid., p.24.

23 Ibid.

24 Ibid.

25 Ibid., pp. 24-25.


28 Ibid., p.7.

29 Ibid., p.127.


31 McLuhan, Understanding Media, op. cit., p. 7.

32 Ibid., pp. 7-23.

33 West and Hunter, Introducing Communication Theory, op. cit., p.430.

34 McLuhan, M., op. cit., p 5

35 Ibid.

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid.

41 Ibid., p.133.
42 Ibid.
43 Ibid.
46 Ibid., pp. 93-103.
47 Ibid., pp. 103-105.
49 Ibid., pp.192-207.
50 Ibid., p.208.
52 Ibid., p.85-87.
53 Ibid., p.88-90.
54 Ibid., pp.91-98.
56 Ibid., p.122.
57 Ibid.
58 Ibid., p.122.
59 Ibid., p.123.
60 Ibid., p.124.
61 Ibid., pp. 125-128.
62 Ibid., pp. 129.
64 Ibid., pp. 59-68.
65 Ibid., pp. 69-70.
66 Ibid., pp.71 -72.
68 Ibid., p.22.
69 Ibid., pp.22-24.
70 Ibid., p.24.
71 Ibid., pp. 25-26.
73 Ibid., pp. 38-40.
74 Ibid., p.40.
75 Ibid., pp.41-43.
76 Ibid.
78 Ibid., pp.1-11.
80 Ibid.
CHAPTER TWO

OVERVIEW OF COMMUNICATION IN DIPLOMACY AND THE CONCEPT OF ELECTRONIC DIPLOMACY

2.0 Introduction

This chapter gives a brief account of the importance of communication in diplomacy and how advancements in information and communication technology over the centuries have further advanced that role. This chapter will also provide a fundamental explanation of the concept of electronic diplomacy. The chapter will also look at some tools and practices of e-diplomacy in order to provide a general idea of what the concept of e-diplomacy entails.

2.1 The Essence of Communication in Diplomacy

According to Berridge, “Diplomacy consists of communication between officials designed to promote foreign policy either by formal agreement or tacit adjustment.”¹ One scholar defined diplomacy as “the communication system of the international society.”² From the above definitions, it can be observed that diplomacy is in essence communication and diplomacy as an art or profession thrives on effective communication. Former Vietnamese diplomat Van Dinh Tran sums this up neatly when he wrote: “Communication is to diplomacy as blood is to the human body. Whenever communication ceases, the body of international politics, the process of diplomacy is dead, and the result is violent conflict or atrophy.”³

Signatories of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations recognised the importance of communication to diplomacy and therefore in Article 27, they grant to diplomats the right to use appropriate means of communication while they mandate the receiving state to grant immunities to such means of communication.⁴ In fact a lot of the functions which diplomats
perform involve communication in order to inform or to arrive at some agreement. Such functions include reporting relevant events in the host country to their home countries, negotiating, lobbying, clarifying the intentions of their home state, mediation and promoting their country’s foreign policy interests abroad.

Even though diplomacy has evolved over the centuries from rudimentary systems of sending envoys into a more established system governed by instruments of international law, one aspect of diplomacy has remained the same and that is communication. According to Jönsson and Hall, the fundamental elements of communication in diplomacy are information gathering and the dissemination of information. In their view, it is necessary for diplomats to gather and assess information about the environment outside the borders of their polities in order to be able to formulate and execute foreign policy.

The Byzantine Empire for instance, engaged in extensive information gathering through its diplomatic representatives because it relied heavily on its diplomatic prowess for survival since its military power was limited. The empire thus created an office of Barbarian affairs where there were a good number of foreign language interpreters and translators. The office was also responsible for preparing envoys for missions as well as analysing the reports which the envoys sent back to the capital. The Byzantine Empire also established a pseudo-intelligence system which consisted of both official and unofficial agents which included priests and merchants. These agents were tasked with gathering information from cities they travelled to and reporting the information back to the capital.

Italian Renaissance Diplomacy also relied greatly on the gathering of information. The first permanent resident mission was established between Italy and the Island of Genoa in 1450,
the main task of diplomats was to gather information and to promote inter-state relations.10 Ambassadors were required to write reports daily and also special reports known as “relazzioni,” which gave information on the state of the relationship between the Italian capital and the receiving state.11 When the ambassador returned to Italy following the end of a mission, he was required to give a speech at a special gathering known as the “signoria.” This speech was to be delivered within a fortnight following the return of the ambassador.12

Jönsson and Hall estimate that if the gathering of information in diplomacy serves the purpose of formulating foreign policy, then diplomatic communications with foreign states is a very crucial component in the execution of foreign policy.13 For instance, the ancient Greek empire realised the importance of efficient communication to their diplomacy and thus the envoys were chosen based on a good memory and a loud voice.14 This is because the Ancient Greek Empire practiced mostly public diplomacy where envoys were sent to persuade the citizens of the receiving state. The envoys were hence expected to display remarkable oratory skills in order to be able to achieve this purpose.15

It is important to note here that communication in diplomacy could either be verbal or non-verbal. Verbal communications include negotiations, mediation and conferences among others. Non-verbal communications involve a whole gamut of subtle and explicit elements such as body language, the exchange of gifts, signalling and so on.16

2.2 Advancements in Information and Communication Technology and their Influence on Communication in Diplomacy

The interplay between diplomacy and communication technology is not a new phenomenon. It may be observed that throughout history, innovations in communication technology have found their way into diplomacy. With each new mode of communication, the speed of diplomatic communication has varied over time. In some cases, aside the messages
communication devices convey, they have influenced diplomacy and indeed international relations in other ways. This falls in line with McLuhan’s Media Ecology Theory or Medium Theory discussed in the previous chapter which says that media or technology environments play a role in human affairs which in this case is the practice of diplomacy.

For instance, as far back as the fourth millennium BC (4000 BC) when cuneiform writing was invented by the ancient Sumerians, it became a common “technology” used in diplomatic communications of the ancient times (i.e. 4000 BC to around 1000 BC). Cuneiform writing is a writing system where a wedge-shaped tool is pressed into soft clay tablets in order to form symbols. Kurbalija considers writing as a form of technology because in his view, writing is an acquired skill and not an inherent one. Moreover, writing requires the use of certain implements and materials. Archaeological discoveries of diplomatic documents dating back to 2500 BC, revealed that diplomatic correspondence was written in cuneiform. Such documents included information on relations between city-states, peace negotiations, arbitrations and the status of envoys. According to the diplomatic protocol of the era, emissaries were required to read the messages from the tablets and afterwards provide verbal explanations of the messages they had read.

The discovery of the Amarna Letters by archaeologists in 1887 at Tell el-Amarna in Egypt also point to the use of cuneiform writing as a means of diplomatic communication during the ancient age. The Amarna Letters refers to diplomatic letters exchanged between the monarchs of the Ancient Near East and Egypt. There are 382 tablets in all and they are made up of letters which the reigning Egyptian Pharaoh received from the sovereigns in Babylonia, Assyria, Hatti, Mitanni and Cyprus. Ancient Egypt also received a good number of letters from rulers of the vassal states of Canaan, Lebanon, Ugarit and the coastlands east of the
Mediterranean. The contents of the letters comprised information on the exchange of royal gifts, diplomatic marriages, updates on events in faraway cities, military issues, requests for food items, building materials and military aid.\textsuperscript{24}

Archaeological discoveries also revealed that the first peace treaty was written in cuneiform script. The Treaty of Kadesh or the Egyptian–Hittite Treaty is the first and oldest treaty concluded between two independent empires, Ancient Egypt and Hatti.\textsuperscript{25} The Egyptian version of this treaty is documented on clay tablets in cuneiform script in the Akkadian language which was the language of diplomacy at the time the treaty was concluded.\textsuperscript{26} The treaty was concluded in 1258 BC between Egyptian Pharaoh Rameses II and King Hattusilis III of the Hatti Empire following their inconclusive battle for the control of the city of Kadesh.\textsuperscript{27} It is quite obvious that the purpose for putting their agreement into writing was because writing was the available technology at that time and also, writing enabled them to keep documentary evidence of their agreement. The clay tablet containing the text of the treaty was discovered in 1906 during an excavation at Boğazköy in Turkey.\textsuperscript{28} On September 24, 1970, a copper replica of the clay tablet was presented by the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, İhsan Sabri Caglayahgil to the then United Nations Secretary General, U Thant.\textsuperscript{29} The replica is two meters long and it hangs on a wall of the United Nations building.\textsuperscript{30}

The 19\textsuperscript{th} and 20\textsuperscript{th} centuries also witnessed a good number of technological revolutions which also played their role in diplomatic communications. Baron Pavel Shilling, a Russian diplomat invented the first completely functional electric telegraph while at post in Germany in 1835. It is however worth noting that he was not the first to invent a telegraphic device. His invention was preceded by the invention of a mechanic telegraph also known as a semaphore in 1794 by Claude Chappel.\textsuperscript{31} The telegraph is a significant example of a
communication technology which influenced diplomacy because for the first time, communication was detached from transportation or travelling.\textsuperscript{32} The telegraph found its way into diplomatic communications in the early 1850s. For instance, Germany and Austrian created an Austro-German Telegraph Union in 1850 as part of bilateral agreements between the two states.\textsuperscript{33} This led to the creation of the West European Telegraph Union in 1855 and subsequently, the establishing of the International Telegraph Union in 1865.\textsuperscript{34}

The Ems and Zimmermann Telegrams are two strategic diplomatic telegrams which influenced the course of history.\textsuperscript{35} The Ems telegram triggered the war between France and Prussia in 1870 and this eventually lead to the unification of Prussia and the southern German states into a single German state.\textsuperscript{36} This is a strategic telegram because the then Prime Minister of Prussia, Ottoman Von Bismarck edited the contents of the original France-bound Ems telegram with the aim of provoking war between Prussia and France.\textsuperscript{37} He estimated that when France declared war on Prussia, the southern German states would come to their aid against France and this would subsequently lead to their unification. His estimations proved true and everything happened as he had envisaged. Therefore, Prussia eventually united with its allies to form the state of Germany.\textsuperscript{38}

The Zimmermann telegram provoked the United States to abandon its isolationist policies in order to fight in the First World War in 1916.\textsuperscript{39} The telegram was sent by German’s foreign secretary, Arthur Zimmermann to Germany’s ambassador to Mexico soliciting for Mexico’s assistance in the war with the promise of U.S territory as a reward.\textsuperscript{40} However, the telegram was decoded by British intelligence services. Now Britain sought to take advantage of the Anti-German sentiments which had begun to surface in the United States and thus the
decoded message was presented to the United States which resulted in the US joining the war.41

In 1877, Alexander Bell invented the telephone.42 The invention of the telephone is very significant because the telephone enabled the human voice to be carried over a long distance. The use of the telephone in diplomacy however begun after the Second World War.43 The telephone enabled heads of state to maintain close and exclusive communication with each other especially in order to avoid a possible degeneration of an international unrest.44 In an attempt to invent a wireless telephone, Guglielmo Marconi and Reginald Fessenden instead invented the radio in 1906.45 The radio made wireless communication possible and it was widely used in Cold War politics where the US and the USSR used the radio as instruments for projecting their ideals to the international audience.46

ICT inventions of the 21st have outshone the technologies discussed above in terms of efficiency. Some of these inventions are not entirely new since they could be described as new and improved versions of already existing technologies. For instance, even though the 21st century has seen a good number of computer and internet based innovations, the computer and the internet were already invented in the 20th century. The new technologies and their associated programs have proved very valuable to diplomacy. This is because they facilitate communication in ways that were previously not possible. This relationship between the new inventions and diplomacy has been christened e-diplomacy and this will be discussed in further detail in the following section.
2.3 The Concept of Electronic Diplomacy (e-diplomacy)

According to Hanson there is no agreed definition of electronic diplomacy (or e-diplomacy). He therefore gives a working definition of electronic diplomacy as “the use of the web and new ICT (information and communication technology) to help carry out diplomatic objectives.” William Assanyo defines the concept as “a new diplomacy resulting from the association of ICTs and other electronic tools to conduct diplomatic activities.” Diplo foundation describes the concept as “new methods and new modes of conducting diplomacy with the help of the internet and information and communication technologies.” In addition to this definition, the concept, according to Diplo Foundation is also used to refer to “the study of the impact of these tools (ICT tools) on contemporary diplomatic practices.”

Even though there may be no agreed definition of e-diplomacy, the definitions above point to e-diplomacy as the use of mainly electronic information and communication technology as conduits for advancing diplomatic interests. Drawing from the above definitions, it means that diplomacy can now be conducted through a wide variety of electronic ICT tools. E-diplomacy also points to new dimensions of conducting diplomacy brought on as a result of the influence of ICT tools. E-diplomacy shows that diplomacy has evolved in response to the demands of the 21st century. Indeed, ICT tools serve to advance the cause of the 21st century diplomat in these digitally advanced times.

Other terms sometimes used synonymously with e-diplomacy are virtual diplomacy, cyber diplomacy, digital diplomacy, net diplomacy and internet diplomacy.
2.3.1 Some Tools and Practices of E-diplomacy

There are several ways in which ICT tools have been used to advance foreign policy or diplomatic interests. Some of these are discussed below:

2.3.1.1 Websites

A number of foreign affairs ministries and diplomatic missions have websites on which they display a wide variety of information relevant to the target audience. In the case of websites of foreign affairs ministries, information usually includes the foreign policy objectives of the country represented, trending national news and sometimes a list of the addresses and web links of country’s embassies and consulates around the world. In the case of websites of diplomatic missions, information available includes the purpose and aims of the mission, important contacts, available consular services and information about the country the mission represents. A random search via well-known internet search engines such as Bing or Google for these websites produces a large number of results for different countries such as Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Lithuania and so on. There is also a website dedicated to e-diplomacy. The website provides various resources on the concept of e-diplomacy and its aspects in addition to providing resources on the practice of diplomacy. The website was created by Diplo Foundation and is available at “www.diplomacy.edu”53 Diplo Foundation is a non-profit foundation established by the governments of Malta and Switzerland. The foundation was the brainchild of a project designed for the purpose of integrating ICT into diplomacy.54

2.3.1.2 Intranets

An intranet is defined as “a local or restricted communications network, especially a private network created using World Wide Web software.”55 In simpler terms, an intranet is a system
modeled somewhat after the internet except that unlike the internet which covers a very wide area and is available almost anywhere in the world where internet access is possible, intranets are limited to smaller areas and access is often restricted by special network security settings. Intranets can be used for sending emails, for storing, searching for and sharing information. For example, the United States Department of State runs an information pooling initiative referred to as “The Current” on its unclassified intranet.\textsuperscript{56} The United Kingdom’s Foreign and Commonwealth Office also runs an intranet known as “FCONet.”\textsuperscript{57}

2.3.1.3 Wikis

A wiki is “a website or database developed collaboratively by a community of users allowing any user to add and edit content.”\textsuperscript{58} A wiki may be made accessible to a wider community of users for instance Wikipedia or may be accessible to a smaller group of users. The United States Department of State operates an internal wiki known as Diplopedia.\textsuperscript{59} This is an online encyclopedia which personnel of the Department use to share knowledge about the Department and other issues in international affairs.\textsuperscript{60} The Department has a read-only version (i.e. it cannot be edited or modified) of Diplopedia which it shares with other United States government agencies. A classified version of the wiki is reserved solely for the Department and it contains classified information.\textsuperscript{61}

2.3.1.4 Blogs

A blog is “a regularly updated website or webpage, typically run by an individual or small group that is written in an informal or conversational style.”\textsuperscript{62} The difference between a blog and a wiki is that the contents of a blog are not open to modifications by users. Users may only comment on the content but content editing is left to the owner(s) of the blog. The United Kingdom’s Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) operates a blog which is
accessible at “blogs.fco.gov.uk.” The blog features articles written daily by staff of the FCO, British diplomats and ministers on certain foreign policy issues, the work of the FCO and other issues on the international scene. Content on the blog is also available in a wide variety of languages. New Zealand’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) also runs a blog available at “blogs.mfat.govt.nz.” The blog provides information about MFAT, New Zealand’s foreign, trade and economic relations, embassies, treaties and international law. It also provides links to publications produced by the ministry, blogs by the country’s Ambassadors and High Commissioners and other relevant information.

2.3.1.5 Social Media

Social Media is defined as “a variety of web-based platforms applications and technologies that enable people to socially interact with one another online.” Examples of social media are Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram and Twitter. Social media by their nature engender mostly informal interactions and they usually draw a large membership. They enable users to share a wide variety of content such as messages, videos, pictures etc. Another feature of social media is that, they enable rapid dispersion of information and as such can be used as powerful tools to push forward certain ideas, policies or perceptions or to incite certain public action. These features make them particularly useful for diplomacy especially in the area of public diplomacy.

Twitter and Facebook by far seem to be the most common amongst diplomats, government agencies and state officials. For instance, according to Marks, in 2014, the United States Department of State had around 800,000 followers on Twitter and 480,000 followers on Facebook. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is said to have millions of followers on Twitter while he is followed by tens of millions of people on Facebook. The United
Kingdom’s Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has several accounts including non-English Language accounts on both Twitter and Facebook as well as on other social media platforms.

Social media are useful platforms for diplomats and heads of state to engage especially with people from foreign lands on a wide array of issues regardless of location and time. For instance, in 2015, Canada’s ambassador to Myanmar launched social media campaigns in Myanmar (via Facebook) and in Beijing (via Weibo) in order to be able to reach a wide variety of people on needs that were peculiar to them.70

2.3.1.6 Online Learning for Diplomats

Online learning refers to distance learning done mostly with the use of ICT tools. Diplo Foundation is an organization dedicated to improving the skills of diplomats through regular training and education on trending issues in international affairs.71 It often achieves this goal through flexible online courses, blogs, webinars (seminars conducted over the internet) and some courses taught face-to-face. The foundation offers opportunities to ministries of foreign affairs to register their diplomats for some of their online courses. These courses are readily accessible to practitioners whether they are in their home country or at their posts abroad. Diplo Foundation also designs tailor-made courses for foreign ministries upon request.72

2.3.1.7 Virtual Embassies

Virtual embassies are embassies which do not exist in the physical sense but rather they exist on internet-based spaces. These online embassies serve as some form of diplomatic representation for countries which wish to establish diplomatic presence where there is no
physical embassy. In some cases, they are created to complement physical ones. The Maldives was the first country to open a virtual embassy on 22nd May, 2007.  

2.3.1.8 “SanctionsApp”

This is a specialized software application which provides information on the United Nations Security Council’s targeted sanctions. These sanctions are measures as indicated under article 41 of the United Nations charter, employed by the Security Council, against nations which are engaged in acts which threaten other states or the international community. The sanctions adopted do not involve the use of armed force. The application is meant to serve as a resource base for diplomats and anyone who wishes to get more information on the UN targeted sanctions. Information available from the application was gathered from a research by the Targeted Sanctions Consortium (TSC). “SanctionsApp” is available on iPhone, Android and Blackberry devices.

2.3.2 Other Potentially Essential ICT tools for the Practice of E-diplomacy

During the 2013 “Essential e-tools for diplomats” webinar (seminar via the internet) organized by Diplo Foundation, Italian diplomat Stefano Baldi indicated that there were some other ICT tools which would be potentially useful for daily diplomatic activities yet diplomats were not utilizing them to their advantage. Some of the tools are discussed below:

2.3.2.1 Netvibes

This is a software application which makes a ready list of a user’s most frequently visited websites and displays them in a single webpage. In Baldi’s view, this application is useful for diplomats because they are confronted with a vast amount of information on a daily basis.
especially online information. Hence it would be essential to use a tool which enables them to quickly access new information on already saved websites. According to Baldi, even though there are several applications which can perform the same function, Netvibes is most suited to the needs of the diplomat.

2.3.2.2 Delicious

Delicious is a social bookmarking tool which enables registered users store bookmarks of websites on a shared server. This makes it easy for the users to access the bookmarked sites via different devices. Even if the user is using a device which belongs to someone else, the user would still be able to access the bookmarks on the delicious website. Baldi is of the view that this tool is essential to diplomats because they use different computers in their daily work (i.e. home computers, laptops and office computers). Therefore this tool would enable them get easy access to their bookmarks regardless of which computer they may be using at a given time.

2.3.2.3 PDF (Portable Document Format) Printer

According to Baldi, PDF formatting enables the creation of documents which look like the originals. The difference is that unlike the original versions, these new documents cannot be modified. This software in his view is particularly useful in the practice of diplomacy where it becomes necessary to create documents which cannot be modified.

2.3.2.4 Evite

This is a website which enables users to create, manage and email invitations to events. Baldi believes this is useful to diplomacy because diplomacy also involves invitations to a whole array of both formal and informal events. In Baldi’s view, Evite is particularly useful for
sending invitations for informal events where a large number of people are expected because the interactive services provided by Evite are especially valuable for managing such an invitation process.\textsuperscript{86}

\subsection*{2.3.2.5 Google Alerts}
This is a service managed by Google which provides email notifications of the latest relevant search results related to a topic or an item a user previously searched for. In Baldi’s estimation, this is useful for diplomats because it enables them follow constantly developments or news on events or personalities of relevance to their work.\textsuperscript{87}

\subsection*{2.3.2.6 Google Docs}
This is an online service provided by Google which enables several people to work on the same document at the same time. This is an essential tool in multilateral diplomacy according to Baldi because in multilateral diplomacy, diplomats need to work on the same documents.\textsuperscript{88} The service keeps record of all the modifications made by the people working on the documents and therefore it makes negotiations simpler and it also enables diplomats follow the changes which are made to original documents.\textsuperscript{89}

\subsection*{2.4 Conclusion}
Information gathering and the diffusion of information is the lifeblood of diplomacy. Throughout the course of history, inventions in communication technology have served to enhance the communicative aspects of diplomacy by speeding up communications. In some cases, these new inventions have decoupled communication from transportation and thus enabling public outreach on diplomatic and international issues. The twenty first century in particular has experienced rapid and ongoing revolutions in information and communication
technology, as evidenced in the appearance of technological tools such as websites, online databases, blogs, social-media etc.

These innovations have also served the purpose of enhancing diplomatic communication in these times and in addition to this, they have introduced new methods of conducting diplomacy which may not have been possible with technologies of previous centuries. Diplomacy like humanity keeps evolving with the passage of time. This evolution is at varying degrees depending on the entity/country involved. It can be discerned that due to the wealth of the developed nations, they will have a lot more resources available to invest in newer technologies as opposed to developing countries such as Ghana.
Endnotes

4 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, Vienna 1961, art 27.
6 Ibid.
8 Ibid.
9 Ibid.
11 Ibid.
12 Ibid.
13 Jönsson and Hall, op. cit., p.75.
16 Jönsson and Hall, op. cit.
20 Ibid.
21 Ibid.
23 Ibid.
24 Ibid.
26 Ibid.
27 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
32 Ibid.
33 Ibid.
34 Ibid.
35 Ibid.
36 Ibid.
37 Ibid.
38 Ibid.
39 Ibid.
41 Ibid.
Ibid.


43 Ibid.


46 Ibid., p.2.


48 Ibid., p.2.


50 Ibid., p.2.

51 Ibid.

52 Ibid.

53 Ibid.

54 Ibid.


59 US Department of State, op. cit.

60 Ibid.

61 Ibid.


64 Ibid.


66 Ibid.


72 Ibid.


Ibid.

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CHAPTER THREE

ELECTRONIC DIPLOMACY (E-DIPLOMACY) IN GHANA

3.0 Introduction

This chapter looks at the extent to which Ghana has utilised ICT tools in order to achieve the country’s foreign policy objectives, the benefits that have accrued and challenges which have been encountered.

3.1 Principles of Ghana’s Foreign Policy

Legg and Morrison define foreign policy as “…a set of explicit or implicit objectives with regard to the world beyond the borders of a given social unit and a set of strategies and tactics designed to achieve those objectives.”¹ They go on further to say that “…a foreign policy implies the perception of a need to influence the behaviour of other states or of international organizations, so that they either maintain the existing pattern of behaviour or change the present pattern by initiating a new set of policies or by altering or halting the implementation of existing ones.”²

The main motivation of a state in the formulation of its foreign policy is the promotion and preservation of its national interest. The national interest includes those needs a state identifies as necessary for its survival within the international system. Ghana’s national interest has been clearly stated in Article 35(2) of the country’s 1992 constitution and it says: “the state shall protect and safeguard the independence and territorial integrity of Ghana, and shall seek the well-being of all her citizens.”³ In line with the country’s identified national interest, the following are the basic principles of the country’s foreign policy outlined in Article 40 of the country’s constitution:
i. Promotion and protection of the interest of Ghana.
ii. Establishment of a just and equitable international, economic, political and social order.
iii. Promotion of respect for international law and treaty obligations.
iv. Promotion of the settlement of international disputes through peaceful means.
v. Adherence to the principles enshrined in the Charter and aims or ideals of the United Nations, the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Commonwealth and the Non-Aligned Movement.

3.2 Ghana’s Foreign Service

Ghana’s Foreign Service is made up of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration (MFA&RI) and the country’s diplomatic and consular missions. The MFA&RI is the main state organ responsible for the formulation and execution of Ghana’s Foreign Policy. The ministry is made up of the Headquarters, fifty diplomatic missions and five Consulate Generals/Consular Missions. The ministry also comprises three other organisations which are the Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy (LECIAD), the National African Peer Review Mechanism Governing Council (NAPRM-GC) and the All African Students Union (AASU).

The ministry’s mission is to “advice Government on the formulation of Ghana's Foreign Policy and implement its objectives in the most efficient and cost effective manner.” Hence in the fulfilment of this mission, the MFA&RI takes into account Ghana’s national interest as well as current events on the domestic and international scene and advises the government accordingly on the best decisions to make with regard to the country’s foreign policy.

3.3 Electronic Diplomacy in Ghana

The vision of the MFA&RI as stated on its website is to be “A well-resourced Foreign Ministry capable of establishing, developing and sustaining international goodwill, solidarity and support for national development.” In line with this vision, the ministry is thus
undergoing a rebranding initiative where it seeks to use new ICT tools in order to enable it engage better with its internal and external stakeholders and to make the ministry more efficient, productive and innovative in the formulation and execution of Ghana’s foreign policy and to improve upon its channels of communication. Some of the tools which are in use by the Ministry are described below:

3.3.1 Internal Web Platforms

In an interview with a staff member of the ICT Unit, the respondent made mention of the fact that the ministry made use of internal web platforms. According to him, these are collaborative internet-based tools which are used in communication, pooling of and dissemination of information largely within the closed network of the headquarters but in some cases some of these tools are used for communications between the headquarters and diplomatic missions.

3.3.2 The Ministry’s Intranet

The ministry’s intranet serves as a platform for interaction, information and knowledge management and a source of updates on upcoming events. It consists of a web application similar to Wikipedia that serves as a central reference point for information concerning the ministry and diplomacy in general. It is particularly useful for new Foreign Service officers and other new employees of the ministry since it provides definitions of key terminologies used within the ministry and in diplomacy.

The intranet also consists of an internal mailing system. It is used for sending official mails within the institution, between the institution and diplomatic missions abroad and between the institution and diplomatic establishments of other countries either within or outside Ghana. The mailing system is tied to the National Information Technology Association
(NITA) which gives the ministry the license to register Foreign Service officers, the bureaus of the foreign ministry and the country’s diplomatic missions abroad. The internal mailing system is also used for sharing calendars for meetings. The network hosts an internal blogging site which allows employees to write and share articles in their area of expertise which can be critiqued by other employees. It also encourages officers who have been on missions abroad to write reports on the blog which can receive contributions from other officers.

Additionally, the intranet comprises micro websites which give information on the structure and services provided by each of the bureaus within the ministry. It also comprises a human resource management programme which provides a database of personnel employed in the ministry and other employment details as well as the capacities of the offices within the ministry. The system is also programmed to give alerts or notification on officers who are due for retirement. The intranet also features a programme which offers technical assistance for addressing issues. Employees simply log onto their computers and lodge a complaint, a ticket is registered, the person in charge of the help desk is notified of the ticket and he in turn assigns the another officer to deal with the issue. After the issue is resolved, the ticket is registered in the database. At the end of the week, a report is generated from the registered tickets which indicate problems that were resolved and problems which may still be pending.

3.3.3 The Website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration

The ministry’s website is used to disseminate information about the foreign ministry to the public. Information that is destined for the ministry’s website first needs to be vetted and approved. Then the ICT unit of the ministry gets a soft copy of the information which the
A visitor to the website would find basic information on the history of the ministry and a brief description of its structure and functions, general information about Ghana, Ghana’s foreign policy objectives and guidelines, brief descriptions of the various bureaus working under the ministry and the duties they perform.

The ministry’s website also provides quick links to the websites of the Bank of Ghana, the Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA), the Ghana Free Zones Board (GFZB), the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC) and the government of Ghana. Additionally, the MFA & RI website also provides useful resources on Ghana’s diplomatic and consular missions, international organisations in Ghana and information for Ghanaians who wish to travel abroad.

3.3.4 Social Media

The minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, Hannah Tetteh, is an avid user of social media, especially Twitter in order to address issues on Ghana’s foreign policy and other national issues. The ministry itself has recently created its official accounts on social media platforms such as Google+, Pinterest, Facebook and Twitter and is currently in the process of inviting stakeholders to these platforms and raising public awareness of its presence on the platforms. The ministry intends to use social media as a means to gather comments from its stakeholders and to respond accordingly.

3.4 The Benefits of E-diplomacy to Ghana

The arrival of ICT tools in the conduct of Ghana’s diplomacy has enhanced the activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration to some extent and these are discussed below:
3.4.1 Efficient means of communication

A staff member of the ICT unit of the MFA &RI stated during an interview that the use of ICT in the ministry has facilitated communications within the ministry and between the ministry and Ghana’s diplomatic missions abroad. Contact between the ministry and foreign diplomatic missions in Ghana have improved vastly in terms of speed. The internal mailing system provides a faster alternative to the fax machine and the diplomatic bag. With just a click of a mouse, messages sent via the mailing system go directly to the recipient and with immense speed. Direct contact among bureaus and individual employees through internal messenger systems have made their coordinated work more effective. Intranet message boards enable easy share of more informal information while online forum discussions on the ministry’s intranet have brought in the space for ongoing brainstorming and debates on major activities and plans thereby increasing productivity. These new tools, remove the issue of distance when it comes to communication.

3.4.2 Cost-effective means of communication

With the use of ICT, the ministry is gradually moving towards paperless forms of communication. This has the advantage of reducing the amount of paper that is used in communication and hence cutting down the portion of the ministry’s budget that is allocated to procuring paper. Moreover, the ministry’s intranet is run on an operating system that is inexpensive yet very efficient. It is easy to use and it enables the creation of security software. The operating system also provides effective protection against computer viruses and hence the ministry is spared the extra cost of purchasing antivirus software for all the computers run on the system.
3.4.3 Increased avenues for public diplomacy

Public diplomacy involves efforts by countries to communicate the objectives of their countries to both local and foreign citizenries. Social media especially offers the MFA&RI many avenues for communicating with the public on its foreign policy issues. As one Indian Foreign Service Officer aptly notes:

Postings via social media by officials adds texture and context to stories that would otherwise come out as drab press releases . . . press release by the office would often be ignored by the media but a short, well written blog giving a first-hand account, along with a photo or two can make all the difference, particularly if it reveals real people talking on the ground about real projects to real diplomats with names, photos, and profiles.32

According to Peltea, at the beginning of 2014, there were 2 billion active social media users worldwide. Facebook alone accounted for 1.184 billion and Twitter accounted for 232 million users.33 The ministry’s presence on social media hence gives it access to a huge audience both foreign and domestic and it can take advantage of this to project Ghana’s diplomatic agenda. Moreover, this provides a platform for the ministry to reach and educate the diaspora on what is happening in Ghana. Social media is also useful for engaging potential foreign investors and tourists who may need to satisfy their curiosities with respect to Ghana.

3.5 The challenges of electronic diplomacy to Ghana

Even though the ministry is reaping some benefits from the use of e-diplomacy tools, it is also facing some challenges. These challenges are:

3.5.1 Resource-related challenges

A staff member of the ICT unit of the MFA&RI stated during an interview that the ministry is currently constrained by limited resources to fully implement the necessary projects it
envisages under its rebranding initiative. Like most developing countries, Ghana is limited by financial constraints in procuring state of the art ICT tools that will enable it effectively pursue its foreign policy objectives. Moreover the ministry is operating on an internet bandwidth speed that is less than what is needed for its operations. In view of this challenge, the ministry is making attempts at adopting innovative means of making the most out of available resources to carry out its rebranding initiative.

3.5.2 Change Management Challenges

The Director of the ICT unit of the MFA & RI stated during an interview that even though the ministry has been quite receptive to the use of ICT, the general adoption rate has been quite slow since it requires a conscious shift from old ways of doing things to new ways. This process, for some sections of the ministry, is very gradual since not everyone who works in the institution is ICT savvy. The ICT unit of the ministry however has remedied this by creating a help desk which provides support and guidelines to employees in the use of the new tools so that they can become gradually more adept at and more open to using them.

3.5.3 Security Challenges

Persons interviewed indicated that there had been no instance where ICT networks came under attack. However, they declined to give any details on security challenges that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration was facing in the use of E-diplomacy tools with the reason that such information had security implications for the ministry. This indicates that security is a major source of concern for the ministry in the use of these tools. This is not surprising because cyberspace has become an area for unscrupulous activities and any state including Ghana which utilises cyberspace can become a target. Not only do these assailants target states, individuals or organisations via cyberspace, they can also exploit
weak computer systems to their advantage. Since diplomacy involves the collation and management of sensitive information, such nefarious activities pose great danger to the integrity of Ghana’s diplomatic communications. Some of such activities which Ghana is vulnerable to are discussed below:

3.5.3.1 Hacking

In computing, hacking is defined as “the practice of modifying computer hardware and software to accomplish a goal outside of the creator’s original purpose.”\(^{39}\) People who possess such skills are often referred to as hackers. Hacking as a skill in itself may not be harmful. Hackers are sometimes able to use their skills to detect problems in computer systems and find solutions to these problems. The skill is especially useful for developing robust computing systems which cannot be easily compromised in terms of security.\(^{40}\) There however exists some groups of hackers who break into computer and other communication systems in order to tamper with, reveal, steal, alter or destroy sensitive data for their own ends. This group of hackers are sometimes referred to as “crackers” though they are still more commonly referred to as “hackers”.\(^{41}\)

For instance, in November 2012, the website of Ghana’s Ministry of Justice and Attorney-General was hacked by a hacker identified as “@Hpa_Argentina”. The hacker’s reason was that Ghana had refused to release an Argentinian ship that had been seized earlier on.\(^{42}\) The hacker further threatened that if the ship was not released within 3 days, hackers in Argentina would hack all websites of the government, banks, energy, oil, gold and water companies and reveal classified information which would prove costly to the nation.\(^{43}\) This shows the vulnerability of the government of Ghana’s ICT systems including those of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration to hacking attacks.
3.5.3.2 Cyber Espionage

The Oxford online dictionary defines Cyber espionage as “The use of computer networks to gain illicit access to confidential information, typically that held by a government or other organization.” An example of a massive cyber espionage campaign was “GhostNet.” This is a virus discovered by researchers of the Information Ware Management Programme in 2009 and believed to have originated from hackers based in China. The virus was targeted at about 1,300 computers in foreign affairs ministries, embassies, international organisations, news agencies and NGOs in 103 countries worldwide in order to steal possibly sensitive information. An investigation by the Munk Centre for International studies in Toronto, Canada revealed that in addition to searching computers for specific information, the virus enabled infected computers to download a Trojan known as “ghostRAT.” The Trojan enabled hackers to control the computers’ in-built devices such as cameras and microphones which when turned on recorded any conversations within range. With an attack such as the one discussed above, any country including Ghana could have been particularly vulnerable to such an attack.

The Ghana section of the WikiLeaks Saga revealed the intense intelligence gathering activities of the embassy of the United States on Ghana. The information which was gathered is still available on the Ghana section of the WikiLeaks official website. It is however not clear by what means the embassy of the United States gathered the information aside the fact that WikiLeaks got their information from leaked diplomatic cables sent by the United States embassy in Ghana to the United States. However, it could still be inferred that with the use of ICT tools the country is also providing more avenues for espionage to occur.
3.5.3.3 Wire Tapping

This is “a form of electronic eavesdropping accomplished by seizing or overhearing conversations by means of a concealed listening or recording device connected to the transmission line”. In the Snowden saga, Edward Snowden’s revelations show that the United States National Security Agency (NSA) and the United Kingdom’s Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) allegedly tapped into the internet’s structure in order to intercept the entire world’s internet data. Most actions performed on the internet usually pass through a backbone firm which provides the network support for the world’s internet infrastructure. Therefore if any individual, organisation, security agency or other government agency is able to get access to the cables of such backbone firms, then they would get access to a huge amount of data sent across the world’s internet.

Snowden’s leaked documents show that the United States National Security Agency (NSA) had launched a massive yet secret surveillance campaign known as “Prism.” Under this programme, the agency accessed the servers of nine technology firms which include the well-known Microsoft, Google, Facebook and Yahoo in order to track online communication data which passes through the firms’ systems. The data the NSA and the GCHQ had access to included e-mail, chat logs, stored data, voice traffic, file transfers and social networking data. Some of Snowden’s revelations also indicated that the United Kingdom’s spy programmes included tapping into the undersea fibre optic cables through which data and phone calls flow and the information gathered was shared with the United States. The revealed documents allege that the GCHQ was able to get access to 200 fibre optic cables which enabled it to observe about 600 million communications every day. Data from internet and phone communications was amassed for up to 30 days after which it was to be filtered for further analysis.
3.5.3.4 Cyber-Terrorism

Saint-Claire defines cyber terrorism as “the use of computing resources against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.” Terrorism in itself has become a serious international security issue because terrorists have become decidedly more brutal and aggressive in their activities. Tackling them physically has proved to be a herculean task since they align themselves in small groups, subgroups and affiliated groups in hideouts all over the world which are difficult to track. Moreover, there usually isn’t enough intelligence gathered on their activities and intended activities or attacks and thus a number of their attacks usually take the world by surprise. Typical examples are the attacks on tourists in Tunisia in March and June of 2015 and the Paris attacks in November 2015.

What is equally disturbing now is that some terrorist groups now support their physical acts of terrorism with online attacks. For instance, there has emerged a group known as the “Cyber Caliphate” which claims to be linked to the terrorist group Islamic State (ISIS). On February 10, 2015, this group hacked the Twitter account of US magazine, Newsweek. The group posted a message on the seized Twitter account encouraging what it calls “cyber-jihad.” The group also threatened the family of the President of the United States, Barack Obama. This attack followed an earlier attack on the Twitter account of the United States military command and the Twitter accounts of some media houses in the United States.

The above example points to the fact that if a technologically advanced country such as the United States is unable to deal with the menace of cyber terrorism, a developing country like Ghana which is not an originator of digital technology, may not stand a chance at all in the
face of these attacks. Cyber terrorism thus poses a great threat to the practice of e-diplomacy in Ghana.

3.6 Conclusion

Ghana’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration has only just begun the process of incorporating information and communications technology in its operations and in the conduct of diplomatic activities. The benefits reaped so far are few compared to the many challenges posed by the use of these innovations in diplomacy. These challenges include the unavailability of adequate resources to effectively put together an ICT infrastructure and manage it. The challenge in this regard is not only the lack of monetary resources but also the requisite human capital. Additionally, the malevolent forces of hackers, cyber-terrorists, cyber-spies etc. make it increasing difficult for a country which has limited financial resources from being a major player on the global stage when it comes to ICT flavoured diplomacy.
Endnotes


2 Ibid.

3 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, 1992, art. 35(2).

44 Ibid., art. 40.


6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.


9 MFA &RI, “Brief History of the Ministry,” op. cit.

10 Ibid.

11 Personal communication with the Director of ICT Unit of the MFA&RI, July 26, 2014.

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13 Ibid.

14 Director of ICT Unit, MFA&RI, op. cit.

15 Staff member of ICT Unit, MFA&RI, op. cit.

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid.

19 Ibid.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid.


23 Ibid.

24 Personal communication with the Assistant Director of Information and Public Affairs Bureau of the MFA&RI, July 26, 2014.

25 Ibid.

26 Staff member of ICT Unit, MFA&RI, op. cit.

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34 Staff member of ICT Unit, MFA&RI, op. cit.

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37 Director of the ICT Unit, MFA &RI, op. cit.

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56 Ibid.
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60 Ibid.
CHAPTER FOUR

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.0 Introduction

The study sought to examine the extent to which Ghana has incorporated ICT to achieve its diplomatic objectives and the benefits the country has reaped from this as well as the challenges it has encountered. Based on the objectives of this study, the following are the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations:

4.1 Summary of Findings

Communication has been and still remains an essential aspect of diplomatic practice. Advances in communication technology have served to enhance the role of communication in diplomacy. With the advent of new technology over the centuries, diplomatic communications became progressively faster. The preponderance of new information and communication technology of the twenty-first Century surpasses previous centuries. In fact, the conduct of diplomacy is changing in response to the digital environment of the 21st century.

This is as a result of the use of new technology such as the internet, virtual private networks, virtual embassies and social media sites which enhance communication and diplomatic outreach. With these tools, geographical distance no longer matters in communication. Communications in foreign affairs ministries or departments have improved while the
conduct of diplomacy is no longer only a state to state affair. The public have also become important stakeholders in international affairs and diplomacy.

Ghana's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration appreciates the importance of ICT in the performance of its role of formulating and conducting foreign policy. This is evident in its attempt to use digital technologies in order to facilitate operations by improving the speed of communication and cutting down the costs of communication. In addition to this is its attempt to reach out to its stakeholders through popular social media sites. Furthermore, the ministry’s website, serves as a one-stop shop for information on Ghana’s foreign policy guidelines and objectives. It also provides news on the country’s diplomatic activities, relevant contact details on the country’s diplomatic missions and other important information about the country. The country is however constrained in its practice of e-diplomacy by limited financial resources and the slow progress of shifting to digitised operations within the ministry. There are also security risks associated with practicing e-diplomacy in Ghana. These risks are posed by hackers, cyber terrorists and the possibility of espionage by parties who are interested in looking for classified details about Ghana’s domestic and foreign policy agenda.

4.2 Conclusions

This study was premised on the hypothesis that the adoption of e-diplomacy by developing countries with particular emphasis on Ghana will improve its diplomatic practice if the country is able to reduce its resource and security vulnerabilities. Based on the findings of the research, the study revealed firstly that e-diplomacy is an emerging phenomenon in the world of diplomacy. Another observation was that Ghana’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration is practicing some form of e-diplomacy though to a minimal extent.
This is through the use of ICT tools such as internal web platforms, social media, the ministry’s website and intranet. These tools have provided effective means of communication in terms of reducing communication costs and increasing the speed of communications. Social media in particular provides more avenues for the country to engage in public diplomacy.

The next observation is that even though e-diplomacy is taking root in Ghana, the country still has a long way to go in the area of ICT-driven diplomacy especially since the country lacks financial resources to shore up the required ICT infrastructure for the practice of e-diplomacy. The country also has to contend with the lack of skilled human resources in order to facilitate the adaptation or transition to a technology- savvy diplomacy coupled with security threats. Particular security threats identified include hacking, cyber espionage, wiretapping and cyber terrorism. These threats are serious challenges to the practice of e-diplomacy by a developing country like Ghana because of the danger of losing very sensitive information and also the risk of having the nation’s communication systems corrupted.

From the above, it is clear that Ghana’s diplomatic practice will indeed be improved through the practice of e-diplomacy if the associated security challenges and resource challenges are resolved. This is more so because Ghana’s ability to address security challenges will also depend on the amount of resources that are available to the country for this purpose. From this perspective therefore, the hypothesis for the study has been validated.
4.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings from the research, the following recommendations are made:

4.3.1 Strategic E-diplomacy Plan

The current e-Ghana projects being pursued by the Government of Ghana should also include a strategic e-diplomacy plan which will be backed by government budgetary provisions. The e-Ghana project is a plan by the Government of Ghana with backing from the World Bank to create a modern IT infrastructure that can support the country’s sustainable development plans in the years ahead.¹ The Government seeks to achieve this by leveraging Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and public-private partnerships to develop the Information Technology enabled Services industry, and contribute to improved efficiency and transparency of selected government functions through e-government applications.² The proposed e-diplomacy plan would demonstrate strategies by which information and communication technology can be used as an effective enabler of Ghana’s diplomacy. The plan would hence focus on applying modern ICT tools, approaches, systems, and information products to the mission and tasks of Ghana’s diplomacy and development.

4.3.2 Training

In order to address the change management challenges associated with the shift to new digital tools. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration through its ICT unit and in collaboration with the National Information Technology Agency of Ghana (NITA) could organise intensive training programmes and workshops for staff of the ministry on how to use new ICT tools in their work. Such training programmes and workshops could also be used as platforms for further brainstorming on other possible ways to integrate information and communication technology in the work of the ministry and in the execution of Ghana’s
diplomatic objectives. Moreover, the ministry could take advantage of the tailor-made online courses offered by Diplo Foundation for ministries and departments of foreign affairs in order to train its staff and Foreign Service personnel in the practice of e-diplomacy.

Furthermore, there could be collaboration between the MFA&RI, NITA and LECIAD in order to design “ICT in diplomacy” course modules which would form part of the Master of Arts in International Affairs Programme offered at LECIAD. The programme is offered for staff of the MFA&RI as well as other people interested in the field of International Affairs and diplomacy.

4.3.3 Research

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration can also collaborate with information technology agencies such as the National Information Technology Authority (NITA) and the Ghana Community Network Systems (GCNet) in order to conduct extensive research in order to be able to design e-diplomacy applications that would enable Ghana can use ICT tools in its diplomacy in cost-effective ways which will fall within the country’s budgetary limits. In addition to the above research, it would be necessary for these three agencies to research on cyber-attacks which threaten the practice of e-diplomacy. This research would be vital to understanding the nature of cyber-attacks, the mind-set of cyber criminals, the motivation behind these attacks and possible solutions to counter them.
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A. Books


B. Journal Articles

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**C. Official Documents**


**D. Internet Sources**


E. Interviews

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