SJIF Impact Factor (2025): 8.688| ISI I.F. Value: 1.241| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2016 ISSN: 2455-7838(Online)
EPRA International Journal of Research and Development (IJRD)
Volume: 10 | Issue: 9 | September 2025 - Peer Reviewed Journal

KENYA'S FOREIGN POLICY AND DIPLOMACY IN DIGITAL SPACE

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Article DOI: https://doi.org/10.36713/epra24168
DOI No: 10.36713/epra24168

ABSTRACT
Digital diplomacy is an important dimension in the contemporary foreign policy despite of its reliance on other factors associated with technology and political context. This article examines determinants of digital diplomacy that shape Kenya's foreign policy. It emphasizes on internet connectivity and political leadership. Internet access is critical for digital tools and spaces to be functional. Disruptions to the internet supply or interference of the cables exposes digital diplomacy vulnerability to external shocks. Stable internet is important for successful diplomatic engagement. Since digital diplomacy is supported through digital spaces and other enablers, internet connectivity is essential. Political leadership is also important for successful use of digital diplomacy. Digital spaces vary in use and all contribute in a way to the success or failure in the use of digital diplomacy. Social media sites are highly used for digital engagements, underscoring the centrality of public diplomacy in Kenya's foreign policy. Digital diplomacy is shaped by several factors aligned to knowledge on technology, political environment and technological infrastructure. Kenya's successful influence in global affairs can be felt through strengthened partnerships, capacity building and robust investment on digital infrastructure.
KEY WORDS: *Diplomacy; Digital Diplomacy; Foreign Policy; Internet Connectivity; Political Leadership.*

INTRODUCTION

Technological developments have influenced the modern practice of diplomacy leading to integration of digital spaces into diplomatic activities. The conduct of foreign policy has taken the digital angle of including digital diplomacy tools in its conduct. It has become important component in international relations. The enablers of digital diplomacy include virtual communication channels, social media, and government websites. States are able to reach larger audiences and get their views while managing perceptions. They are able to engage directly with global publics, diaspora and foreign governments.

There are several factors that influence the use of digital diplomacy not only in Kenya but across other states. They vary ranging from institutional frameworks, political goodwill, technological infrastructure, skills of diplomatic staff, and institutional capacity. Although digital platforms provide opportunities, there are also challenges that affect their functionality such as poor internet connectivity, political instability and interference, and unequal access to technology. These factors are therefore necessary in understanding how digital diplomacy contributes to Kenya's foreign policy strategies in an increasingly networked world.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Technological access varies from country to another and where one is the supplier of internet cables it would control much of the consuming nations. State sovereignty would likely be affected by such controls despite the normative and regulative aspects that take place in reaching an agreement for the supply. Digital diplomacy relies heavily on internet connectivity that further depends on internet cables that carry internet across countries and continents. It is currently estimated that 90% of internet flows is through submarine cables across the globe. Any damage on the cables poses a risk of internet disconnection across countries that have adverse impacts to digital dependent activities. For example, the cutting of key internet cables in 2008 around Alexandria in Egypt hampered users and businesses across the Gulf Region and India (Diplo, 2022). The traditional norms on state sovereignty and jurisdictions are affected by digital technology since states can use cyber operations to engage in state sponsored espionage. This is despite of the state having the authority to develop and implement regulations on the operations of technologies and in line with international obligations.

States as sovereign entities engage in different ways with the aim of achieving their interests. Nye coined the term soft power in defining state's ability to influence others based on social norms, image and values (Golan, 2015). Digital diplomacy as a form of soft power cuts

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across states and just as the case with resident diplomats where citizens at the diaspora would reach to air their views, the public are able to use digital platforms to raise issues of concern and the state is able to take action due to pressures that come with it. Digital diplomacy from the institutional framework enables the sovereign state authority to allow ordinary citizens to engage not only with the international organizations and civil society groups but to make their open contributions to the affairs of the state (Reka et. al., 2016). The public are enabled through digital mediums to lobby and exert influence in designing and implementing specific foreign policies.

Technological infrastructure keeps mutating and changing as a result their sophistications and competitions from various service providers. The accessibility of these mediums and internet despite the various regulations put in place keep posing threats globally. Jihadi movements for instance used up to 80% of the internet to recruit the youth and the famous WikiLeaks scandal of 2010 that published 250,000 diplomatic cables between US missions and Washington (Bjola and Holmes 2015). Social media platforms regulative aspects are a challenge to manage since they are easily misused due to other emanating aspects of freedom of expression and democracy championed by interest groups, activists and human right groups. The regulative aspect of digital diplomacy requires cognitive concepts and therefore is reliant of expertise and elites on technology. This means that the elites play a role in all dimensions of a state from the political, to economic and even cultural aspects (Kiplagat & Juma, 2023). Their influence cannot be ignored in the current state of digital diplomacy use because they are the influencers all forms of policy making. The Tec savvy is also responsible for ensuring the regulative measures are well implemented. For instance, technology experts are to ensure the machines, internets and other enablers are well protected from external penetrations. There are various external attempts to access sensitive information unlawfully through hacking and cyber-attacks especially for highly ranked government officers or institutions that serve their purpose. When private information becomes public, reputation and image is tainted (Westcott, 2008). Many states have therefore cybersecurity strategies and established legislations although the risks also continue to be sophisticated infiltrating not only on the public but also highly sensitive areas of security and national defense. Technological infrastructures are most privately owned as well as internet service provision with the operators located at different jurisdictions globally which becomes an international challenge and threat.

The process of accessing information and the culture of connectivity spearheaded by internet availability have impacted diplomatic institutions when using online mediums for service delivery and information passage to its citizens. During crisis periods, diplomats and embassies have navigated through digital diplomacy in the effort to convey information their affected citizens. Other notable scenarios are during natural disasters and in the event of terrorism attack as was the case in the twin terror attacks at Ugandan capital, Kampala on November 16, 2021 by armed suicide bombers. Digital means of delivering consular aid is increasingly growing and becoming convenient leading to diplomatic institutions getting recognition as "service providers" (Manor, 2017). Such initiatives are achieved through issuance of guidelines for proper use of digital diplomacy platforms by embassies during consular crisis and in conducting digital simulations reflective of emergency situations.

Domestic policies and politics have influenced diplomatic practices towards engagement of targeted online audiences. Various embassies and diplomats have gone a notch higher in ensuring there is accuracy of information they deliver or receive online. It is viewed as a power shift from Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFAs) to the embassy as it bears the burden of getting public views through online conversation and engagement (Manor, 2016). Diplomatic practices have been influenced by technological advancements where events are reacted to as they arise, a practice referred by Philip Seib as "real-time diplomacy" (Manor, 2017). An example is the 2017 London terror attack in which embassies had to curate online information besides advising its citizens as events unraveled in their television screens. Crisis communication previously prioritized engagements with observers such as the global institutions. In so doing, diplomats and MFAs aspired to influence public opinion. This results in legitimizing their policies because digital diplomacy channels have enabled reach of several audiences both domestic and foreign (Hocking & Melissen, 2015).

Diplomatic activities have for long been conducted through resident diplomacy but in the advent of digital era, several state activities are carried out by means of digital diplomacy channels. Such activities as state recognition are done through negotiations, communication, management of states outlook, and furtherance of foreign policy (Roba and Maluki, 2020). It is through digital diplomacy that these activities are conducted today without sending state emissaries on such missions. Newly formed states have been recognized through the digital diplomacy platforms with Eritrea and South Sudan being a good example in Africa. Although Eritrea gained independence in 1993 when digital diplomacy was yet to gain prominence, their anniversaries just like for Kenya and many other states, congratulatory messages are received through digital forums not limited to official X or website account from diplomats around the world which shows the efficiency of digital means in conducting diplomatic affairs. This relies on high level of digital connectivity that make such activities to occur in a timely manner. Digital connectivity as an essentiality in application of digital diplomacy ensures success or failure in digital diplomacy practice. South Sudan for instance made good use of it in mobilizing for diplomatic support at regional and international community that resulted in gaining independence and recognition. Diplomats would later use digital diplomacy mechanisms to spread their speeches, pronounce their public appearance and pass congratulatory messages after their

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successful referendum. Several states have normalized the use of official social media sites in supplementing their traditional mechanisms.

The government of Kenya continues to improve technology use. The effort is traced to 1960s a period that the government through the treasury purchased mainframe computer that was solely used in automation of government employee's payroll system. That marked the epitome for ICT usage towards better service delivery in Kenya. Computer technology kept improving slowly by slowly and systematically to the extent that by 1990s, several client servers were introduced to assist in information sharing and online transactions. The period beginning the year 2000 saw increased uptake of internet, mobile and even wireless transactions. Although digital diplomacy was yet to be embraced, Bowman observes that president Kibaki's first term implemented technological policy and infrastructural development. Internet was provided using Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA) and Global System Mobile (GSM) in postal services across Kenya (Bowman, 2010). Integrating digital channels to government service delivery was a step towards the current digital diplomacy. E-Government for instance became an avenue for the delivery of government services using internet and other related ICTs. This was to enhance public service delivery and generally improving efficiency and effectiveness. Similarly, today the digital diplomacy platform has enabled MFAs to engage with other countries on matters of mutual interest, participate in negotiations, and engagement with non-state actors while focusing in improving on ties and widening its scope in the international system. Through digital diplomacy channels, citizens within and outside the state are able to discuss on key issues shaping foreign policy which may otherwise have not been possible (Otwoma, 2012).

Kenya's MFAs strategic plan 2014-2018 in the effort to enhance digital diplomacy strengthened digital connectivity. Similarly, the ministry established other facilities among them good boardrooms that can be used in online meetings and a good video conferencing room with computers that have been installed with online meeting apps and cloud computing. However, COVID- 19 pandemic struck and the first case was witnessed in Kenya in March 2020 that saw the ministry upgrade its connectivity and infrastructure towards hosting Global web Portal for information access, Virtue Private Network (VPN) to secure information when using internet, and Electronic Document Management System. This further led to the enhancement of ministry's virtual connectivity with missions abroad supported by installation of varied systems for information and data to suit real time reporting. The ministry has continued to train its staff in order to improve service delivery and efficiency (Republic of Kenya, 2014).

Traditional policy matters have undergone digitization whether at the government or organizational level. This has created a challenge in offering diplomatic services that cut across trade, health, and environment. World Trade Organization (WTO) for instance shifted to E-commerce with an agenda dominating around artificial intelligence, data and circular economy. Debates around climate change are increasingly being conducted digitally while conflict mediations are being done through social media and other digital channels across the world (Kurbalija and Hone, 2021). Traditional policy approaches have to be transformed by diplomats to effectively align to digitization impacts with governments working towards expanded internet connectivity and access of news lets. Diplomatic services can therefore be transformed to promote national interests online, change traditional policy agenda and cope with digital interdependence.
Digital connectivity is centered on multiple services in line with states foreign policy goals. There have been emerging national procedures towards digital foreign policy centered on e-commerce, cybersecurity, infrastructure and human rights. Digital policy covers wide range of issues which involves different actors. They may even cover on developing networks based on academia and research, digital power through well-structured technological industries, and issues of public interest and human rights. The digital foreign policy would engage multi-stakeholder governance in order to reach different actors at all levels (Kurbalija and Hone, 2021). Aware of such changes, some governments have begun setting up new kinds of diplomatic representations. In the tech industry for example, there is a move away from traditional corporate lobbying into deeper participation in diplomacy just as Microsoft pursued diplomacy by setting up its presence in diplomatic centers such as the UN and actively engaging in global issues of cybersecurity, human rights and development.

A whole-of-government approach is another key method for successful use of digital diplomacy as pointed out by Kurbalija and Hone, (2021). The aim in this is engagement of several ministries and government departments in guaranteeing effective digitization by dealing with policy and standards to ensure successful installation of technical infrastructure important internet resources. Foreign affairs and security ministries for example are critical in handling cybersecurity negotiations internationally mostly through the UN while digitization extends to other functional areas of health and migration. Many developing countries will sooner than later widen their network to cover embassies abroad. Kenya is working towards having an intranet or Virtual Private Network (VPN) as a mode of ensuring communication protocols. Electronic gadgets used for confidential communication are set aside from the general use one. This in itself is a move to digital diplomacy where activities are conducted in a mobile manner as the diplomat is empowered to operate and negotiate from any location or environment hence enabling their instant communication no matter the situation (Rao, 2017).

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Emerging technological mediums among them mobile services are known accelerators of technology consumption and even forge towards improved development of broadband infrastructure as well as data storage capabilities. Meg Whitman, while the US ambassador to Kenya emphasized technology development in line with resolving of people's problems. She stressed the need for African countries to involve technology use in improving their economies through a careful harnessing of technological strengths and solving of challenges that could be equated to AI, e-money and satellites. Technology may bring in innovations that includes providing formidable solutions, being specific, and ensuring sustainability. In so doing, Africa is expected to have better levels of interconnectedness (Yusuf, 2024).

METHODOLOGY

The study was guided by concurrent mixed method design in answering the identified research questions thereby depicting issues of a generalized population. The design offers two sets of strengths in addressing appropriately the research question through an integration of multiple data sources that are helpful in studying complex problems (Poth and Munce, 2020). The target was drawn from three strata derived from embassies/high commissions, Ministry of foreign and diaspora affairs, and Parliamentary committee on national defense and foreign relations. Stratified purposive sampling guided in reaching the respondents from the strata. Primary data was collected through open and closed-ended questionnaire, and secondary data from relevant publications. Quantitative data were edited, classified, and analyzed descriptively. Qualitative data were thematically analyzed and presented in narrative and verbatim form.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Two set of theories were used that comprised participatory culture theory, and organizational institutional theories. Participatory culture theory points to the public getting authority to create content as well as supporting for public debates. It advocates for public participation, a component that has taken shape in the present use of digital diplomacy. The turnaround moves to have consumers take control of online engagement and even becoming producers results to "participatory culture" (Jenkins et. al., 2006). Digital diplomacy embraces various technological channels where people come together because of social matters that affect their lives. The internet aids assembling of people with like-minded issues who connect, establish and share relevant information. Organizational institutional theory brings the institutional dynamics into the determinants of digital diplomacy as a tool in the conduct of foreign policy. There are for instance regulative aspects that the institutional theory refers as rules of adherence failure to which it attracts sanctions (Effah, 2016). This helps in bringing order in the use of various digital platforms while protecting the enablers. It explains the various regulations put in place by different states that guide operations of various social platforms hence the existence of official digital platforms for information exchange by states. The normative component pointed out in this theory is essential as it sets clear what can be categorized as legal and illegal when using digital diplomacy as a tool in conducting foreign policy. The cognitive aspect championed by this theory relates to knowledge and expertise where organizations tend to borrow from other organizations that seem successful (Scott, 2008).

DETERMINANTS OF DIGITAL DIPLOMACY IN FOREIGN POLICY

Digital diplomacy as a tool relies on digital spaces and the preferred platforms for specified passage of information of engagements. This is however reliant on internet connectivity in usage depending on the digital platform used at that moment or across states. In China, Weibo is used much more than Facebook that dominates in other states to which the level of connectivity varies (Hanson, 2012). Digital diplomacy as a tool is applicable in reaching wider audiences in a specific country hence diplomats are tasked with aligning foreign policy goals and objectives. States work towards strengthening their strategies and concurrently widening digital connectivity to market their foreign policy goals and processes in attaining these goals. Digital integration enables coordination among stakeholders through online meetings, group chats, and progress reports via emails as well as real time discussion on urgent matters without spending vast resources rather than the conventional diplomacy whereby physical meetings are organized to deliberate on issues of national interest.
The contemporary society has witnessed better connectivity that has improved interdependence as well as transnational associations. In light of this, states today engage each other through digital forums in sustaining relations or influencing actions of other states (Westcott, 2008). The assertion is possible given the fact of interdependence and dependence among states. Globally, states rely on grants and loans for development purposes. This in turn influences alignment of foreign policy in tandem with policies championed by the donor countries. Foreign policy therefore becomes an instrument for diplomatic negotiations characterized by use of digital diplomacy means in striking a deal and ratification done at MFAs and embassy levels. There is increasing data dependence by countries as a result of digital enablers hence the importance of maintaining data flows in ensuring economic wellbeing, social stability and growth. Diplomatic agendas can be presented aided by these digital mediums that may include matters disarmament, human rights, trade, health and migration (Diplo, 2022).

Currently the networked world has improved on efficiency leading to inevitable use of digital diplomacy as a tool in the conduct of foreign policy. Research by Maluki and Njagi shows that there is over five billion people using internet globally. Statistics however shows that African continent remains low at 42.2%, in comparison to Asia 58.8%, Australia 67.7%, Latin America 71.5%, Europe 87.2%, and North America 90.3%. The world can be shaped by all because of the ability of majority to provide their views using digital

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space. African countries can use digital diplomacy as a tool to promote diaspora diplomacy and in championing branding of their nations (Maluki and Njagi, 2020). In order to achieve this, the African states have to shape their connectivity and access of digital mediums with ease as they are far behind in it.

It was established from the study that internet connectivity is a critical component for digital diplomacy functionality to be attained (A=100.0%; M=4.93; SD=.294). All responses showed that without proper internet connectivity, there would be ineffective use of digital diplomacy efficacy as a tool. Success or failure in the present forms of digital technology depends on internet connection and their strength. This explains why there are various digital platforms but their usage varies from one country to another. Emergence of coronavirus pandemic influenced the operations of MFA directorates since they are steering diplomatic initiatives. They carry out critical roles in ensuring proper set up of virtual meetings and conferences. It has put into great practice the ideas linked to digital diplomacy especially in the case where movement is restricted globally thus ensuring continued functioning of diplomatic initiatives. Several equipment's are available at the Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs (MFDAs) to facilitate diplomatic activities at various levels and to be used by different responsible personnel at the ministry. The availability of laptops, computers, tablets, and internet phones are aimed at ensuring continuous and seamless service. In order to ensure practicality in use, there are well established and set up of wired internet, mail servers, scanners and Wi-Fi internet. Tablets are meant for easier participation on conferences and virtual meetings with other sections like embassies and foreign countries through their representation including MFAs. This is underpinned by Radunovic (2010) assertion that development of small portable devices that include laptops, digital pads, tablets, and palm tops with proper cameras and microphone cable to connect well with wireless internet enables efficient diplomatic initiatives. Such have been elevated through set up of teleconferencing facility and satellite equipment's that are important in sharing security details with relevant stakeholders. It was observed that there is need for strong internet connection if digital technologies are to be effective. The patterns of digital diplomacy are reliant on the access of internet to which it varies from developed to developing countries.

The findings of this study further highlighted the importance of partnerships among countries. African countries are still far behind technologically and they overly rely on undersea cables from the European countries. In order to improve and strengthen internet accessibility, they continue to rely on partnerships in terms of trainings and seminars. There is therefore continued build up from either borrowed ideas or as a result while the much-developed nations keep engaging technology experts from African countries to their advantage. There is concurrence with the writings of Manor (2017) on the culture of connectivity. He noted that online information access has influenced the diplomatic institutions to the extent that they have shifted their focus to online service delivery mechanisms as well as enabling information access by the citizens. Furthermore, internet connectivity is essential in online communication especially in times of crisis. Whenever there is an emerging crisis issue, embassies resort to online communication to their affected citizens. An example is the twin terror attack at Kampala, the Ugandan capital city by armed suicide bombers on November 16, 2021 that saw diplomatic institutions providing consular aids through digital means. Digital diplomacy as a tool was effective in conducting online simulations to the public reflective of emergency situations. It is eminent that internet connectivity is a key factor influencing digital diplomacy applicability as a tool in the conduct of Kenya's foreign policy.

Various African government officials converged in Connected Africa Summit held in Nairobi Kenya on April 22, 2024 together with Information Communication Technology (ICT) experts and international organizations to discuss on, "the future of technology, unlocking the connectivity potentials and beyond". Industrialization according to experts can be improved through digital transformation that could contribute to poverty reduction and improve on job creation. There has been an improvement in African continent in regards to broadband connectivity and internet users' rise at 115% increase between 2016 and 2021 at about 160 million users. This is as per the international financial institution although there are existing challenges such as lack of secure accessible and reliable internet yet it is important in catching up with other European and Asian countries (Yusuf, 2024). One of the speakers, Lacina Kone, who heads an international organization called Smart Africa tasked with coordination of ICT in the continent pointed the need to integrate technology into daily operations of African societies. Furthermore, digital transformation can never be evaded in the present day living and is becoming a necessity just as water is. Having a connected Africa is therefore an opportunity for the African continent citizens hence the need for collective alignments of visions to have a better technologically equipped society.

The then Kenya's cabinet secretary of technology and digital innovation, Eliud Owalo, in his official Facebook account explained the need for African countries to come together in harnessing the potentials of digital infrastructure through collaboration in advancing a shared vision of digitally empowered Africa by 2030. He pointed out the need for Africa to increase internet consumption and access by 5% in the next five years and also training 1 million youth with digital skills by 2027 across Africa. For the collaboration to be successful, the Connected Africa Summit 2024 outlined seven areas of collaboration that include harmonizing legislation and regulations; facilitating cross-border transfer; promoting knowledge sharing on AI; harmonize ICT taxation; establish continental digital

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platforms; participate in semiconductor manufacturing; and, invest in data center infrastructure (Eliud Owalo's Facebook Account, 2024).

The findings of the study showed that 93.4% of respondents agreed with the statement that technological advancements influence diplomatic practices. This nearly unanimous agreement highlights that technology has become indispensable for diplomats in engaging with the public, shaping foreign policy, and addressing global challenges. Cariole (2021) warned that over-reliance on internet connectivity may expose digital diplomacy to risks related to cybersecurity, data privacy, and misinformation. Even with strong internet infrastructure, the effectiveness of digital diplomacy may be compromised by the spread of fake news and malicious cyber activities (Lips, 2019). Therefore, while internet connectivity is undeniably critical, it must be coupled with robust safeguards and policies to ensure its effectiveness as a tool for diplomacy. Without such measures, digital diplomacy can be vulnerable to threats that undermine trust and reliability in diplomatic communications (Cariole, 2021).

The question of Kenya's political leadership influencing digital diplomacy usage in the world of foreign policy was noted by majority of the respondents as a true statement. The results were in total agreement as majority 56.7% of respondents held similar views to this especially in the areas of policy making, formulation and implementation. The finding reflects a moderate consensus but also highlights significant variation in respondents' perceptions of political leadership's role in digital diplomacy. This variability points to differing views on the extent to which political leadership in Kenya has prioritized or effectively implemented digital diplomacy. This suggests that political leadership is a moderate influencer of digital diplomacy in the conduct of foreign policy. Participatory culture (Jenkins, 2006) emphasizes the importance of creating an enabling environment for public and institutional engagement in digital platforms. Effective political leadership can facilitate such an environment by promoting policies that encourage transparency, public involvement, and digital innovation. However, as highlighted by Taplin (2008), political leaders often face challenges in balancing transparency with strategic interests, especially in sensitive diplomatic contexts. Further, Costanza-Chock (2012) notes that political leadership can significantly influence how digital handles are deployed in fostering public participation and international relations. Leaders who fail to align digital diplomacy tools with broader governance and foreign policy objectives risk creating gaps between potential and actual performance.

Additionally, there was ambivalence and lack of clarity as to whether ICT personnel were employed and trained in digital diplomacy (A=36.7%; M=3.30; SD=1.02). This lack of clarity shows that the ministry lacks a clear policy on training employed ICT personnel on digital diplomacy. This is partly because of the assumption that ICT personnel are experts in their field and have knowledge of setting up technology tools to be used by diplomatic experts. It therefore creates normative pattern of operations where the tech experts set the tools and diplomacy experts takes over in the usage. As per the findings only 36.7% of respondents agreed that ICT personnel were employed and trained in digital diplomacy. This relatively low agreement reflects the ongoing institutional challenge of aligning human resource development with technological advancements in diplomacy. This suggests that there is still ambiguity and lack of general clarity regarding ICT personnel employed and trained in digital diplomacy as an influence on digital diplomacy as a tool for Kenya's foreign policy. The response however defers with the information on Kenya's MFDAs whereby it highlights the greater role that the human actor plays since the ministry has a section tasked with the management of ICT facilities as well as providing advisories on ICT related matters. In addition, the MFDAs through the ICT section ensures constant update of digital diplomacy as a tool for effective communication and passage of information to consulates and missions (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2014).

Christensen (2012) observed that the successful adoption of digital diplomacy hinges on skilled personnel capable of maximizing their potential. Similarly, Effah (2016) emphasized that while technological infrastructure is critical, the human capacity to leverage it effectively often lags behind, particularly in developing nations. The need for specialized training is also highlighted by Wang and Saxton (2013), who argue that digital diplomacy's effectiveness depends on ICT personnel's ability to understand both the technical and diplomatic nuances of their roles. Kenya's apparent lack of sufficient trained personnel could impede its ability to fully capitalize on digital diplomacy tools, reducing their impact on foreign policy.

CONCLUSION

The article indicates that in Kenya, digital diplomacy is shaped by both political and technological factors. Internet connectivity is however the main reliance for all the other digital factors to function hence the most critical. Technological advancement offer opportunity for digital diplomacy. However, there are persistent challenges such as inadequate training of ICT personnel, weak institutional frameworks, inconsistent political prioritization, and cybersecurity risks that limit its full potential. Countries should invest in digital infrastructure and human capacity. By strengthening these areas, Kenya's foreign policy and diplomatic engagements will not only improve but also position the country and leverage digital tools as a form of soft power and a driver of global influence.

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