PUBLIC DIPLOMACY: A NEW FOREIGN POLICY PARADIGM

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Abstract

Soft power and Public Diplomacy became a buzz word in international politics. Despite the fact that the idea of soft power and Public Diplomacy has attracted considerable attention throughout the world, yet the concepts, actors, approaches and practices of both the dynamic concepts remained ambiguous. Public diplomacy, which carried the soft image of a nation, is somewhat naïve to majority of academia, diplomatic scholars and practitioners. Initially, the term Public Diplomacy was considered as the jurisdiction of state domain only, however with the increased number of international actors, the non-state actors legitimately played their role in the working of public diplomacy. This research work attempts to conceptualize Public Diplomacy and try to clarify different terms, methods and actors associated with Public Diplomacy. Further it tries to highlight challenges and prospects of the concept and related activities.

Key words: Public Diplomacy, Actors Stages, Challenges, Future, Foreign Policy.

Introduction

Twenty first century is termed as the century of soft power, the term coined by Joseph Nye. The concept has attracted and infiltrated in the entire world. The developed countries as they have resources and expertise in terms of researchers, scholars and diplomatic practitioners, immediately followed the suite and started practicing and adopting new techniques of Public Diplomacy. It is considered as one of the best means to achieve the foreign policy objectives of a country. Now the narrow concepts of diplomacy, state to state relations have been changed and new actors, issues and concepts also joined
the ranks of diplomatic system. This further facilitated conceptual development of the term public diplomacy.

However, the term Public Diplomacy is somewhat new for the developing countries` scholars, practitioners and citizens etc. Also among the developed countries, there is no consensus as far as the definition of the term is considered. Different people define Public Diplomacy differently while others differ as far as the mechanism is considered while for others, there are different actors to argue upon. Presently, the debate of diplomacy does not center on the role, kind or strategies of diplomacy. Now those who are associated with diplomacy in any form and capacity argue about the relevance and role of hard power, role of public in diplomacy and Public Diplomacy in the 21st century. Still Public Diplomacy is exploring its horizon.

**Definition of Public Diplomacy**

Joseph Nye coined the concept of soft power. He is of the view that other than military and economy, there is soft power which helps the government to achieve its foreign policy aims. According to Joseph S. Nye Jr

“...One can affect others’ behavior in three ways: threats of coercion ("sticks"), Inducements and payments ("carrots"), and attraction that makes others want what you want”.

Nye believes that soft power rests on, culture, political values, institutions and foreign policies. Thus art, literature, architecture, media, education system, politics, vibrant civil society, tourism and much more can contribute in the soft power image of a country. Nye, in his book *Soft Power*, identified the differences between high and popular culture. He also clarified that soft power is not only about entertainment and popular culture but the universal values that a country culture have and shared by the others also like human rights, democracy, market economy, equality and rule of law. Similarly, narrow domestic policies and foreign agenda
can undermine the soft image of a nation\textsuperscript{3}. Currently Russia, China, Japan, Spain, EU, Germany, Singapore, Malaysia and India are successfully utilizing the soft power concept into reality\textsuperscript{4}. However, the success of soft image of any country depends upon the accomplishment of its public diplomacy-as a tool to communicate.

Public Diplomacy is considered as a platform from where one can initiate its soft power policies. However, there is no agreed definition of the term public diplomacy. It can be defined as engaging foreign audience to achieve the desired foreign policy goals. The term was coined in 1965 by Edmund A. Gullion, former Dean of the Fletcher School, said

“Public diplomacy” deals with the influence of public attitudes on the formation and execution of foreign policies. It encompasses dimensions of international relations beyond traditional diplomacy; the cultivation by governments of public opinion in other countries; the interaction of private groups and interests in one country with those of another; the reporting of foreign affairs and its impact on policy; communication between those whose job is communication, as between diplomats and foreign correspondents; and the processes of inter-cultural communications. "Central to Public Diplomacy (PD) is the transnational flow of information and ideas".\textsuperscript{5}

Another definition is given be Alan K. Henrikson

**Professor of Diplomatic History**

“Public Diplomacy may be defined, simply, as the conduct of international relations by governments through public communications media and through dealings with a wide range of nongovernmental entities (political parties, corporations, trade associations, labor unions, educational institutions, religious organizations, ethnic groups, and so on including influential individuals) for the purpose of
influencing the politics and actions of other governments.”

Nicholas J. Cull describes:

“Public Diplomacy is an international actor’s attempt to manage the international environment through engagement with a foreign public.”

Over the time, people related to the field of diplomacy coined different definitions and broaden the conceptual scope of Public Diplomacy. The above definitions revealed that Public Diplomacy is concerned with:

- Listening to foreign audience
- Related to foreign policy goals
- Inter cultural communications
- It’s a long term process.
- Approaches are carved out according to the situation and demand
- The ultimate aim is to manage international environment.
- Different and effective means of communication to be utilized.
- It is open and based on reliable information.
- It must have comprehensible message and goals and strategies.
- It’s a concept revolving around branding a nation.
- It must be credible.
- It’s a two way process.

The above mentioned definitions revealed the fact that Public Diplomacy cannot be related with propaganda. Public Diplomacy is based on facts and persuasive policies. It is all about worldwide streaming of ideas and information.

**New Public Diplomacy**

In international political communication, Public Diplomacy is considered as the paradigm shift which is
termed as 'transformational diplomacy' by the former USA secretary of state Condoleezza Rice in 2006. On the other hand, scholars preferred to use the term new Public Diplomacy because of following factors.

- New and more actors became the part of diplomatic mission.
- It’s about people to people contact.
- New and faster means of communication developed.
- Blurring of domestic and international issues.
- New terminologies for Public Diplomacy, like soft power and branding.
- New Public Diplomacy strategy is based on people to people contacts
- New Public Diplomacy is described as relation building.
- New thinking and new solutions are given chance to solve the problems.
- Increased role of NGOs, supranational and sub national actors.

Following tables highlight the differences between traditional Public Diplomacy and Public Diplomacy for twenty first century.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conditions</th>
<th>Traditional Public Diplomacy</th>
<th>21st Century Public Diplomacy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conflict, tensions between states</td>
<td>Peace</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Goals</td>
<td>To achieve political change in target countries by changing behaviour</td>
<td>Political and economic interest Promotion to create receptive environment and positive reputation of the country abroad</td>
</tr>
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Public Diplomacy: A New Foreign Policy Paradigm

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Strategies</th>
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<th>Building and maintaining relationships engaging with public</th>
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<td>Direction of Communication</td>
<td>One-way communication (monologue)</td>
<td>Two-way communication (dialogue)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Very little, if any</td>
<td>Public Diplomacy based on scientific research where feedback is also important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Message Context</td>
<td>Ideologies Interests Information</td>
<td>Ideas Values Collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target Audiences (public)</td>
<td>‘general’ public of the target nation; Sender and receivers of messages</td>
<td>Segmented, well-defined publics + domestic publics; Participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Channels</td>
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<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>Sponsored by government</td>
<td>Public and private partnership</td>
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Public Diplomacy: A Remedy for NATO’s Image Problem
http://www.Academia.Edu/2606658/Public_Diplomacy_A_Remedy_for_NATOs_Image_Problem
The Old Public Diplomacy and the New

<table>
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<th>Dominant Characteristics</th>
<th>Old Public Diplomacy</th>
<th>New Public Diplomacy</th>
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<td>Identity of international actor</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>State and non-state</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tech. environment</td>
<td>Short wave radio Print newspapers Land-line telephones</td>
<td>Satellite, Internet, real-time news Mobile telephones</td>
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<tr>
<td>Media environment</td>
<td>Clear line between domestic and international news sphere</td>
<td>Blurring of domestic and international news sphere.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Source of approach</td>
<td>Outgrowth of political advocacy &amp; propaganda theory</td>
<td>Outgrowth of corporate branding &amp; network theory</td>
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<td>Terminology</td>
<td>“International image” “Prestige”</td>
<td>“Soft power” “Nation Brand”</td>
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<td>Structure of role</td>
<td>Top down, actor to foreign peoples</td>
<td>Horizontal, facilitated by actor</td>
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<td>Nature of role</td>
<td>Targeted messaging</td>
<td>Relationship-building</td>
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<td>Overall aim</td>
<td>The management of the international environment</td>
<td>The management of the international environment</td>
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The above tables show that the main driving force for traditional and 21st century public diplomacy is to manage the relations among states and international environment. Now in
the present century, Public Diplomacy has broader concept, goals, and more players working together and sharing responsibilities. It’s all about building relations by using modern technology and terminologies.

**Goals of Public Diplomacy**

Different scholars mentioned different goals; nevertheless the underlined theme remains the same.

- Introducing or familiarizing the country to foreign targeted audience.
- To exhibit positive image of a country.
- To engage and influence the foreign public.
- To influence people.
- To respond to any kind of propaganda
- To correct the misunderstandings and misinterpretations.

**Stages of Public diplomacy**

Joseph Nye mentioned three dimensions of Public Diplomacy and all are important.

- **Daily Communications**: At this stage, the government tries to explain the daily domestic and foreign policy decisions. It occurs within hours or days. It can be a press conference or policy brief by the government. It’s a short term arrangements.

- **Strategic Communication**: It aims to develop a theme; it is for weeks, months or even years. Shared Values Initiative by USA in 2002 to inform the Muslim world that Muslims living in USA have positive aspects and are respectable and prosperous citizens. It’s a medium term approach.

- **Lasting Relationships**: It develops over a decade and involved long term planning. It involves scholarships, exchange programmes or media campaign. It’s a long term planning.
Reactive, proactive and relationship building are the terms used by M. Leonard for the three stages of public diplomacy. “Reshaping perceptions and opinions of foreign individuals is key to all three efforts.”

**Actors of Public Diplomacy**

Traditionally, diplomacy and foreign policy are considered as a state domain. Public Diplomacy was also under the jurisdiction of state. With globalization, non-state actors sprout with global agenda and interests. As defined by The National Intelligence Office of the United States:

“Non-sovereign entities that exercise significant economic, political, or social power and influence at a national and at international levels (National Intelligence Office, 2007)”.

The major strategy of non-state actors is to rely on soft power. Not only has this, the non-state actors like NGOs, multinational co-operations, think tanks, religious groups, transnational diaspora communities do have the clear objectives, resources, means of communication, net working abilities and human expertise to effectively carry out Public Diplomacy activities and strategies. All the major capitals in this world have the head offices of NGOs and INGOs. Talking about the role of non-state actors in Public Diplomacy Nye said that:

“These flexible nongovernmental organizations and networks are particularly effective in penetrating states without regard to borders. Because they often involve citizens who are well placed in the domestic politics of several countries, such networks are able to focus the attention of the media and governments on their issues. They create a new type of transnational political coalitions. For example, the coalition to ban land mines brought together NGOs, celebrities, and politicians in many countries.”
Besides NGO, there are terms like non-profit organization, civil society organizations, self-help organizations, voluntary organizations, which are playing active role in the domain of non-state actors. Now Public Diplomacy is number one priority of the diplomats and the governments which they carried out with the help of numerous players.

**Approaches to Public Diplomacy**

Nicholas J Gull has identified, listening, advocacy, cultural diplomacy, exchange diplomacy, International broadcasting and psychological warfare as the core approaches to public diplomacy\(^{15}\). Bruce Gregory has mentioned understanding, planning, engagement and advocacy as the core approaches and concepts of public diplomacy.\(^{16}\) To him, understanding is equivalent to listening. Listening is related to understanding the foreign public opinion and gathering information with the help of different strategies like survey, media, and opinion research. Once the listening has been done, the actors try to map out the planning and support for their public diplomatic goals. To Bruce, engagement and advocacy are related to operational categories\(^{17}\). However, they are somewhat overlapping, but one cannot put them in the same category.

Cultural and exchange diplomacy works, according to Cull, are overlapping. Cultural diplomacy is based on the nation’s cultural resources to be shared with the foreign audience. The aim of exchange diplomacy is also the same. To show ones culture, civilization, values, education system and political pluralism, to those who visit the country. While making use of modern technologies like TV and radio, government can cater all the functions of Public Diplomacy. International broadcasting is vital to achieve the goals of Public Diplomacy. Psychological warfare is the term which seems to be eccentric with the concept of Public Diplomacy, however, Public Diplomacy can turn into psychological warfare if it is used for an immoral purpose\(^{18}\), as mentioned by Cull.
Evolution of Public Diplomacy

Since the dawn of history of diplomacy, the practitioners tried to achieve their national interests with the help of persuasion, promotion, projection and presentation (culture, gifts, their national souvenirs). Public Diplomacy has been practiced since many centuries, where countries engage the process of formulating international public opinion through education, culture and exchange programs. Public Diplomacy (PD) was practiced by Romans, Greeks, French, German and many others. Although the term Public Diplomacy is new, but as far as the practices of Public Diplomacy are considered, those were practiced by France, Germany, UK, Italy, and many others during pre-world war I. However, later during World War I and II, and even the cold war, the countries were more interested in propagating their objectives and ideologies. The history of Public Diplomacy can be divided into following phases:

Cold War Period

Over the years, the term Public Diplomacy is associated with the terms like communication, information and influencing the foreign audience. It means that Public Diplomacy during the cold war period is associated with state to state diplomacy. It was considered as a powerful contrivance to achieve the aim of bipolar world. Both USA and USSR tried to convince the domestic and foreign audience that they were right and their enemy was evil. It’s not only the two super powers, but other major powers were also engaged in projecting their culture, sports, education, music, art, technology, movies, theater and much more.

US President Woodrow Wilson in 1917 formulated a Committee on public information with the aim to inform foreign audience about the foreign policy goals of USA. Later on USA Public Diplomacy initiative include: cultural exchange programme in Latin America, International visitors programme, Radio Free Europe, Voice of America, Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty, Fulbright exchange program, US
information Agency, US International communications Agency. American libraries were established and published Washington File\textsuperscript{20}. Not only that with the help of print and electronic media, USA was successful in winning the ideological war.

Like USA, former Soviet Union also comprehended the importance of public opinion. In 1955, Moscow formulated the Soviet All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries (VOKS)\textsuperscript{21}, with the aim to revive Soviet American cultural exchanges\textsuperscript{22}. Thus cultural agreement in 1958 was signed between the two rivals.\textsuperscript{23} While the visit of VOKS delegation to USA was highly publicized. Both the nations realized the "usefulness of exhibits as an effective means of developing mutual understanding."\textsuperscript{24} It was all about presenting Soviet technology, industry, and culture to the USA citizens. The US held The American National Exhibition in Moscow in 1959. This exhibition tried to present the American achievements in the field of technology, fashion, art, culture, to soviet citizens.\textsuperscript{25} With the passage of time, USA utilized cultural and educational exchange programmes to promote friendly relations between USA and audience abroad.

However, the two super powers, with the passage of time, were engage in propaganda. Soviet Union fully utilized Radio Moscow which by 1970, broadcast in 70 languages. Soviet used movies, television, books and all kinds of media to project USA as racist. Soviet desire to become hard power undermined its soft power strategies and achievements.

**Post-Cold War Period**

With the end of cold war, it seems that the ideological war is over. Thus in 1999, the USIA was abolished and its functions were handed over to State Department, under the newly created Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. The main aim of the US Public Diplomacy in post-cold war period is to
“.. Support the achievement of U.S. foreign policy goals and objectives, advance national interests, and enhance national security by informing and influencing foreign public and by expanding and strengthening the relationship between the people and Government of the United States and citizens of the rest of the world”\(^{26}\).

To achieve its foreign policy objectives, US Public Diplomacy is making use of communication with foreign audience by relying on cultural, educational and academic programmes along with use of media- print and electronic.

**Post 9/11 Period**

By going through the history of US and other nations’ public diplomacy, the underneath message remains the same, to tell one’s story to rest of the world. However, the tragic event of 9/11 has put a question mark over the ineffectiveness of US Public Diplomacy initiatives. To handle those who were responsible for the tragic event of 9/11, USA resorted to military solution as first reliable option and Public Diplomacy the second. To answer the question why they hate us? USA carved out two phases of public diplomacy. First to promote US values and secondly to isolate the radical and fanatic elements\(^ {27}\). New Public Diplomacy campaign started for the Muslim and Arab world. The campaign was mostly based on media and respond to misunderstanding and misinformation about USA. Zahrana cited three reasons for the failure of US Public diplomacy.

- **Firstly**: USA Public Diplomacy is based on one way communication rather than a two way process. USA just try to present their point of view, without understanding the grievances’ of the other side. Its only information driven campaign.
- **Secondly**: USA didn’t fully comprehend the cultural values and core identity of the targeted audience-Muslim world. They tried to implement their values, ethic, morality and political system, without giving due...
consideration to the ground realities. It’s a common perception among the Muslim world that USA wanted to Americanized the entire Muslim world.

- **Thirdly**: There is no relationship and connection between USA Public Diplomacy and foreign policy. USA is more interested in building cordial relations with the public of Muslim world and believe that Muslim public will accept their campaign without giving due consideration to public attachment to Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine.

- Post 9/11 is the incident which gave impetus to the Public Diplomacy throughout the world.

- Entire world realized the importance of soft power and Public Diplomacy and initiated the public

- Diplomacy policies and strategies. Germany, China, Russia, France, India, reframe and boosts. Their public diplomacy. Scholars started discussion and research on the theory, challenges, strategies, goals, achievements and much more related topics of public diplomacy.

**Current Situation**

The term Public Diplomacy gained prevalence after 9/11 incident when USA tried to find out the reasons behind tragic incident and answer to the question why they hate us? Immediately, USA made Public diplomacy, after military to win war on terror, a national security tool to win the hearts and minds of the people abroad, particularly, the people of Arab and Islamic world. USA current Public Diplomacy campaign is based on two objectives. Firstly, to promote USA values and secondly, to marginalize the extremist elements.

USA government fully utilized print and electronic media along with the use of social media like twitter, face book and You Tube. Outreach programmes like lecture tours, listening tours, public private partnership programs, exchange programs, educational scholarships, regional media campaign and much more has been designed for the Arab and the Muslim worlds. All the Public Diplomacy initiatives by USA government is to improve the country image abroad. Thus, currently USA, for instance, to improve its image among the
public of Muslim world, is spending a great deal of money and resources on the projects related to public diplomacy. These are related to youth, media campaign, education resources, exchange programmes, established USA center to engage in a dialogue with Muslim and Arab world public, interfaith dialogue, and much more. For the success of the public diplomacy, USA government is making maximum use of the available resources including private sector like nongovernmental organizations.

Currently, almost all ministries of foreign affairs started giving importance to Public Diplomacy and they set the goals and targets along with well-defined strategies for public diplomacy.

**Challenges to Public Diplomacy**

Although Public Diplomacy or new Public Diplomacy has become the routine practice by different governments but it’s not a simple road to follow. Public Diplomacy has to face many challenges and here only few are mentioned.

First challenge is how to conceptualize the Public diplomacy. Some scholars viewed Public Diplomacy as a bridge to narrow the gaps and bring understanding between different nations, groups or regions of the world, for others like Mohan Jyoti Dutta and Mahuya Pal are of the view that transnational companies, developed nation states and other actors in order to keep their hold on the resources and markets, facilitate the privatization policies and economic liberalization, a neocolonial agenda, Public Diplomacy programmes are initiated.

“One of the primary public relations functions through which neocolonial interests are carried out by nation-states is public diplomacy; that is using the government’s ability to enact power and control in international arena to create spaces for neoliberal hegemony in foreign spaces”.32
Neo-imperialist powers made Public Diplomacy strategies to further their interests globally.

Secondly, how to separate Public Diplomacy from propaganda. Many scholars are of the view that propaganda and Public Diplomacy are the same interchangeable terms that is to capture the minds of the people or to influence the opinion of foreign audience. According to Ambassador Richard Holbrooke “Call it public diplomacy, or public affairs, or psychological warfare, or — if you really want to be blunt — propaganda…” However, many are of the view that Public Diplomacy and propaganda are two different terms. For Nicholas J. Cull propaganda is used for immoral purposes and its not a two way communication. For Public Diplomacy it must be based on moral grounds and one of its strategies is that it’s a two way process. It’s a dialogue based course.

Thirdly, modern information revolution has created an environment where public, governments, organizations all depend on the means of communications like, newspapers, radio, television, internet and much more. The problem with the modern age of communication is that there is so much information, opinion, government owned means of communication that people get confused. Most of the time, people don’t trust the government explanation regarding any issue. Furthermore, there is stereotype explanation to issues by the media, which also present the biased information and analysis. Ineffective listening and misperceived messages make Public Diplomacy an uphill task. In such a situation, it’s difficult to effectively carry out Public Diplomacy and convey the message in a convincing manner.

Finally, the government is not the only actor to control the information. More influential civil society actors play their role as far as the diplomacy is considered. Non state actors effectively and diplomatically are entering into the domain of state. They are credible and effective as they do have recourses, expertises and modern technologies, thus they can
easily influence the public opinion. Thus making it difficult for a state to achieve its public diplomacy objectives.

**Future of Public Diplomacy**

According to Silvia Kofler, Spokesperson, Delegation of the EU to the U.S.

“I predict that the ongoing democratization of Public Diplomacy will not only continue, but grow exponentially. In the past few years, Public Diplomacy has already changed dramatically. No longer simply the purview of nation-states, it is practiced by international and non-governmental organizations, regional governments, and other new actors”\(^35\).

Those who are associated with Public Diplomacy, either as professionals or practitioner, are very much convinced about the future of Public Diplomacy. For their conviction following reasons can be mentioned.

- More and more Public Diplomacy practitioners’, diplomats, are utilizing the tools of Public Diplomacy and their number is on increase.\(^36\) It has a large number of governments from all continents which are making strategies and programs to fully use the Public Diplomacy to achieve their foreign policy objectives. Furthermore, governments are spending more resources on Public Diplomacy than ever before.
- Increase in number of academics and scholars to write about Public Diplomacy\(^37\) history, objectives, programs, challenges, role of non state actors and so on. New Public Diplomacy institutions, centers and departments are mushrooming among academic circles as well as non-governmental offices. More horizons are being exposed by the scholars and practitioners. First, its Public Diplomacy, then new Public Diplomacy, social media Public Diplomacy and now Public Diplomacy.
Further, the scope of activities related to Public Diplomacy has increased. Now, more and more areas are coming under the jurisdiction Public Diplomacy like fashion industry, sports, music, art, culture, media and so on.

The number of actors, to carry out the activities of Public Diplomacy, has increased. Now, its not only state but non state actors are also involved.

Because of new technologies and media as the use of Public Diplomacy tools has also given a boost to Public Diplomacy activities. Twitter, face book, internet, YouTube are all being used as Public Diplomacy tools. Role of social media cannot be denied or overlooked in the age of globalization. One can cite the role of face book and twitter during the spring revolution in Tunisia, Libya and Egypt. Now diplomats and politicians have to be online to keep in touch with their goals.

Conclusion

In twenty first century, Public Diplomacy is considered a tool to manage international environment. Public Diplomacy is different from traditional diplomacy as far as its scope and actors are considered. It is a dialogue oriented and engaging the public rather than the one way flow of information from the state. The process of globalization makes Public Diplomacy even more important and indisputable with the fact that more effective actors like global NGOs, multilateral organizations and IGOs are more influential than the national governments. New means of communication further the role of Public Diplomacy. Use of Social media is increasing, those who wanted to communicate with public cannot ignore it. Embassies must develop their potentials to fully utilize the social media. Governments must pay more importance to Public Diplomacy and allocate more funds for its activities. It does not mean that every government use Public Diplomacy for every country but it is recommended that priority must be given to those who are vital for the interest of a country. Similarly, every state has to set its own objectives, and
strategies to achieve its foreign policy objectives. For this, state has to engage more actors. Public Diplomacy is the need of time, it cannot be done on ad hoc bases neither it can be ignored. If governments wanted to be at the top of their foreign policy goals, they must know how to fully utilize the Public Diplomacy tools. Public Diplomacy is the diplomacy for the contemporary world politics.

**Notes**


2 Ibid. p. 95.


4 Ibid.

5 What is Public diplomacy?

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28 Ibid.

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