

Digital Diplomacy via Social Networks: A Cross-National Analysis of Governmental Usage of Facebook and Twitter for Digital Engagement

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Over the last couple of years, digital diplomacy has become a fascinating area of research among Mass Communication, Peace and Conflict Studies, and International Affairs scholars. Social media and new technology open up new avenues for governments, individuals, and organizations to engage with foreign audiences. However, developing countries' governments are still lacking in the realization of the potential of social media. This study aims to analyze the usage of social media (Facebook & Twitter) by the two biggest countries in South Asia (Pakistan and India). I selected 10 government officials' social media accounts including prime ministers', national press offices', military public relations offices', public diplomacy divisions', and ministries of foreign offices' profiles. The study relies on quantitative content analysis and a comparative research approach. The total number of analyzed Twitter tweets (n=1,015) and Facebook posts (n=1,005) include 10 accounts, five from each country. In light of Kent and Taylor's (1998) dialogic communication framework, the results indicate that no digital engagement and dialogue occurs between government departments and the public through social networking sites. Government departments do not engage with local or foreign audiences through digital media. When comparing both countries, results reveal that India has more institutionalized and organized digital diplomacy. In terms of departmental use of social media, the digital diplomacy division and foreign office of India is more active than other government departments in that nation. Meanwhile, Pakistan's military public relations office and press office is more active than its other government departments. In conclusion, both countries realize the potential of social media in digital diplomacy, but still lack engagement with foreign audiences.

Keywords: digital diplomacy, digital engagement, dialogic communication theory, Indo-Pak, social networking sites, e-diplomacy, government departments

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Introduction

Digital Diplomacy is an emerging area of research in mass communication, Peace and Conflict Studies, Political Science, and International Relations disciplines (Golan, Manor, & Arceneaux, 2019). Developed countries allocate billions of dollars to win the hearts and minds of the foreign public through public diplomacy efforts. For instance, the U.S. Advisory Commission's annual report on Public Diplomacy reveals that \$324,613 USD was spent on digital audience engagement through social networks in 2015 (United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy, 2015, p. 117). Developing nations have yet to realize the potential of using digital platforms to attract and engage a foreign audience to convey goodwill and a positive image—even without big budget allocation. Several developing countries have image problems. For example, Pakistan has had these issues since the country started the war against terrorism in 2001 (Fan & Shahani, 2016). And according to the Kaplan article published in *Foreign Policy* that “perversity characterizes Pakistan” (Kaplan, 2012, para. 1).

Digital diplomacy literature suggests that social media can help countries to build their positive image through engagement and dialogue. Ciolek argues “social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube have not fundamentally changed the objectives of public diplomacy but are just new tools for facilitating engagement with audiences in an evolving information environment” (Ciolek, 2010, p. 2). However, a recent study by Simunjak and Caliandro (2018) suggests that the U.S. President, “disrupts traditional codes of diplomatic language” through Twitter. Donald Trump's engagement with world leaders through social media is constructing new codes of diplomatic communication.

Kent and Taylor's (1998) study pioneered work in dialogue and engagement through the Internet in public diplomacy and public relations. This pioneering study is used as the framework in different parts of the world to examine the digital engagement of government institutions. For instance, Kampf, Manor, and Segev (2015) tested dialogic principles and their use by foreign ministries. The recent studies in this domain testify that dialogue and engagement are scant. Additionally, the results also reveal that the ministries and government institutions have failed to engage the public through social media networks. The comparative study's findings also suggest that ministries have institutionalized social media and trained their diplomats but are still lacking in dialogue with a foreign public (Kampf, Manor and Segev, 2015; Manor, 2017; Strauß, Kruikemeier, van der Meulen and Noort, 2015; & Ociepka, 2012). These findings illustrate that the focus of digital diplomacy is still state-centric rather than audience-centric. However, studies also show a paradoxical dichotomy in their results, arguing that embassies and other state institutions are engaging the public and are creating dialogue using social media (Khatib, Dutton, Thelwall, 2012; Seo, 2013; & Kim, Yeo and Cha, 2014).

The above-mentioned contradictory results of recent studies demand that there still needs to be an examination of the engagement and dialogue between government institutions and ‘netizens’ through Social Networking Sites (SNS). A recent book, *The Digitalization of Public Diplomacy*, measured digital diplomacy based on more than 90 items. In the last decade, many studies have been conducted on the role of social media in public diplomacy with respect to engagement and dialogue, but very few scholars focus on developing countries' efforts in digital diplomacy with

netizens to interact with them through live Q & A sessions. Although finding a gap in digital diplomacy literature, particularly in comparative digital diplomacy in the Global Nuclear South, this study is intended to analyse the social media (Facebook and Twitter) use of five Indian and five Pakistani government officials' institutional accounts.

The analysis of this paper is guided through Kent and Taylor's (1998) and Kampf, Manor and Segev's (2015) framework for the use of social media by government institutions to communicate with social media users in the two largest countries and nuclear powers in South Asia. There are several reasons to choose the two biggest rivals in the region. First, both nations are doing their best to present their case regarding the Kashmir Conflict. Second, both countries blame each other for cross-border terrorism. Third, both countries want more influence in Afghanistan. Fourth, both countries face a lot of tension on Line of Control (LOC). In addition to that, it is vital to understand empirically where both countries fall in their digital diplomacy efforts.

The Dialogic Communication Theory is comprised of five principles including the Dialogic Loop, Usefulness of Information, The Generation of Return Visits, Intuitiveness, and The Rule of the Conversation. Because these principles were initially designed for the World Wide Web, scholars tested their validity in the context of social media. Hence, this study uses three principles (The Dialogic Loop, Usefulness of Information, and The Generation of Return Visits) to measure dialogue between government institutions and social media users. The other two principles of this theory are not relevant to examining and measuring social media engagement between government institutions and the foreign public because the functionalities of social media are different than those of conventional websites of organizations.

The focus here is on Pakistan and India's government departments' use of social media to extend their digital diplomacy. Despite the substantive initiatives taken by the Indian External Affairs and Pakistan's Foreign Office in digital diplomacy, there is a lack of evidence of success or failure in the engagement of foreign audiences through social media. My study begins to explore the overall government social media strategies to engage global audiences using Kent and Taylor's (1998) and Kampf, Manor, and Segev's (2015) framework.

Literature Review

Social Media and Public Diplomacy.

Since the inception of the internet, heads of states, state institutions, and government officials' social media use has increased. It has also become a significant area of research after the Arab Spring in 2011 (Bjola and Jiang, 2015). According to the Twiplomacy study (2018), 97% of the United Nations' member states have an official presence on Twitter. Digital platforms provide an opportunity for the officials to build a direct connection with global audiences. It helps them to review policies based on the feedback given towards certain issues, particularly through Twitter

and Facebook (Tomiczek, 2012, p. 1), which are the most used social networks among governments, diplomats, and institutions (Twiplomacy, 2018).

Kampf, Manor, and Segev, (2015) compare 11 foreign ministries' social media (Facebook & Twitter) practices using Kent and Taylor's (1998) framework of dialogic communication. The study found that there is no difference between foreign ministries' use of social media. Additionally, the study also reveals that ministries have failed to foster dialogue through social networks. Khatib, Dutton, and Thelwall (2012) explore the digital engagement of the U.S. Digital Outreach Team (DOT) toward a mass audience. The study claims that DOT posts are perceived negatively on all selected websites. Moreover, DOT has a number of challenges including the need to counter misinformation and negativity. Therefore, they are behaving reactively rather than proactively. Ociepka's (2012) study on the role of new technology in international communication reveals that ministries of foreign affairs are still unsuccessful in using online dialogue strategy with global audiences.

Similarly, Cha, Yeo, and Kim (2014) examine the use of social media by foreign embassies in Korea, guided by Kent and Taylor's (1998) framework of dialogic communication. The study shows that the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and Israel's embassies are using social networks more actively in comparison to the other countries. Following the trend, Simons (2014) discusses Russian public diplomacy and shows that the relational approach is more effective and that embassies do lack the realization of social media's potential. Bjola and Jiang (2015) highlight three advantages of social media in public diplomacy. These advantages include the effectiveness in the delivery of information, the information's reach to the target audience globally, and the potential for two-way communication between diplomats and the foreign public.

Due to the rapid development of social media, many scholars across the globe studied social media in the domain of public diplomacy (O'Bolye, 2019; Manor, 2019; Dodd & Collins, 2017; Park, Chung, & Park, 2018; Simunjak & Caliandaro, 2018). Existing literature suggests that social media allows diplomats, governments, and institutions to engage and interact with foreign audiences (Simunjak & Caliandaro, 2018). However, most of the studies have been focused on developed countries' digital diplomacy (see Park, Chung, & Park, 2018; Sevin & Manor, 2019; Spry, 2018; Samuel-Azran, Ilovici, Zari & Geduuld, 2019; Cull, 2018). The field is relatively new, creating opportunities for scholars to explore the avenues social media opens across the globe. Consequently, small and developing countries are neglected in digital diplomacy literature. This study explores the occurrence of engagement through social media from the Global Nuclear South (India and Pakistan).

Digital Engagement and Public Diplomacy.

Yepsen (2012) explored the United States' efforts to engage people in Venezuela using Twitter. The study results indicate that a few topics engaged people on Twitter but most of the topics and hashtags did not. Bjola and Jiang (2015) investigated the diplomatic engagement of the European

Union, the United States, and Japan on Sina Weibo (a Chinese microblogging site) because many social networks are blocked in China. The findings reveal that none of the selected countries' embassies are interacting with people on social media. Additionally, the study also suggests that social media is being used for the dissemination of information. Another study by Sundstorm and Levenshus (2017) investigates the tools and techniques for public engagement through Twitter using dialogic communication theory and also examines possible strategies to enhance the relationship between people and companies. The study provides evidence that most of the organizations use the Applied Dialogue Theory of Public Relations to promote organization, to integrate with people on social networking sites, and to have interactive talks with an audience.

Jiang (2016) investigates the use of Sina Weibo by foreign embassies (U.S., U.K, Canada, Cuba, and Korea) in China. The analysis is relevant because of the measurement and the tone of comments on the Embassies' Weibo pages. The results claim that Weibo can be used effectively to engage the Chinese audience. Findings also suggest that “‘conversational' communication enabled by 'generative technologies' does not necessarily equate to high engagement with online publics” (p. 16). Ciolek (2010) analysed the U.S. Embassy's Jakarta Facebook page engagement prior to a visit from President Obama. Results argue that effective use of social media contributes to public diplomacy. Lee (2017) compares eight Korean embassies, including their Facebook activities and users' engagement through reactions on the embassies' postings. The investigation is based on Cull's (2009) analysis of public diplomacy domains. The results show that embassies are using the One-Way Information Method, but most of the scholars recommend a two-way communication method for engagement. The study also claims that cultural postings and exchange methods have more reactions than the simple dissemination of messages. On the whole, the findings are contradictory on the effective use and genuine interactivity on social networks from diplomats and state institutions (embassies and foreign offices), which means that scholars have yet to fully understand the implications, as well as the potential of digital diplomacy, to enrich the digital diplomacy literature.

India's and Pakistan's Digital Diplomacy.

The Indian public diplomacy division under the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) was established in 2006 to meet global and regional challenges in the political arena. Suri (2014a) describes in the *Public Diplomacy in India's Foreign Policy* why the Indian foreign ministry realizes the potential of public diplomacy. India is new to the use of digital tools to engage a young global audience. Public diplomacy is not only about communicating with people, but it also consists of building “a long-term relationship,” “trust,” and “credibility” with an audience (Suri, 2014a, p. 3). India is trying to attract the global audience through digital tools and wants to nurture its online presence and promote its democratic ideals, secular ethos, economy, dance, yoga, cinema, and IT industry. Murti (2013) discusses three layers of public diplomacy—“monologue, dialogue, and collaboration.” He explores Indian facilitation centers in the world and their engagement with people through websites and social media. Findings suggest that the facilitation centers' websites are used for monologues and disseminating information for people

living abroad. However, the study's foremost focus is on drawing a framework of the three layers of public diplomacy (Murti, 2013, p. 23).

The Ministry of External Affairs India Digital Diplomacy Footprint report (2017) claims that MEA pioneers the use of social media and technology to foster dialogue and communication with local and foreign audiences to disseminate soft information for the public. MEA India started its digital journey in 2010, and now all social media accounts are verified, and officials are working on social networking sites, including YouTube and LinkedIn. Through @IndianDiplomacy's account, India promotes itself as a brand and provides positive human-interest stories for local and global audiences. MEA's 174 missions have Twitter accounts and 172 missions have Facebook, all of them are official and verified. Sushma Swaraj, India's foreign affairs minister, is the world's most-followed foreign minister having "more than 10 million followers" (MEA, 2017, p. 20). MEA maintains accounts on Instagram, Sound Cloud, Flickr, and the MEA App, their own mobile application. It reports that, "MEA India has enthusiastically embraced the social media sphere and persistently perseveres to enlarge its footprint in the new realm of diplomacy" (MEA Report, 2017, p. 3).

Suri (2014b) states that the Indian government organized a campaign for "Global Video Challenge 2011" and gained 245 entries within three months. Out of 245 entries, 123 are from 40 international countries. Almost 75% are from Europe and North America. The Indian foreign ministry's website got 27,000 hits and 16,000 visitors from 149 countries in six continents. Immediately, MEA started posting on Facebook and Twitter and within a few hours, pages reached up to 45,000 Facebook followers. The top 10 countries are "Indonesia, Egypt, Morocco, Iraq, Malaysia, the United States, Canada, Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates" (Suri, 2014b, p. 55). Most of the followers are from Muslim-majority countries. After this, MEA decided to participate actively on social media and engage people using games and competitions. The winners received Indian Diplomacy CDs, books, and other gifts. As a result of this tremendous initiative by the Indian government, India's accomplishments were published on 45 different websites from 15 countries and in four newspapers. This happened without any press releases or involvement from the Public Diplomacy Division Office (Suri, 2014b, p. 56).

However, most of the studies focus on potential tools for Indian public diplomacy and soft power. For example, the recent studies focused on Bollywood, Yoga, and cultural aspects of Indian public diplomacy (Mishra, 2017; Mahapatra, 2016; Hanson, 2012; Kishwar, 2018; Dhanapalan, 2014; Malone, 2011 & Purushothaman, 2010).

According to Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs' (MOFA) Public Diplomacy Division's official website, there are certain objectives Pakistan wants to achieve through its public diplomacy. For example, Pakistan desires to promote its diverse and open culture, innovative ideas in entrepreneurship, foreign direct investment in the country, and democratic values. It also wants to build relationships with decision-makers and opinion leaders, engage people in national policy and key issues, and finally, use modern technology to reach an international audience. With these objectives in mind, particularly the last two, international engagement through modern technology is fundamental for Pakistan to get support on key issues like Kashmir and the war on terror (MOFA website 2018).

These general objectives are available on the MOFA website, but there is no comprehensive plan or strategy to achieve them, especially with the use of the last point about achieving foreign policy goals. The recent studies are about the image of Pakistan in the U.S. and Chinese mainstream press (Shabbir, 2012). Scholars have yet to investigate the “Global Nuclear South” comparative study and examine the social media use of state institutions within the framework of Kent and Taylor’s (1998) Dialogic Communication Theory. There are a number of newspaper articles, blogs, and other forums about Pakistan’s public diplomacy (*Dawn*, 2017; *The Diplomat*, 2017; *Daily Times*, 2014; & Ittefaq, 2017). Against this background, this paper examines the occurrence of dialogue between state institutions and social media users. Secondly, it compares India and Pakistan’s use of social media to conduct public diplomacy. The following research questions were formulated for this study.

How do India and Pakistan’s government institutions use social media channels (Facebook and Twitter) to communicate with the foreign public?

SRQ1: Do government departments utilize Dialogic Communication Theory principles while communicating with the foreign public on social media?

SRQ2: How do these two countries differ regarding engagement on Facebook and Twitter?

Method

The present study follows a quantitative and comparative approach. It is quantitative due to its media content analysis instrument. Lombard, Snyder-Duch and Bracken (2002) argue content analysis “is specifically appropriate and necessary for the central work of communication scholars, in particular, those who study Mass Communication: The Analysis of Message” (p. 1). Content analysis is a widely-used research design in the field of Media and Communication. Our content analysis instrument consists of data collected from the social media activities of both countries’ Prime Minister’s Offices (PMO India and PMO Pakistan), Ministries of Foreign Affairs (MEA India and MOFA Pakistan), Public Diplomacy Divisions (Indian Diplomacy and Pakistan Diplomacy), and official accounts of the National Press (Press Information Bureau India and Press Information Department Pakistan) and the Military Public Relations Offices (Additional Directorate General of Public Information India and Inter-Services Public Relations Pakistan). I also use comparative analysis between the two countries including five departments from each country, based on the content analysis of two social networks. Table 1 illustrates the key information regarding both countries’ populations, Internet users, social media users, GDP, and literacy rate.

Table 1

Comparison of key Information of the selected countries (August 2017)

Item	Pakistan	India
Country Name	Islamic Republic of Pakistan	Republic of India
Established Year	14 August 1947	15 August 1947
Total Population	207 million	1.2 billion
GDP	\$988.2 billion	\$8.721 trillion
Internet Users	35.835 million	325.441 million
Literacy rate	26% 57.9%	18% 71.2%
Social Media Users	44 million	196.02 Million

Notes. Data updated until August 2017. Source: (Statista.com and indexmundi.com)

I have used Kampf, Manor and Segev's (2015) codebook in order to assess different features of Digital Diplomacy of both countries. The coding process is according to the functionalities of both social networks (Facebook and Twitter). In addition to Kampf, Manor and Segev's (2015) codebook, the posting date, time and the language used are also considered for coding. This includes looking at the text that appears in tweets, hashtags, and possible rewording after the post has been published. It also looks at the number of retweets, replies, and likes. In social media, there are other functions and elements like images and videos; I code them as well. The comprehensive codebook consists of three groups of variables.

The period of the data collection consists of six months from 1st January 2017- 30th June 2017. The rationale behind the selection of the six-month period is that during this time-frame neither country experienced any large events. Therefore, this time frame omits the July 2017 situation in which Pakistan's Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif, was accused in Panama leaks for offshore companies which permanently barred him from the political process. These types of events affected the governments' institutions to either tweet and post less or more, but I chose this six-month time-frame to explore government activeness on both networks. Secondly, a six-month time-frame is sufficient to explore the existing strategies of governmental departments on social media. The total sample of posts was (n=2,020) including Twitter (n=1,015) and Facebook (n=1,005) from both countries. The data was retrieved with two different methods depending on

the platform. The Twitter accounts data were collected via Python software using the tweepy library.

These accounts were selected because all of them are related to a country's foreign policy and all utilize digital platforms for public diplomacy purposes. In this case, I considered terms such as date and time, language, text, and possible reactions. However, there are some limitations to the complete retrieval of information included in the tweets and posts; for example, the actual count of the replies and replies within them are difficult to collect. As I attempted to retrieve all possible details, software and social media's individual policies and capabilities deployed built-in functions such as that of Facebook which generates a consumer key, consumer secret, consumer token and access token secret. The token secret was applied according to Facebook's instructions and an automatic retrieval key was given. Once deployed, the automatic retrieval key allowed the software to extract every detail of the posts on Facebook such as posting date, time, location, text, images and videos (Appendix A). Both networks download data in English and Urdu. I coded the posts and tweets in English with the rationale that they were designed for an international audience. Because the literacy rate is very low (Ittefaq & Iqbal, 2018) in both countries, there is a high probability that domestic audiences are addressed in local languages such as Hindi and Urdu; therefore, English is used to reach out to international audiences. According to the Central Intelligence Agency World Factbook (2019), Pakistan uses English as official lingua franca of Pakistani elite and most government ministries. In order to communicate internally and externally, government departments and ministries communicate in English instead of their local language Urdu. The Facebook posts and Twitter tweets were extracted in the form of a comma-separated values (CSV) file. I imported those files into a single SPSS file for data cleaning, coding, and analysis (Appendix B). Before performing the statistical analysis, the data set was cleaned by examining several descriptive statistics for inconsistencies, miscoding, and possible typographical errors. The cleaned data set includes key variables: (1) it needed to be published in the English language, (2) it needed to have sufficient activity on both social media outlets such as Facebook and Twitter, (3) it needed to focus on the same region, and lastly, (4) all the governmental institutions were directly related to public diplomacy scholarship. The Facebook and Twitter posts are the units of analysis.

Two human coders coded the items. The inter-coder reliability was recognized with 10 percent of total data (n=202), including Facebook posts (n=101) and Twitter tweets (n=101). The coders were trained for one week to understand the whole process and the topic. The coding training was primarily focused on content-related variables; for example, the dialogic loop, the generation of return visits and the usefulness of information. The inter-coder reliability was tested by performing Krippendorff's Alpha known as (KALPHA). The KALPHA ranged from 0.61 to 0.76. By looking at the results, we improved our codebook and instructions to make them more clear and easier for coding of the most content-related variables with simple 1=Yes and 2=No. For example, if the foreign ministry is talking directly with followers, I code them 1=Yes and if not, I code as 2=No. This improvement made a difference, and my results increased from 0.61 to 0.85 and 0.91. These numbers validated our codebook to code all material for analysis.

Results

The Dialogic Loop.

To answer our research questions, I perform various tests in SPSS including descriptive, cross-tabulation, and Chi2. The results of this study regarding the applicability of theory by the governmental departments of both countries indicate there is a sign of the Dialogic Communication Theory but it is very minimal. Most of the departments are not inviting people to join their online session; they do not have Q&A sessions, and they are not dealing with people's queries online on both networks.

The dialogic loop results indicate that there is no sign of dialogue between Pakistan's Prime Minister's Office and its followers on Twitter and Facebook. The Indian Prime Minister's Office shows 1% dialogue between netizens on SNS. The 99% indicate that there is no dialogue at all. The Pakistan's MOFA is using Dialogic Communication Theory 0% of the time, and the Indian foreign ministry office only 0.7% of the time. It has few posts on Facebook with live sessions and invitations to join live sessions.

The Public Diplomacy Division of Pakistan has not had any Twitter posts since 2013 and no posts have been recorded on the Facebook account. The Public Diplomacy Division of India has 6.70% dialogue between netizens and the department while the remaining 93.30% do not engage people in their posts. The National Press Office of Pakistan has no engagement through dialogue, but the Indian Press Office has 11.60% engagement with people. The military public relations departments of both countries do not have any kind of dialogue on social media. There is a very small difference between both countries' engagement with people online through the PMO, foreign offices, public diplomacy divisions and national press offices.

The Generation of Return Visits.

The occurrence of return visits to the websites is also rare on each governmental departments' social media accounts in both countries (Pakistan & India). The Prime Ministers' accounts of Pakistan and India have the same percentage—1% generation of return visits through hashtags and mentions but 99% of posts do not generate return visits through social media. The foreign office of Pakistan has no return visits, but the Indian foreign office has 1.20%. The Pakistani foreign office is not encouraging people to make return visits via social networks. Pakistan's Public Diplomacy Division has no return visits either, while the Indian public diplomacy office generates 2.20% return visits. The results reveal Pakistan's National Press Office has no return visits, but the Indian National Press Office remains successful in this regard and generated 12.30% visits—more than any other department from both countries. The army public relations accounts of both nations have not generated any return visits even though return visits could be generated through hashtags and mentions on Twitter and Facebook to attract users' attention toward issues.

The Usefulness of Information.

The third variable for Dialogic Communication Theory is the usefulness of information. The usefulness of information means how much the information is relevant to the audience. Kent and Taylor (1998) suggest five principles in their study, but the framework is for websites and two of those principles could not be used to measure dialogue on social media. This theory is tested and is employed by online communication, which consists of blogs and websites. The usefulness of information is measured to gauge the extent to which government departments engage a national and international audience.

The results indicate that the Pakistan PM's Office is talking about international issues and information related to an international public 49% of the time while 51% of content relates to local and national publics. The Indian PM's Office focuses 71.10% of its posts on international audiences while 28.90% of posts relate to local and national issues on both social networks. This difference illustrates that both countries' approaches, especially the Prime Minister's offices, are different. The foreign office of Pakistan is focusing 60% of posts on international users and 40% on local and national people. The Indian Foreign Office is addressing international issues in 84.20% of its content and the local population in 15.80%. Both foreign offices are talking more about international issues and international audiences than national audiences.

The Public Diplomacy Division of Pakistan does not have any content, so I coded that as empty. The line in the graph is for the representation of the Department without any content. The Indian Public Diplomacy account on social media is addressing local people in 82.20% of its posts while 17.80% are about international people and issues. The National Press Office of Pakistan is talking about international topics 43.10% of the time and 56.90% of posts are about local and national issues. The Indian Press Office is talking about international issues in 54.10% of its posts, and 45.90% of the content relates to the local and national public. Both countries' military public relations offices are addressing local and national people as well as international netizens. The Pakistan Military Public Relation Office is talking 51.30% about international topics and 48.70% about local and national topics. The Indian Military Public Relations Office is addressing international issues 70.90% and 29.10% of posts related to local issues.

Pakistan's Organizational Display on Social Media and Public Diplomacy efforts.

Our third sub-research question is about the difference in the organizational display on social media regarding Public Diplomacy efforts. There are two variables I use to measure the organizational display. The first variable is date—or how consistent they are in posting content on social media. It is theorized that to conduct public diplomacy, organizations should update content and inform their target audience regularly. The second variable is about verified and official accounts. It is theorized that the dissemination of information through verified and official accounts has a bigger impact and attracts more of the audience's attention than unverified

and unofficial accounts. Since the fake news phenomenon has become prolific in the market, people are more conscious of information than they are in the past.

As figure 1 illustrates, none of the governmental departments are posting content on social media regularly. Pakistan’s Foreign Office (n=14) posted on social media during January 2017. In the month of April, MFA posted (n=9) tweets, far less than in the month of June, when MFA posted (n=40). This dichotomy indicates that there is no mechanism in place to update Pakistan’s foreign office’s social media account. The PM office is the only department that remains consistent in its posting activity: From January to June, it posts between (n=13) to (n=21) consecutively. Figure 1 illustrates that there were no posts from the Pakistan diplomacy account because it does not have an account on Facebook, and it has not posted on Twitter since 2013.

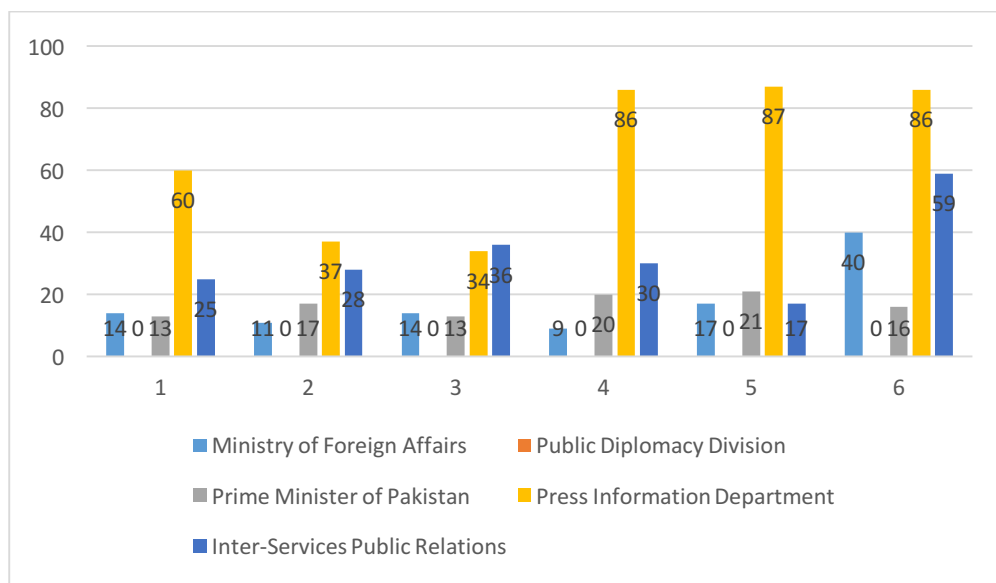


Figure 1. The frequency of Pakistani governmental departments and their monthly postings

Even though the Press Information Department (PID) is the most active department in Pakistan, they did not post regularly on social media. For example, PID posted (n=34) in March but in the last three months (April, May and, June), it logged (n=86, n=87 & n=86) posts per month. From the Pakistani side, the results of the organizational display show a huge variance and there is no evidence that Pakistan’s governmental departments were utilizing strong promotional efforts on social media regarding PD. As the literature suggests, public diplomacy has shifted from government-centric to public-centric, so government departments are focusing on the public and are engaging them through digital platforms. Inter-Services Public Relations is the second most active department in Pakistan but like the other entities, ISPR does not have enough content on social networking sites to engage a foreign audience. In May, ISPR logged (n=17) posts, compared to its (n=59) in June, which was three times more than the previous month. Recall that

the time frame selected was a standard period of time to get significant results that would not be confounded by large political events that typically cause an increase in tweets or posts.

India's Organizational Display on Social Media and Public Diplomacy Efforts.

India has launched several campaigns to brand itself, including Incredible India and Digital India. The Incredible India Campaign was launched in 2002, and it is part of the National Tourism Policy (Edwards & Ramamurthy, 2016). Digital India was launched in 2015 with several programs including e-government, public access to the Internet and more.

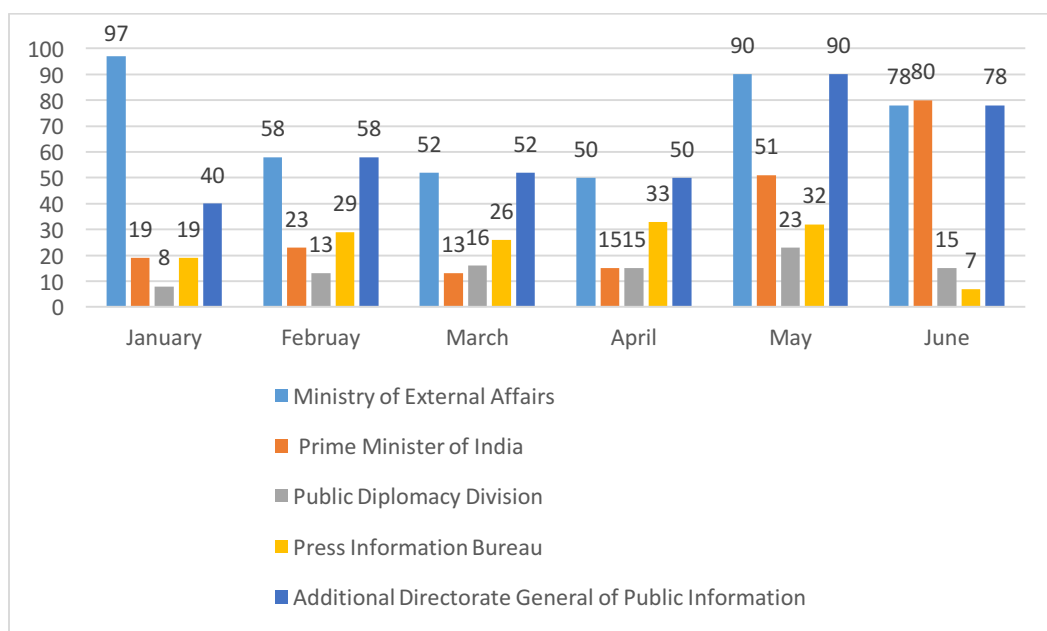


Figure 2. The frequency of Indian governmental departments and their monthly postings

Figure 2 shows, the Indian Foreign Ministry as the most active department (n=425). The Indian Prime Minister's Office is not as active as the Foreign Office, especially in the first four months of the year (January, February, March and April). In the last two months, May and June, it became very active and showed a huge increase (n=51) and (n=80). I describe this with the help of numbers rather than by percentage; the figure's fluctuated lines are also showing the number of tweets per month. Indian Diplomacy logged (n=8) posts in January, which is far less than other departments. But the Public Diplomacy Division is not active or consistent on social media. Public Diplomacy is one of the most relevant departments for analysis in our study because this

department is responsible for conducting public diplomacy under the umbrella of the Foreign Office.

The maximum posts in May were (n=23). This difference shows that there is no concrete planning or strategies to handle social media. The Press Information Bureau (PIB) is also less active in comparison to the Foreign Office and Military Public Relations Office. PIB posted (n=7) in June, their maximum was (n=33) posts in April. The Additional Directorate General of Public Information (ADGPI) is the second most active department that is following the public diplomacy mission seriously, with exception to January 2017 (n=40), it posted the same number of Facebook and Twitter tweets in February, March, April, May, and June. The fluctuation of the lines in figure 2 represents the Foreign Office and ADGPI which are the same except during the first month.

The second variable I use to measure the organizational display is the verified versus the official account. Figure 3 illustrates the verified accounts from both countries. As (Figure 3) clearly shows, only 10% of Pakistan's Facebook accounts are verified while 90% of India's Facebook accounts are verified. The second social media network I used was Twitter. Of Pakistani Twitter accounts, 20% are verified, while 80% of India's accounts are verified. Twitter requires that accounts have a minimum of 500 followers to be verified. All of the Pakistani and Indian social media accounts fulfill the criteria to be verified, but they are not verified. Pakistan has 90% unverified accounts on Facebook and 80% unverified on Twitter. India is doing better than Pakistan in this regard. Pakistani governmental departments do not seem to be paying attention to their digital presence to communicate with the foreign public.

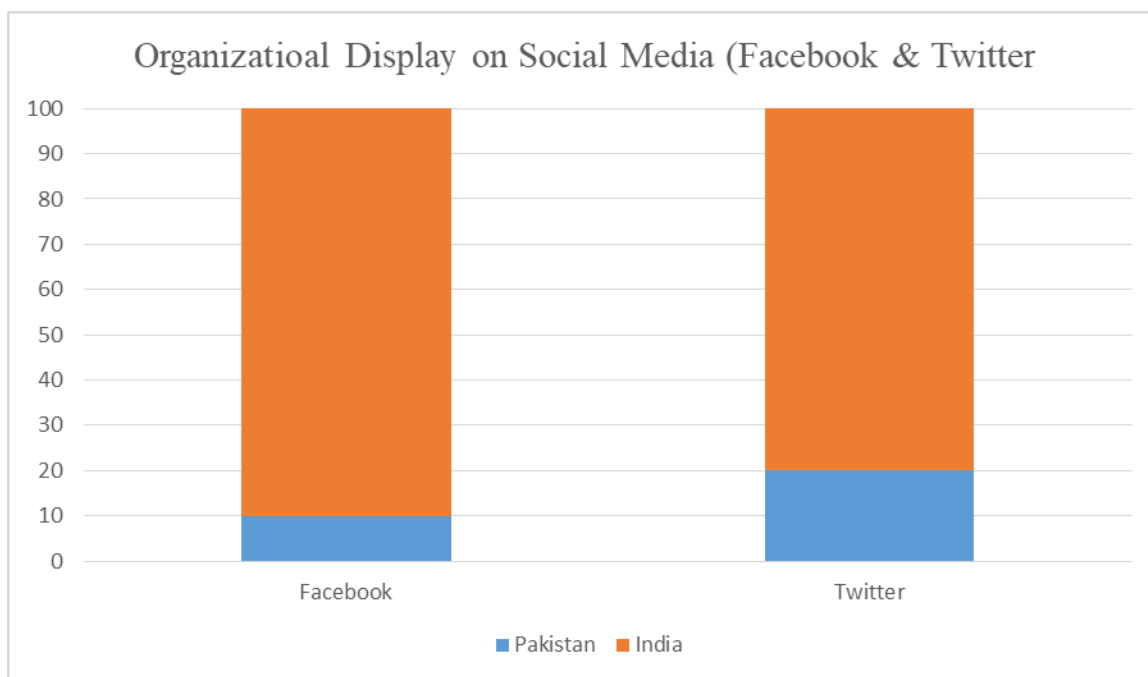


Figure 3. India & Pakistan's governmental department verified accounts on Social Media

Indian diplomacy literature suggests that India took credit for its technology institutes. India is selling this notion to the world, that apart from the biggest democracy, India is producing the best IT experts in the world. Tharoor (2011) claims that India has rich cultural assets, an innovative technology sector, and a vibrant Bollywood industry. These similarities between organizational displays of both countries are significant when it comes to verified and unverified accounts. On the other hand, the Foreign Ministry of Pakistan is less active than the Indian Foreign Ministry, but Pakistan PID is more active than PIB India.

Discussion

In this study, I investigated the use of social media by Indian and Pakistani governmental departments. By looking at the dialogue between governmental departments and the foreign public, this study employs existing literature to examine the role of social media in this cross-national context. Digital Diplomacy is a new phenomenon within the broad concept of Public Diplomacy. Not only governmental departments use social media to communicate with the foreign public to persuade them about certain topics and issues, social media is also being actively used in election campaigns.

Social media platforms are considered a tool for two-way communication between governmental departments and individuals. As literature suggests, public diplomacy has been a monologue consisting of one-way messages, but since the inception of social media sites, it has become relational, with two-way communication and dialogue between stakeholders and the audience. Both countries are similar in the practice of digital diplomacy.

The results of the dialogic loop illustrate that the Pakistani governmental departments and their social media followers are not engaging with each other. Among all departments from India, only the National Press Office and Public Diplomacy Division are creating a dialogue, but it is still rare there, too. Apart from the use of the Dialogic Loop, the results demonstrate that there is no coherence and a huge gap between the objective of their foreign policy and their activities on social media. The departments' engagement only occurs in live sessions with those attendees who were invited to join the conversation. There are no posts regarding Q&A sessions, and the departments rely on scheduled posts. In the study, only two departments from India are found to be engaging people. This is one of the most important findings to examine in the use of Dialogic Communication Theory. I can argue that not only the Ministry of Foreign Office but also most of the departments do not realize the potential for engagement with their national and international followers. The rare use of Dialogic Loops established that governmental departments of both countries are not recognizing the role and importance of this kind of communication in public diplomacy.

The second variable for Dialogic Communication Theory is the generation of return visits. In this category, the results show that the generation of return visits is also rare on the most of the governmental departments' social media except the National Press of India and the Country's

Foreign Ministry Office. India's Public Diplomacy account did have return visits, but they were rare. Due to Twitter's character limit, most of the departments are more active on Twitter—as they can share small nuggets of information in multiple posts. In contrast, on Facebook, where there are no such constraints, departments can post a lengthy press release.

The third variable is the usefulness of information to measure the Dialogic Communication Theory. The result reveals that the majority of the departments are targeting international audiences rather than the national public. Kampf, Manor & Segev (2015) also reflects similar findings in their study. Government departments are updating information on social media accounts but not in a consistent way. They are also considering their national audience (except Pakistan's Public Diplomacy, which is not on Facebook and has not posted on Twitter in several years). The mix of information is confusing for audiences because it is unclear what messages are for whom, and the interaction about national and international issues does not occur. As Cha, Yeo and Kim's (2014) study suggests, the Ministry of Foreign Offices and government departments need to realize the potential of Dialogic Communication Theory. The study of Waters et al. (2009) claims that a social media presence is not enough for organizations; they also have to design specific strategies according to their mission and objectives to achieve goals from stakeholders.

The results of the last question indicate that there is inconsistency in social media posts. For example, in January, one department has 14 posts and in the next month, it has 90 posts on Twitter and Facebook. This dichotomy shows that there are no clear guidelines and directives from the state to run their social media. The results also seem to suggest that every department is utilizing social media tools within their own capacity. The inconsistencies in posts and tweets show that both countries' governmental departments do not have comprehensive plans to regulate digital platforms. With regard to organizational display, Pakistan has few verified accounts but most of India's accounts are verified. Verification of social media accounts is very important and plays a significant role in the audience's point of view, since fake news, misinformation, and disinformation is becoming a new phenomenon on virtual networks. Social media creates so many bubbles for information, and the free flow of information on social media makes it less secure and thereby susceptible to become a platform for propaganda, specifically in the form of fake news.

The lack of persistent patterns in postings on both networks suggest that either there is lack of technical and social media experts in all of the Government's departments or they are unable to realize the significance of social media. Both nuclear powers and neighboring rival states have not enjoyed friendly relations since the independence 1947. The major reason is the Kashmir conflict which is not a security threat to these countries but to the whole South Asian region. Both countries advocate Kashmir policies and spread the information against each-other to receive a favorable response from the world.

Conclusion

Theoretically, this article provides a comprehensive overview of India and Pakistan's institutional engagement on social media (Facebook and Twitter). It also provides an insight into organizational display on both social networks. Practically, our findings can provide a baseline for the understanding of digital engagement with national and international audiences to promote a country's culture, values and key issues. It advances Kent and Taylor's (1998) framework and suggests that results are the same as previous studies, such as Kampf, Manor & Segev (2015). Government institutions need to understand the potential of social networking sites to promote the country's image and culture. The study also indicates that mere presence on digital media does not fulfill the criteria of social media engagement. Our findings conclude that no digital engagement and dialogue occur between governmental departments and the public through social networking sites. In comparison to each country, results reveal that India has more institutionalized and organized digital diplomacy than Pakistan.

Social media allows the dissemination of information and creates dialogue with users. This study focused on digital engagement and excluded the topics users talked about, visual content they uploaded, and the most discussed topics on social networks. One of the most important features of Facebook and Twitter is feedback from the audience through comments that allows readers to engage with state institutions. It is significant to study the communication strategies and the discussed topics on social networking sites. It is also important to conduct interviews with officials to garner insight into their social media strategies.

One of the biggest limitations of this study was its small sample size and the small number of tweets and posts which, in total, was over 2,000 in number. Generalizability is limited because there are huge discrepancies in departmental activeness on social networking sites. For example, Military Public Relations and Information Bureau have hundreds of thousands tweets and posts, but Public Diplomacy only has a few hundred. This makes the study less comparable within the departments. The implications of this study can be beneficial to both countries' government departments. Since public diplomacy research area is enriched with extensive literature including this study, governments should change and/or modify their online strategies.

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