



SEEK WISDOM, ELEVATE YOUR INTELLECT AND SERVE HUMANITY !

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*An Assessment on the Practice of Strategic Communication
for National Image Building: The Case of Ministry of Foreign
Affairs of Ethiopia*

By Mekuanint Bimer Kelemu

*A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School of Journalism and Communication
Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of
Arts in Journalism and Communication*

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May 2018

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Addis Ababa University School of Graduate Studies

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Mekuanint Bimer, entitled “*An Assessment on the Practice of Strategic Communication for National Image Building: The Case of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia*” submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Journalism and Communication complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

Signed by the Examining Committee:

Chairman, Department of Graduate Committee

Signature

Advisor

Signature

Examiner

Signature

Declaration

I declare that this thesis: “*An Assessment on the Practice of Strategic Communication for National Image Building: The Case of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia*” is my own work. And I have duly acknowledged the sources I have used in this paper.

Name: Mekuanint Bimer

Signature _____

May, 2018

Abstract

The purpose of the study was to assess the practice of strategic communication in national image building in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia. The study assessed the roles of strategic communication and current practice of the Ministry in promoting the country's image to the international community. In the assessment, the researcher collected views of practitioners working in the Ministry and the overseas diplomatic missions of Ethiopia.

The researcher employed qualitative methodology to get detail views and used purposive sampling technique to select key informants in the Ministry. For the conceptual and theoretical frameworks, the concepts of strategic communication, national image building, agenda setting and framing theories were reviewed respectively. Strategic communication guides for a favorable image promotion of a nation in a way the promotional messages are framed and set as an agenda. Furthermore, the Foreign Policy and National Security Strategies and other related documents were reviewed for supporting the study as a baseline.

The findings of the study revealed that a huge gap exists in using strategic communication for national image building in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Ministry and missions abroad do not use strategic communication, rather practice the traditional and conventional way of promoting a country. Also, there is lack of coordination between or among stakeholders in the country in promoting the country's image. The Ministry also lacks skilled public diplomats and communication practitioners who are familiar to digital diplomacy. Though the Ministry has shown limited improvement in training diplomats, the rigid bureaucracy and unresponsive working systems have still become impediments that hinder the Ministry in using strategic communication for building the image of Ethiopia.

Based on the findings, the Ministry has to replace the traditional practices for strategic communication to build the country's image. In the contemporary world, the image of a nation highly matters for developing countries like Ethiopia in attracting foreign direct investment, tourism, and establishing friendly relations with other sovereign countries. The study also suggests that the government has to establish an overriding institution which regulates the disintegrated promotional activities of various stakeholders in the country.

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List of Acronyms

BSC: Balanced Scorecard

DG: Directorate General

FDI: Foreign Direct Investment

FDRE: Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

FANSSP: Foreign Affairs and National Security Strategies Policy

HoA: Horn of Africa

IR: International Relations

MFA: Ministry of Foreign Affairs

MoFEC: Ministry of Finance and Economic Cooperation

INSA: Information Networking Security Agency

MNCs: Multi-National Companies

PD: Public Diplomacy

PDDG: Public Diplomacy Directorate General

TNCs: Trans-National Companies

VCDR: Vienna Conventions on Diplomatic Relations

VCCR: Vienna Conventions on Consular Relations

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Appendix II in- depth interview questions-English version

Appendix III in- depth interview questions-Amharic version

Chapter One: Introduction

1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the topic of the study. It explains the background, states the problem, and presents the rationale of the study. It also presents the objective, significance, scope and limitation of the study.

1.1. Background of the Study

International relations run primarily on the wheels of communication, without which, the good image of a country cannot be achieved. Hence, communication must be calculated, purposeful, and strategic, particularly in international engagements. Subsequently, the subject of strategic communication cannot be overemphasized in the field and practice of diplomacy particularly in public diplomacy. The introduction of modern technological modes of communication together with the changing nature of diplomatic communication has made the role of strategic communications significant.

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia's (FDRE) Foreign Affairs and National Security Strategies Policy (FANSSP) states national image building as one of the objectives of the policy which aims at promoting the country's image in terms of history, tourism, natural resources, economic development successes, peace, hospitality of the people and other Ethiopian values. The major basis of Ethiopia's current foreign and security strategy policy is achieving economic development and building democracy in the framework of globalization. In developing nations like Ethiopia, the image which can be promoted through strategic communication, is invaluable for realizing a national interest. The FDRE Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the one which takes the lion share in implementing the foreign policy and national security strategies. It is one of the institutions which are responsible for handling the issues of national image in communicating with the world's sovereign nation states and international public.

Nation branding and image building are very important concepts in the fields of Political Science and International Relations, Public Relations and Communication. Though these fields of studies have begun teaching the theories of national image building in Ethiopia, there are still a number of shortcomings in using the very strategic communication approaches to promote the image of

the country. This is particularly operationalized by the FDRE Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia in its implementation of the foreign policy of the country.

Public Diplomacy Directorate General of the Ministry is responsible for protecting and burnishing Ethiopia's image by providing timely and accurate information about Ethiopia to the media and foreign publics. It prepares and distributes news, communiqués and press releases to both the domestic and international media. Moreover, it monitors media outlets and their coverage about Ethiopia and provides replies whenever necessary. Therefore, the meaningful practice of communication in this department of the Ministry is highly invaluable in promoting the image of the country. However, the use and operation of the right communication strategies in promoting the country is still critical and it is the main focus of this study.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

National image can be seen as the brand of one country which reflects the nation's politics, economy, culture, history, reality, people's living style and the other values of its society. With the growth of the globalization, communication among countries is spreading significantly. Thus, national image of a country is playing an important role in affecting the international relations. Gaining a good image is helpful for getting respect and trust while maintaining relations with the international state and non-state actors. In the age of globalization, nation states are interdependent in which countries do not only rely on their own resources, but also on their national images and how a country is perceived in the eyes of the international community to achieve development in different aspects.

In the case of Ethiopia, the idea of national image has various manifestations from past to present period. The image (good or bad) of the country can be described in terms of its economic, political and social values. The international community pictures the country by taking these national values in to consideration from media reports, literatures about Ethiopia or personal experiences such as visits. According to the Bloom Consulting Country Branding ranking, an American based institute which conducts surveys on national image of countries, Ethiopia's image rank was not among the list of rankings. The country's tourism ranked 129th in 2013 and 111th in 2014 out of more than 190 countries. Meanwhile, while the image of Ethiopia's tourism

and cultural heritage ranked 92nd, the image of its governance ranked low. As a result of this, the country's global image has been among the lowest of all world countries for longer time.

This research project was provoked by the researcher's new inquisitive interest to assess the practice of strategic communication in national image building of a country's stature in the eyes of different people across the world. The researcher is working on this research area particularly because he believes communication strategies and approaches being implemented in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia create both favorable and unfavorable impression to the international public in viewing Ethiopia. The approaches and strategies of communication used in promoting national image may affect a country's development both in the short-run and long-run. It interested the researcher because he wants to investigate how strategic communication is put in to practice in building the image of countries with particular reference to Ethiopia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Among other governmental organizations, Ethiopia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs dominantly engages in national image building activities due to its given mandate both in the FDRE constitution and Foreign Affairs and National Security Strategies Policy. Beyond image promotion endeavors at the head office, the Ministry assigns diplomats assigned overseas in Ethiopia's foreign missions/ embassies in different countries. Currently, Ethiopia has more than 58 missions (Embassies, Consulate Generals and Consulates) which base in different countries. One of the activities of those diplomats at head office and missions is the creation and promotion of national image as clearly stated in the foreign policy document. While promoting Ethiopia's image, diplomats in different foreign missions and in the Ministry highly require a good understanding of communication strategies and the impacts over national interests. Though the Ministry deploys a number of human and financial resources for image promotion, there are still negative views by the international community including Ethiopian nationals abroad about the country's image.

The country's national image by the international community is not also directly the same as what Ethiopian nationals perceive it. Some foreign nationals surprisingly do not even hear and know the name 'Ethiopia', let alone the location, people, history, culture and other features of the country. There are also foreign people who remember the name 'Ethiopia' whenever they hear

the word ‘famine’ and ‘drought’. Indeed, it is a fact on the ground that the country has been known for its deep- rooted poverty, low level of literacy and poor governance. Moreover, there are different views and impressions by Ethiopian nationals mainly the Diaspora who resides in Europe, America, Australia and other parts of the world.

All Ethiopian Diasporas who live in different parts of the world have a variety of attitudes towards Ethiopia. Some are affirmative and optimist; while others are negative and pessimist about the country as such feelings can be manifested at different times in history. On side of the government, there is also a misconception that national image building of a country is the sole responsibility of particular government communication affairs. The researcher believes that every individual citizen of a country is accountable and responsible for capitalizing the positive aspects of a country’s image to the international community. In doing so, strategic communication contributes much to selling a country’s image positively and manages the different views of the global public towards Ethiopia. In terms of building and promoting the image of Ethiopia, the process of making every Ethiopian citizen and nationals as an ambassador of his/her country requires high effort in communicating strategically both the domestic and Ethiopian national abroad.

However, the use of strategic communication at the individual, organizational and national level in Ethiopia requires some reforms which go together with the country’s development and its current image by the international community. The study focuses on ministerial level here to assess the practice of strategic communication for building an image of the nation. Communication is one of the necessary tools needed for a country to build a positive image, discard the old perceptions and rub shoulders with the so-called developed country. In all cases, strategic communication, if effectively used, can serve as means to resolve or at least reduce the opposing or conflicting attitudes and impressions of the international public including the Diasporas towards Ethiopia.

Due to the poor practice of strategic communication in the Ministry, rather dominated by the conventional/customary practices, the country’s international image is not growing from time to time. Thus, having this in mind, the researcher demands to explore more on the practice of strategic communication in building Ethiopia’s national image, finds out the challenges of

practicing strategic communication in the Ministry and suggests the possible ways of practicing it for a better image building process in the country.

1.3. Objective of the Study

1.3.1. General Objective

This study explores the practice of strategic communication in building the image of a nation with a specific reference to Ethiopia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

- To identify the roles of strategic communication in image building process of a country in particular to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia.
- To investigate how the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia practices strategic communication as a tool for image building purpose.
- To find out the level of coordination between the concerned institutions and departments in the Ministry in implementing strategic communication in the promotion of Ethiopia's national image.
- To identify the challenges and prospects of the Ministry in practicing strategic communication for national image building.

1.4. Research questions

The research is aimed at answering the following questions?

1. What are the roles of strategic communication in national image building of a country in particular to the case of Ethiopia?
2. To what extent does the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia use effective strategic communication approach for building the image of Ethiopia?
3. How does the level of coordination looks like between concerned institutions and departments in the ministry in promoting the image of Ethiopia's image?
4. What are the prospects and challenges facing the Ministry's public diplomacy department in using strategic communication for image building purpose?

1.5. Significance of the Study

This study is hoped to contribute to filling the knowledge gap on the area of strategic communication and national image building. It also helps the FDRE Ministry of Foreign Affairs on how to promote the image of the country for the international community. The study outcomes also provide inputs for the government and policy makers in crafting a national message that can brand the country, integrating stakeholders and communicating the message to the larger public. Finally, the study can also be used as an input for other further researches on the area.

1.6. Scope of the Study

The study covers the practice of strategic communication in building the image of a nation in particular reference to the image of Ethiopia. Though the concepts of national image and strategic communication are broad by their nature, the researcher is limited to discussing the practices of strategic communication in promoting the image of Ethiopia. It largely centers on the case of Ethiopia particularly in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs than comparing it with other countries' communication strategy. It focuses mainly on exploring the practice of strategic communication in promoting the national image of Ethiopia by the Public Diplomacy Directorate General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Regarding the research target subjects or participants, selected diplomats at different positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia are the main resource people. Since it is difficult to manage in including all the Ministry's fifteen Diplomatic Directorate Generals which involve in national image building activities, a focus was given only to two Directorate Generals: The Public Diplomacy & Communication Director General and the Spokesperson Office of the Ministry. The study predominantly focuses on Public Diplomacy & Communication DG and the Office of the Spokesperson because they are daily dealing with communication in building the image of Ethiopia.

1.7. Limitation of the Study

Interviewees' reluctance (due to fear of personal security) to give an interview has limited the researcher's ability to gather data from a larger pool. The busy schedules of the interviewees

have been another factor that discouraged some diplomats and ambassadors from participating in the study. The limited presence of organized public diplomacy documents in the Ministry has also hindered the researcher in exploiting data from different perspectives.

1.8. Organization of the Study

The study is structured into five chapters. The first chapter discusses the background of the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, significance, scope and limitation of the study. Chapter two reviews related literatures on communication and national image building; assesses the history of Ethiopia's national image and the practice of strategic communication in FDRE Ministry of Foreign Affairs; explores the role of media in branding a nation; illustrates the impact of national image on a country's development and approaches or strategies of communication for national image building.

The third chapter presents discussions on the methodology employed to conduct this study and the reasons why the researcher opted for qualitative methodology with details of procedures on how the researcher undertook the research. Chapter four is dedicated to discussing the findings of the study through interpretation of texts using different methods in line with the research questions and related literature discussed. And the final chapter presents conclusions, implications and recommendations of the study.

Chapter Two: Review of Related Literature

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter, an attempt was made to discuss various literatures on communication, public diplomacy and national image. Beginning with detail, but clear conceptual frameworks on communication, public diplomacy and national image building, the research paper presents selected theories of communication. Both the conceptual and theoretical frameworks are framed in the way they support the topic of the study. Finally, the researcher discussed and reviewed those frameworks in relation to the objectives of the research presents how strategic communication is pertinent if implemented practically at ministerial level of promotion of national image with particular reference to Ethiopia.

2.2. What is Strategic Communication?

There are various definitions of strategic communication and multiple various understanding of those definitions. Most scholars also categorize the definitions of strategic communication as official and non-official definitions. According to Christian Paul, the official definition of strategic communication is directly related to national government reports, doctrines and other government publications. On the other hand, the non-official definition refers to academic articles, studies, journals and publications.

Afety (2014) in his study defines the word ‘strategy’ as the “deciding or planning ahead and it is a collection of ideas, preferences and methods which explains activity and gives it purpose, by connecting it to a desired effect or a stated goal.” Planning ahead in communication activities helps many communication practitioners and governments to make an influence in nation building motives in different ways.

Strategic communication is simply identifying what a country stands for and communicating that message clearly deploying appropriate channels, taking cognizance of the implications and possible outcomes of such communications. Christopher Paul (2011) also presents the working definition of strategic communication stating as “*coordinated actions, messages, images and other forms of signaling or engagement intended to inform, influence, or persuade selected audiences in support of national objectives.*” Paul also adds that effective communication

strategies entail the following denotations: Strategic communication planning, integration, and synchronization processes; communication strategies and themes; communication, information, and influence capabilities; and knowledge of human dynamics and analysis or assessment capabilities.

A broader understanding of strategic communications allows communication activity to function as one of the tools used by many governments in their approach towards a national strategy. Strategic communications are not just about words, explaining intentions or actions, but it is also about achieving the required ends of integrating communications in national strategies so as to ensure good relations among states. According to Laity (2010:98), strategic communication requires the proper use of information by way of unifying result-oriented actions and coordination between/ among relevant institutions; socio-cultural structure, history and customs of the target audience as well as technological factors should be considered in the use and transfer of information. Strategic communication does not mean making policies and decisions followed by declaring these decisions taken or activities performed and legitimization thereof before the public. Strategic communication is envisioned to integrate the information to each and every element of policy, planning and execution; the information is not a trivial concept to be released to the public after decisions are made.

2.2.1. Characteristics of Strategic Communication

Onat (2012) lists out the multidimensional and distinctive characteristics of communication strategy as pre-planned, goal oriented, well managed. All the communication elements and tools are pre-planned in a way the coordinated efforts of all these help to achieve the desired goal. There is a super-ordinate goal or target in the communication process. the communication should be well managed. It is also very important to control target audiences' the perception, decoding and understanding of the message.

Onat also discusses that a strategic communication needs to entail alternative **plans and strategies** to achieve the desired goals; **methodology** to successfully determine and apply tactics and approaches of the communication; and the **messenger** to convey the message properly to the target audience. For communication, the use of technology is also used to make communication faster, easier and accessible to the audience.

In national image building through diplomacy, strategic communication is not best achieved by using a fixed, separate, central structure but through a shared strategic communications mindset, fundamental to every department of a government and at every level of national policy and strategy. For a country where communication is strategic and national image is inevitable, a strong coordinated effort between/among different concerned bodies of a state need to be formed. This means creating a self-sustaining and workable system allows for an exchange of information and experience involving leaders, communicators, agents and stakeholders.

Paul (2011) also argues that sticking to a broadcast media to convey a nation's message may not help strategic communication effective in achieving the objectives set. If nations say their messages louder and clearer on more channels, the international public or audience will understand and strategic communication will have succeeded. Nevertheless, articulating the foreign policy of Ethiopia, for example, through various forms of media by itself can not realize the foreign policy objectives because the idea of engagement is significant here. In addressing the international community through various media requires close engagement which creates two way communications and gives opportunity to listen to what others in the world think and say. Effective public diplomacy tools make strategic communication achieve the foreign policy objectives of a particular country. In developing countries like Ethiopia, where diplomacy plays active role to gain favorable image by the foreign public, public diplomacy activities should be guided by a very sound and strategic communication procedure.

2.2.2. Goals of Strategic Communication at Foreign Ministry and National Level

Foreign ministries of sovereign states are usually the core institutions for a country's foreign policy through soft power called diplomacy. These institutions base their headquarters at the country of their origins and open their missions (embassies) in many foreign countries. The reason for expanding their missions basically go together with the country's increasing foreign relations with different countries which help one country achieve its national interest through diplomacy. In making the foreign relations effective, the role of public diplomacy is significant in building the image of a country at international level. This kind of diplomacy usually interacts with international media and the foreign publics. In the process of building the image of a country, public diplomats require strategic communication.

Most scholars equate the goals of strategic communication with public diplomacy goals and objectives. Strategic communication, as well as disciplines like perception management and public diplomacy, is considered to play a critical role in achieving national interests as a force multiplier rather than as just an approach. Paul (2011) and Guler (2012) identify the goals of having strategic communication in accordance with public diplomacy.

A. Informing, Influencing and Persuading

Public diplomacy is a discipline which seeks for information and informs people mainly foreign audience in the way that a certain country can be pictured by those audiences. Informing the foreign audience can no longer work in the traditional method of communication such as white-paper letters and envoys, rather requires a strategic communication which uses the internet technology to address the foreign audience. However, persuading and influencing are the two most challenging aspects of strategic communication because they require the crafting of the truth in our messages in pursuit of policy objectives.

Paul (2011) argues that strategic communication should not be thought of only as a tool for countering violent extremism, but as a significant part of government endeavors to speak to, listen to, engage with and establish good faith to all the people of the world. The ability of influencing and persuasion require both the policy objective be clear, and a study how foreign audience attitudes, behaviors, or perceptions will support these objectives. Influencing and persuading comes after effective informing procedures in strategic communication. Well informed audiences are ready to listen to the speaker and to verify the accuracy and reliability of the information.

Ekşi (2014) discusses the importance of strategic communication and its management could highly help to make the coordination of states' communication activity and policies of the state, vision and activities practices integrally and coherently. This can be done by determining how to craft the messages, transmitting the style, arranging the short and key messages, operationalizing the messages, the tools and methods choosing clear key notions and words that are repeated constantly. In trying to inform, influence and persuade, the role of strategic communication can be seen in three stages: planning, operationalizing and evaluating.

Planning what to inform, how to persuade and influence is the most critical aspect of a strategic communication. The role of a strategic communication or public diplomacy here acts as a road map in determining communication policies and specific strategies. Planning requires deep investigation and identification of target audiences, articulating of clear messages, choosing the right media/channel and the means of getting feedback. After the planning stage, the communication strategies come in to force of operations. In this stage, the role of the communicator is informing, persuading and influencing target audiences by providing the messages crafted through selected media that can help the speaker reach. The last stage is evaluating the activities of communication in the previous stage. Strategic communication has gained high importance in the role of the ‘decoder’ and solving the more complicated mass media process. Strategic communication management evaluates the effectiveness of messages conveyed to the target audiences and identifies the perception level while it instantly changes the discourse if there is a misunderstanding or lack of effectiveness. Thus, Strategic communication management prevents misunderstanding of target audiences (Özkan, 2015).

Generally, informing, persuading and influencing are the primary goal of a strategic communication and public diplomacy which contribute high for creating favorable image among the international publics about certain issues or events. In the age of globalization, countries should care for their present communication management approach; create their own cultures about the primary topics such as democracy, human rights and freedom; and make efforts to create their own images. The “perception” of countries’ about us has great importance (Özkan, 2015).

B. Getting Reputation and Favorable Image

Özkan (2015) argues that countries must build their own “nation values” in the 21st century in order to gain reputation, esteem and reliability. With the growing of globalization, the world is interconnected and strategic communication gains high importance. The traditional methods of communication between countries can no more operate in the 21st century due to the emergence of digital technology. Countries to gain favorable image in the eyes of the international community need to update their ways and strategies of communication. That is the right time and place for strategic communication, the key to gaining good image that gets higher importance. Such gains have a positive impact in political, economic, social and tourism aspects of a country.

For developing countries such as Ethiopia, management of the strategic communication gives opportunity for effective planning, creating clear messages and conveying these messages to the target audiences easily which finally determines the end in gaining success.

As Anholt highlights, the world is a market place where each country needs to compete to share trade, policies, and technological and capital transfer of the world. Having an image in such competitive markets is invaluable for countries like Ethiopia (2008: 31). Countries which succeed in building a brand and promoting its values could attract the foreign direct investment (FDI) and tourism; increase the exports and living standards of the people of that country (Gilboa, 2008: 67). It has been observed that the strategic communication processes have an impact on taking the support of foreign public opinion in the international environment. This positive message enhances the national values of countries. To see this with the image of companies, big brands and business always look for new regions to produce goods in a cheaper cost. On the other hand, underdeveloped and developing countries focus much attention to foreign direct investment so as to create new working opportunities and the growth for national economy. For huge brands and investors, the tax practices, transportation facilities and other regulations of countries in which they make investment have great importance.

2.3. National Image Building versus Nation Branding

Hill (2003) defines nation as a group of people who share common history, identity, and seeks statehood, but can also exist independently. Nation branding is an interesting, complex and controversial concept by many scholars. It is interesting due to its representation of an area in which there are little existing theories, but a huge amount of real world activity. Nation branding is gaining high importance and prominence as several countries in the world like commit much resources for their nation brand.

The word 'brand' simply refers to a name, symbol, design or a combination of which help to identify goods and services of a certain company or country. It is one of the identities of a particular product which help create a mental vision on the eyes of customers, buyers or other stakeholders both at domestic and global settings. Jenes (2005) also describe elements of nation's image: national symbols, colors, clothing, typical buildings, objects, political system, literature, historical heritages, customs, etc. Thus, nation branding is defined as the unique, multi-

dimensional blend of elements that provide the nation with culturally grounded differentiation and relevance for all of its target audiences. (Here, it is clear that nation branding is a multi-faceted discipline which focuses on the stature of a country.

Dinnie clearly identified three major reasons why countries are engaging in nation branding processes. These are stimulating in-ward investment, attracting tourists and boosting export. Countries may also commit resources in branding their nations in the area of talent attraction to get skilled workers and intellectuals. The rationale behind the above reasons lie in building international credibility in boosting investors' confidence, increasing potential partners and enhancing national image increasing international political influence (Dinnie, 2008: 13).

The branding process of a nation aims at measuring, building, and managing the reputation of countries. Kerr and Wiseman (2012) define "nation branding" as the use of corporate marketing concepts and techniques to countries for the purpose of enhancing their reputation in international relations. The concept of branding is a marketing concept which seeks for promotion of a company's goods and services. This role exists due to the presence of competitive firms and other related companies with almost similar products. Thus, the branding activities also work for countries in the international relation because countries demand to export their products and services and attract investors, tourists and other potential profit maximizing companies for the development and growth of a nation's economy. Germany, for example, for their own motor industry because popular car companies such as Mercedes, BMW, and Audi are German companies. This reputation helps Germany to export the cars to the global market without any challenge. This is achieved due to the role of their branding effect. Buhmann (2015) concludes that a country's brand is simply an aggregate of strategically communicated information of a nation-state about itself. It is closely linked with the country identity, which constitutes the necessary basis for any constant self-representation.

Skinner defined place branding correlating it with nation branding as: "a place's promotional activities, contextualized in the domain of marketing communications, marking a place with a distinct identity in the minds of the various target groups targeted from an inside-out approach, assuring the place's multiple stakeholders, in partnership, manage and communicate the place's brand identity to a wider world as they wished it to be presented," (Skinner, 2008, 923).

The Nation Brands Index (NBI), developed by Simon Anholt, also identifies the scope of nation branding through six aspects: people, culture and heritage, investment and immigration, governance, and export. This index shows the reputation of a country’s nation which is closely linked with the success of its business, trade and tourism efforts, as well as its diplomatic and cultural relations with other nations. The NBI considers these major criteria for listings and rankings of world countries in describing their statures in the world. The following figure 1 shows the six aspects where nation branding encompasses.



Figure 1: Nation Branding Hexagon (Source: Anholt, 2005)

When the branding of those aspects is in action in one’s country, the government is not the sole actor, rather citizens also involve in the branding process. Concerned government institutions, ministries and other bureaus also coordinate seriously for the branding of a nation. This aggregate effort would result in an image of the nation. The global community including states and non- state actors will start to develop a perception or an attitude towards the country which seeks for its brand. Therefore, the summation attitudes and perceptions of all foreign individuals,

governments and other non- state actors (such as multinational companies, terrorist organizations, and non-governmental organizations) yield the image of a nation.

The nation brand is the aggregate of people's perceptions of a country and its people apart from six usual areas of national assets, characteristics and competence. Tourism is often the most visibly promoted of the nation brand. But it is only a part of the reality of a country. Export is the power of "Made in" label to add value to products and services. Governance means people's perception of the government sense of responsibility. Investment and immigration relate to people's personal willingness to live and work in each country for a substantial period of time. Culture and heritage measure a country's cultural heritage, as well as people's appreciation of or intention to consume its popular, more commercial cultural products and activities. Also the country's sporting excellence. Finally, people are used to understand how the human capital of each country is viewed.

In the framework of globalization, the notion of national branding has been a crucial factor for governments of different countries in international relations. Ying Fan, a Brunel University in London identifies the difference between nation branding and national image. He states that the concern of nation branding is the image and reputation a nation enjoys in the world. However, national image is defined by the people outside a particular country. A national brand originates within a country for the purpose of image building. The scope of national image entails the perceptions in the minds of foreign people towards the stature of a certain country. Nation branding is a joint effort of the people and government of a country to help build the nation's brand. Every country has its own image, identity, and value and reputation. The people, tourism, culture, governance, economic strategies such as exports, investment and immigration, could contribute to the country's image. The international publics' perceptions towards a country are mostly influenced by stereotype, media coverage as well as personal experience. Like commercial brands, a nation's image can be repackaged, repositioned and communicated in a professional fashion.

The prominent authors in nation branding, Morgan & Pritchard (2002), present the five phases of building a brand. The first phase is performing market investigation, analysis, and strategic recommendations. This step requires market intelligence in assessing the environment and proposing recommendations. The second phase suggests that developing a brand identity. Brand

identity here means the self-perception of domestic people of a country's citizens. (Rusciano et al, 1997). The third phase is launch and introduction of communicating the vision to the people. This helps to inform the objectives of the branding on the minds of the citizens. Brand implementation is the fourth phase which is practical task. The final phase of branding is the process of monitoring, evaluation and review.

The concepts of national image and nation's branding are also summarized by different scholars. National image is referred as nation branding and often related with public diplomacy and its activities and international perceptions of a certain country. Boulding (1956) underscores national image as "the total cognitive, affective, and evaluative structure of the behavioral unit, or its internal view of itself and its universe" (pp. 120–121). Wang (2006) proposes a nation's reputation includes the collective judgments of a foreign country's image and character (p. 91). Several scholars also associate the concept of national branding and imaging as a form of soft power such as public diplomacy.

National image is formed on the basis of experience and opinions about the people or the country especially information received through different media and non- media channels. These include foreign policy and internal affairs (political), mass media, telecommunication and entertainment (Movies), stereotypes or rumors (Jenes 2005).

Manheim & Albritton, (1984) have pointed out two dimensions of national image building in examining a country's national image in the media. These include visibility and valence. Visibility refers to the total amount of media coverage that a country receives from the media, while valence refers to whether a country is portrayed unfavorably or favorably in the media. These two dimensions combine to form the overall national image of a country. As such, a negative national image results from negative valence and low visibility, while a positive national image results from positive valence and high visibility (Manheim & Albritton, 1984).

Generally, the concept of national image and nation branding are inter-related terms which show how a particular country should construct its stature and the perceptions of the world people towards the image of the country. Branding is all about the use of different communication approaches to create a mental picture of a nation through different media such as Television, Radio, Magazine, Newspaper, social media, fliers, pamphlets and other modes of

communication. The image of a country might be conceived wrong through stereotype, media coverage and reporting, and direct personal experience. Therefore, countries commit much of their resources to their nation branding to change the wrong image and capitalize on the positive aspects of that country.

2.3.1. The Use of Strategic Communication in Nation Branding and Image Building

Because world countries are forging more tightly and interdependent, effective communication has become extremely important. Government and public officials sign trade agreements, pursue foreign aids and investment, take part in negotiations and involve in various national assignments with other foreign governments. In the process of doing all these activities, the role communication plays is highly important and a failure to communicate effectively could cost the whole nation and governments a loss.

Strategic communication is crucial in building successful positive relationship among people, organizations, and economies as well as governments. The use of newsletters, manuals, emails, memos, official notices, words of mouth, media broadcast and other sources help facilitate a good strategic communication. A good image of a country is built through its effective communication with people, governments and other communication actors in the world. According to Shayna Englin (A Professor in Public Relations and Corporate Communications), strategic communication involves the strategic means of communicating the best message by using the right media in accordance with organizational communication specific goals. Communicating the best message to the target population helps to build the reputation of the organization and develop a favorable public opinion.

Generally, a communication strategy is one of the most crucial items that can be used in building a desired national image. As Jim Lukaszewski, a PR and Communications expert from the USA said strategy is a driving force in any business or organization. It is the intellectual force which helps to organize, prioritize and energize what they do. No strategy; no energy. No strategy; no direction. The scholar also added that if there is no strategy, there is no momentum and impact.

A communication strategy can simply be defined as a planned series of actions or tactics for achieving national goals. Strategies can comprise a number of various tactics together with many

people involved in attempting to reach those goals. These tactics are the specific methods and actions used in achieving the goals.

2.4. Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication

2.4.1. Definition of Public Diplomacy

There is no a universal accepted definitions of public diplomacy. Diplomacy is the modern and effective instrument of foreign policy in international relations. It aims at managing the international relations through negotiations with actors in foreign relations. Within diplomacy, we can find public diplomacy and is viewed both in its traditional and modern perspectives. The classical definition of public diplomacy was focused on a one-to one communication between the political elites of government of different countries. It was limited to state-to- state relations especially before the cold war.

Renken (2014) categorizes the global history and its features in to three periods of time as follows.



Figure 2: Periods of Global History

Until the cold war, the world was divided in to two major blocs: East and West led by the Soviet Union (USSR) and United States of America respectively. During this period, different countries government officials have their own ideologies but included under the East and West blocs. In diplomacy and international relations, states used to communicate through disseminating their propaganda each other. The public diplomacy communication activities of most of countries was propagating their ideologies rather than applying a modern means of communication.

However, the end of the cold war brought the notion of globalization. The emergence of globalization has affected the foreign policy and international relations of world governments.

The ways diplomacy, particularly public diplomacy implemented in the foreign ministries of most countries started to coincide with the impacts of both state and non-state actors in foreign relations. Because states could no longer work in traditional public diplomacy strategies such as propaganda, the need to adopt new ways of public diplomacy tools and strategies has been highly essential. As a result, many professionals and scholars on the area of the new public diplomacy have started to conceptualize public diplomacy in different ways, but all definitions include a strategic activity that it aims to support the foreign policy goals of countries and international organizations by ignoring the traditional ways of diplomatic work and employing two-way communication and direct engagement not only with foreign governments, but also contacts foreign people directly or via non-governmental partners.

Melissen (2005) defines public diplomacy as public diplomacy is *one of soft power's key instruments which include the involvement of state and non- state actors in international relations*. A more clear and precise definition is given by Paul Sharp describing public diplomacy

Public diplomacy is the process by which direct relations with people in a country are pursued to advance the interests and extend the values of those being represented (P.106).

This definition mainly focuses on the foreign people, not only governments of countries. Public diplomacy with government to government by itself is not a simple job because it requires new ways of strategies to deal with foreign governments. On the contrary, the focus of the new public diplomacy on the foreign publics emerged as a result of globalization in the 21st century which makes it a more complicated task in dealing with such publics.

Andrić (2012) also defines

Public diplomacy traditionally means "government to government" communication aimed at foreign audiences to achieve changes in the "hearts or minds" of the people. It also becomes a tool for building favorable public environment to pursue specific or particular interests (P.13).

Public diplomacy also described in the sense of content as activities in the area of informing education and culture which directly influence foreign governments through influencing their citizens. According to the NBI report from 2006-2009, Germany has been the first of the top ten countries with good image from a study which included more than 70 countries (both developing and developed countries). The report has six major criteria which entail politics, economy, social, tourism, etc. in measuring the country's images. Among the reasons provided for Germany, the Goethe Institute of the country has done a wonderful job in informing the cultural and Germany's quality products especially machineries and cars. Germany has also given so many scholarship opportunities for students all over the world and has made the country in promoting identity of Germany to the world.

In the modern sense, public diplomacy's scope is wider in that it comprises domestic and foreign media news and internalizes and makes analysis on the impact of such news towards national interest of a country. The third article of the 1961 Vienna Conventions on Diplomatic relations (VCDRs) also defines the functions of diplomats in foreign missions which comprises representation, negotiation, promotion are among some. The task of public diplomacy is, therefore, linked mainly to the promotion and branding of the nations' of the sending state in order to increase reputation and boost the positive image. Melissen suggests new strategies should be established for dealing and distinguishing the diverse and heterogeneous foreign publics with the domestic people of a certain country. He also adds differentiating the domestic audiences affairs' from public diplomacy which deals with the foreign audience is the oddness of the new public diplomacy strategies in the global relationships.

The American Security Project describes public diplomacy as: *Communication and relationship building with foreign publics for the purpose of achieving a foreign policy objective*. It involves communication which is 'strategic' and relationship building aspects. The US foreign policy during President Bush was criticized for the undermining nature of America over the Islamic countries. Public diplomacy during that the then time was involved in propaganda making target at Muslim countries. This has ended with the cold war and showed 9/11 attack in September 2001.

Francis Fukiyama stated the end of the cold war as the end of history. Snow and Taylor (2009) reshaped Fukiyama's statement and described it should have been the end of ideology. The US foreign policy shifted its priority focus to the importance of public diplomacy and demonstrated the desire for foreign citizens all over the world to have their voices heard. The US communication was very strategic by tapping the power of new media and merely relied on Twitter, Facebook and other mediums of communication to get the global communities' messages across. The crafting of strategic messages to foreign publics which strive to listen to and understand their voices has resonated the misunderstanding.

Successful public diplomacy and strategic communication should address both mass audiences and particular target audiences. Mainstream media such as television, radio and the internet, as well as press and public affairs maneuvers, reach a wide-ranging public. However, public diplomacy activities are directed at narrower, more distinct groups who influence the decisions and opinions of others. Opinion leaders in foreign communities can be good partners in advancing broader public diplomacy goals and strategies. Therefore, tailoring public diplomacy and communication programs to specific audiences using the most appropriate and effective media available is a vital job to accomplish. (*Source: U.S. National Strategy for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication, 2007*)

Diplomacy is the communication system of the international society which largely involves the skill and tactics in dealing with diverse people. Public diplomacy in such cases serves as the best instrument of a strategic communication in achieving foreign policy goals. Effective public diplomacy and strategic communication, moreover, require a process that presents various aspects of effective communication and requires diplomats to prepare adequately and adopt the appropriate techniques and skills in the conduct of their duties. Leonard, Stead, & Smewing (2002) state that the public diplomacy of any foreign ministry may have the following three purposes: Political, economic and social or cultural which all have their own reactive, proactive and relationship building activities.

Purpose	Reactive (hours and days)	Proactive (weeks and months)	Relationship building (years)
Political/ Military	News management	Strategic communications	Relationship building
Economic			
Societal/Cultural			

Table I: Conceptualization of Public Diplomacy According to Purpose and Time Span. Source: (Leonard, Stead, &Smewing, 2002, p. 10).

According to this conceptualization, news management seeks to inform and influence the way in which current events are regarded, strategic communications targets in transmitting and selling certain messages through a series of planned events and, finally, relationship building is associated with the idea of creating long term bonds. This differs from strategic communication since it involves a genuine conversation and uses means which differs significantly from strategic communications to describe the overall picture of a country (Leonard, Stead, &Smewing, 2002, p. 18). Both news management and strategic communications have an impact in relationship building, which is eventually aimed to create a common exploration of issues and giving people a clearer idea of motivations and factors affecting their actions.

Communication is at the center of any diplomatic activity, say it the traditional diplomacy or the new public diplomacy. Without communication, there will never be diplomacy, so communication for diplomacy is analogous with blood for human body. The actors in diplomatic communication are numerous, but Manheim (1994) categorized the use of communication by different actors in the following diagram.

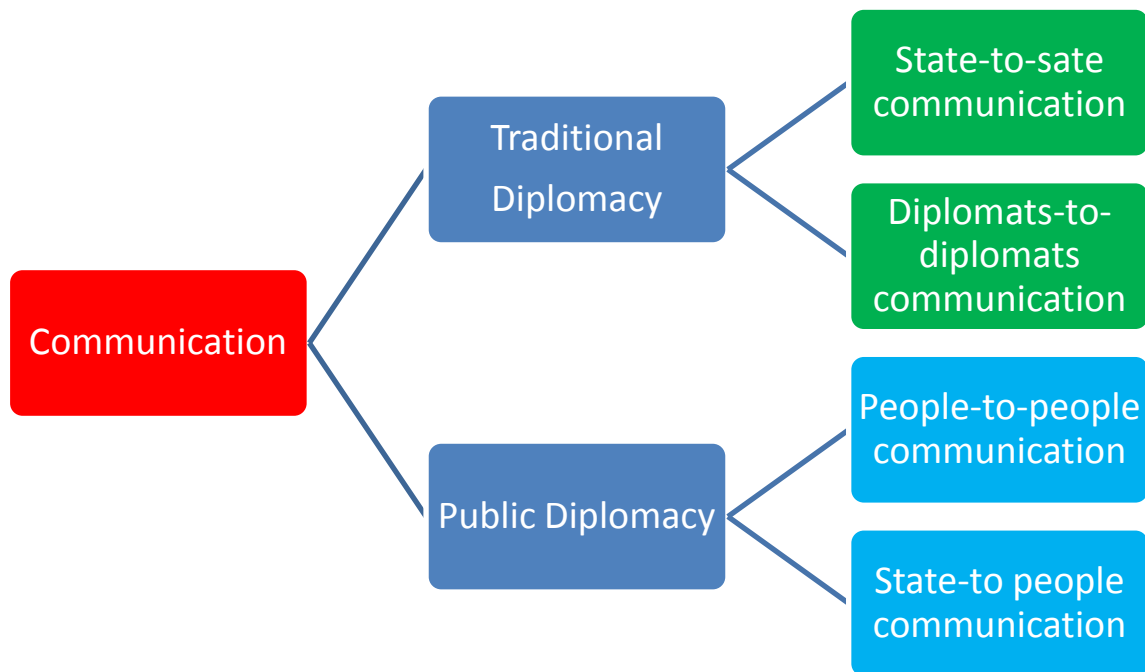


Figure-3 Source: prepared by author based on (Manheim, 1994, pp. 3-4)

The nature of communication, however, matters for effective public diplomacy. The use of communication between states and diplomats is termed as traditional diplomacy in the way it limits the communication at diplomat and state level. However, the public diplomacy involves the people in achieving foreign policy goals of countries. Governments and diplomats highly listen to the views and opinions of the global people and engage with the public to inform, persuade and influence other nations. From these comparisons, it is clear that public diplomacy uses communication strategies to branding a nation and building an image of a certain country in the minds of the international publics.

The 2007 US National Strategy for Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication document hints the definition for strategic communication in the context of United States of America national interest. It describes the importance of public diplomacy and strategic communication in achieving foreign policy objectives. Public diplomacy and strategic communication should always strive to support a nation's fundamental values and national security objectives.

In addition, the document recognizes that all communication and public diplomacy activities should underscore the commitment to freedom and human rights, dignity and equality of human being; reach out to those who share America's ideals; support those who struggle for freedom

and democracy; and counter who espouse ideologies of hate and oppressions. From this statement, it is quite clear to understand the role of strategic communications in national objectives particularly promotion of national image. Andrić (2012) argues “modern foreign policy-making and implementation in the 21st Century has to include strategic communication and public diplomacy tools” if results are to be expected.

2.5. Public Diplomacy Tools and Image Building

As so many scholars discussed the high importance of good image for a country's growth, selected tools and strategies and public diplomatic tools are extremely essential to branding a country in a way that it can create a positive mental picture in the minds of foreign audience. Public diplomacy was conducted between states for a long period of time. The only actors in diplomacy and international relations were states and states only. Diplomats were messengers of the sending government until recently. The tools of communication at that time envoy, letters, diplomatic courier, post mail, telegraph, and merchant caravans. Treaties, Protocols, Memorandum of Understanding, Note Verbal, Aide Memoires, Joint communiqué, Press Communiqué and Resolutions are among written means of Diplomatic Communication. Interdepartmental communication documents include; Briefs, letters, Talking Points, Record of a Meeting; Cabinet Memos and Loose Minutes or Memos.

The use of the traditional tools of diplomatic communication is characterized by the one-way communication and could no longer work for the contemporary diplomatic communication due to the changes globalization has brought. This indirectly changed the pattern and strategies of public diplomacy in the era of globalization. Experts on the area argue that managing the domestic audience of a country can contribute much. Engaging with one's own domestic audience with a view to addressing the foreign audience has become part of the new public diplomacy strategy of countries as diverse as Canada, Chile and Indonesia. As a Canadian ambassador to Washington observed: ‘the new diplomacy, as I call it, is, to a large extent, public diplomacy requires different skills, techniques, and attitudes than those found in traditional diplomacy’.

The practices of the new public diplomacy employ several instruments in addressing both state and non-state actors. Non-state actors in the international relations are entities which do not

belong to an established system in a state and have the power to influence the international relations. NGOs, multinational companies (like Coca Cola Company), and terrorist organizations (like ISIS, Boko Haram, Al-Shabab) are some of the non-state actors. As discussed by many scholars and practitioners on the field of contemporary public diplomacy, the focus is given to informing, persuading and influencing the international publics so that they will change their negative perceptions and attitudes to a certain nation's image. It is actually a challenging job to get in to the minds of the people while public diplomatic activities comprise both governments and people of the world in dealing with the image of a country. Though it is challenging, the new public diplomacy uses the following tools to reach the foreign audience (both state and non-state actors).

The Internet is free and it is a place where minds meet and ideas flow. Even though the Internet has taught people a lot and broadened our horizons, we cannot ignore the fact that any person can publish an idea or opinion and it can influence the thinking of others or masses. Through social media, the individual can 'participate' in communication, hoping he or she will become some kind of influencer in certain topics. Among the tools, most of them are of social media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter, Skype, You Tube etc. Apart from this, public diplomacy has various cultural and other advocacy strategies such as granting scholarship and establishing cultural institute and language schools in other countries. The tools of public diplomacy in relation to branding a nation and image building are thoroughly discussed and presented below.

2.5.1. Major Social Media Tools

Andrić (2012) argues that the public audience is relying less and less on traditional information sources. Relying on information coming from traditional mass media has no relevance in the 21st century due to the higher media effects of social media. Public and government sources are not the only information sources. Journalists or experts are no longer the only reliable source of information. New technology has brought new sources of communication. The social media have allowed each individual to become both an information maker and an information selector this is because the availability of media for immediate use without any interference. The emergence of social media has forced many diplomatic missions of several countries to integrate social media in their nation branding strategies. They have almost become tools for strategic communication

in the modern diplomatic relations among countries. Social media have almost become platforms for face to face communication due to their interactive nature of audiences.

I. Facebook

A group of students at Harvard University created Facebook in 2004 and it has grown to be one of the most successful social media networks, as it is the most used social network almost all around the globe (Rubio, 2011, p. 49). Facebook is a simple, free-of-charge platform that allows users to stay connected with friends and family, to realize what's going on in the world, and to share and express what matters to them (Facebook, 2015). Moreover, it allows users to upload photos, videos, and send messages.

Andrić (2012) points out that the most often used social networking service and website today is Facebook. In the past years, Facebook users have doubled from 200 million in April 2009 to 400 million in February 2010. In 2012, the number of Facebook users increased to 1.6 billion in 2014. A recent study (2016) on the area shows that users are signing up every fraction of seconds and the number reached more than 2 billion. It had more than 125 billion friend connections and over 42 million 'Pages' with ten or more 'Likes' by the end of March 2012. Facebook is available in more than 80 languages. According to studies, the number of world population has increased and become almost 7 billion. Among these, 2.5 billion are using Facebook which shows the sharp increase in using Facebook. Facebook is the leading social media in the number of users and Instagram, YouTube and Whats Up follow with relatively high users.

People post and share photos, ideas, feelings, thoughts and interests with their nearest friends or their social networks. We can communicate directly with our audience, and the result is that every time we do so, our audience helps spread our message. This occurs because by their very nature, social media are designed to let people share information. Many government leaders and their respective diplomats have also started using Facebook for the purpose of communication with both the domestic and foreign publics. Several diplomatic missions all over the world have created their own Facebook accounts in order to address the international community. Public diplomacy department of any diplomatic missions or with in foreign ministries target the foreign audience by sharing information about a country's activities. Diplomats also gather and analyze

the views and comments of their audiences for the purpose of creating a positive climate of a certain country.

II. Twitter

Twitter is hugely popular in the United States though not very much used in other developed and developing countries. Twitter allows users to send short messages to anyone who is subscribed. Such short messages are ideal for users who are getting their information on their mobile phones. Twitter, allows users to send and read other users' messages. Since the launching, it has gained about 180 million users worldwide. In 2010, there were approximately 50 million tweets per day on Twitter; in early 2011, the number is almost three times that amount, an average of 140 million per day. People send Tweets about major events as they are occurring. More than 200 members of the US Congress are users of Twitter. Ambassadors and diplomats also use Twitter in their daily jobs because it enables to send and receive others' messages, ideas and feelings.

As of April 2014, an estimated 241 million active users had joined Twitter. Twitter also provides policymakers the opportunity to hear the different views of the foreign publics worldwide. World leaders and their diplomats have understood the rapid expansion of Twitter and have begun using it to engage with foreign audiences and their own citizens. Italy's Foreign Minister Giulio Terzi in his book "Twitter for Diplomats" mentions the two big positive impacts of Twitter on a country's foreign policy. These are fostering a beneficial exchange of ideas between policymakers and the publics and enhancing diplomats' ability to gather information and to anticipate, analyze, manage, and respond to events.

Twitter for in diplomacy helps to make a true conversation between policymakers and citizens as well as between diplomats and foreign publics. In the era of information communication technology, several foreign ministries have started to use e-diplomacy and then shifted to Twi diplomacy (Twitter diplomacy). The use of digital diplomacy especially Twitter helps to build the image of a country through sending messages and then reacting to the responses given by the foreign publics. Many foreign ministries and diplomatic missions would be beneficial in collecting, gathering and analyzing the views and opinions of external audiences if they could use the Twitter. Twitter could be the beginning to get in to the digital diplomacy which helps diplomats to engage in global communication.

The contemporary governments have lost their political hegemony over the flow of information and individuals have empowered their influencing ability to seek knowledge independently. Now, the competition for attention is fierce because hundreds of millions of people are addicted to social media. As a result, governments must adapt their messaging initiatives and responses to electronic platforms that operate beyond their direct control.

According to a study by Professor Richard Davis of Brigham Young University, “People who firmly follow both political blogs and traditional news media have a tendency to believe the content on blogs is more accurate and reliable. However, using social media does not replace traditional media. Most of the mainstream media have moved online to computer technology and telecommunications along with governments and organizations. It guarantees certain connectivity with the public. To be heard, diplomats and foreign services have to move online along with governments and organizations. The concept enables direct interactions and conversation. Facebook, Twitter and other social media tools, however, should not be used as the end, but the means, to realize the power of ideas where the global publics become new actors and politicians and diplomats are no longer elites.

To sum up, social media is undoubtedly a necessary channel for nations to build their brands since they offer interaction and value, and respond to interest and needs, while providing background insight. The globe became very small and the information travels fast. Events are flashed around the world as soon as they occur in words, photos, and videos through blogs, smart phones, Skype, email, YouTube, Facebook, Flickr, and Twitter. For that reason, foreign offices and diplomats must know the specific features of social media and how to efficiently use them. Governments and diplomats must resort to an effective and proactive use of social media.

2.5.2. Other media Tools

I. Email

Email is one of the electronic means of communication which helps to send and deliver message to the target receivers. It is used in many foreign ministries including within ministerial level and a ministry with other foreign actors in diplomacy. It helps organizations to send their messages including their attached documents to the target audiences. However, in the modern sense of diplomacy, email is limited to institutions rather than addressing people with the latest

information. As compared to other social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter, email is characterized by the formal nature of applying communication. It does not significantly encourage the international people to actively engage in using emails and communicating with governments or diplomats.

II. Website

Easley (2010) describes the website as one of the information network by stating World Wide Web (WWW) as a very prominent example of such a network. The growth of the Web has helped to the use of information networks by the global community. Because the Web plays a very significant role in the current information world, companies, institutions and organizations have started designing their websites to provide information to their target audiences. The growing interests of these organizations in using email services and other online services led to the formation of the Web.

The Web is an application which allows people to share information over the Internet. It was developed by Tim Berners-Lee during the period 1989-1991. Easley further describes that the original conception and design of the Web involved two central features. First, it provided a way for people to make documents easily available to anyone on the Internet, in the form of Web pages that can be created and stored on a publically accessible part of your computer. Second, it allowed a way for others to easily access such Web pages using a browser that could connect to the people on computers via the Internet and retrieve the Web pages stored there.

Government organizations particularly foreign affairs ministries create their own websites to provide basic information to the global people. They partition their organizational structure in to departments and smaller sections and provide information on the goals, objectives and responsibilities of every department. The overall organizational description can be managed by using Web. National image aims first at informing the international community with basic goals and uses positive influencing communication strategies. Thus, the Web can serve as a very important media tool in delivering information to people who like to access a certain ministry's services. It also creates an interaction system between companies and users because most organizations leave their addresses on the website.

III. Cultural tools, language teaching, scholarship granting

Countries also implement different strategies in achieving their own foreign policy objectives. Most scholars argue that there are two ways of implementing a foreign policy: Hard power and soft power. The hard power is a fierce way which uses military and sanctions over other countries. Before the Cold War, countries used their military power to conquer and expand their territories or for the purpose of resource exploitation in other sovereign nations. Nevertheless, the use of hard power no longer applies in the modern diplomacy and international relation.

Due to the impact of globalization, states have started to use soft power instead of the hard power which dismantles a state's sovereignty. These soft powers mainly include diplomatic communication strategies such as negotiation, public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy. As a result, different countries started to use diplomacy as the best tool in the contemporary international relations and communication between or among sovereign states. The opening of cultural institutes in different countries transfers values of nations to others which finally try to influence the public opinion.

For instance, the Goethe Institute of Germany, the British Council, the Chinese Cultural Institutes, the Italian Cultural Institute and other countries' cultural institutions made themselves available in many parts of the world. They largely involve in language teaching, and cultural orientations to the people in other countries. It is also believed that these institutions also spy and investigate the public perceptions to achieve their own national interests in host countries. These institutions are soft power methods to inform the values and culture of their own to the countries they host them. They have a very strong power to influence the perceptions and attitudes of the international publics which ultimately contribute for the effective implementation of their own foreign policies.

There are also many countries who are highly engaged in promoting the cultural values of their nations. Many diplomatic missions of different countries promote cultural values organizing through bazaars, forums, seminars, panel discussion and other shows to capitalize a nation's values. Diplomats who base in foreign missions are extremely busy in branding their country's good culture to other nations. They conduct different types of cultural campaigns in order to inform global people and change the bad attitude towards their culture. For example, China's

hosting of mega events like Olympic helps to promote the Chinese culture and other values. Not only government officials of china, but also individual's involvement in and participation at mega events stand out as the leading predicator of developing positive attitude in the eyes of the global community.

Other public diplomacy tools and strategies used by many countries especially those developed is the granting of scholarship for global students. This is another way of finding out the perceptions of people about that country and teaching the culture and other values of the nation in the form of academics. Many European and American universities grant scholarship mainly to students in developing countries and teach their ideologies. The granting of such scholarships actually benefit those students in getting better education, but helps those universities largely the nations in spreading their way of life, doctrines and good images to the world.

Generally, the image that people have on another country does really matter for the growth of countries. That is why states spending a lot of resources to building their images in addressing the international public. To address this, we need to first learn how other nations perceive and learn about other nations. Boulding (1956) also states that individual behavior is highly dependent on national image. Personal direct experience or a visit combined with news on mass media (Television, Radio, newspaper, Internet) reporting of on a country contribute much for the creation of public images. Media images provide basic frames (framing theory) for how individuals will judge the actions and activities of other countries. Taylor and et.al, (2012) state that many state-owned media attempt to disseminate powerful message to the international community.

2.6. Public Diplomacy and the Challenges of Nation-Branding

The other concept in relation to public diplomacy discussion is nation-branding or nation re-branding in the marketing discipline. Nation branding practices require a much greater and coordinated effort than public diplomacy. To clearly look at their scope of application, Andrlic (2012) identifies that practitioners are the initiators of public diplomacy, whereas branding requires the mobilization of all the forces of a nation that can contribute to the promotion of the good image to the global community. The above public diplomacy tools used for nation branding or image building are not the only tasks of diplomats in public diplomacy, but also involves an

integrated effort of the other stakeholders. Andrić compares the two concepts: nation-branding and public diplomacy are sisters under the skin, and this explains why foreign ministries in a great variety of countries have expressed an interest in branding.

Simon Anholt (2008) states communication with foreign publics is more than anything else a matter of applying the principles to international relations. If public diplomacy and nation branding discourses are separated discourses, a country's image will be distorted because the two are not inseparable. They are different but not entirely dissimilar responses to the increased salience of countries' identities and also to globalization's effect of international homogenization.

The main challenge for many governments in branding their nations is not related to the techniques of branding, but integrating their nations first. Nation branding becomes successful when the citizens of a country live their brands or good images. Anholt (2013) substantiates as follows:

Nation branding occurs when public speaks to public; when a substantial proportion of the country-not just civil servants and paid figureheads-gets behind the strategy and lives it out in their everyday livings with the outside world (p.38).

The main feature of national branding projects is their holistic approach. The language of nation branders resembles the 'can-do' approach from the practice of marketing and the clarity of strategic vision from the corporate world. It is hard to deny that the idiom of branding is 'cool' and promising, and branding has particularly attracted countries with a weak international image or a reputation that leaves much to be desired. It is looked upon favorably in a number of transition countries and also among the very small and 'invisible' nations. As Anholt states: 'Brand management is often, as we know, something quite humble: the cautious and slow-moving husbandry of existing perceptions. It is a process as unglamorous as it is not scandalous and, not coincidentally, hard stuff to get journalists excited'. Second, nation-branding accentuates a country's identity and reflects its aspirations, but it cannot move much beyond existing social realities. The art of branding is often essentially about reshaping a country's self-

image and molding its identity in a way that makes the re-branded nation stand out from the pack. Crucially, it is about the articulation and projection of identity.

In the new public diplomacy approaches, branding and public diplomacy are in fact largely complementary. They are also likely to be more successful if they are seen as long-term approaches rather than seen as being dominated by the issues of the day. But instead of aiming at the projection of identity, public diplomacy is fundamentally different from branding in that it is first of all about promoting and maintaining smooth international relationships. In an international environment that is characterized by multiple links between civil societies and the growing influence of non-governmental actors, public diplomacy reinforces the overall diplomatic effort in the sense that it strengthens relationships with non-official target groups abroad. Interestingly, the modus operandi of the new public diplomacy is not entirely different from the public relations approach. Many writers recommend that it is very important for practitioners to bestow some time in identifying and building relationship; otherwise, they will forever be caught in the reactive mode of addressing immediate problems with no long-term vision or strategic efforts coordination. It is like being trapped in a leaky boat: If you spend all your time bailing and none of it rowing, you will never get to shore.

Chapter Three: Research Method and Methodology

3.1. Introduction

This research explores the practice of strategic communication in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia in promoting the national image of a country. In doing so, the study assesses the practices and identifies the challenges and prospects of the Ministry in applying strategic communication. To this end, this section discusses the methodological approach, data gathering methods and sampling technique.

The study employed qualitative research methodology because qualitative methods of data collection and analysis are deemed the best options to get opinions and attitudes of respondents for the study. It also helps to describe individuals' beliefs, perceptions and experiences. Yin (2011) states that qualitative research differs because of its ability to represent the views and perspectives of the participants in a study. In addition, this methodology is beneficial as it depends on a variety of sources to get consolidated evidence about the issue under study. Yin (2011) also argues for the benefit of qualitative data collection and analysis as follows:

Qualitative research strives to collect, integrate, and present data from a variety of sources of evidence as part of any given study. The variety will likely follow from a real-world setting and its participants. The complexity of the field setting and the diversity of its participants are likely to warrant the use of interviews and observations and even the inspection of documents and artifacts. (p. 9).

Thus, qualitative methodology is helpful in order to get data on perception issues by involving different sources. Mack (2005) also consolidates the use of qualitative research method below:

The strength of qualitative research is its ability to provide complex textual descriptions of how people experience a given research issue. It presents a variety of information about the "human" side of an issue, i.e., the often contradictory behaviors, beliefs, opinions, emotions, and relationships of individuals (P.21).

The analysis towards the use of communication strategy in building Ethiopia's image is based on the collected primary and secondary data. In each part of the analysis, multiple specific research methods will be used to match different cases in the thesis.

Employing qualitative research methods, the researcher shall undertake detail investigative assessment of both primary and secondary sources to identify the roles of strategic communication for national image building. Semi- structured method that is an in-depth interview is the major method of data collecting tool. Purposive sampling is predominantly used to collect data from the primary sources.

3.2. Data Gathering Method and Process

The major data gathering technique in the study is an in-depth interview. Practitioners on public diplomacy and national image building areas of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia were interviewed in detail. According to Mack et al, (2005), in-depth interview is important for gathering data on individuals' personal histories, perceptions, and experiences, predominantly when sensitive topics are being explored. Mack et al (2005) also strengthens the reason behind the use of an in-in-depth interview as follows.

The point behind the use of an in-depth interview during qualitative research is the need to garner the view and perspective of the participant about the issue under investigation. Accordingly, such data collecting method is indispensable for it allows the researcher to probe and ask the participant follow up questions hinging on his or her response in order to glean the clear picture of his or her thinking on the given research topic (p,29).

Mack further explains the benefit of using open-ended questions during an interview in an exploratory qualitative research for it gives participants the opportunity to respond in their own words, rather than forcing them to choose from fixed answers, as quantitative methods do.

Among the 15 Directorate Generals of the Ministry, only two DGs (the Public Diplomacy DG and the Office of the Spokesperson) are highly mandated to promote the image of the country for both domestic and international community as well. As a result of the responsibility given to these DGs, the researcher chose ten practitioners who work in these offices for an in-depth interview. Conducting an in-depth interview with most of the practitioners who had the chance to work in Ethiopia's embassies and consulates also helped the researcher in getting data from a wide range perspective. The interview was made with reference to national image building and the practice of strategic communication in the Ministry.

In-depth interviews with a total of 10 diplomatic and communication practitioners' were conducted with individuals including experts, diplomats, Directors and Directorate Generals in two departments of MoFA. The interview included not only junior diplomats but also Directors and Directorate Generals in the Ministry so as to get additional essential information. In addition to the personal interview, the Ministry's related documents such as agreements, reports, the Foreign Policy, proclamations, and its website are further explored.

The researcher, in the first place, formulated the interview questions in a semi-structured way in the English language. For the sake of easy communication, those questions were also translated into Amharic version. The researcher was free to change the sense of the questions according to the situation of the interview although the researcher prepared the questions for the in-depth interview. During each individual in-depth interview, note was taken properly. Besides, the individual responses of the interview were recorded via the help of a digital audio recorder in order to support the note taken and to avoid some elements that might have been missed during the note-taking process.

Furthermore, the researcher managed to get valuable information from the interviewees as he kept on probing and asking follow up questions. So, the semi-structured questions designed lead to initiate further relevant questions based on the interviewees' response thereby contributing further sense to the analysis part of the study. In the analysis part of the research, the researcher was told by the interviewee not to mention any of their names and other personal traits for the sake of privacy.

3.3. Sources of Data

The researcher used both primary and secondary sources in the study. The main data collecting instrument for this research is an in-depth interview and hence the researcher has conducted in-depth interviews with various primary sources. The sources interviewed for the research have experiences in communication and public diplomacy activities which range from a junior diplomat to Directorate General in the MoFA mostly in Public Diplomacy DG. To cross check and enhance the validity of data, secondary sources are also used.

The primary sources of data for this study are public diplomacy and communication professionals who work at different levels of the Ministry. An in-depth interview, using semi-

structured questions, was conducted to get substantive data valuable for the study. The interviewees have different levels of educational background, experience and positions in the Ministry.

Regarding the use of secondary sources, the researcher conducted an analysis of documents such as the FDRE constitution, the Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and Strategies, public diplomacy and communication manuals and strategies, articles, reports and commentaries. As Prior (2004) mentioned, documents are put forward for consideration in schemes of social research and are approached in terms of what they contain and the focus is primarily on the language embodied in the documents as a medium of thought or expression. The researcher used such secondary sources/ documents because the Ministry also used written medium to promote the image of the country. Among the Ministry's print media outlets, 'Diplomaciachin' (ዲፕሎማሲያዊ ጽሑፍ) magazine, 'A Week in the Horn' online weekly publication, reports, articles and commentaries are some of them which were referred to support the main tool of data collection.

Generally, the primary and secondary data were collected at different times and presented in statement form of qualitative data presentation. Such data are also integrated and analyzed in a way that can answer the crafted research questions and meet the stated objectives of the study.

3.4. Sampling Method

As to the sampling method, the researcher used purposive sampling technique to identify key informants from a large population in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. According to Kothari (2004), this sampling method comprises purposive selection of particular units of the universe for constituting a sample which represents the universe. The researcher purposively and selectively approached those diplomats, Directors, and Director Generals who are supposed to be representative of practitioners in the communication and diplomacy fields. The major reason for the selection of those key informants is the professional experience and skills they have on the public diplomacy and communication discipline. Their professional work experience and skills at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ethiopia's missions abroad would help get diverse and relevant data for the study.

According to Oliver (2012), purposive sampling is a kind of non-probability sampling in which decisions vis-à-vis the individuals to be included in the sample are taken by the researcher, based upon a variety of criteria which may consist of specialist knowledge of the research issue, or capacity and willingness to participate in the research. Some types of research design require researchers taking a decision about the individual participants who would be most likely to contribute appropriate data, both in terms of relevance and depth.

Therefore, diplomats and Directors and Directorate Generals at different positions in the Ministry were chosen with the complete discretion of the researcher for the researcher thought that these chosen sources of data are representative samples of the population.

Chapter Four: Research Analysis and Findings

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and findings of the study. The main purpose of this part is to assess the practice of strategic communication for national image building in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In this connection, the researcher used codes in place of the respondents' names to keep their privacy. These codes are a combination of letters and numbers. For instance, I1 and I2 are equivalent to Interviewee 1 and Interviewee 2 respectively. The letter 'I' stands for the word 'Interviewee' and the numbers simply represent the interviewee. Thus, the data obtained through an in-depth interview will be presented and analyzed in light of the research objective.

4.2. Roles of Strategic Communication for Building the Image of a Nation

Strategic communication for image building of a nation is a critical element in the foreign policy of any country. According to a senior diplomat (I1_ anonymous) in the Ministry, the foreign policy of Ethiopia focuses on economic diplomacy. He stated, “the country had faced a severe famine in the previous years; as a result, many lost their lives. The famine that occurred in 1983 has painted the country’s image black in the eyes of the international community even by mentioning the country’s name with the word ‘famine’ in Oxford dictionary until recently” (Personal interview, September 24, 2017). This was actually an undeniable fact that the words ‘drought’ and ‘famine’ have been closely attached to the name Ethiopia.

The Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and Strategy (2005) document also consolidates that any governments strive to build and manage their national good images by using strategic communication in their own foreign policies. In their foreign policy, building and managing their good image is among the prior objectives. According to this document, one of the foundations of the Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy Strategy of Ethiopia is the national pride and prestige. This element serves as the basis of the foreign policy. Presenting the arguments of many people about national pride, the foreign policy document states why Ethiopia is proud of it as follows:

We are proud that we are a people that never succumbed to colonialism and the only nation in Africa to have remained independent. Rightly so, we also deservedly take

pride in our historical heritage whose creativity has been much appreciated and proud civilization, it now trails far behind in the long list of countries when it comes to development (Source: Foreign Affairs and National Security Strategies, P. 9, 2002).

Here, the policy gives directions as a basis for foreign relations by praising the country which did not give hand in Africa for external aggressor. In addition, the historical heritages are manifestations of the national image that credits the previous generation for their patriotic struggle.

The other issue discussed in this document is the impact of migration of Ethiopians to different countries and the bad image that is created over the country. The issue of migration has been influencing the image of Ethiopia for several years. Here, the researcher looks the repentance of the government to renew its ruined image by famine, drought, migration, etc. In this policy document, there is a statement which supports this idea saying “.....so, while we are proud of our heritage, we are also ashamed of the current state of the country.”

To avoid all the above-mentioned national humiliating factors, the government has been engaging in economic diplomacy for more than two decades. Developing the economy of the country has been the key activities of the foreign relations of the country, for example, in attracting foreign direct investment and tourists. Nevertheless, this seems difficult to let it happen looking at the status quo though there are progresses on the economy. The country lacks coordinated activity in promoting the image of the nation as many countries try to manage their national image promotional activities by using strategic communication. The Chinese government, for example, has taken a number of proactive steps in the past to improve the country's national image. According to Wang, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) established an overseas Propaganda Department in 1991 to directly confront attacks on China's national image by publishing a series of white papers.

In Ethiopia, let alone responding to the attacks, there is no even a competent government body that crafts a national message for promoting the country's image. The researcher suggests the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to draft its own strategic communication directives that help to develop a national message and promotion strategies in order that the bad images will be washed

out and the good image will be maintained. The directives might base the foreign policy document since the issue of national image and its strategies are specifically mentioned in it.

Thus, strategic communication is highly noteworthy for building the image of a nation. The way countries use strategic communication may differ from one another. A senior diplomat (I6) in PD mentioned the case of America and China in deploying strategic communication in their foreign policy for building their nations. He adds that America's use of strategic communication differs from China in that it uses an outward-looking propaganda. The US foreign policy centers on the values and life style of the American people and ultimately urges the rest of the world to follow America's values as the right and blessed ones. China's foreign policy, however, follows an inward looking communication strategy which aims at the building and promotion of the Chinese unique culture, values, and ideologies. The Chinese strategy has highly invested in their people in acculturating the values.

Bringing this practice to Ethiopia, the current foreign policy of Ethiopia follows an inward-looking policy or an inside-out approach like that of the Chinese. The policy states that

...the policy and strategy bases itself on the internal challenges and vulnerability to threats that have an influence on our survival, and its focus is on tasks that should be carried out with in the country. Our direction is to move from the internal to what is external, doing our homework first, thereby enabling us to identify our shortcomings (Source: FANSPS 2005: P, 3).

The purpose of this approach is to work on the domestic resources and values intensively and ask for a hand from the other nations in case of scarcity. The idea of strategic communication and its application in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs seems promising because it precedes building the attitude of the domestic people and follows informing the international community regarding the national values of the country.

However, a diplomat (I1) in the Public Diplomacy DG stated the freshness of the practice of strategic communication in the Ministry.

The idea of strategic communication is a very new concept which has not broken the shelves in the 21st century especially to developing countries like Ethiopia.

From the establishment of the department, Public Diplomacy in was named Press and the Media Section in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The idea of public diplomacy was introduced very late compared to other departments in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia. Thus, the department is an emerging one and there is a little practice of strategic communication in the Ministry (Personal Interview, September 08, 2017).

According to the informant I3 (anonymity maintained), strategic communication, as a one-step advancement from the conventional means of communication, has several roles in countries like Ethiopia which has carried a black picture in the eyes of the global community as it can be remembered in the 1984 severe drought in the country. To trash out such a negative image the practice of strategic communication at the national level is a necessary condition for the country's sustained progress.

A senior diplomat I1 (anonymity maintained) also explained the government's efforts in refurbishing the country's bad image for longer years; however, the practice of strategic communication at the Ministry's level is low so that it has brought little changes on the image of a nation. As a result, he states the country's need for foreign aid, development partners, foreign direct investment and other technical assistance from developed nations.

The study shows the significance of strategic communication for a country demanding for developed nations' assistance. Strategic communication can pave the way either for aid or trade or both. The Ministry shall take the relevance of communication in winning the hearts and minds of the international community before going for aid or trade. The previous image of the country has to be renewed. It has now become a mandatory task to work on strategic communication and image building in the country to achieve the country's development goals. There has to be a serious work in refashioning Ethiopia's image in the global venue to realize what the country wishes for.

To fill the gap between the global perception towards Ethiopia and the efforts done so far at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry has done little compared to what has been expected. To put the roles of strategic communication in image building activity, the researcher abridged the views of the practitioners as follows.

The first role of strategic communication is to curve the dominant past stories of the country. According to a diplomat at the PD DG (I1), the dominant story of the country is the big image with regard to poverty. In fact, the global community views the country as one of the poorest nations in the world. A senior diplomat (I3) who was in Europe in the Ethiopian Embassy surprisingly stated that there are people in Europe who do not even recognize the name 'Ethiopia'.

He added,

When diplomats in the Embassy participate in receptions and other international conferences in Brussels, they communicate with the participants including with diplomatic corps of different countries. At those events, the diplomats introduce themselves including where they are from, i.e. Ethiopia. That is when their counterparts begin asking where Ethiopia is (Personal interview, October 04, 2017).

In fact, this happened due to the absence of full practice of strategic communication at the national level in washing out the past stories and builds the image of the country. The researcher also doubts that the Ministry sets up a modern (digital) way of strategic communication for the promotion of the country's image.

Strategic communication for image building purpose in the Ministry also helps to cope up with the global dynamism. In the 21st century, the world is changing due to the increasing tension in terrorism, migration, climate change, pandemic diseases and weapons of mass destruction. The use and practice of strategic communication in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs help to reduce the level of tension in the dynamism of the globe. A diplomat I1 (anonymity maintained) underscored the importance of strategic communication in public diplomacy as follows.

Using public diplomacy and strategic communication helps not only to talk the talk but also to walk the talk. Strategic communication is like talking the walk walking the talk is like public diplomacy (Personal interview, September 08, 2017).

Public diplomacy, which entails strategic communication, has become a key tool in building the image of nations. Indeed, the trend of state-to-state diplomatic relations between or among countries has shifted to people-to-people relation since the 1950s. Thus, to strengthen the

relationship between two or more countries, their people also engage in the process. This process leads to the use and practice of public diplomacy and strategic communication in foreign affairs ministries.

Providing balanced responses to individuals and media organizations who sell information on pseudo-realities is the other role of strategic communication in national image building. This role is linked to media organizations which paint the image of a nation black by taking a single event and generalize hastily to the whole trait of a nation. A public diplomat (I9) at MFA mentioned the importance of deploying strategic communication at the ministerial level for building the image of Ethiopia taking media organizations which propagate their own ideologies to other silent nations.

There are many international media organizations which release information, news or reports for or against Ethiopia. Multilateral organizations like the UN, World Bank, and the African Union are strategically important for a country's development if there are positive achievements in different aspects. There are also organizations such as the Auckland Institution which paints countries like Ethiopia black by always criticizing negatively and hardly accepting the positive achievements of different internal and external affairs. So it is mandatory for a country to respond to these organizations by providing a well-crafted message in strategic communication (Personal interview, April 28, 2017).

Generally, the concept of strategic communication would truly help in the areas of the above-mentioned ideas (refurbishing bad image, coping up with the global dynamism and responding to media organizations' reports) in the 21st Century. Using strategic communication helps to control the media which indirectly relate to controlling the hearts and minds of the global community.

Diplomatic communication in the contemporary foreign relations does not only stick to government to government, but also includes non-state actors such as international organizations, civil society's pressure groups etc. The digital world has made the communication between or among states and non-state actors easier in international relations. While working on the foreign policy, a foreign affairs ministry needs to include all these actors. One of the elements included in a foreign policy is national image building. Particularly to Ethiopia, it is mandatory to include

image building in the foreign policy because much has not been done towards disseminating information regarding the country's endowed culture, resources, values and traditions. It is, therefore, very important to work on strategic communication for the promotion of national image and realizing national development in every aspect.

A senior diplomat-I2 (anonymity maintained) at the Ministry consolidated the role of strategic communication and national image for development as follows.

A country's favorable image and reputation around the globe have become more important than its territory, access and raw materials. Nations' image is a very important tool for realizing development, in all perspectives, of a nation. It is worth recognizing that national image is not solely dependent upon media reports or policy speeches, but also associated with a country's products and services (Personal interview, October 03, 2017).

A country's positive or negative image in any foreign media can also bring considerable influence on public attitudes toward a particular country. As Anholt (2008) states an enhanced national image provides a more favorable atmosphere for tourism, international trade, international job market, and good political relations between countries.

The diplomat (I2) also adds that increased negative media coverage of a nation results in more negative attitudes toward a country. People all over the world begin to develop a negative perception and attitude towards a negatively branded and reported country. Thus, media coverage was linked with a country's public attitudes toward overseas countries. Specifically, the foreign publics believe in the reporting and coverage of media which forms grater negative perceptions towards countries.

In this study, it was found out the roles of strategic communication in national image building Vis a Vis a country's overall growth within the framework of communication, diplomacy and international relations. The study concludes that an image building activity supported by strategic communication becomes successful particularly by taking three major pillars of growth. The practice of strategic communication in image building helps to increases foreign direct investment (FDI), attracts tourism, and strengthens diplomatic relations.

4.3. Ways of Implementing Strategic Communication for Image Promotion

Strategic communication is significant to anchor on the values of a nation while there is still a changing of the global dynamism. For a public diplomat I4, strategic communication is a new approach in MFA which came with the idea of public diplomacy and communication. Due to its novelty, the practice of the strategic communication in the Ministry has been poor since its inception. He adds that

The practice communication in the Ministry is not strategic but conventional. The term 'strategic' actually does not simply mean communicating with the target audience by providing 'quick fixes' such as informing the audience by coping and pasting the success stories (propaganda) of a government in different aspects (political, economic, social, cultural etc.). Rather a communicator should give information that could be tested through time (Personal interview, August 12, 2017)

To achieve a successful national image promotion, strategic communication is one of the mandatory elements to get practiced in the Ministry and other stakeholders. The conventional way of communicating with the international community has brought less result in the country. To explain the conventional method, the Ministry plans annually the objectives and specific activities of national image building and cascades the plan to Ethiopia's missions/ embassies abroad. The Ministry does not highly involve in the image promotion, rather collects the reports of embassies in the area at different times and evaluates their performances. It does not craft a message that considers the contemporary stature of the country in promoting the image of the nation.

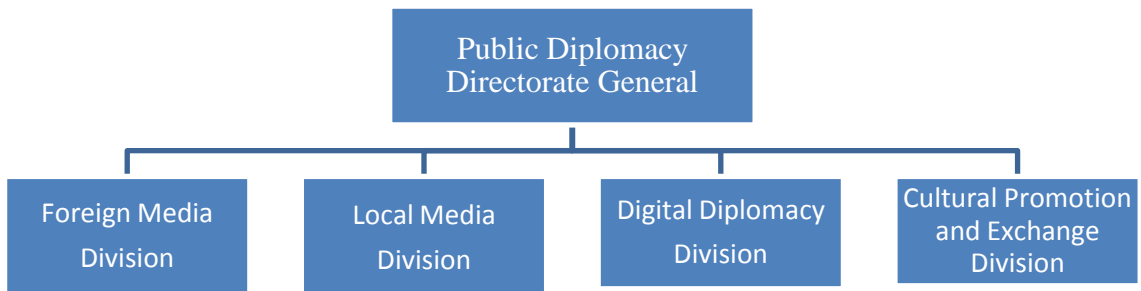
According to a public diplomat (I1), strategic communication in public diplomacy path should not be similar to the path of propaganda. He adds that in propaganda, one can use political manipulative words which are very politically correct so that a government pursues its constituencies to get trust among its subjects. However, strategic communication in public diplomacy comprises viable, reliable and trustworthy information that lets you inform, persuade and influence a government's constituency. To create a digital consistent public in any country, nothing is necessary, but strategic communication.

4.4. Roles of the Public Diplomacy DG in MFA Vis-a'-Vis National Image Building

Among all the Directorate Generals of the Ministry, the Public Diplomacy and Communication DG is the central body that involves in national image building activities. In addition to the DGs, there are around 57 Ethiopian embassies and consulates (missions) all over the world. One of the key duties that bind all these departments is the issue of building the country's image. Among the DGs in the Ministry, it is the Public Diplomacy DG that manages and monitors the overall activities of Ethiopia's missions abroad and other DGs in the Ministry with regard to image building.

The public diplomacy DG in the Ministry is the pillar of every communication and image building activities that are undertaken both in the headquarter and missions abroad. The other responsible department is the Spokes Person Office of the Ministry. Public diplomacy and Communication DG, together with the Spokesperson office, include the digital diplomacy mainly the website to work on image building aspects. To observe the roles of the PD DG, it is good to understand the organizational structure of the Ministry particularly the Public Diplomacy DG.

Sub-divisions of Public Diplomacy



According to a public diplomat (I8), the foreign media division is tasked with making international news analysis and disseminating it to the wider public including the audience in the Ministry and missions. The news might comprise both bilateral and multilateral events such as visits by Head of States/ Governments, decisions and resolutions of the United Nations on different issues and its effect towards the foreign policy of Ethiopia. Thus, the foreign media

division of PD makes awareness on major events of the country, the Horn of Africa (HoA) and the globe to cooks out news on what international media report to the world.

To promote the image of a nation, informing the target audience about the national values is the preliminary step in image building process. Within this division the diplomat (I7) states that Public Diplomacy DG has an online weekly publication called “A Week in the Horn”. The name of the publication signifies the reporting of major weekly developments in the Horn of Africa from the beginning and now expands its scope to the continent and globe as well. Many embassies of various countries which are based in Addis Ababa are very consistently contented to the Ministry’s weekly news.

The dissemination of information is one of the vital elements of strategic communication in image building processes. Thus, the foreign media of the PD creates an understanding/awareness between or among the Ministry and the mass audience. Directly or indirectly, the foreign media is engaged with image building tasks while making news analysis and dissemination it to the international community.

As to I9, the Public Diplomacy DG is the one which coordinates the promotional activities of the image of the country. One of the ways of using strategic communication for promoting the country’s image is preparing a talking point on current affairs and disseminating it to the missions abroad. This helps to avoid discrepancies among the missions in promoting the image of the country. The talking point lists out main issues of an event and the position of the government. The other way of implementing strategic communication is the preparation of the Week In the Horn online publication and disseminating it to all diplomatic missions, continental and international organizations which base in Addis Ababa. From the view of the respondent, the above two ways are crucial for informing both the domestic and foreign audience. In fact, providing information to these audiences brings an influence on their opinion and attitude towards the image of the country.

A senior diplomat (I3) also adds that the other role of foreign media is dispatching news on economic diplomacy events. Ethiopia’s foreign policy is highly anchored on economic diplomacy so the public diplomacy involves in business forums, meetings and conferences on agriculture, FDI (Foreign direct investment), banking and other financial and economic issues. It

is highly keen on disseminating information to the digital audience. Furthermore, the foreign media division is also engaged in tourism promotion, culinary (food) diplomacy, music, art and other values of the country or the nation.

The second division of PD, digital diplomacy, is tasked with the designing of state of the art videos that can support the information being disseminated. This includes graphically rendered photos, info graphics, and other graphically endowed information. A diplomat working in the digital diplomacy section (I7) stated the relevance of this unit for image building activities in the DG. He said,

Without the digital diplomacy, it is difficult to promote the image of the nation in the contemporary world. The infotainment industry is booming so that the digital diplomacy has the role in providing information to the digital audience. Besides, this section surfs for information that has an impact on the country's foreign policy on the internet. After surfing the information, it crafts messages that are palatable to the audience (Personal interview, October 24, 2017).

However, the use of digital media tools in Ethiopia's MFA is at infancy stage by which among the 30 digital instruments, Ethiopia is working only on WWW, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube and Pinterest. Thus, the other role of digital diplomacy in the Ministry is to expand the use of the digital instruments so that much information can be accessed when more instruments are available. Expanding the digital instruments boosts the reachability of information to the mass audience which ultimately helps for national image building.

The third division, cultural and promotion exchange takes part in the cultural aspects of people and tries to create people to people relations. According to I1, this unit focuses on the relationship between people of different countries, cities, towns and provinces. As culture is an important element of national values, it is one of the soft means to promote the image of a nation. The country's culture can be manifested through art, dance, music, drama, film, etc. A diplomat who works in the PD DG (I8) also highlights the low performance of the unit in promoting the national image.

The fourth division is local media which is responsible for providing news for the local people. Since national image begins with the domestic people, the nation's understanding of the country might affect the national image building process. In order to build an attitude among the local constituency, strategic communication is again crucial for image promotion. If a country wants to pass its positive image from generation to generation, there has to be a hard work on the communication approaches and its effect on the local constituency. Otherwise, having good stories by itself does not grant for getting a good image. Thus, this is the reason why local media section is established in the Public Diplomacy DG. It disseminates information in local languages mainly in Amharic. This directorate also plans to reach the local audience by increasing the number of languages such as Oromifa, Tigrgna, etc.

Generally, the Public Diplomacy DG entails the following roles that are directly related to the national image building. These are disseminating information to both local and foreign constituencies, monitoring and evaluating the activities of the Ministry and overseas missions. The above-mentioned tasks are also tasks of other Directorate Generals in the Ministry, but particular to public diplomacy.

4.5. The Level of Practicing Strategic Communication in MFA

There is a huge communication gap between the MFA and the missions abroad in practicing public diplomacy and strategic communication. This is created due to a number of reasons such as lack of competent and skilled manpower and the presence of routine works that have no relation with image building. According to a diplomat (I1), veteran diplomats in the Ministry and missions are not enthusiastic about the public and digital diplomacy; in other words, they are allergic to the information communication technology. The establishment of Public Diplomacy DG was preceded by another department called Press and Media. Thus, most of the informants agreed there is still a traditional practice towards the public diplomacy and digital diplomacy among the veteran diplomats who base both in missions and headquarter. This has stunted the growth of public diplomacy and digital diplomacy in the missions abroad for building the image of the nation at large.

For a diplomat at the Ministry (I3), Ethiopia's diplomatic missions abroad have less emphasis towards the use of the practice of public diplomacy. Among the 57 overseas diplomatic missions,

only 6 to 7 missions have their own public diplomacy DG such as Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Washington DC and the United Kingdom. Apart from this, there are diplomatic missions who run public diplomacy by creating their own Facebook pages and Twitter account.

In addition to the less emphasis given to public diplomacy, most of the missions have no capacity to practice public diplomacy for creating a digital presence and promoting Ethiopia's image. This depends on the attitudes, knowledge, and skills of the head of the missions (Ambassadors) and the diplomats who are working in overseas. According to I1, Ethiopia's Embassy in the UK is the best example which is keen on digitalizing the activities of public diplomacy and strategic communication for building the image of the nation.

On the side of the Ministry, the same reasons (less emphasis and lack of skilled practitioners) apply to the poor practice of public diplomacy and strategic communication which weigh much on building the image of the country. I1 also mentioned that the Ministry surprisingly has *'diplomats who are allergic to information communication technology such as using Facebook, Website, Twitter, etc'*. From the informants' view, it is clear to say there are no technocrats who can avail digital presence in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Ministry cannot reach all diplomatic missions here in Addis in the form of new technology that can help build the image of Ethiopia. Another diplomat I6 stated that there are times the Minister of Foreign Affairs briefs all ambassadors of diplomatic missions, regional and international organizations' representatives who base their residence in Addis Ababa. According to him, the briefing is a good thing, but the Ministry has to arrange other events that can promote the country's values.

Generally, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs does not practice an enhanced specific communication strategies, rather traditional (conventional) approaches are used to build the image of the nation. It has not put them in place so far due to various reasons such as lack of technocrats and poor access of technological devices both in the Ministry and missions abroad. The Ministry has not crafted specific communication strategies to promote the image of the country. According to a diplomat B, the ongoing practices of the Ministry in using strategic communication for promoting the national images are categorized into three methods.

Beyond this, the researcher assessed related documents in order to crosscheck the validity of the data and reach a solid analysis. Among the objectives set in the foreign policy document,

removing the earlier bad image (such as poverty, famine....) through diplomacy is the one that is given due attention in the Ministry. As a result of this, the Public Diplomacy Board was established in 2010 and started developing communication strategies manuals and documents.

The researcher found that these manuals are outdated and have not been updated since 2010. One of the indicators for this is the exclusion of digital diplomacy as a new way of promoting the image of the country. The second indicator is the absence of clear and workable communication strategies that help to promote the national image. Based on this finding, the researcher can conclude that the Public Diplomacy Directorate General lacks an updated working manual for the promotion activities. The PD DG, therefore, needs to strategically recognize the target audience, identify appropriate channels, craft message and collect feedback in light of the digital diplomacy for the promotion activity.

Among the developed documents, the BSC lists out the procedures of strategic communication that can promote the image of the country. These procedures follow the steps of classic communication models which entail medium, audience and message.

4.5.1. Identifying Global Media Outlets

The Ministry basically identifies global media outlets for image building purpose through its missions in different countries. These missions select appropriate media to reach the target audience. Beyond this, the Ministry also attempts to work with global media institutions which are accustomed to providing information which reflects both the positive and negative images of Ethiopia. Thus, selecting appropriate media combined with working closely with familiar media helps to strategically communicate in building the image of Ethiopia.

Nevertheless, according to a diplomat II, there is lack of consistency in working with those new and familiar mainstream media organizations. The interviewee also added that Ethiopia's missions do not work with new media to address the audience rather use frequently the same channel and media to promote the image of the nation. Most of the time, the missions choose the community media channels (radio) to reach the larger diaspora. The researcher identified that the use of such traditional media outlets no longer helps the Ministry in promoting the country's image. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs needs to work further in searching for the new media outlets such as the digital diplomacy so as to reach its target audiences.

4.5.2. Identifying the Target Audience

The Ministry reaches the diaspora as its target audience who resides in different corners of the world mainly in Europe, America and Australia where a larger number of diaspora live. According to I1, the Ministry and missions classify the diaspora into three categories: Proponent diaspora, opponent Diaspora (tsinfegna) and the *Mehal Safari* diaspora. The proponent diaspora actually includes those diaspora members who have a good attitude towards Ethiopia's development and the incumbent regime. The opponent diaspora, however, opposes the overall practices of the government by providing information which paints the country a black image on different social media outlets. The *Mehal Safari* are those Diasporas who are neither in favor nor against of the overall activities of the government and Ethiopia.

Thus, targeting only the proponent diaspora group does not significantly help for the promotion of the image of the country. Ethiopian embassies abroad need to also work with the 'opponent diaspora' group to increase the number of constituencies. Apart from the diaspora, the Ministry and missions have not gone a long distance in identifying other foreign audience. Embassies can, for example, arrange cultural promotion program in their own residences and invite other countries' nationals so that the promotion would be effective. Thus, specific communication strategies are crucial in addressing the diaspora and the non-diaspora audiences. The language of communication the Ministry uses also limited the number of the audience. So, to reach the wider audience, the messages have to also be crafted and disseminated in other languages as well such as in French, Spanish, Arabic, Russian, etc.

4.5.3. Crafting of Messages

According to a diplomat (I1), the practice of message crafting in missions is usually for the diaspora dubbed with the 'proponent diaspora'. On expanding communication strategies, the messages are crafted targeting only the proponent diaspora which has a bigger consequence in the country both in the short run and long run. A diplomat (I5) also strengthens the idea of targeting all types of the Diaspora.

When crafting the messages, it has to be inclusive of all the Diaspora members and this has to be lessened from the past (Personal interview, October 10, 2017).

In addition to this, the Ministry and missions have to employ various languages to address the target audiences in building the national image. English is the only medium of communication which is widely used. There are also countries that are not in favor of using English as a medium of communication such as the Middle East region countries, China and Russia.

4.6. The Practice of Message Crafting and Dissemination

The researcher has found out that there is little practice of strategic communication both in the MFA and diplomatic missions. Thus, it is logical to argue that there is no message crafting tradition in the Ministry at all. Message crafting is a very important element of strategic communication. In the Ministry, there are no standards/ criteria for message crafting; rather there is a conventional way of sending information to the missions.

A public diplomat (I1) stated,

The messages sent to the missions by different departments in the MFA are even conflicting to one another. The headquarter and Ethiopia's embassies, for example, release different messages on the same issues. Thus, there is lack of coordination among the directorate generals and the missions (Personal interview, September 08, 2017).

According to I1, there is a good beginning to consolidate uniform message crafting in MFA since recently. The Public Diplomacy DG has started to coordinate the other DGs in crafting a message and disseminating it to the target audience. This DG briefs other DGs every Monday on how to work on a uniform national image message crafting activity.

Message crafting is a necessary condition, but not a sufficient condition in strategic communication to promote the image of a nation. The crafted messages should go down to the target audience by using appropriate media. According to I9, the Ministry disseminates the messages through the conventional tools of diplomatic communication such as note verbal, memo, pouches and letters. There was also a publication of newspaper and magazine such as *Diplomaciachin* which was produced only for a year. Apart from the print media, the Ministry uses broadcast media like community media inconsistently to reach audiences. 'A Week in the

Horn' is another online publication that the Public Diplomacy DG disseminates the anchor news and events of every week.

If an institution is not strategic in its communication activities, there will be miscommunication, miscalculation, and misunderstanding among the stakeholders. This will lead to conflict that cannot be easily solved in the short period of time. Consequently, this creates an institution that has no direction in its communication plan, implementation and evaluation. There has to be a clear plan, uniform practices and objective standards that can measure the implementation of its strategic communication.

The use and practice of digital diplomacy is infant in the Ministry so far but growing faster than the previous years. Since the effect of globalization is high in countries currently, the Ministry uses social media outlets such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and Google + to reach a large number of their audiences. These days, disseminating the messages in social media outlets is more feasible in terms of time, cost and reachability to audiences.

4.7. Monitoring and Evaluation of Strategic Communication in MFA

The monitoring and evaluation of strategic communication of the Ministry are conducted weekly, monthly, quarterly, semiannually and annually. Since the Ministry and diplomatic missions plan to promote the image of the country in different aspects (tourism, investment, trade), there are time frames put to implement these activities and evaluate the execution.

Because the Public Diplomacy DG is tasked with image building roles, it monitors and evaluates the activities of both the head office and the missions. According to a public diplomat (I1), the foreign media of the PD particularly provides '*Week in the Horn*' online news, as a result, it is easy to monitor and evaluate its operation. The number of news disseminated to the audience and the collected responses are easy to quantify and measure. These monitoring and evaluation take place monthly, quarterly, semi-annually and annually. Particularly the evaluation is conducted after Ethiopia's missions overseas sent their BSC reports at the specified period of time. Based on the reports of the missions, the Ministry provides feedback for the missions. I1 also explains that this checking mechanism is held in the form of meeting though the meeting is wholly dominated by the conventional way of discussion (such as good governance) which does not

strategically identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the Ministry and missions in national image building activities.

4.8. Digital Diplomacy for National Image Promotion

The digital diplomacy particularly the social media is the biggest platform where an institution can influence the public opinion about the image of a nation in the contemporary world. The use of Facebook, Twitter and other social media outlets worths a country/ an institution in building its image. Since using digital diplomacy is not limited to geographical boundaries, an institution, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, can employ it as a strategic communication with a number of audiences worldwide.

According to I10, the use of social media in the Ministry and missions abroad was active during the tenure of Dr. Tedros Adhanom while he was the Foreign Affairs Minister of Ethiopia (2012-2016). As to a senior diplomat T (anonymity maintained), 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 and dialogue with audiences in an evolving information environment.

A senior diplomat I3also states in his article the role of digital diplomacy particularly the social media in providing information to the public as follows.

The government of Ethiopia has been focusing on comprehensive nation-building efforts. Though further research will be required to investigate the causes that lead to empowering the extreme elements in the Diaspora, the government is partly to blame for the systemic failures exhibited in our Embassies and the local media. Therefore, it is high time that the Ethiopian government aggressively pursues to engage the diaspora beyond rhetoric and provide them with up-to-date information regarding the current economic, political and social developments in Ethiopia (Source: Public diplomacy tools in Ethiopian Embassies, an article by I3).

Providing the latest information to the Diasporas helps to inform, influence and persuade the attitude. In order to inform as timely as possible, the role digital diplomacy plays is peerless. Ethiopia's Embassies abroad are supposed to be at the forefront of using the digital diplomacy

for information dissemination. The Public Diplomacy DG's assessment on the utilization of social media by the missions abroad shows that only 13 missions out of 57 use their websites, Facebook and Twitter account properly. The others have only Website, Facebook, Twitter or none of them. To put it into a percentage, 22.8% (1/5th) of the missions provide information to their audience. Regardless of the provision of substantive information by these limited missions, the overall deployment of digital diplomacy in missions is questionable.

Thus, to promote the image of the nation by providing information and influencing the public opinion, Ethiopia's missions are supposed to expand their reachability by using social media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, YouTube, etc. These tools are less costly and interactive by their nature. In connection with this, the missions should provide information to the diverse audience in different languages so that the image building activity could be effective.

4.9. Coordination of Stakeholders for Image Promotion

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia is not the only responsible institution of the country that promotes the country's image through strategic communication. Other private and government-owned institutions such as the Ethiopian Airlines, Ethiopian Tourism Organization, Ministry of Tourism and Culture, Ethiopian Investment Commission, etc. have also a role in branding Ethiopia to the international community. However, these institutions have their own communication strategies and narratives in branding and building the country's image.

As to II, there is no proper, consistent and strategic coordination between or among these institutions. Citing an example he stated,

*The Ministry of Tourism and Culture took the initiative in shifting the country's tourism brand from the **Thirteen Months of Sunshine** to **Land of Origins** in 2016. During the inauguration ceremony of the new brand at Sheraton Hotel, there were major stakeholders (including the MFA) who were put to sadness because they were not even consulted about crafting the new brand (Personal interview, September 08, 2017).*

Also, other many stakeholders were not aware of the new brand and its real meaning that denotes the country's real image. Similarly, the Ethiopian Airlines has also become one of the huge aviation academies in the Africa and the world. This institution has an enormous potential in promoting the country's image by using its local and international flight schedules. Nevertheless, the institution uses its own communication approaches to brand the same country Ethiopia.

Thus, it is possible to conclude that Ethiopia's sectoral offices and institutions have weak and disintegrated way of promoting the image of the country. Most of these institutions are not also digitalizing their promotion works; rather follow the traditional methods/ channels. Their websites are not frequently updated, graphically designed and attractive. According to II, the major causes for these are lack of technocrats, low understanding of digital and public diplomacy. Generally, this has stunted the coordination among the sectoral institutions which are the stakeholders in the promotion of national image Ethiopia.

4.10. The Involvement of the Diaspora in Image Building

According to current information from the Diaspora DG of the Ministry, there are around 3million Ethiopians who reside in different parts of the world. Though these Diasporas have a number of pushing and pulling factors to live out of Ethiopia, they can play a positive and constructive role in building the image of the country at their country of residences. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the major actor in dealing with Ethiopian nationals (including the Diasporas) abroad.

According to a diplomat (II) in Public Diplomacy DG, the Diasporas are classified into three political categories: The proponents, opponents and neutral (mehal safari) diaspora. The Ministry of Foreign and its diplomatic missions have not gone far in involving the diaspora for national image promotion due to several reasons such as the country's instability, the negative pressure of the diaspora, and lack of communication skills. Crafting a message is highly significant for approaching the Ethiopians abroad which helps to involve the diaspora in image building activities. Ethiopians who reside in different parts of the world can be the ambassadors of their country if strategically communicated. The negative stereotype of the diaspora to the political aspect of the country could be curved when they are provided information that is genuine,

reliable and consistent. Besides, the government of Ethiopia has a lot of homework at the domestic level in fixing conflicting political issues.

4.11. The Challenges

➤ Limited use of social media outlets

Though the Ministry, compared to other 200 countries' Foreign Ministry institutions, ranked 3rd in Africa and 76th in the world in using digital diplomacy in 2016, it has used only Facebook and Twitter for image building purposes for long years. The parameter for such a study is on the number of social media outlets that countries (Foreign ministries) use for diplomacy. However, there are a number of social media tools such as Google+, Pinterest, YouTube, Flickr, etc. to expand the reachability of the Ministry to the wider audience so that the image of the country can be built at a large scale.

➤ Domestic volatility

The domestic situation of a country has a big influence on a country's image. According to a senior expert in PD DG (I6), Ethiopia is one of the fastest growing economies in the world that tried to negate the past bad image with a new image. He also adds the country's economy is showing progress from time to time.

However, the political and human right issues are still provoking revolt by the domestic people and the diaspora. The UN Human rights is also watching it seriously, as a result, it releases reports of human right handling. A diplomat (I1) strengthened the idea of political instability in the country recently paints the favorable image of the country black. The current unpredictable political situation of the country is tarnishing the image it has built for a long period of time. As a result, it has become an unsolved challenge for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and missions to operate on image building activities.

➤ Website monitoring

The website of the Ministry was changed two years ago and now the INSA (Information Networking Security Agency) monitors the Ministry's website for the sake of security threats. According to a diplomat (I1) who works in PD, the Ministry's website is out of the control of it and this has extremely reduced the number of readers on the website. The informant stated,

The intervention of INSA has downsized the number of website readers of the Ministry recently. The number of readers of the website of the Ministry two years ago was thousands, but now sixty. It is daunting and depressing. The server is not here at the Ministry; rather believed at the Prime Minister's Office. Thus, this has created a challenge in website alteration, and real-time action on it. To do this, one needs to get the permission of the INSA (Personal interview, September 08, 2017).

In addition to this, the website is not compatible with smaller devices that help readers to access information very easily. This resulted in the inconsistent availability of information to the readers. According to the above informant, the Ministry and even the missions abroad cannot get information on the website, let alone the external audience. This affects the institution in providing information to both the domestic and foreign audience and ultimately creates uninformed audiences who depend on social media narratives. The audiences especially Ethiopians abroad depend on unofficial, unreliable and inconsistent information on Facebook, Twitter, personal blogs and other social media stories. This disintegration of audiences creates groups based on race, religion, color, etc. which finally leads to disintegration than unity among the people of Ethiopia.

Alexa Website Ranking is website ranking institution which has a number of standards to evaluate the proper use of websites in institutions. According to this ranking institution, Ethiopia is the least country in the world currently in using website. From this, it is clear that the Ministry is in danger of its website usage. Without information communication, the Ministry and missions cannot run national image building activities. This is indeed catastrophic for the country in that it creates an information gap among its citizens in and out of the country that may lead to chaos.

An informant (I7) stated the trend of using social media as follows.

“The website and other social media use of the Ministry were active when Dr. Tedros Adhanom, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs (2012-2016) and the current Director-General of WHO, was running for the WHO Director General. The website and social media accounts had many readers and followers in which

they created a huge impact on his campaign for WHO'' (Personal interview, September 23, 2017).

From the informant's view, the use of social media had been quite active during the former Minister tenure. Adding to this, the Minister once was labeled as the 'Facebook Minister, for spending much time on the social media. The researcher also asked a follow up question whether the current minister uses social media or not. In this case the informant responded that the practice of social media by the incumbent Minister of Foreign Affairs is limited compared to the then Minister.

➤ **Message crafting**

Lack of message crafting is the other challenge in Ministry of Foreign Affairs that hinders the development of current affairs, human interest, and palatable message.

A diplomat (I1) strengthened this as follows:

Message crafting is challenging in that there is always trans nationalizations of stories such as the GERD (Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam) or 'Hidassie Gidb', good governance or 'melkam astedader', rent seeking or 'kiray sebsabi'. These stories have a clear shape and direction (Personal interview, September 08, 2017).

From the informants' view, it can be understood that the Ministry does not have an absolute right in crafting unique stories that can get into the hearts and the minds of audiences, spends its resources for transnational stories which bore audiences. The higher officials of the Ministry as well as Ambassadors in the missions are not happy to new stories by young diplomats.

The Public Diplomacy DG of the Ministry, as it is tasked with informing the global community with updated information,

➤ **Access to information**

According to a public diplomat (I1), the Internet penetration across the country, with the 3rd rank in digital diplomacy in Africa, is the lowest in the continent even less than Somalia which does not have telecommunication companies. This poor connection has affected the Ministry in gathering and analyzing global news and its effects towards the country and the region.

He also added the intervention of security agencies over the involvement of the Ministry's information accessibility as follows:

The INSA hampers or jams some of the 'unfavorable' media agencies such as ESAT and other media institutions which narrate negative stories over the country. This has created a challenge in the Ministry to balancing stories of the government and those stories called negative (Personal interview, September 08, 2017).

As the informant stated, the INSA blocks media institutions which are supposed to oppose the ruling party's political apparatus. Diplomats cannot get this information easily; as a result, diplomats become unresponsive to these media's stories. The uninformed nationals of Ethiopia, particularly the Diaspora has then become hostile to the governments' communication and image promotion activities. This directly hampers the Ministry's and mission's image promotion activities internally and externally.

➤ **Rigid bureaucracy**

The Ministry's bureaucracy does not match with the current global changing conditions that may affect the country's interest in different aspects. A diplomat in Public Diplomacy DG affirmed that a diplomat bounded by a closed and unresponsive system cannot even think out of the box, leave alone analyzing the changing global conditions and their effects towards the image of Ethiopia.

➤ **Lack of skilled manpower and human resource allocation.**

According to a senior diplomat (I10), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs lack efficient diplomats who have the skills and knowledge of strategic communication, public diplomacy and national image building. He also adds that the diplomats in Ethiopia's missions in different countries lack communication skills which help them to build the image of the country. Many of the informants also mentioned the other major factor for the absence of strategic communication for promotion of Ethiopia's image both in the Ministry and the missions abroad. This factor is the disregarding of career diplomats and the political appointment of non-diplomatic staff as ambassador or head of a mission. For I10, politically appointed ambassadors lack the basic knowledge and skills of diplomacy, rather they are appointed for political fidelity. This has

become a challenge for the Ministry and missions to promote the image of the country to the international audience.

Chapter Five: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1. Summary

The purpose of this study is to assess the practice of strategic communication for national image building in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia. The study shows that strategic communication is decisive for promoting the image of a nation. Countries use this approach in their foreign policies to brand and build their global images in that strategic communication in image building helps for attracting foreign investment, increasing tourism attraction and strengthening the relations between countries.

In the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, the concept of strategic communication is fresh let alone putting it in to practice to build the image of the country. Though the Ministry (public diplomacy in particular) is at the forefront of implementing the foreign policy, it has used routine and traditional approaches to build the image of the country for longer years. The use of strategic communication in the Ministry helps to curve the dominant past stories of the country, cope up with global dynamism, and provide balanced responses to different kinds of media reports on the country.

The Public Diplomacy DG, the responsible department of the Ministry in national image building of the country, makes international news analysis and disseminates it to the global public in the Ministry's website. It also produces a weekly publication called "A Week in the Horn" that reports major weekly events which happened in Ethiopia, the region and across the globe. In addition to the online publication, the dissemination of such information to both local and foreign audience is also through digital diplomacy tools such as Face Book, Twitter, Instagram and Pintrest. The researcher found out that the analysis and dissemination of local and international news is the major role of the Public Diplomacy DG, rather than deploying strategic communication that can brand and build the image of Ethiopia. The study also assessed this department is busy with routine activities which have less or no relation with national image building.

Crafting message, identifying target audience and selecting appropriate media are very important elements in strategic communication. Yet, the Ministry has poor practice of employing the major

elements of strategic communication which results in the presence of stagnant image of the country for longer periods. The study also found out the presence of disintegrated way of promoting the country to the international community among the responsible stakeholders. Generally, the limited use of social media outlets, domestic volatility, absence of independent website monitoring, lack of message crafting, poor internet connection, rigid bureaucracy and lack of skilled manpower are identified as challenges that hinder the Ministry's national image building activities of the country.

5.2. Conclusion

The study particularly aims at assessing the practice of the strategic communication in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia. At the Ministry, the Public Diplomacy and Communication Directorate General is highly tasked with the building of the image of a nation. According to this study finding, strategic communication in image building is one of the key pillars for the overall development of a country. A country which works on building its image can curve the attention of the international community towards its values, resources and people. Global states, giant companies (MNCs), organized tour agencies and other potential entities have the opportunity to enter and operate a business in a country with a good image.

This study generally reveals the importance of strategic communication for building the image of a developing country like Ethiopia. Strategic communication is vital currently for trade, investment and tourism promotion. However, the way the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia and the missions abroad communicate with the rest of the world including the domestic constituency highly matter for the country's image. It is found out that the role of strategic communication is peerless in promoting the national image of Ethiopia. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ethiopia's diplomatic missions in foreign countries are big stakeholders which implement the foreign policy goals and strategies. Though strategic communication plays a significant role in national image building, the Ministry and overseas missions have not been strategically promoting the country's image to the international public/ audience, rather they deploy conventional and customary practices.

The use of strategic communication at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the diplomatic missions abroad is crucial for curving the country's unfavorable image into a favorable story,

managing the foreign relations of the country in the global dynamism, and providing a balanced response to international media organizations which release reports on the country. In doing so, the country's good image brings foreign direct investment, boosts tourism and increases the credibility of the country in foreign relations with other countries.

The implementation of strategic communication begins from the crafting of national message that serves as a guide for the promotion of national image. In Ethiopia, there are different governmental and private stakeholders which promote the image of the country. However, the ways and communication approaches for promotion being implemented among the stakeholders are quite different. The Office of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Tourism and Culture, the Government Communication Affairs Office, the Ethiopian Investment Commission, Ethiopian Airlines and other stakeholders follow their own approaches in promoting the country's image. As a result, the study findings reveal that a gap exists among the stakeholders in deploying strategic communication that helps to craft a national message for promoting the image of Ethiopia.

In the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Public Diplomacy Directorate General is the active player in building the image of the country by organizing and coordinating the other Directorate Generals and Ethiopia's missions abroad. However, the researcher found that there is lack of understanding on the use of strategic communication, public diplomacy and national image in the Ministry. Though the Ministry has shown little improvement in building the capacity of the practitioners on public diplomacy and national image building areas, it lacks skilled and charismatic diplomats and ambassadors who can confidently promote the image of their country.

In relation to this, the research revealed that the head of overseas missions (ambassadors) are not far-going in promoting the country's image. The major reason for this is the presence of political appointment of non-diplomatic staff as an ambassador/ head of a mission than a career-based appointment. The study shows that most of the politically appointed ambassadors and diplomats do not have the basic knowledge of diplomacy and international relations, rather they are appointed as the head of a mission for political fidelity. This directly or indirectly impede the use of strategic communication for promoting the country's image to the global community. Thus, the level of using strategic communication might probably occur if the Ministry deploys diplomatic personnel than the appointment of politically affiliated people. This is because the

diplomatic corps is nearer to the changing global dynamism and knows where, when and how to communicate strategically with the relevant state and non-state actors such as states, the international public and bigger global corporations.

The domestic volatility of the country has become the major factor which affects the promotional activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the missions abroad. The research reveals that the current internal peace and security situation of the country is an impediment in that it multiplies the previously built favorable image of the country by zero. The presence of corruption and maladministration in the country resulted in the discontent of the citizens of the country. As a result of the dissatisfaction, the majority of the Diasporas abroad use social media to darken the image of the country in different platforms. With regard to this, the Ministry and missions have not developed a strategic communication in addressing the interest of the Diasporas, rather than labeling them as a destructive force for the country's development and the incumbent government.

The use of digital diplomacy for national image building is infant, but growing in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and missions. As one of the communication strategies, digital diplomacy helps to widen the reachability of the Ministry and missions in providing current information and influencing the attitudes of the international public. However, the Ministry and missions lack technocrat diplomats who are skilled in using the digital diplomacy for building the image of the country. The surprising issue which might contradict with this poor usage of digital diplomacy is the 2017 world report, which was held in Israel, on the deployment of digital diplomacy in foreign ministries. According to the report, the Ministry of Foreign affairs ranked 1st and 25th in Africa and the world respectively by using the digital diplomacy. However, the actual use of digital diplomacy in the Ministry is still poor and incomparable with other countries' foreign ministries, though it requires deep comparative research. The researcher believes that the Ministry needs to look itself seriously on the area and take best experiences from the other foreign ministries so as to boost the level of digital diplomacy usage.

5.3. Recommendation

As thoroughly discussed in the analysis part of the research, strategic communication plays a vital role in building the image of the nation. The good image a country is helpful in attracting foreign direct investment, boosting tourism and creating the political credibility in international relations. However, the integrated communication among the concerned stakeholders needs uniformity in promoting the country's image to the international community. Otherwise, there needs to be a central body which regulates the promotion activities of the disintegrated stakeholders.

On top of this, the central aspect of strategic communication is national image building. However, the problem for Ethiopia is there are no clear messages and strategies for promotion across the different stakeholders. The government needs to craft the true image of the nation and the communication strategies in order that the actors in the area will have similar messages and tools of promotion. The MFA, the PM Office, Government Communication Affairs Office and other stakeholders should sit together over a table and discuss thoroughly what the image of the country is, how this image can be promoted, and other regulatory and monitoring activities. This helps to avoid discrepancies in what and how to promote the image of a nation among the stakeholders of the country.

The Ministry, in order to expand its reachability and build the nations' image, needs to develop its own institutional strategic communication that helps to realize the good image of the country. There should also be the practice of digital diplomacy by using new social media outlets which help to address the global community for image promotion. The institution has to break the rigid bureaucracy and go along with the changing globe by establishing an efficient system that drives for the promotion of the image of the nation.

There should also be an authority between the MFA and INSA that manages the intervention because INSA intervenes in the Ministry's technical works without knowing the bigger picture. The intervention is due to security reasons, but it affects the Ministry's communication activities in jaggging behind the changing nature of the globe. The Ministry's website server has to be back to the institution for full operation.

Besides, diplomats and ambassadors in the Ministry and missions should broaden their understanding and skills on public diplomacy, strategic communication, information communication technology so that a professional and well-equipped manpower can work on communication strategically and image building of the nation. The Ministry needs to empower the human resource by arranging training, conferences, and other capacity building mechanisms.

In connection with the current domestic political situation, the government needs to fix out the overriding political crisis in the country so that the favorable image of the country will be promoted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ethiopia's overseas missions. The central driving factor for building the country's image is the stable and peaceful domestic situation by which the government needs to do its homework. Listening to the hearts and minds of the people, avoiding maladministration and corruption domestically help for the promotion of the country's image.

Apart from this, the human resource allocation in the Ministry's Public Diplomacy Director General needs to consider the interest, knowledge and skills of diplomats. Most of the time, the assignment of human resource in different Director Generals is not transparent and merit-based, rather anonymous. Finally, the organizational set-up of the ministry needs adjustment and revision. The need for public diplomacy should be given big attention in the Ministry since it is the pillar for the promotion of the country's image worldwide.

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Appendix I

In-depth interview questions for key informants

1. What roles do you think strategic communication play in building the image of a country in particular to Ethiopia? Is national image building process an important aspect of a foreign policy? Why?
2. How is strategic communication used as an instrument to promote the image of a nation? How is it used or practiced in the Ministry?
3. What are the roles of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Public Diplomacy DG) and the Missions abroad in relation to using strategic communication for national image building purpose?
4. To what extent the Ministry, including the Ethiopia's missions abroad, use effective communication strategies for the promotion of Ethiopia's image? What looks like the ongoing practices in using strategic communication?
5. How are the messages crafted in promoting the image of the country both in the Ministry and all Ethiopian missions abroad? How are the messages disseminated down to the target audiences?
6. How does the Ministry monitor and evaluate the use of strategic communication for image building? How often has the monitoring and evaluation been undertaken?
7. How does the Ministry particularly the Public Diplomacy DG use the idea of digital diplomacy in promoting the image of the country?
8. How do you see the role and coordinated efforts of the Ethiopian sartorial offices in promotion of the country's image?
9. How does the Ministry in particular the Public Diplomacy DG use the Ethiopian Diaspora who lives in different parts of the world as an actor in the promotion of the national image?
10. What are the challenges that the Ministry and the missions are facing regarding the use of strategic communication for the promotion of Ethiopia? How are these challenges solved?

Appendix II

ለ “ቁልፍ አስረጅዎች” (Key informants) የሚቀርቡ የመነሻ ጥያቄዎች

1. የአገርን ገፅታ ከመገንባት አንጻር በተለይም እንደ ኢትዮጵያ ላሉ አገሮች የስትራቴጅክ ኮሚኒኬሽን ሚና ምንድን ነው ብለው ያስባሉ? የአገርን ገፅታ በመገንባት ሂደት ውስጥ የውጭ ግንኙነት ፖሊሲ አስፈላጊ አካል ነው? ለምን?
2. የአንድን አገር ገፅታ ለማስተዋወቅ ስትራቴጅክ ኮሚኒኬሽንን እንዴት መጠቀም ይቻላል? በኢትዮጵያ የውጭ ጉዳይ ሚኒስቴርስ አጠቃቀሙ ምን ይመስላል?
3. የውጭ ጉዳይ ሚኒስቴር በተለይም የፕብሊክ ዲፕሎማሲ ዳ/ጀኔራል ስትራቴጅክ ኮሚኒኬሽንን በመጠቀም የአገር ገፅታን ከመገንባት አኳያ ያለው ሚና ምንድን ነው ብለው ያስባሉ?
4. ሚኒስቴር መ/ቤቱ እና በውጭ የሚገኙ የኢትዮጵያ ሚሲዮኖች የአገርን ገፅታ ለመገንባት ወጤታማ የኮሚኒኬሽን ስልቶች አጠቃቀማቸው ምን ያህል ነው? ስትራቴጅክ ኮሚኒኬሽንን ከመጠቀም አኳያ አሁን ያለው ልምድ ምን ይመስላል?
5. ሚ/ር መ/ቤቱ እና ሚሲዮኖች የአገሪቱን ገፅታ ለማስተዋወቅ የሚጠቀሙበት መልዕክት እንዴት ይዘጋጃል? የተዘጋጀው መልዕክት ለትክክለኛ ተደራሹ (አድማጭ) እንዴት ይሰራጫል?
6. ሚ/ር መ/ቤቱ ስትራቴጅክ ኮሚኒኬሽንን በመጠቀም የአገሪቱን ገፅታ ለመገንባት የሚሰራቸውን ስራዎች ቁጥጥር እና ግምገማ እንዴት ያካሂዳል? የቁጥጥር እና ግምገማ ስራዎች ስምን ያክል ጊዜ ውስጥ ይካሄዳሉ?
7. ሚ/ር መ/ቤቱ በተለይም የፕብሊክ ዲፕሎማሲ ዳ/ጀኔራል የአገሪቱን ገፅታ ለመገንባት ሲባል የድጅታል ዲፕሎማሲ አጠቃቀሙ ምን ይመስላል?
8. የአገሪቱን ገፅታ ለመገንባት የሚመለከታቸው ባለድርሻ አካላት ያላቸውን ቅንጅታዊ አሰራር እንዴት ያዩታል?
9. ሚ/ር መ/ቤቱ በተለይም የፕብሊክ ዲፕሎማሲ ዳ/ጀኔራል በውጭ የሚኖሩ ኢትዮጵያውያንን ለአገር ገፅታ ግንባታ ስራ ከማሳተፍ አንጻር እንዴት እየሰራ ይገኛል?
10. ሚ/ር መ/ቤቱ እንዲሁም ሚሲዮኖች ስትራቴጅክ ኮሚኒኬሽንን በመጠቀም የአገርን ገፅታ ለመገንባት ሲሰሩ የሚያጋጥማቸው ችግሮች/ፈተናዎች ምን ምን ናቸው ብለው ያስባሉ? መፍትሄው ስምን ይመስለዎታል?