

APPRAISAL OF NIGERIA'S DOMESTIC POLITICS AND FOREIGN POLICY IN THE FOURTH REPUBLIC

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Abstract

Foreign and domestic policy issues are related products of the same political system and are designed to define and implement overall national purposes. Foreign and domestic policy must be mutually supported if national policy aspirations are to be achieved in an atmosphere of political stability. However, over the years Nigeria has been portrayed in a bad light due to its unimpressive image and reputation as a corrupt and mismanaged economy often blamed on bad governance and leadership. Extant literature shows that perhaps, if Nigeria could utilize her natural endowment, surely the country will develop greatly, and it is this innate intelligence and utilization that makes Nigerians “shine” productively when they find themselves outside the country and it is also this rare ingenuity that continues to hold the country together. To this end, this study is an appraisal of domestic politics on Nigeria’s foreign policy. In this research, secondary sources were used to generate data, while linkage theory was also adopted as a theoretical framework. The findings reveal that Nigeria is faced with numerous domestic challenges such as; corruption, mono-cultural nature of the economy, unemployment, and poverty, exchange rate volatility, bad leadership, and ethnic cleavages among others. The challenges pose a great challenge for the future of Nigeria’s foreign policy because the resilience of any country’s foreign policy derives essentially from the strength of its domestic base. The study recommends among others that the government must evolve a “home-grown” economic policy and honestly abide by its implementation, Nigeria should pursue the goals of democracy, good governance, and respect for human rights at home to ensure the credibility of her leadership role abroad. And there must be a culture of political dialogue and debate among Nigerians to show the international community that we are mature people worthy of a respectable place within the comity of nations.

Keywords: *Interest, National Interest, Policy, Foreign Policy, Domestic Policy*

Introduction

Nigeria is often described as the “Giant of Africa”. Its foreign policy is best understood and assessed in the context of its regional and continental ambitions which have been demonstrated throughout the country’s independence history. Nigeria’s leaders of all political persuasions have come to see their country as the “natural leader” of the African continent. This aspiration to continental leadership which manifested since the country’s independence in 1960 is central to understanding some of the principal features of Nigeria’s foreign policy. It is clear from a historical examination of Nigeria’s foreign relations that its hegemonic ambitions have not, however, necessarily led to relevant, coherent, and effective policies.

The foreign policy of Nigeria is anchored to a very large extent on a myriad of both external and domestic factors and forces. These factors and forces range from the pursuit of security and welfare broadly considered vital to her status and prestige. The essence is for the state’s stability and the citizenry’s happiness. The combination of these factors and forces not only puts certain limits upon the actions and choices of Nigeria’s foreign policy formulators but also set the scope within which domestic political contest over foreign policy matters must be determined (Adefunye, 1992). Thus, it has been argued that the accomplishment of these purposes requires an interplay of domestic politics a foreign policy. Marxist scholars are among the earliest thinkers to analyse systematically, the interconnection between internal politics and foreign policy. They characterise foreign policy as a continuation of domestic politics. This is because, in virtually all countries, the dynamism of popular participation in foreign affairs, according to these scholars, produces a continuous balancing of foreign and domestic concerns. This, of course, is an admission of the fact that domestic policy is also affected in some aspects by external factors and forces. This is particularly so in former European colonies.

Ofoegbu (1978) posits that “the category designated domestic policy consists of many subcategories which cover economics, social welfare, national politics, education, and transport”. All these, he demonstrates, regulate, shape, direct and govern relations among citizens, groups of people and national institutions. These domestic variables according to this author provide either contentment and happiness or discontent and domestic unease, hence, foreign policy, he infers, is seen as the extension of domestic policy. In the Nigerian situation, therefore, Adefunye (1992) observes that the nature and conduct of her foreign policy since the attainment of statehood in 1960, have been influenced by a variety of factors. The most prominent among them has remained the domestic factors that are anchored on “ethnic compositions, the colonial heritage, internal political situation, the attitude and perceptions of the Nigerian elite, and the priorities which the government set for itself”.

Nigeria came into the world stage with a relatively intimidating stature. With the country’s numerical preponderance over all other states in Africa, and the number of natural resources within the state, it was presumed that Nigeria had the potential to dominate global politics in favour of Africa in general, and for its benefit in particular. Kolawole (2005:873) elaborates on this position thus:

By her resources and size, Nigeria was expected to be at the front seat of Africa providing others, the necessary leadership and weapons to

fight the clutches of colonialism, neo-colonialism, under-development, poverty, famine, and racial discrimination.

As an independent country in 1960 full of hopes and promises of becoming not only a regional player with the vast array of her human and material resources like Bitumen – found in Lagos, Edo, Ondo, Ogun; Coal in Ondo, Benue, Enugu; Oil and gas in Akwa Ibom, Abia, Bayelsa, Edo, Delta, Rivers, Imo; Gold in Edo, Ebonyi, Kaduna, Ijesha, Oyo; Iron Ore in Benue, Anambra, Kogi State, Kwara, Delta State; Lead and Zinc in Ebonyi, Benue, Ogoja, Kano; Salt in Akwa Ibom, Abia, Ebonyi, Cross River, and Tin in Jos, Bauchi (Kolawole, 2005).

It was also expected that not too long after independence, she will become great and take her rightful place in the comity of nations (Kolawole, 2005). Several decades thereafter, this did not happen as the country was caught up in several challenges both domestic and external which negatively affected her performance like the inability to tackle problems such as corruption, terrorism, and ethnicity. On the international scene, Nigerians were treated with disdain at various international airports because of her corruption status and the country that once prided itself as the Giant of Africa could not secure her citizens at home and abroad. The abundant resources that God endowed them with became like a curse for the nation because Nigeria at some point was branded the “poverty capital of the world”.

To remedy the situation, the country introduced a lot of measures such as shuttle diplomacy, citizen diplomacy, and economic diplomacy intended to turn things around to achieve its foreign policy objectives. Despite these efforts, success has not been attained. This is however due to the interplay of both internal and external forces. In practical terms, examining the interplay of domestic forces and the external environment in the formulation of foreign policy in Nigeria is essential to understanding the intertwined factors that have influenced the country’s foreign policy in the post- Cold War era.

Domestically, the importance of issues such as human security was felt by many participants to be an important dimension in the study of the domestic influences on Nigeria’s foreign policy. Other internal considerations such as the impact of a reputation for corruption on Nigeria’s foreign relations, were also seen as key issues affecting Nigeria’s foreign policy. Of equal importance is the issue of domestic political, social, and economic conditions, in respect of foreign policy initiatives. The extent of the impact of these conditions is most felt when a state does not measure to acceptable standards among the comity of nations.

Moreover, when the leadership is well rooted or connected with the citizenry that will help mobilize them to support any course that the leadership is championing. For example, one of the factors responsible for minimal success in the fight against Boko Haram in Nigeria today is the division among the people. While some are committed to ending terrorism, others are not, such that when decisions are taken to attack them, such information is revealed to them even the Nigerian security officers cannot do anything. This then means that the division among Nigerians is making the war against insurgents insurmountable. There is therefore a link between domestic happenings and Nigeria’s conduct in the international system. Also, juxtaposing the underlying principles of the national interest against the demands of internal

and external pressures on foreign policy formulation and implementation, this study is interested in discussing how domestic politics has affected the country's foreign policy.

Statement of the Problem

The Nigerian state is characterised by diverse ethnic nationalities, socio-politically and culturally detracted, and roughly welded together by colonial and military praetorian rules. The circumstances that appear natural that the most fundamental and central problem of Nigeria's foreign policy remains how to forge a national consensus behind any foreign policy issue or challenge which the country has to address on the world stage. Consequently, it was often very difficult for the country to uphold with conviction a definite stand on issues on the world stage, even when such a stand was perceived to be necessary. This has been due mainly to the dictates of domestic reality, occasioned by a fractured and diffracted society enmeshed in an unending struggle to find a national consensus.

Another challenge that Nigeria's foreign policy faces are the difficulty in the relationship between the executive and legislative arms of government. In the routine conduct of foreign affairs, the foreign affairs department and officials encounter hitches with the legislature. This organ of the government often injects itself directly into the foreign policy implementation process. In many instances, the legislative organ of the government reacts or deals with aspects of Nigeria's foreign relations without the benefit of institutional knowledge and information about best practices and processes. The net effect of this policy of incoherence is that this organ of state then works at cross purposes, making Nigeria's foreign policy goals and objectives unclear and ambiguous.

In January 2003, some members of the House of Representatives visited Pakistan, apparently seeking to mediate in the dispute over Kashmir, without consulting the Foreign Affairs Ministry. The ministry under Sule Lamido wrote to the chairman of the committee, pointing out the risk of such a trip without background knowledge of the delicate balance of alliances. The lawmakers reacted angrily that "...nobody is here as an appendage of Sule Lamido's ministry. We are not his boys. We are not bound by his whatever foreign policy strategy" (Sule 2013). To be sure, it is not being argued that the Nigerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the sole agency for the formulation and implementation of foreign policy. The point that cannot be overstated is that, given the dynamic nature of foreign policy making, consultations with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are sine-qua-non for coherent and effective policy.

Oftentimes in Nigeria, the adjudged national interest lacks 'nationless' and its 'nationalistic' quality is in great doubt. While the first term interrogates the extent of the peoples' input and participation in determining that which is tagged as their collective interest, the second doubt the people-centeredness of the so-called interests. Viewed from the Marxian perspective, Nigeria's national interest cannot be sequestered from class, the ruling class. Therefore, according to this school, national interest is another name for the interest of the class ruling at a given time and period in the country.

Therefore, it is against this backdrop that this study examines the domestic factors as they affect Nigeria's foreign policy to identify and analyse those factors that have always influenced our external relations. Specifically, the research is aimed at achieving the following objectives:

- i) To discuss the domestic challenges faced by the Nigerian state in her quest for an enduring orientation and a constructed design to fit the country properly into the international system since independence.
- ii) To ascertain the influence of domestic politics on Nigeria's foreign policy in the fourth republic.
- iii) To examine the linkage between domestic factors and Nigeria's image among the comity of nations.
- iv) To provide possible solutions on how to improve Nigeria's foreign policy.

Conceptual Clarification

The Concept of Foreign Policy

Foreign policy has been given different definitions by scholars, historians, and diplomats. It has been defined as "the actions of a state towards external environment and conditions usually domestic, under which these decisions are formulated". Foreign policy is an interaction between identifiable domestic political forces and the dynamics of international political relations (Gambari, 2003). In other words, sees foreign policy is seen as "an interaction between internal and external forces" (Aluko, 1981). It could also be understood as the actions and reactions of states targeted at the external environment (Osita, 2007).

Foreign policy is essentially the instrumentality by which states influence or seek to influence the external world and attain objectives that are in conformity with their perceived national interest. "Foreign policy is conditioned by environmental or systemic characteristic actions by others which impinge on the interests or values of a state or group of states and domestic social and economic needs".

Fawole (2003) stresses that foreign policy is a governmental activity that concerns the relationship between the state and other actors, especially other states in the international system. Put differently, foreign policy could be seen as the totality of all actions, decisions, overtures, or interactions between states in the international system. Such could be directed or based on economics, politics, culture, or creating understanding or cooperation (Fawole, 2003).

The foreign policy of a state is concerned with the behaviour of a state towards other states. It refers to the ways in which the central governments of sovereign states relate to each other and to the global system in order to achieve various goals or objectives. Through a state's foreign policy, it endeavours to persuade others in accordance with one's own ends. It is primarily in proportion to its national power that its persuasive power is effective in this regard. However, even a powerful state cannot afford to enjoy a solo flight in this regard. It has to take into account, not only its own objectives and interests, aspirations and problems, but also those of other states. This process involves intricate processes of diplomacy short of war. It is also based on the traditional behaviour of a given state. Moreover, a state while implementing its foreign

policy cannot afford to ignore the rules of International law and canons of international morality. The whole essence of this prelude is that the term foreign policy cannot be studied in isolation from the factors that determine it (Alkali, 2000).

So, foreign policy is the bundle of principles and practices that regulate the intercourse of a state vis-à-vis other actors, and states. Through foreign policy, a state seeks to achieve a variety of objectives. The objectives sought to be attained by a state are of different types and categories, yet there are certain objectives which are uniformly pursued by all states i.e. Political independence and territorial integrity, economic well-being, and, prestige and status of a nation” (Frank, 1973).

It can be further stressed that foreign Policy is the category of a nation's policy agenda that deals with defense, security, international political relations, and international economic relations (Ofoegbu, 1980). Foreign policy according to him deals with relations between an actor and other actors in the international system. In dealing with other actors and attempting to govern relations with them, the foreign policy of state endeavors to” concentrate on the following areas:

- (a) Defining the objectives of actors concerned and their understanding of the international system;
- (b) Articulating their own awareness of other actors and their objectives. Evaluating frankly and sincerely, its capacities;
- (c) Evaluating the capabilities of other actors such as their determination in pursuing their goals and likely costs of such determination and accordingly; and
- (d) Provide and adopt strategies for achieving the set objectives.

Ajene (1978) views foreign policy “as the action of states directed towards their external environment.” He argues that before an action constitutes foreign policy, it must have been taken by a state or government on behalf of the state and must be directed towards the external environment.

Ogene (1983) on the other hand sees the concept of foreign policy from a different perspective. In his analysis of American foreign policy, he defines foreign policy as “comprising all the various forms of official statements or actions intended to represent the response of a nation in international issues” (Ogene, 1983). Foreign policy in our view goes beyond that conception by Ogene. Whatever the definition of foreign policy that may be given at any point in time, one obvious fact still remains that the foreign policy of any Nation-State within the international system seeks to achieve its goals and objectives, and it is no doubt a reflection of a nation's domestic reality. It begins with the identification and articulation of national interests (Frank, 1973). The National interest is the principal consideration in the formulation and execution of all National policies both at the domestic and international levels. The goals which a nation seeks to achieve in its relations with other nations and the means at her disposal for achieving such are the main planks of foreign policy. But, the extent to which a country can achieve its goals in the external environment is highly dependent on the domestic environment, one of

which forces is politics. Surveying Nigerian's foreign policy from the first to the second republics, Ogene (1983) observes that:

Nigerian foreign policy is one of the most controversial concepts in the sense that no semblance of consensus exists among scholars in relation to its effectiveness and achievements due to its peculiar nature according to administrations from Balewa to Shagari (Ogene, 1983:15).

Borne out of the conviction that Nigeria's Foreign Policy is merely a function of popularity, but also a dependent variable of great inputs, Idang (1974) makes the internal politics of Foreign Policy, his focus of analysis in what he calls a systematic analysis, which for most studies in African countries had been lacking. He points out that this is not an easy task since "domestic determinations are often observed because of the independence of the external and international sources of foreign policy" (Idang, 1974).

Indeed, he observes that a distinction is now largely a matter of analytical convenience. He studies the impact of domestic factors on foreign policy, choice, and actors, looking at the relationship between policy perceptions and behaviours of the actors towards their environment (domestic and external). Certain dominant traits are brought out. First, the constant tension emanating from the international political scene means that decisions are taken in a hurry leaving little time for policymakers to deliberate fully on available options. Secondly, the perception and attitudes of official foreign policymakers, on the one hand, are constantly at variance with the non-officials (articulated public), and on the other, with the former being rather conservative and the latter radicals. Another trend is the marked departure (even if reluctantly) in 1961, of Balewa's government from its previous attitude to more "progressive" areas in response to both internal and external pressures. During this time too, he states that Balewa had great control over the foreign policy process and machinery. This provided for Idang the linkages he sets out to find between the domestic political process and foreign policy that Nigeria's federal nature and economic interest had on its foreign policy.

From the above definitions and many others, three identifiable components of foreign policy are obvious, one, the actions of a state; two, national or domestic interests, which influence these actions and three; the external or foreign environment of a state towards which these actions are oriented. These three components are clearly closely related and dependent on each other. They act together and one influences the other. It is from this perspective that the foreign policy of a state evolves in the competitive international environment.

Concept of National Interest

National interest is an elusive term that has been described in various ways. Kaplan (1967) for instance, defines it as the interest that a national actor has in implementing a defined system of action. Morgenthau (1967) conceives of it simply as politics among nations. To Jones (1970), national interest is a term used in the political debate within a country, to signal the case that

the item of policy suggested will bring benefits not merely to its proponents, but also to its opponents.

Frankel (1973) postulates that national interest is a key concept in foreign policy. In his view, it amounts to the total of all national values, national in both meanings of the word, both pertaining to the nation and the state. One general common sense definition describes it as the general and continuing ends for which a nation acts. This presupposes that every nation has a set of objectives or goals which give life and meaning to the behaviour of such a nation in international relations.

Some of these objectives or goals are central to the survival of the nation, while others are not so central to it, even though, they are integrated within the large interest of the international community. Strictly speaking, every nation strives to protect, promote and defend its objectives at all costs even to the point of going to war, if it feels that the pursuits of these objectives or goals are threatened. Hence, the totality of these objectives or goals is what constitutes national interest.

Sondermann (1979) has aptly observed, that within the rhetorical arsenal, few concepts are more effective than that of national interest. In the considered view of Obiozor (1999), national interest evaluates not only the worth of foreign policies, but, also explains why nations do what they do when they engage in international affairs. National interest, therefore, provides an explanation or rationalization for state behaviour in international relations. The concept of National Interest is predicated on two assumptions:(i) that there exists an objectively determinable collective interest that all individual members within a given society share equally; (ii) that this collective interest transcends any interest that a particular sub-set of these individuals may share with individuals in other societies (Sondermann, 1979). The concept, therefore, underscores the fact that the primary interest of a state is to obtain or retain an optimal position on the international scene. Adeniran (1983) describes national interest in the following way:

When statesmen and bureaucrats are expected or are required to act in the national interest.... what is meant is that they are the political situation, the economic and social well-being, health and culture of the people as well as their political survival. They are being urged to take action that will improve the lot of the people rather than pursue policies that will subject the people to domination by other countries...policies which are likely to make them unable to stand among nations (Adeniran, 1991).

Thus, the centrality of the concept of national interest as a fulcrum around which organization of the complex and diverse issues of international politics revolves and by which the behaviour of states and governments could be understood is that, all states share some common interests-political independence, economic growth, cultural preservation, peace etc. The most obvious national interest is self-preservation, and the greatest threat to that basic interest is for another state to invade and conquer it. The threat of foreign invasion is, however, increasingly rare in international relations, since the end of the Cold War.

Three other “core national values” in diminishing importance are the enhancement of a nation’s economic development, independence from the interference of others in one’s domestic affairs, and preservation of the nation’s “way of life or culture”. It is pertinent to note that in reality, national interest is conducted, directed or determined by the ruling class or the political elites. It is the power that the (incumbent government most times) uses to select, pursue, or operationalise what a nation’s national interest is. This explains why it varies as regime changes. For instance, Tunde Idiagbon/ Muhammed Buhari’s regime in Nigeria between 1983 and 1985 considered it, the interest of the nation not to collect the International Monetary Fund (IMF) World Bank loan, in spite of the parlous state of the Nigerian economy. But the successor, General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida’s regime in 1986 chose to contract the loan (despite its stringent conditionality).

National interest apart from all else is useful for analytical purposes as it is a yardstick for actors in the international system. However, if the nations of the world do nothing, but, rationalise their actions on the basis of parochial national interest, there would be more crises than what now obtains. The philosophy surrounding the concept is increasingly becoming devalued, given the increasing interdependence of states, as well as the emergence of non-state actors, who somewhat de-emphasise state centrism, and have been flagrantly and recklessly disregarding tradition and order of things concerning inter-state interactions.

From the foregoing study, it is however believed that National Interest is a key concept in International Relations. All the nations are always engaged in the process of fulfilling or securing the goals of their national interests. The foreign policy of each nation is formulated on the basis of its national interest and it is always at work for securing its goals. It is a universally accepted right of each state to secure its national interests. A state always tries to justify its actions on the basis of its national interest.

Theoretical Framework

For an in-depth analysis of Nigeria’s Domestic Politics and Foreign Policy in the Fourth Republic, linkage theory is used as a theoretical framework for this paper. In foreign policy discourse, the state remains the basic actor in the international system. Thus, to obtain relevance and respect in the international system, a state must conduct its relations against the backdrop of influences from two environments (Odubajo, 2017). Alli (2010) identifies these environments as the domestic and the external.

The Linkage Theory evolved from systems analysis and has its roots in the notion that the term linkage refers to any recurring behavioral sequence that originates in one system and is reacted to in another (Rosenau, 1969; Frankel, 1972). The mutually reinforcing nature of elements within a system is reflected similarly in international relations. The interconnected nature of international relations informs the linkage theory and presents the argument that domestic and international politics are so interrelated that they should be simultaneously analyzed (Gourevitch, 1978).

Pada (2006) also posits that the merger that exists between domestic and international factors is fully captured in James Rosenau's Linkage Theory. The theory establishes that domestic factors influence foreign policymaking and vice versa, thereby causing a linkage between the national and international affairs of a state. Rosenau (1969) seeks to understand the relationship between domestic and foreign policy. He focuses on the intricacy between national political systems and the evolution of foreign policy events and processes (Starrels & Mallinckrodt, 1978). Rosenau (in Starrels & Mallinckrodt, 1978), states that "the need for linkage theory is multidimensional ... [there] is the need to trace linkages in which national and international systems function in such a way as to continuously reinforce each other."

The tenets of the theory as presented below reinforce the relevance of this theory to the subject under study. The thrust of Rosenau's linkage theory as highlighted by James & Rioux (1998) includes:

- i. Independent governments and the international system reinforce one another.
- ii. The processes and structure of domestic politics are not independent of international occurrences.
- iii. Ruling elites tend to redirect the concern of the public towards real or imagined external threats in a bid to reduce focus on internal challenges.
- iv. Active participation in international relations is dependent on the state's ability to establish an effective cadre of officials capable of successfully managing their nation's foreign relations.

Rosenau's (1969) postulations inform the thoughts of Adeola and Ogunnoiki (2015) in affirming that when domestic and foreign policy are analyzed accordingly, findings would show that they are interconnected and interdependent in nature. The level of interdependence is so intense to the extent that the reality of the external environment is a major aspect of public policy, thus making foreign policy an offshoot of public policy. Pada (2006) argues, however, that focus should not be placed only on the interconnectedness of both environments, but should also evaluate if the state is able to cope with pressures from the domestic and international sphere that would lead to the formulation of a strategic foreign policy. The satisfaction of both environmental spheres thus requires a strong state and leadership.

Issues and theories in social sciences generate contradictions and debates among scholars. Therefore, linkage theory whether to redistribute benefits or incentivize commitment, the study found in much of the literature is that expanding negotiations along a new issue dimension can secure and maintain an otherwise unattainable level of cooperation. This view, however, is not unanimously held. Some notable scholars question the ability of linkages to secure otherwise unattainable cooperative arrangements. Moravcsik (1998) for example, he argues that the major constraint on linkage strategies lies in their domestic distributional implications. Though linkages may create benefits, they also create domestic losers who, if highly concentrated, tend to generate more political pressure than winners. This means linkage will be domestically viable only where adjustment costs are moderate and the potential for linkage is limited.

The linkage theory can be used to explain the intricacies in international relations as it relates to but is not limited to, foreign and domestic policies, international crises, and international economic relations, to mention but a few areas.

Building on the linkage theory, this research establishes the nexus between the domestic and external environments in Nigeria's foreign policy. The domestic environment is crucial to foreign policy as it sets the base on which it should run. However, if neglected, it results in challenges like loss of respect and relevance in the international system. This argument ties strongly to the first and second tenets above that emphasize the reinforced relationship that exists between domestic and international politics. A case in point is the poor treatment of Nigerians within the country by security officials and law enforcement agents. Due to Nigeria's inability to tackle this budding challenge, it questions Nigeria's ability to be assertive on the regional front in protecting the welfare of Nigerians abroad. This may partly account for the weak responses by the Nigerian government to the xenophobic attacks on Nigerians in South Africa. As a result, Nigeria cannot fully entrench the use of the reciprocity principle on the regional or global front because of its failings at home.

Research Methodology

The data collected were secondary sources to elicit relevant information. The secondary sources are journals, books, magazines, newspapers, and the internet, among others. Data collected were analyzed through the use of content analysis. All materials used were duly acknowledged.

Empirical/Review of Previous Studies

Domestic Challenges Faced by Nigerian State that Obstructs the Country from Properly Fitting into the International System since Independence

It is not irrefutable that Nigeria is faced with numerous challenges in her internal and external affairs. The conduct of the foreign policy of Nigeria has to a large extent been dictated by internal domestic challenges. Although, Nigeria's foreign policy at some point was acclaimed to be vibrant, dynamic, and purposeful. However, the analysis of the domestic challenges facing the country is centred on issues discussed below:

Challenge of Professionalism: The institutional framework for foreign policy formulation and execution, particularly with regard to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, faces teething challenges. When Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala was appointed foreign affairs minister in August 2006, she discovered that the ministry had no internet connection with the outside world, including its missions abroad, and that the lifts in the building were not functioning (Mustapha 2008). Embassy buildings in Khartoum, Teheran, and others in Latin America were said to be leaking. This sort of context is hardly conducive to creative and professional thinking.

Moreover, the Foreign Service Academy which was established in the early 1980s only served the training needs of staff newly recruited into the service. There was no systematic programme for follow-up training for this or indeed any other category of foreign affairs officers (Gambari 1989).

Budgetary allocations for foreign affairs have always been low to meet up with the expected service delivery. The foreign affairs ministry receives just about one percent of the federal

government budget for recurrent expenditure. In contrast, defense and some other ministries receive far more. The downward exchange rate adjustment of the naira since the early 1980s has made the matter worse. There were some disturbing reports of the country's mission abroad owing rents, and Nigerian diplomats not being paid their allowances regularly (Fawowara 2008). Because of the issue of underfunding, some Nigerian foreign policy analysts and political stakeholders have called for the closure of Nigerian missions abroad. Specifically, in the regime of President Olusegun Obasanjo, a committee was set up which suggested the closure of some missions deemed to be expensive for the country's economy to run. Such missions were those in Venezuela, Kuwait, Lebanon, Congo, Pakistan, Bangladesh, North Korea, and the Philippines (BBC 2013). The disturbing problem posed by this closure is that "when we close the mission, we damage relations that have taken years to build" (Ashiru, 2013). Referring to Nigeria's foreign policy budget for 2009 and 2010, Uhomoibhi (2012:234) wrote:

When it is compared with South Africa's...in 2009 and 2010 respectively, it becomes clear why Nigeria's global outreach, influence and relevance cannot match that of South Africa. Yet South Africa is one of the countries against which Nigeria is competing for leadership in Africa, including membership of the UN Security Council.

Required attention is yet to be paid to the staffing of the foreign affairs ministry. A 2002 study by the Bureau of Public Service Reform showed that most government ministries in Nigeria have aging staff, with whole the generation missing from the staff profile (Mustapha 2008). Corruption and incompetence also trouble foreign ministry staff. Between June and August 2006, the Authentication and Consular units of the foreign ministry were closed down on account of these problems. Fawowara, a former Nigerian diplomat argued that funding and training of Nigerian diplomats both face serious constraints and financial setbacks.

He suggests that only 25 percent of foreign ministry personnel speak a second international language apart from English (Fawowara 2008). Gambari (2008) has argued for a move away from a foreign service based on generalists, to one based more heavily on specialists. In this era of intricate trade negotiations and rapid movement of people across the globe, specialist disciplinary and language skills are of vital importance.

A much stronger assault on the morale of professional Foreign Service officers derives from the recent practice of appointing a significantly larger number of politicians than careerists to ambassadorial posts abroad. Indubitably, the injection of politics into the recruitment process in the Foreign Ministry has impacted negatively the quality and professionalism of the foreign affairs service. It is imperative that Nigeria's foreign policy be driven by professionals that have deep knowledge and understanding of the contemporary international system. In general, the need to restore efficiency and professionalism remains a major challenge facing both the Nigerian Foreign Service and Nigeria's foreign policy. Added to this, the phenomenon of appointing and posting a disproportionate number of non-career diplomats to sensitive diplomatic posts is another unfortunate development that is eroding professionalism. It is in the interest of professionalism and service integrity to create space for Foreign Service officers at

the top of their careers to be the lead change agents driving Nigeria's foreign policy pursuits abroad.

Legislative-Executive Relations: Another challenge that Nigeria's foreign policy faces is the difficulty in the relationship between the executive and legislative arms of government. Besides the difficulty in getting the Ministry of Foreign Affairs budget approved by the National Assembly, ambassadorial nominees also have to be confirmed by the Assembly. In the routine conduct of foreign affairs, the foreign affairs department and officials encounter hitches with the legislature. This organ of the government often times injects itself directly into the foreign policy implementation process. In many instances, the legislative organ of the government reacts or deals with aspects of Nigeria's foreign relations without the benefit of institutional knowledge and information about best practices and processes. The net effect of this policy of incoherence is that this organ of state then works at cross purposes, making Nigeria's foreign policy goals and objectives unclear and ambiguous. In January 2003, some members of the House of Representatives visited Pakistan, apparently seeking to mediate in the dispute over Kashmir, without consulting the Foreign Affairs Ministry.

Worse still, there has been considerable resentment by the home ministries against the foreign ministry. Personality conflicts, rivalries, and petty jealousies are only part of the problem. The larger problem has been the lack of any focal point of coordination for the activities of the ministries of foreign affairs with those of home ministries where external relations are concerned. When inter-ministerial meetings take place, they tended to be ad hoc in nature, and participation rarely included the ministers themselves. Inquiries and communications between the foreign affairs ministry and other ministries and vice versa were often left unanswered even on crucial or urgent matters of trade and economic relations with other countries or international organizations.

Reciprocity: In international relations and foreign policy, the principle of reciprocity states that favours, benefits, or penalties that are granted by one state to the citizens or legal entities of another should be returned (Eze, 2010). The implication is that Nigeria should have incurred enormous benefits from her many and varied humanitarian policies toward fellow African countries. But to this expectation, the contrary has remained the case. For example, it is on record that Nigeria contributed 12000 out of the 13000 ECOMOG troops deployed to Sierra Leone between 1998, and 1999 and its treasury released nearly 400million US Dollars annually for the mission (Uhomoibhi, 2010).

Nigeria provided at least 80% of the ECOMOG's troops that kept peace in embattled Liberia and 90% of its funding (Obioma 2013, Adebajo 2008). But contrary to the expectations of reciprocity in international politics, both Liberia and Sierra Leone voted against Nigeria's interest and candidature for non-permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council. After the Liberian and Sierra Leonean Wars, disappointedly, no Nigerian construction company or human resource firm was offered a contract in both countries for rebuilding and reconstruction as of way compensating and recouping the enormous amount of money spent on peacekeeping in both countries.

As Obioma (2013) noted, Nigeria failed to take advantage of these military deployments and spending in diplomatic terms. There was no clear indication that such good gestures by Nigeria were regionally appreciated beyond rhetorically expressed gratitude. In pursuance of her Afrocentric policy stance, Nigeria contributed immensely toward Angola's political independence. Nigeria did not only recognize the MPLA but also gave financial backup of up to twenty million dollars, military hardware, fighter planes, etc (Obi, 2006). But despite all that Nigeria did for Angola, Nigeria's name was not contained in the list of countries that Angola paid tribute to, for their assistance in Angola's independence struggle, in its first appearance at the OAU Summit (Obi 2006). It took Angola a long time to express its condolences over the death of Murtala Muhammad, Nigeria's Head of State at the time of Nigeria's support roles in Angola's independence (Garba, 1991).

Nigeria tried without success to win Angola's consent to allow Nigerian trawlers to fish off the Angolan coast. Rather than Nigeria, Russia was granted exclusive fishing rights on the same coast. Of the system of international relations in which national interest is always in view and reciprocity is a constant factor, Nigeria did not get high marks. In Garba's words, "...we gave and gave to Angola, and in return got nothing". What is confusing is whether, in spite of all these, Nigeria should feel obliged to such countries that have shown open hostility despite benevolence shown.

An instance of reciprocity in international politics and conduct of foreign policy could be seen in Nigeria-US relations during the very beginning of President Obasanjo's era. Dokubo (2010) notes:

While Obasanjo lobbied Clinton to put in a word with the Paris Club to consider the forgiveness of Nigeria's debt, Clinton reciprocally extracted a promise from him (Obasanjo) to pressure OPEC to reduce the soaring crude oil prices in the world market.

Against this understanding, twenty million dollars in cash went to Angola without even a discussion of what Nigeria might gain, or even what uses it would be put to (Garba 1991). It seems right to argue in the light of the above that the Nigerian government under President Babangida should have applied the principle of reciprocity when the Liberian president, Samuel Doe wrote to Nigeria asking for help by requesting an agreement contract that Nigerian companies would take charge of reconstruction once peace is restored.

In several African countries, innocent Nigerians have been mistreated. Gabon and Equatorial Guinea are specific examples. Ghana adopted some economic policies (over-taxation) that are partly meant to limit the economic presence of Nigerian businessmen in that country (Akinterinwa 2012). At the extra-African level, the manner of treatment of Nigerians requesting for visas in various diplomatic missions accredited to Nigeria cannot be said to reflect any form of respect for Nigeria, her government, and its people.

Extrapolating from the foregoing, the question is, should Nigeria's foreign policy attitude towards African countries be predicated on reciprocal treatment or not, bearing in mind that Nigeria wants to provide leadership in the management and conduct of African affairs?

Public Opinion and Citizen Involvement in Foreign Policy: The centrality and fundamentality of public opinion in the foreign policy process are not in dispute (Chuka 2007). Ideally, public opinion inputs in, and impacts a country's foreign policy determination (Rourke 1997). Especially in democracies, the assumption is that the chance of foreign policy process is enhanced by public opinion.

But since Nigeria's independence in 1960, a number of test cases exist, that point to the contrary. Abounding shreds of evidence have it that foreign policy decisions in Nigeria are personality, with the political class as independent actors, having free and unfettered hands in policy making. A number of developments and incidents have shown up to demonstrate the failed and foiled attempts by the public opinion of the Nigerian public to exert influence on the foreign policy process and foreign policy stances of the government. In 1960 for instance, the government of Nigeria ratified an Anglo-Nigerian Defense Pact (Tyoden 1986). In response to this pact, several developments and demonstrations on the domestic front took place, creating pressure for the abrogation of the pact. Popular oppositions and pressures against the signing of the pact mounted, reaching their peak when massive demonstrations were organized to prevent the ratification. Interest groups, students, and the intelligentsia, the professional and bureaucratic elites were all part of the agitation and demonstration to abrogate the defense pact.

Though the pact was however abrogated in 1962, the government had shown that public opinion constituted no threat to its control of Nigeria's foreign policy. Public opinion and interest groups, though operative, did not weigh heavily both in the decision to ratify and abrogate the pact. The government went into the ratification in exclusion of public opinion. That the pact was not abrogated in 1960 (when the public outcry was made), but in 1962, is evidential enough to confirm the suspicion that the abrogation was not a case of a government's response to public opinion in foreign policy decisions. This point is further demonstrated by the government's fierce use of the police against the rioters which had the demonstrations neatly quelled.

Articulation of National Interest: National interest is at the heart of foreign policy. Foreign policy is essentially about the protection and advancement of the national interest of a country, and therefore, cannot be operated in a vacuum. Every nation's foreign policy is or should be in the service of its national interest (Eze 2010). Worrisome enough, this centrally important 'National Interest' has defied a comprehensive, clear, and precise definition in Nigeria's constitutions and in Nigeria's foreign policy practices. Analysts and leaders alike are not agreed on what constitutes Nigeria's national interest. Alluding to this, Professor Osita Eze wrote "It is difficult to identify Nigeria's conception of national interest since independence to date" (Eze, 2010). If it is difficult to define what the national interest of Nigeria is, it will even be more difficult to redefine it, in order to provide among other things, the mechanism and strategy that will facilitate the pursuit of foreign policy to achieve its national objectives especially given the deepening of globalization and the emergence of new powerful actors. By every

parameter of measurement and consideration, this is a fundamental challenge that confronts Nigeria in the 21st Century.

It is noticeable that trends in Nigeria's foreign policy indicating its national interest have not been very stable over time. From the Tafawa Balewa administration, identifiable national interests and foreign policy goals were decolonization from colonial racists' settler regimes; Pan-African solidarity; National economic development, and world peace. Yet under Babangida at the All-Nigerian Conference on Foreign Policy 1986, he conceived of national interest as simply national security (Agreen, 2013).

Often times in Nigeria, the adjudged national interest lacks 'nationless' and its 'nationalistic' quality is in great doubt. While the first term interrogates the extent of the peoples' input and participation in determining that which is tagged as their collective interest, the second doubt the people-centeredness of the so-called interests. Viewed from the Marxian perspective, Nigeria's national interest cannot be sequestered from class, the ruling class. Therefore, according to this school, national interest is another name for the interest of the class ruling at a given time and period in the country.

Akin to the above is the challenge of primordialism and lack of tradition in Nigeria's foreign policy process and practice. Excessive personalization of the foreign policy process by successive heads of state is a huge obstacle to Nigeria's foreign policy progress. The foreign policy of Nigeria during the Tafawa Balewa era was but a reflection of the Balewa's personality and character, rather than that of the Nigerian state. The idiosyncratic traits of Presidents Murtala Mohammed and Olusegun Obasanjo were the reason for the injection of activism and dynamism into the foreign policy manifestations of the country at the time. With this, Nigeria's foreign policy seems to have been void of tradition. The patterns and processes of foreign policy in Nigeria do change with changing leaderships and regimes.

The fundamental question this raises is whether there is really anything like 'Nigeria's Foreign Policy?' Does Nigeria actually own a policy? Will it not be more appropriate to say Tafa Balewa's policy, Obasanjo's policy etc? Challenge of Afrocentrism: Arising from the Afrocentric character of Nigeria's foreign policy are lots of problems and challenges. For some obvious reasons, Nigeria since her independence has made Africa the major plank of her foreign policy. For this, Nigeria has supported Africa's course in many respect and participated in various peacekeeping operations. This involvement of the country in peace operations in many troubled African zones has drained both the material and human resources of Nigeria. It has also created conflicting perceptions among different actors in the conflicts which are carried along in other forums and international platforms.

More so, Nigerian citizens themselves need to see the practical results and gains of the country's Afrocentric diplomacy in the material improvement of their lives, otherwise, they will see no justification for the money spent on these pursuits. More so, the age-long grasp of Afrocentrism by Nigeria's foreign policy is long overdue to give way to citizencentricism as a foreign policy stance of the country. Nigeria has for many years pursued, without gains, the good and well-being of other African nations at the expense of the well-being of its citizens.

The impression that has been ingrained in the minds of Nigerians, especially those living outside the shores of the country, is that the Nigerian state does not care about the plight of its citizens abroad. Cases involving Nigerians abroad, that the intervention of the Nigerian state through the missions would have ameliorated, were perceived to have been left unattended. Nigerians who are facing difficulties abroad are almost all times, seen as sheep without shepherds, yet the constitution unambiguously provides that sovereignty belongs to the people, from whom the government derives its power.

It is for this understanding that the government of Yar'Adua began giving thoughts to what its Foreign Affairs Minister, Ojo Mmaduekwe called Citizen Diplomacy. This principle in consonance with the constitutional directive principles, places the priority of Nigeria's foreign policy on the protection of the interest of the Nigerian citizens, both at home and abroad.

Especially since the post-Cold War era, it has been the expectation that there should be an alteration and shift in the Africa-centeredness of Nigeria's foreign policy in view of Nigeria's domestic situation, and the realities of the post-Cold War international system. It is absurd to rely on foreign policy tools and conceptual frameworks developed in the 1960s for dealing with the modern complexities of an international system, increasingly driven by the forces of globalization. In the era of globalization, Nigeria has no choice but to adjust and adapt to the way it conducts its foreign policy. For instance, such challenges as climate change, terrorism, and trans-national crime issues are impossible to ignore, and imperatively they are to reflect on foreign policy formulation and governance at the domestic level. Accordingly, Nigeria's foreign policy must keep a watchful brief on these issues and pay attention to their wider ramifications.

Economy: The weak state and appendage nature of Nigeria's economy has debilitated the ability of Nigeria's foreign policy to protect the national interest, and project it effectively into the outside world. It is a truism that a state's foreign rating and influence in a very fundamental sense is a reflection of the health and size of the country's economy. While Nigeria has a large economy, it equally has a serious economic crisis that makes it difficult to realize its full potential. The economy of Nigeria exhibits largely a neo-colonial structure, depending on the export of primary goods and importation of finished commodities. More so, Nigeria is heavily indebted. This, unarguably, disallows her to play the critical roles she craves in the international system.

Connected to the issue of economy in Nigeria's foreign policy challenges is the challenge of globalization. The global transition to the 21st Century poses serious challenges to Nigeria, especially in the context of Africa. The phenomenon of globalization is the singular most profound change in the 21st Century. Globalization refers to the relative liberalization and homogenization of the globe as a result of technological revolutions. The focus of this is the advance in information and communication technology. This has made the transmission of information around the world very easy, fast, and cheap. Today the world is witnessing extensive global trade patterns that make available, a greater variety and quality of goods to consumers.

Paradoxically, while globalization tends to sweep away all barriers to the formation of a single world market, increase the volume of trade and expand the parameters of consumption, the reaction of nation-states has been protectionist, in the main (Mbachu, 2009). Presently, there is no country in the world that is totally independent of others.

Finance, capital, labour, and goods are highly mobile, as the world has rapidly shrunk as a result of the information age. However, this interdependence poses a threat to developing countries like Nigeria, as it is not equally beneficial to all states because the developed countries enjoy a favourable balance of trade and more economic power than the developing countries like Nigeria. This situation makes Nigeria and other developing countries vulnerable to manipulation by industrialized countries.

The Influence of Domestic Politics on Nigeria's Foreign Policy in the Fourth Republic

After Fifty-nine (59) years of independence, Nigeria is still battling with numerous variables that impact the conditions of the internal environment of foreign policy making. These include; psychological factors, socio-political and economic conditions of the state, the foreign policy machinery at the level of bureaucracy, military capability, the character of the informed public, and insecurity, among others. The psychological factors deal essentially with the quality of leadership at the helm of decision-making. In most governmental systems, this is composed of a large pool of an admixture of professionals and political office holders that deliberate, and presumably decide on the best policy options for the state.

Three major domestic factors are identified as being key determinants in Nigeria's foreign policy formulation, first, the country's ravaged and weak economy; second, the personality and character of the leadership and their perception of how to nurse and revive the economy; and third the issue of ethno-religious diversity in a federal context, which more often than not makes consensus on national issues difficult to achieve. While other factors such as historical traditions and public opinion have impacted Nigeria's foreign policy, it can be said that the three major factors identified above are more decisive in the Nigerian context (Soremeku, 2003).

An in-depth examination of foreign policy formulation during the past regimes demonstrates how successive Nigerian regimes have in general, shown a lack of sensitivity and responsiveness to popular pressures and input into the foreign policy formulation process. As a result, foreign policy in Nigeria tends to be elitist and government-driven. Significantly, this has been complicated by the phenomenon of prolonged military rule with its pervasive legacies, which by and large, still condition and temper the current democratic governance (Ugwu & Omotayo, 1989).

While policymakers and executors of Nigeria's foreign policy appear to be committed to responding to demands, pressures, and influences from the external environment, particularly in the context of the challenges posed by globalization, they also need to respond appropriately to domestic pressures and influences derived from popular public opinion. The move away from parliament and research institutes in Nigeria's foreign policymaking toward public

opinion will lead to a more responsive and democratic foreign policy-making process (Akindele, 1970).

While much attention has been paid to the formal aspects of Nigeria's foreign policy formulation, the world inhabited by diplomats, and national technocrats institutions, there are two other aspects that also influence the outcome of Nigeria's foreign policy process. One aspect is the way in which Nigeria's fractured nationhood has impinged on the foreign policy process and the second is the impact of Nigeria's global reputation or identity for corruption. These factors directly affect the costs of realizing Nigeria's foreign policy objectives (Akindele, 1988).

While Nigeria has played an important role in international peace-keeping both under the auspices of the United Nations and in the Economic Community of West African States Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), Nigeria itself has been immersed in conflicts either at the level of intra-elite power struggles or identity conflicts within the context of its federal structures. Thus, while Nigeria possesses the necessary potential as well as institutional structures needed to formulate a vibrant foreign policy, its constraints lie in domestic factors among which are the nature of the foreign policy elite and its economic dependence and vulnerability (Adebayo, 1991). An examination of the domestic constraints on Nigeria's foreign policy reveals the way in which its foreign policy has been characterized by reactive and uncoordinated policies in the post-cold war era.

Since the 1990s, the Nigerian state has had to contend with multiple crises including the fall in global oil prices and the legitimacy of the "social contract" arising from the erosion of previous welfare gains fueled by the oil boom of the 1970s. Following the return to civilian rule in 1999 and in the context of the return to democracy, previously pent-up grievances and demands have been unleashed to a devastating effect and these have resulted in communal violence along with religious-based conflicts leading to an estimated 10,000 deaths. While many of these conflicts have also involved matters related to "settlers" versus "indigenes" or "oil producing communities" versus "oil multinationals", there is doubt that these have fuelled political instability and led to the questioning of the national identity (Fawole, 2003).

Regarding the institutions responsible for the formulation of Nigeria's foreign policy, many participants at an Oxford University conference on Nigeria's foreign policy agreed on the importance of strengthening Nigeria's Foreign Service by addressing issues such as the training of diplomats and the funding of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Military and Security Issues: The role of military and security issues in Nigeria's foreign policy has not received the critical scholarly attention that it deserves. Addressing the dearth of studies on Nigeria's national security as well as the traditional silence on this issue at the government level is, therefore, an essential dimension in any comprehensive study of Nigeria's foreign policy after the cold war. This includes an examination of both individual security issues such as the Bakassi border dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon, Nigeria/Chad border skirmishes, Libya's role in Chad, and recently the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and

Fulani/herdsmen among others, such a study also needs to focus on internal threats to national security (Ezeilo, 2005).

The view that military and security issues in Nigeria's foreign policy have not been properly harmonized is a central concern of researchers. This deficiency is said to be reflected in the shortcomings of successive military and civilian administrations in Nigeria, which failed to conceptualize the inextricable link between foreign policy and national security. However, the problem of lack of synergy between foreign policy and national security had substantially changed since 1999 when Nigeria returned to democratic rule. This is demonstrated by the drawing up of a government document on national security and foreign policy (Gambari, 2003).

Perhaps, the most pertinent question in the study of military and security issues is whether the Nigerian government has sufficiently understood the grave situation that the country faces in terms of both internal and external security threats. Are the nation's armed forces adequately prepared to meet the challenges of post-cold war era in terms of its strength orientations, training, and weaponry?

Using the examples of the relationship between the Ogoni people, Nigeria's elites, and Shell, it can be argued that the inability of Nigeria's elites to tackle successfully the deep-rooted problems of state legitimacy, national citizenship, democracy, and development – which the murder of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight Ogoni activists in November 1995 dramatized so powerfully - shows that Nigeria's effort to build a united nation, as well as its regional ambitions, will not be realized without resolving its internal problems.

Oil lies at the heart of persistent policy failures in Nigeria. In post-independence Nigeria, relations between the federal government and oil companies are still structured in ways that help the government maintain a firm grip on this strategic resource; a replication of colonial power relations in new forms. Powerful multinationals like Shell have taken the place of British imperial power.

It is clear that in the post-cold war era, and more importantly, in the era of America's war on terrorism, Nigeria's position as the world's eighth largest oil producer means that the country must now also contend with the coming realignment of forces in West Africa driven by America and other Western oil interests. This is the central challenge that Nigerian policymakers will have to grapple with; securing Nigeria's borders and national resources while containing predatory external forces.

Terrorism and Nigeria's Foreign Policy: The increased criminal tendencies and subversive activities of the jobless youths which have swollen the unemployment pool are manifested indicators of past unworkable government policies that have failed to positively address crucial unemployment, food insecurity, abject poverty, disease, and infrastructure development and maintenance neglect. The evolution of ethnic militias has been noticed to arrogate to themselves the functions of the people vanguard with the aim of defending community interests. These arrogated functions are outside the ambit of the 1999 Constitution and threaten the national peace and security of Nigeria state. During the period of conflict, the operation of

these militias may on the surface seem uncoordinated but if critically examined they are organized gangs backed by their communities that played key roles in masterminding and execution of bloody campaigns during conflicts, with serious effects on internal security (Ibrahim, 2002). Most of these groups draw their inspiration from the international terrorist networks, particularly the popular ones, whose atrocities aim to undermine national interests.

In Nigeria today, there are ethno cultural agitations including those fighting for autonomy and resource control. There are also violent activities of ethnic militia groups such as Boko Haram Sect, Fulani herdsmen, Oodu'a People Congress (OPC), and Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) as enunciated with the establishment of a clandestine Radio Biafra that propagates hatred against citizens from other parts of the country, Ijaw National Congress (INC), Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) and the Niger Delta Peoples Volunteer Force (NDPVF). The spate of the kidnapping of foreign oil workers in the Niger Delta region, incidents of bombing in Port Harcourt and Warri, and attacks on oil pipelines and installations illustrate the vulnerability of Nigeria to terrorism inspired by international terrorism. It is horrific to note that the headquarters of kidnapers has moved from the South-South to South West Nigeria.

In the recent past, international terrorism has become an established feature in world politics (Nwolise, 2005). It is used by state agents and insurgents to seek political and military results that would not ordinarily be impossible to achieve in a political forum or on conventional battlefields. Nigeria has remained a beleaguered nation fifty-eight years after independence, afflicted by an unprecedented series of insecurity, inter-communal and inter-ethnic clashes, civil strifes, religious conflicts, armed robbery, assassination, murder, economic sabotage, gender-based violence, abuse of public office, bomb explosion, and massive corruption; worst ever in the history of Nigeria's nationhood. While communities and groups engaged each other in communal conflicts, state agents have been accused of involvement in the perpetration of violence and destruction as reflected in Zaki Biam and Odi in Benue and Bayelsa conflict (Ibrahim, 2002).

There has been an act of economic sabotage relating to pipelines in all the oil-producing states in the Niger Delta. The abduction, kidnapping, and harassment of foreign oil workers, and local contractors, and the amplification of violence based on rumors by militants in the Niger Delta increase the difficulties for law-abiding citizens and oil conglomerates to engage in lawful businesses in Nigeria. This has discouraged domestic and foreign investors which resulted in the loss of revenues to the nation in the last two decades. Retired military, Para –military officers, and ex-servicemen who have served the country with rich experience in weapon handling and tactics increased the level of training imparted to the ethnic militias. Some of them acquired their skills and weaponry from international terror groups.

The Linkage between Domestic Factors and Nigeria's Image among the Comity of Nations

Nigeria's national image is a psychological objective of foreign policy. Positive image building and good image substance are among other determinants that determine the level of influence

and relevance of a nation in international politics. Therefore, the positive perception of any country's image is an important gauge for judging her standing in the international political system. A good image translates to respect, influence, prestige, and to some extent economic prosperity, as this will encourage prospective foreign investors. On the other hand, a bad or negative perception of a country's image indicates that such a country loses respect, influence, and prestige in the comity of nations. As a result, every nation tries to build, maintain and enhance their images in relation to other nations. The factors that determine a nation's image can be both internal and external. Internally, a succession of regimes of bad policies and practices can lead to a bad image; and externally, it could be through participation in foreign military and humanitarian missions. An image problem usually occurs when there are both internal and external factors that sway the pendulum towards a bad/negative image.

As regards Nigeria, Okon (2010) observes thus, "It is the general belief that corruption has taken a second index with little or no foreign investment to complimentarily support the economy in a country wallowing in the doldrums of poverty, unemployment, infrastructural decay and inefficiency in governance". However, the opinion that all Nigerians are thieves, 419ers, and fraudsters, could be proved wrong, by highlighting the positive side of Nigerians through the media. And as Fan (2006:12) observes:

A nation's image is defined by the people outside the country; their perceptions are influenced by stereotyping, media coverage as well as personal experience. Like commercial brands, a nation's image can be repackaged, repositioned and communicated in a professional fashion (Fan, 2006:12).

Thus, a nation's image is what a nation's people want the world to understand is most central, enduring, and distinctive about their nation while reputation is a particular type of feedback received by the nation from the outside world, concerning the credibility of the nation's identity claims. Perhaps the most obvious and familiar aspect of a nation's image is the value it can add – or take away – from the products and services that are made in, or associated with, that country.

The negative actions and statements of Nigerian leaders and citizens simultaneously affect her national and international identity and image. An image can be described as the impression, feeling, or opinion, that somebody has, about an organization. In this case, the impression or feeling or opinion, that other countries have about Nigeria. This can also be called national image which Isaac (2007) cited in Odoemelam (2010) notes thus "it is a set of ideas, events, and attitudes a country is associated with in the comity of nations.

Furthermore, Nigeria's role expectations in different "concentric circles" of her foreign policy have generated multiple role perceptions, thus leading to unintended role conflict. For instance, the policy of Afro-centrism (the policy of Africa being the centerpiece of diplomatic relations) informed and guided Nigeria's foreign policy for the first four decades of her independence, culminating in the country's massive investment in material and human resources in the prosecution of the "war" against racism and imperialism in Africa yielded little or no diplomatic dividends for the country. Akinboye (2013) puts it most eloquently:

Unfortunately, and disappointingly, many of the countries that have benefitted tremendously from Nigeria's largess often turned around

to show ingratitude to both its citizens and the government itself. ...South Africa exhibited xenophobic attacks against Nigerian citizens living in that country... Besides, the countries it has supported financially, diplomatically, and strategically becomes but the butt of derision and envy by them. Some of these countries equally harbor or even offer training facilities for terrorists, while others campaign openly against Nigeria's bid to occupy one of the permanent seats of the United Nations Security Council. From these instances, it has become clear that the age-long philosophical notion of Africa as the centerpiece of the country's foreign policy has become moribund, mundane, and anachronistic (Akinboye, 2013:43-44).

From all appearances, it is obvious that the inconsistencies and ambiguities in Nigeria's foreign policy objectives over the years, accentuated by vagaries in domestic policies, more than any other variable, explain the image crisis that has bedeviled the polity as a result. Specifically, as far back as 2004, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), at a public forum in Lagos, concluded that Nigeria's poor external image has been denying it the much-needed Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to accelerate its economic growth. This is understandable given the fact that Nigeria has for long been bogged down by its perception as one of the most corrupt nations in the world (Adeniyi, 2012).

Possible Solutions on how to Improve Nigeria's Foreign Policy

One of the solutions of the possible solutions how to improve Nigeria's foreign policy is shuttle diplomacy. Shuttle diplomacy is traceable to Henry Kissinger's years as secretary of state in the United States of America, and this was based on his attempt at maintaining peace between Israel and the Arab states (Egypt and Syria) during the Yom Kippur war in the 1970s. Shuttle diplomacy according to Dauda & Bako (2012) refers to the discussions that occur between two or more states whereby an individual, usually a government official, travels to and from the countries involved either for the purposes of mediation, or negotiation, or partnership as the case may be. Abdul & Ibrahim (2013) note that President Obasanjo was renowned for his shuttles in a bid to forge bilateral and multilateral partnerships that sought to advance development within Nigeria and ensure the peaceful coexistence among states in West Africa. Also inherent in the goals of President Obasanjo's shuttle diplomacy was the restoration of Nigeria's image from its position as a pariah state, and the securing of debt relief from the country's creditors. To this end, former President Obasanjo made a total of 113 foreign trips between May 1999 and August 2002 (Adeola & Ogunnoiki, 2015).

One of the biggest achievements of that shuttle diplomacy was the successful reduction of Nigeria's external debt from 36 percent of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2004 to less than 4 percent of its GDP by 2007. The administration also got America and some other Paris Club creditors to sign agreements on debt reduction for \$18 billion with the caveat that \$12 billion of Nigeria's debt would be returned by March 2006 (Dauda & Bako, 2012). The FDI inflows into Nigeria increased following the years of the shuttle diplomacy. Prior to President

Obasanjo's assumption of office in 1999, the highest amount recorded on FDI inflows between 1990 and 1998 was in 1994 with a record of \$2,287.4 million.

While in an acting capacity, President Jonathan embarked on shuttle diplomacy in an attempt to assure the world that Nigeria was secure and available for investment in spite of the domestic challenges it was experiencing. One of his shuttles to America to meet President Barack Obama was predicated on this. He sought to delist Nigeria from the discriminatory rule that enabled the Department of Homeland Security to screen Nigerians on international flights to the United States, especially after the attempted bombing of a U.S. airline by a Nigerian (Boma et al, 2015). President Jonathan also paid visits to China to discuss the subject of trade and he was successful in securing a low-interest loan of \$1.1 billion for the improvement of Nigeria's hydropower, road, and airport transportation systems (Adeola & Ogunnoiki, 2015).

President Buhari has also engaged in shuttle diplomacy with West African nations in the pursuit of regional cooperation targeted at tackling the Boko Haram terrorism; he also engaged a semblance of shuttle diplomacy while acting as chief mediator in solving the constitutional impasse in Gambia (Bello et al, 2017). The Buhari administration also forged diplomatic and economic relations with China which resulted in the provision of necessary funds to augment Nigeria's infrastructural deficit (Kia, Nwigbo, & Ojie, 2017). The adoption of shuttle diplomacy has been a recurring theme in the Fourth Republic and has yielded benefits to Nigeria across the different administrations from 1999 to date. It is crucial to state that shuttle and economic diplomacy could be seen to intertwine occasionally in terms of outputs and dividends.

Another solution is economic diplomacy. Lawal & Aluko (2015) described economic diplomacy as the brand of diplomacy that involves advocating the state's business interests and the application of technical expertise in the analysis of the effects of the receiving state's economic situation on its political climate and on the sending state's economic interests. In other words, economic diplomacy refers to the adoption of foreign policy instruments to achieve specific economic interests via decision-making, policymaking, or advocating. This is noticeable during the General Babangida regime, with General Ike Nwachukwu as foreign affairs minister. A key feature of economic diplomacy in this era was trading, not foreign aid.

President Obasanjo actively utilized economic diplomacy in the formation and strengthening of trade relations with Britain, America, France, and Germany, core financiers of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (Ota & Ecoma, 2016). At the multinational level, President Obasanjo attended sessions of the United Nations (UN), G77, G15, G8, OPEC, World Bank, IMF, UNESCO, Non-Aligned Movement, Commonwealth Organization, African Union (AU), ECOWAS, and many other organizations to further entrench Nigeria's interests on a global and regional scale (Imoukhede, 2016). His bilateral engagements in economic diplomacy resulted in the following partnerships as documented by Kia. (2017): Nigeria-Cameroon Joint Commission, Nigeria-Morocco Joint Commission, Nigeria-South Africa Bi-National Commission; Nigeria-Egypt Cooperation, Nigeria-Niger Joint Commission (Consolidate), Nigeria-Ethiopia on Technical Aid Corp, and Nigeria-Sao Tome Joint Development Relations

The administration also utilized economic diplomacy to deepen its commitments to regional cooperation and integration through a plan to undertake a gas pipeline project linking the Republic of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Niger, and Nigeria on the one hand; and a West African pipeline project linking Benin, Ghana, Niger and Togo on the other (Ota & Ecoma, 2016). Nigeria showed strong determination toward the success of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) (Nwanolue & Iwuoha, 2012). President Obasanjo's administration's interest on economic integration and international institutions attracted some domestic criticisms (Oni & Taiwo, 2016), in the sense that he was accused of expending excessive resources on the pursuit of economic diplomacy (Ota & Ecoma, 2016) and neglecting the problem of corruption that was festering and becoming more institutionalized by the day in Nigeria.

Economic diplomacy featured prominently on President Jonathan's Transformation Agenda leading to the renegotiation and review of several bilateral agreements and the brokering of new ones. Examples include the Bilateral Joint Commission with Indonesia, India, Singapore, and Malaysia; and the leadership of the D8, the group of Eight Developing Countries (Kia, 2017). Lawal & Aluko (2016) identify that in a bid to engage the use of foreign missions in the realization of economic diplomacy, President Jonathan appointed career diplomats as ambassadors to Nigeria's foreign missions.

President Buhari also visited China to solidify trade and economic and diplomatic relations with that country. Specifically, it led to the signing of an agreement to enhance the development of infrastructure and industrial activities in Nigeria between China and Nigeria on Technological and Scientific Cooperation. Following the visit, China granted Nigeria a loan to finance the 2016 budget deficit (Bello, 2017) and other infrastructural development plans of Nigeria.

The third solution is citizen diplomacy. During President Obasanjo's administration, foreign policy was targeted at economic and shuttle diplomacy as a strategy to rehabilitate Nigeria's image and facilitate national development. President Yar'Adua, however, sought to reap the gains of the reintegration advanced by President Obasanjo's administration through the protection of citizens' interests (Ukwuije, 2015). Thus, as Dickson (2010) highlights, citizen diplomacy is a foreign policy thrust under which the Federal Government of Nigeria seeks the involvement of Nigerians at home and in the diaspora in its effort to develop the country economically and politically. The articulation of citizen diplomacy by President Yar'Adua was hinged on a more citizen-centric foreign policy (Ujara & Ibieta, 2014), a seeming departure from the Afrocentric policy that Nigeria's foreign policy had advanced for several decades. The policy as espoused by Ojo Maduekwe, minister of foreign affairs in 2007, centered on reciprocity, implying that the manner in which Nigerians are treated by a particular country would determine the manner in which Nigeria would treat the citizens of that country (Agbu, 2009).

Conclusion/ Recommendations

The study examined domestic challenges in the Nigerian political environment and their impacts on the realization of its foreign policy goals. The study argued that the country is faced

with numerous domestic challenges confronting successive administrations in its bid to reposition the country and boost its image in the comity of nations. Some of these challenges include corruption, the mono-cultural nature of the economy, unemployment, and poverty, exchange rate volatility, bad leadership, ethnic cleavages low Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and the falling prices of oil in the international market among others. Though the government is working assiduously in tackling some of Nigeria's internal challenges, particularly the APC lead administration of President Muhammadu Buhari, the government needs to enlarge its diplomatic space by constructively engaging with multiple actors in global affairs. It has to be pragmatic and systematically adjusted to fit its foreign policy of multilateralism as this will enable her to withstand the challenges of globalization and reclaim its purported leadership role in Africa.

The above challenges pose a great challenge for the future of Nigeria's foreign policy because the resilience of any country's foreign policy derives essentially from the strength of its domestic base. It is generally accepted that a nation's foreign policy is a reflection of its domestic circumstances. To this extent, peace and stability are crucial prerequisites for development. A well-formulated and executed, strong and virile domestic policy will not only address the domestic problems but also be a springboard for the forging and implementation of a robust foreign policy.

Based on the premise of these findings the following recommendations are made to address Nigeria's domestic challenges and thereby enhance her foreign policy goals:

- i. From the findings, it can be seen that corruption is what has metamorphosed to other domestic issues. Corruption especially at the leadership level is the major factor that instigates these myriads of social maladies, and one of Nigeria's main challenges hampering efforts towards realization of a robust foreign policy. This corruption thrives partly because many citizens and groups understand the state to be illegitimate; undeserving of loyalty, an entity whose resources can be appropriated for personal gratification. If the management can design methods to tackle the issue of corruption, it will go a long way in addressing other challenges associated with Nigeria's foreign policy. Some of these ways that can be implemented to fight against corruption here include: putting the right people in the formulation of Nigeria's foreign policy which must be done transparently (transparency), penalties and punishments should be put in place for those caught in acts of corruption and there should be proper supervision and checks at the different levels of their operations. Therefore, if corruption is tackled, it is believed that most of the security issues in Nigeria will be solved.
- ii. As stated in the findings, one of the predisposing factors of domestic challenges is Insurgency, which has posed serious security challenges for the nation as it affects foreign as well as indigenous investments. Insurgency in the Nigerian scenario is caused by poverty and unemployment and has been identified as the contributory factor for the youths engaging in kidnapping operations and other criminal acts. To solve this problem, job creation must be on the frontline of government policy thrust and budgetary allocations, as some of the unemployed youths are university graduates and able-bodied individuals who are virtually frustrated with the lack of employment opportunities.

- iii. To restore the bad image of the Nigerian state, the government should pursue the goals of democracy, good governance, and respect for human rights at home to ensure the credibility of her leadership role abroad. Similarly, the study recommends a culture of political dialogue and debate among Nigerians. Encouraging political dialogue, as the principal mechanism for the resolution of crisis situations would show the international community that Nigerians are mature people worthy of a respectable place within the comity of nations.
- iv. This study recommends that conscious attempts/efforts be made to curb insecurity, crime and corruption through invigorated institutions of governance and effective surveillance anchored on resource provision and prudent management. The ultimate effect of these on Nigeria's image cannot be overemphasized. Also, there is the need for a strong strategic plan and long-term projection of the nation's foreign policy posture with a view to fashioning out a roadmap for Nigeria's diplomacy. Nigeria's foreign policy in the contemporary context must be premised solely on national interest with an emphasis on national security and welfare, regional and global peace, as well as robust multilateral diplomacy that is tailored along strong strategic partnership with friendly states in the global arena.

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