

Make It or Break It with International Diplomacy: An Analysis of India and Nigeria's Foreign Policy Pursuits

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Abstract

This study conducted an analysis of India and Nigeria's foreign policy pursuits. Foreign policy choices have significant benefits or consequences for countries. The future of a nation can be affected by the foreign policy decisions of leaders. The objective of this paper is to ascertain which country made it or broke it through an in-depth analysis of Nigeria and India's foreign policy. The qualitative method of research was used to carry out the descriptive discourse of this study. A thorough analysis revealed that India builds its regional and global status through a stealth economic diplomacy. This has moved India from being classified as a less developed nation to an emerging economy. In Nigeria's case, its Afrocentric foreign policy principle lacks diplomatic strategy. Hence the misinterpretation of national interest has resulted in its economic doom. The study recommends that countries should build their economy first, in order to successfully pursue their desired power status.

Keywords

Economy, Foreign Policy, India, National Interest, Nigeria

1. Introduction

This study seeks to ascertain the outcomes of the foreign policy principles and pursuits of India and Nigeria on their present economic and political state in the world through an analysis of their foreign policy pursuits since they attained independence. India and Nigeria are used for this analysis because both countries possessed similar features of a major power in their respective continental

sub-regions at independence. Also, through their rich history, huge population, and strategic geographic location, both countries attained regional influence. India and Nigeria became independent countries in 1947 and 1960, respectively. Since then, the countries have been engaged in executing several foreign policy objectives in the international sphere in pursuit of their national interests. In the world, it has been recognized that nations design and implement foreign policies that will guide their relations with other states and also promote and defend their principles and national interests. What a nation considers important to its national interest is the protection of territorial integrity as well as the advancement of military, economic, strategic, and diplomatic interests (Folarin & Folarin, 2018). The quest for the national interest has been seen as the primary purpose of foreign policy in relations between states (Marsh, 2001).

Foreign policy is a statement of the intentions and un-intentions of a state. Foreign policy has been likened to a wedding ring used in solemnising the domestic and international environment together. National ambitions are the reasons for such political solemnisation (Folarin & Folarin, 2018). Foreign policy guides a nation in achieving its national interests and acquiring an appropriate position in the midst of nations. It directs the actions and inactions of a state according to the strength of a state and the circumstances of its external surroundings. It is a vision of desired outcomes in relations with other states and actors, strategies for achieving such outcomes, and the available means at the state's disposal that will guide its relations with other nations (Bojang, 2018). Foreign policy thus spawns purpose and gives the confidence to attain that purpose (Ahmed, 2020).

Foreign policy choices have significant benefits or consequences for countries. When foreign policy decisions are made by leaders, the future of that nation will be affected by such decisions. Leaders can alter the global order by making proper foreign policies (Erbas, 2013). Thus, foreign policy is important to survive in this world. The purpose of foreign policy differs from country to country. Many ethical objectives of foreign policy do not pose a risk to the survival of a nation, and other national interests clearly do not have the moral preference of survival (Scott Burehill, 2005). Maximizing great benefits for the country is the ultimate aim of foreign policy. The national interest in every country's foreign policy should precisely be based on the people's welfare, promoting and protecting the citizens' economic well-being. Therefore, the foreign policy of developing countries should be tailored towards the economic development of their countries (Erbas, 2013). Decision makers in every state, through their perceptions of national identity, history, and interests, establish the principles that characterize the country's foreign policy pursuit for subsequent decades (Veen, 2011). Thus, it is essential to investigate how the foreign policy principles established and executed by leaders in power since independence have impacted the economic and political spheres of nations in today's world.

This paper attempts to draw an analysis of Nigeria and India's foreign policy, to show which country made or broke it, and the cause of the breakthrough or

failure. This will be done through a careful examination of their policy principles, their commitments to fulfilling it and the impacts on their present economic and political position. This outline of this paper is as follows: introduction, conceptual review, theoretical framework, methodology, objectives and principles of foreign policy, India's foreign policy pursuit since independence, Nigeria's foreign policy pursuit since independence, foreign policy objectives: an analysis, and conclusion and recommendation.

2. Foreign Policy and Foreign Policy Analysis: A Conceptual Review

2.1. Foreign Policy

Foreign policy deals with international political and economic relations, security and defence issues. For countries to effectively relate to each other, their foreign policies must be well defined, articulated and executed strategically. Hill (2003) has defined foreign policy as the totality of foreign relations executed by an independent body. For Rizwan (2009), foreign policy refers to the method of relations between governments of independent states in the international system in a bid to achieve several objectives. It thus represents courses of action and principles adopted by governments in defining their interactions with other countries in the world. Ola (2017) explains that it involves a range of government actions in its interactions with other actors in the global environment in an attempt to advance the interests of the nation. Ahmed and Minhas (2020) opine that the foreign policy of a country is a reflection of the domestic character of that country on the external stage. It entails the link between a state's objectives and the strategic means to attain them (Ahmed & Minhas, 2020).

Foreign policy is the attitude and representation of a state in the international arena (Ajayi, Njoaguani, Olorunyomi, & Folarin, 2015). Foreign policy has to do with the maintenance and advancement of a state's integrity, security, power, and economy by establishing relationships with other states. It is the shaping of internal and foreign politics through the use of several methods like diplomacy, negotiations, sanctions, and new media, depending on the interests of the state. The basic components of foreign policy include the principles guiding the state in its pursuit of national interest, which entails the underlying philosophy and beliefs of the nation; the goals and objectives; and the strategic means to achieve the nation's goals, which involves diplomatic practice (Njoku & Nwafor, 2005). Hence, it necessitates the study of how states conduct their affairs in the international arena (John, 2019).

2.2. Foreign Policy Analysis

Foreign policy analysis has to do with the practice and conduct of relations with other countries, with emphasis on decision making, the decision making process, the decision makers, the sources of a decision, and the result of the decisions. In other words, it involves examining how decisions are made, ranging

from recognition of the problem, worldviews of the decision makers, planning, and the effects of a decision made toward the country's resources (John, 2019). According to Ahmed (2020), foreign policy analysis is the study of how the external relations of a state are managed. It involves the scrutiny of the foreign policies of a country; studying how a country makes its foreign policy; and the processes, causes, effects, or outcomes of foreign policy making, either in a case-specific or comparative manner (Ahmed, 2020).

It is the scientific interpretation of actions and non-actions by which a country regulates its relationship with the rest of the world using available foreign policy tools or instruments like propaganda, diplomacy, intergovernmental organization, trade, military, and war. It uses such instruments or tools to examine the interplay between systemic processes, national and sub-national determinants, individual decision making, and public opinion (Hudson, 2013). Foreign policy analysis provides answers to controversial actions behind policies made by leaders, as well as knowledge on how foreign policy decisions are made, why they are made, the reasons for engaging in specific policy behavior, and the circumstances and constraints presented by the international system during the decision-making process. It explains how institutions, states, and people relate to each other in an international system that is dynamic (Alden & Aran, 2011).

3. Theoretical Framework

A decision-making theory is adopted in this study to explain the rationale behind foreign policy decisions. This theory posits that decision makers, be they individuals or institutions, should be rational when making decisions in the light of risks and uncertainties. Decision-making theory was first propounded by Herbert Simon in 1947, in his book "Administrative Behavior". Decision-making is a process or series of activities that entails identifying a problem, searching for information, defining options, and selecting actions from considered preferred alternatives. Decision-making theory emphasizes that decisions should be made while being guided by a set of principles (Nitisha, 2009).

The rational model of decision-making theory postulates that institutions are rational in decision-making and must take into consideration the options and consequences with the goal of getting maximum results. States in the international system are rational in their foreign policy pursuits and must examine all alternatives in making decisions and contemplate the possible results, either positive or negative, before making a decision which translates into the policies it adopts in the global system. This act of rationality in decision-making is required in order for states to attain the maximum objectives of their national interest in their relations in the international sphere.

4. Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research method. A descriptive approach was adopted within the qualitative research framework to examine how the foreign

policy actions of India and Nigeria since independence have brought them to their present economic state and world ranking. This study employs diplomacy as an instrument of foreign policy analysis to explain the results of the foreign policy actions of both nations. The study mainly relied on secondary sources of data. The sources from which the data was collected include academic journals, textbooks, reliable internet sources, conference papers, and newspapers. Data collected was described and analyzed using the descriptive discourse method.

5. Determinants of Foreign Policy

Defined agendas and national interest pursuit are what defines foreign policy actions. Countries form and project their national interests based on certain core influential or determining factors. Such factors include:

1) *Geographical Location*: Factors such as topography, shape size, and climate are crucial geographical factors for a country, which determines how it prosecutes its foreign policy. Nations with natural resources, good boundaries for defence, and good soil for producing food enables them to champion an independent foreign policy.

2) *Leader's Idiosyncrasy*: State policies simply reflect the nature of the leaders in authority. The perceptions and personality of a leader comes to bear when policies both domestic and external are being made. As a result, it determines how international politics is perceived, which in turn leads to how national interests are formulated and pursued. This can be seen in the policy changes in states, whenever there is a change in leadership.

3) *Economic Resources*: Economic relations in the international system form a huge part of the global relations in contemporary global politics. States engage in economic exchanges and treaties across the globe, by selling products they have and buying products they lack. Also, the economic status of a country, determines what actions it will take in the international arena and also the friends and allies it makes.

4) *Population*: The population of a nation determines its military numbers, economic markets (buying power) and labour availability. It has been observed that populous nations can become great powers if such population strength is utilized maximally (Obi, 2006).

5) *External Environment*: The role of international organisations, either governmental or non-governmental, state and stateless actors cannot be overlooked in determining the foreign policy stances and actions of countries in the international arena. The foreign policy of a state is usually affected by its membership of several international organisations and external occurrences such as international security, and economic policies (Bojang, 2018).

6. Objectives and Principles of India's Foreign Policy

Although Nehru was an advocate of world peace, tolerance and respect for all nations, national Interest has always been the principle that governs the foreign

policy of India from the onset of its foundation by Nehru.

According to Appadorai and Rajan (1985) India has three basic foreign policy objectives.

1) The preservation of India's independence of foreign policy and protection of its territorial integrity: India experienced two centuries of colonialism and fought hard to attain independence, hence it was natural to emphasize on an independent foreign policy. This explains the policy of non-alignment and India's effort in strengthening Afro-Asian unanimity in endorsing the non-interference principles in other nation's internal affairs. Also, the main interest of a nation is to ensure its territorial integrity by protecting its boundaries from foreign aggressors (Appadorai & Rajan, 1985).

2) Promoting International Security and Peace: With the consideration of the destruction caused by the two world wars, Indian policy makers decided to walk the road of peace and development. They believe that without global peace, social and economic development would be relegated to the background. India's policy on disarmament intended to promote world peace (Rajiv, 2009).

3) India's Economic Development: At independence, India required a rapid development of its economy, in order to strengthen its freedom and democracy (Muni, 2009).

The principles of India's foreign policy were adopted to enable the realization of India's foreign policy objectives. These principles are;

Panchsheel: Peace was given an ultimate importance in the formulation of India's foreign policy by Nehru, the founder. India for him, desired friendly and peaceful relations with all states, especially its neighbours and the major powers. Nehru while signing a peace accord with China in April 1954, advocated for five principles to be adhered to, known as Panchsheel. Since then, it has guided the bilateral relations of INDIA with other countries and still guides India in the conduct of its foreign policy (Appadorai & Rajan, 1985). Panchsheel principles include;

- a) Mutual respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity.
- b) Non-interference in the internal affairs of each other.
- c) Non-aggression toward each other.
- d) Mutual and equal benefit.
- e) Peaceful co-existence.

Policy of Non-Alignment: Non-Alignment is very important in India's foreign policy. It is the act of standing independently on international matters according to the benefits of each case and at the same time not being committed to or bring influenced by any bloc. India is a lone player in the game of international politics; it does not align to the view of others. In order to defend its interests, India applies multiple strategic dialogues with every potential partner on specific issues (Mohan, 2004).

Policy of Resisting Colonialism, Racism and Imperialism: India was a victim of racism and colonialism and as a result opposes such evils in whatever form. India regards colonialism and imperialism as dangers of world security and

peace. India's role in the independence of Indonesia and other fourteen (14) countries in Africa and the elimination of racism in South Africa attest to this (Appadorai & Rajan, 1985).

Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes. India has an unwavering faith in settling international issues without the intervention of a foreign military. It is an important element and pillar of India's foreign policy (Menon, 2020).

Support to United Nations (UN), International Law and a Just and Equal World Order. India respects the international laws of the UN, which are; principles of sovereignty and equality of states and non-interference in other states internal matters. India has supported the UN in the preservation of international peace by actively participating in the process of decolonization and peacekeeping. In an attempt to democratize the UN Security Council, India proposed its reform and also other agencies in the UN. India is one of the petitioners to be permanent member of the Security Council (Tirkey, 2019).

7. India's Foreign Policy Pursuit since Independence

India's foreign policy has alternated between several ideologies, from the idealism instituted by Nehru to pragmatism closely moving towards realism principles. India at independence had the basic features of a major power, such as its size, history, and geographical location. In terms of area and population, India is one of the largest countries in the world and the largest in its sub-region (Brewster, 2012). A strategic central position is occupied by India in the Indo-pacific and the size of India is nine times that of Japan. These characteristics, however, did not automatically shoot India into the status of a major power as a result of its deficiency in economic strength and military capability, which constitute national power. India's lack of national power caused it to dream about becoming a major power. Thus, it was a major country whose influence was limited to its sub-region (Joshi, 2016).

The foreign policy choices of India become constrained by these circumstances. These constraints were very evident during the period of the Cold War. India first established the policy of non-alignment as its fundamental principle of foreign policy in the 1940s by Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister. This policy implies that India will not be aligned with both camps, the US and the Soviet Union (Ganguly & Pardesi, 2009). During the cold war, both super powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, did not show any significant interest in India, which was newly independent at that time. The US was almost ignorant about the country and only had a few economic and cultural relations with India, nothing strategic, and thus paid no significant attention to India. This was an advantage to India as it was an opportunity to maneuver (Horimoto, 2017). As a result of two centuries of colonialism in India, colonial rule memories led to the creation and adoption of a political culture that gave meaning to the concept of national autonomy (Blarel & Paliwal, 2019).

There was a desire to independently conduct the foreign affairs of India, and

any acquiescence to superior powers was not tolerated, even by the public. The policymakers of India after independence were very sensitive to this legacy of colonialism. Accordingly, a different path that would lead India away from the ambit of the Cold War was forged by India's policymakers, since the political sphere was anti-imperialist in nature. Thus, nonalignment was the mainstay of India's foreign policy (Tanham, 1992). Nehru was concerned about unprofitable defense expenses because any form of involvement with any of the super powers would divert important resources from economic development. Also, it was because he did not want to compromise the hard-fought and won independence of India and was intent on maintaining it (Ganguly & Pardesi, 2009).

The policy of non-alignment was dropped early in the 1970s when India signed the Indo-Soviet Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation treaty of strategic mutual cooperation on August 9, 1971 (Chadda, 2019). Hence, India's foreign policy was transformed from non-alignment with either bloc to an alliance with the Soviet Union. A few years into the 1990s, India was confronted with several challenges. The spikes in oil prices as a result of the Gulf War led to a reduction in remittances from Indians working in the Middle East. India had to seek help from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for loans and transformed its economy in return for the loans (Karnad, 2015). The disintegration of the Soviet Union topped the list of India's challenges. The disintegration of the Soviet Union and the new structure of the international system caused India to lose the anchor of its foreign policy. This made India develop new alternatives and initiate several policies. India's foreign policy has become centered on forming partnerships that are strategic to its development (Tanham, 1992). By 1998, India carried out nuclear tests. As at 2015, India has formed and preserved strategic relationships with 28 nation-states as at 2015. The disposition of India to become a major power in the international system developed gradually. The nuclear tests of 1998 can be said to be the beginning of this dream. However, the nuclear goals of India remained only a dream till the BRICS term was coined in 2001. In his publication, *Building Better Global Economic BRICS* (O'Neil, 2001), Jim O'Neil, the then chairman of Goldman Sachs Asset Management, coined the term BRICs.

BRICS is a group of developing economies that includes Brazil, Russia, India, and China. In spite of all indications of a developing economy, India's economic growth was high, at a rate of 8–10 percent between 2003 and 2010 (Ishigami, 2017). As India continued to rise, they launched in December 2011, a medium-range missile called the Agni. In several papers, India was praised as a great power. However, the Indian government never proclaimed publicly that India was a major power. Even though India was generally acknowledged as a future great power, the strange and interesting phenomenon was the negation of such a status by India. Miller opined that the elites and diplomats of India are resistant to the emergence of their own nation (Miller, 2013). India was then seen as adopting swing-state policies, in the sense that India was strengthening its power while bidding for more time (Kliman & Fontaine, 2012). This simply

means that India has always aspired to be a great power but has kept its true intentions hidden; if India had openly declared its ambition to become a great power, it would have elicited negative reactions and situations. As a result, it took such a position (Miller, 2013).

With Narendra Modi's assumption of power as prime minister, he adopted a different approach that is unprecedented in the diplomatic history of India. Unlike his other predecessors, he did not follow in the diplomatic footsteps of Nehru. While Nehru was a realist, an idealist, and a pragmatist, Modi was absolutely pragmatic and realistic (Nayar & Paul, 2004). Mr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, the Foreign Secretary appointed by Modi, announced on the 20th of July 2015 at his IISS-Fullerton Lecture in Singapore that the dimension of India's foreign policy is aimed at becoming a leading power (Huntsman & Bharath, 2015). This was the first time a political elite with such high rank made a public statement about an intention like that. Although his statement was discussed in various Indian newspapers, the significance of such a statement was not evidently noticed. The swing-state policy ideology was kicked out and India affirmed its desire to be a great power. This turnaround is as a result of the ideology of Modi, the first Prime Minister of India who is non-Nehruvian (Mohan, 2016).

As stated earlier, India has the fundamental features of diverse significance and a position of geopolitical influence that is enough for a major power status. The economic and national defense power of India were insufficient during the period of the Cold War. As a result, India's becoming a major power someday seems like a pipe dream (Ganguly, 2010). In the world economic rankings of 2016, in terms of the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP), India ranked seventh and in the rankings of expenditures on defense, India ranked fifth. In recent times, the US is the biggest economic power and the sole major power, with China pursuing it, and so is India, though it is two steps behind China. This turnaround is as a result of the ideology of Modi, the first Prime Minister of India who is non-Nehruvian (Mohan, 2016). There seems to be no other country emerging with as much ambition to be a major power as India (Nayar & Paul, 2004). The US National Intelligence Council predicted in 2012 that India would be the rising economic power that China is today (National Intelligence Council, 2012).

8. Objectives and Principles of Nigerian Foreign Policy

After securing independence in 1960, Nigeria in the face of colonial domination decided to become the "knight" of Africa. The objectives of Nigeria Foreign policy are stipulated in Section 19 of the 1999 constitution as;

- 1) Protection and promotion of national interest.
- 2) Promotion of the integration of Africa for African unity.
- 3) Promotion of global cooperation for universal peace and mutual respect for all nations and elimination of discrimination in all its manifestations.

4) Respect international law and treaty obligations as well as the seeking of settlement of international disputes by negotiation, mediation, conciliation, arbitration and adjudication; and

5) Promotion of a just economic world order.

The principles of Nigerian foreign policy are;

Principle of Non-alignment: At the time Nigeria became an independent state, the world was divided into two opposing ideological power blocs namely; the US capitalism versus the defunct Soviet Union communism. Conscious of this situation, Nigeria decided to protect its budding independence by not aligning to any of the blocs. However, it has been observed by scholars that Nigeria's non-alignment was not practical as the government of Balewa was pro-West as a result of ties of colonialism (Fawole, 2003; Folarin, 2010; Ogunnubi, 2014).

Respect for Sovereignty, Legal Equality and Territorial Integrity of All States: Nigeria has always expressed its readiness to relate with other states in accordance to the international laws of interaction and engagement. This principle was also a way of assuring its neighbours and other African states that it will not impose at any point its authority on them (Amao & Uzodike, 2015).

Non-interference principle in the Affairs of Other States: This principle expresses Nigeria's intentions to not interfere in the domestic issues of other African states. Nigeria however, has always grappled with this principle because of its national interest which is to help its neighbours and Africa at large. This has compelled Nigeria to intervene in their internal concerns in the capacity of a non-state actor through peacekeeping missions. Examples of such interventions among others are; Liberia (1990-2003), Sierra Leone (1998-2002). Nevertheless this principle remains a crucial thrust in Nigeria's foreign policy (Ogunnubi, 2014).

Membership in International Relations: Nigeria believes in addressing crisis and issues through multilateralism. This is evident in its membership in several international organizations such as the United Nations (UN), the Commonwealth of Nations, African Union (AU) and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) (Fawole, 2003).

Africa as its Centre-piece Foreign policy: The foundation of Nigeria's foreign policy was laid by Balewa's administration, with Africa as its centerpiece and this has served as a guide for every administration. Nigerian leaders believe that it is Nigeria's destiny and responsibility to play a big brother role to African countries. Hence, its commitment to pursuing an Afro-centric based foreign policy (Ola, 2019).

9. Nigeria's Foreign Policy Pursuit since Independence

Nigeria, since it became independent in 1960, has considered it appropriate to be involved with the economic and socio-political issues of Africa (Okpokpo, 2000; Saliu & Oshewolo, 2018). In the limelight of politics in Africa, Nigeria is always recognized as the vanguard of leadership and has earned itself the reputation of

being a big brother of Africa (Ogunnubi, 2014). Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, then Prime Minister of the First Republic of Nigeria (1960-1966), laid the groundwork and established the principles of Nigeria's foreign policy, with an emphasis on promoting Africa's development and unity, a concept known as pan-Africanism (Dudley, 1982; Osaghae, 1998). This principle of Afrocentrism and pan-Africanism has predominantly characterized the engagements of Nigeria with African countries and has virtually remained the same notwithstanding the changes in regimes and the oscillation between civilian and military administrations (Ogunnubi, 2018). In Ibeanu (2010), argues that Nigeria's foreign policy has alternated between conservative, radical, and realist ideologies in the history of Nigeria's pursuit of foreign policy.

In Nigeria's first republic, a conservative foreign policy was entrenched. Nigeria's foreign policy was focused on the political aspects of Africa; championing the independence of African states; defending their national sovereignty; and promoting the principle of non-interference in the internal matters of the African nations. Nigeria was also pro-West, favoring its colonial father, Britain; as a result, the country's social, political, and economic development received little attention (Jega, 2010). The interests of Nigerian citizens were not central to the first republic's foreign policies, which caused the divisions created by colonialism to deepen. This resulted in frequent secession threats in the country because the central government lacked cohesion (Gberevbie & Oni, 2021). It has been described as docile, moralistic, ambivalent, indecisive, inert, inconsistent, and devoid of logic by critics (Alkali, 2003; Ibeanu, 2010; Akinboye, 2013; Fayomi, Chidozie, & Ajayi, 2015).

With the end of the Nigerian civil war, oil revenue increase and the entrance of a new military regime (1975-1979), Nigeria's foreign policy experienced a shift from conservatism to radicalism. The foreign policy of the nation became more influential, pro-active, assertive, more activist and radical, displaying hegemonic ambitions (Dibua, 2013). Nigeria during this phase was basically centered on people. The major issues of interest were the protection of the African people, economic emancipation, and the establishment of a new economic system (Ibeanu, 2010). Nigerian leaders during this period defined the nation's foreign policy with regard to its perceived leadership, power, and aspirations on the continent. This era is described as the "golden age" of Nigeria's foreign policy (Ade-Ibijola, 2015).

Africa was still at the heart of Nigeria's foreign policy in this phase. Nigeria, due to its wealth or financial strength, was at the forefront of the Southern African liberation movements against colonial and white supremacist rule. As a result, Nigeria earned the position of chair of the UN Anti-Apartheid Committee (Adeniji, 2005; Akpotor & Agbebaku, 2010). This prestigious reputation became more important to Nigerian leaders than the welfare of Nigerian citizens. Nigeria's prominence on African issues reached a new high; no conversation was perfect without mentioning the contributions of Nigeria (Eze, 2009). Nigeria's

diplomacy during this period was described by [Fayomi et al. \(2015\)](#) as “naira spraying diplomacy” which never received a reciprocation of its benevolence from the African countries that benefited. [Saliu \(2006\)](#) buttressed this point by noting that the Afrocentric policy of Nigeria lacked the principle of diplomatic reciprocity that is obtainable in the international system. International diplomatic practice is hinged on a “give and take” in the relations between states. Thus, the generosity of Nigeria to African nations lacked strategy and political and economic benefit as motivation. Nigeria’s Afrocentric policy has not earned the country the leadership and desired appreciation it deserves, as most beneficiaries of Africa reciprocated its benevolence with ingratitude.

The robust foreign policy actions of the administrations of Generals Murtala Mohammed and Olusegun Obasanjo (1975-1979) landed Nigeria in a severe economic crisis, as the oil boom wealth was mismanaged. Hence, in the early 1980s, the country plummeted into economic depression as a result of the drop in oil prices in the global market. Conflicts in West African states; Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Cote d’Ivoire; made Nigeria redirect its foreign policy thrust to West Africa. Foreign policy activities in the mid-1980s were then geared towards peacekeeping in the sub-region. Notwithstanding the downturn of the economy, peacekeeping operations in those countries were sustained to the detriment of the country ([Folarin, 2014](#)). Nigeria’s reputation in West Africa rose and earned it the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) chairmanship three consecutive times. Nigeria also adopted economic diplomacy in its foreign policy in order to advance the country’s goal of economic development and ameliorate the negative effects of the economic crisis it was experiencing ([Asobie & Ibeanu, 2005](#)). This era of Niger’s foreign policy is described as the realist phase ([Ibeanu, 2010](#)).

Nigeria’s foreign policy took a dramatic turn by 1993 when the military Head of State, General Sani Abacha, made Nigeria a pariah state through his prior human rights record and hostile actions toward the West and African countries. The foreign policy activities of this period were less about African nations and the West and more about the domestic interests of the nation ([Folarin, 2014](#)). The return to democracy in 1999 saw a new era in Nigeria’s foreign policy. It balanced the traditional Afrocentric role between the region and the sub-region ([Alao, 2011](#)). Relations were re-established with global powers in an attempt to handle Nigeria’s domestic challenges. Nigerian citizens were the focal point of the foreign policy administration ([Akinterinwa, 2004](#)). The notion of citizen diplomacy was introduced as the centre of Nigeria’s foreign policy in 2007 by the administration of the late Umar Musa Yar’Adua ([Folarin, 2011](#)). The socio-economic and political issues of the nation were crucial in this administration. It was also pursued by the administration of Goodluck Jonathan ([Amao & Uzodike, 2015](#)). Citizen diplomacy is the act of making home and abroad Nigerians the centre of the nation’s foreign policy. This was also a move from the usual Afrocentric directed foreign policy ([Mbara & Gopal, 2020](#)).

With President Buhari's assumption of power, foreign policy actions have been centred on neighbourliness and economic development. Relations with Nigeria's neighbours have improved in a joint attempt to combat the prevailing transnational Boko-Haram terrorism. Nigeria has also partnered with the United States to fight terrorism through providing military manpower and intelligence. Also, relations with China have been improved to promote economic growth through infrastructural development (Bello, Dutse, & Othman, 2017).

10. Foreign Policy Pursuits of India and Nigeria: A Comparative Analysis

The purpose of foreign policy is to achieve a country's national interest. Nation-states in their interactions with one another aim to achieve a goal. National interest is a means to an end, and it guides countries in formulating their foreign policy. Foreign policy objectives are an essential instrument in measuring the foreign policy of a nation (Ola, 2019). Foreign policy is not welfarist in nature; it is conditioned by national interests since every state aims to achieve certain objectives through international relations. According to realists, states are self-interested and only want to achieve and secure their interests (Waltz, 2002). Such interests could be power, economic, military, etc. As such, all moves are seen as a means to an end. The economic prospects of a country usually fall under the umbrella of national interest, as they have actual or potential material benefits. Survivability, power maximization, and economic strength are all elements of national interest; thus, pursuing national interests entails pursuing economic interests (Scott Burehill, 2005).

There are several foreign policy objectives that countries aim to achieve in international relations; the economic objective, however, supersedes all others. According to Karl Marx, the economy is the substructure upon which politics, the superstructure, is built (Buecker, 2003). The extent and quality of a country's ability to pursue its political and foreign policy objectives is determined by the economic strength of that country. Wallace (1971) argues that governments mostly seek economic development goals as the principal objective of foreign policy. In the same vein, Drezner (1999) explains that countries conceive the concept of national interest as obtaining maximum welfare and securing that welfare. Countries will always seek to increase their wealth and income in order to advance other interests (Drezner, 1999). Likewise, Ahmed (2020) opines that foreign policy aims to achieve economic development in order to play an assertive role in world politics. The prestige and status of a nation can only be secured if the economy of the country is stable.

India's foreign policy objectives are realistic and economic growth oriented. India focuses on building its regional and global status by focusing on economic diplomacy in order to build a muscular foreign policy, through multi-alignment that guarantees its interest. In the 1990s, there was a challenge to India's foreign policy because of its economy and the disappearance of the Soviet Union, its

major ally, thus creating a new unipolar world order. India had to effectively link its foreign policy to its economic policies. Several economic reforms were initiated by India's Prime Minister Rao Narasimha in 1991, who acknowledged that in order for such economic reforms to be successful, India had to be connected to bigger economies. As a result, India rekindled its relations with the US because of the strategic importance of the US. India also established relations with Israel and Iran and further expanded its relations with the big economies of Asia through its membership of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Rao's bold foreign policy movements inspired his successors to continually pursue economic reforms by forming new alignments and creating fresh possibilities (Pant, 2021).

The economic reforms of three decades ago shaped India's foreign policy significantly; these economic reforms, pursued by determined foreign policy objectives, resulted in rapid economic growth in India and changed the way India relates to the global world. The foreign policy of India in reality has been spontaneous and its substance is difficult to comprehend. This is because India employs foreign policy actions based on the timing and circumstances at hand. Sometimes India relies on Japan and the US and, at other times, befriends Russia and China (Khilnani et al., 2012). Such foreign policy actions have continued to baffle outsiders. India, beginning in 2000, has been developing and dishing out several foreign policies, which depend on the region they are dealing with. Such tendencies in implementing foreign policy in recent times have appeared to be unique (Blarel & Paliwal, 2019).

The foreign policy of Modi has been described by scholars as the Matrix. It has various characteristics. Firstly, it comprises of three categories of levels: the local level (South Asia region), the regional level (Indo-Pacific region) and the global level. Every level has different and specific objectives with equivalent measures (Ganguly, 2010). The discrepancies in the way India relates to the three levels have continued to be a puzzle to outsiders, as it appears that India seems to be using major powers to its advantage in order to attain its interests. Japanese newspapers have characterized the foreign policy of India as omnidirectional (Horimoto, 2017). This simply means that India has been committed to growing its economy and advancing its defense capabilities in order to become a rich and powerful country. A firm economy for Modi does not only mean the economy alone, but the diplomatic infrastructure also. The base of every effective foreign policy is a strong economy. Thus, rather than geopolitics, India pursues its foreign policy from the angle of geo-economics (Horimoto, 2017).

India's involvement with its immediate neighbours is with the aim of pursuing economic growth and emerging as a major power in the region and beyond (Chellaney, 2014; Chaulia, 2016). As a result, India has grown from being a rule taker to a rule maker. In recent times, India has been recognized as a rising power with a growing ambition, growth in military and material capabilities, a big consolidated democracy, and an expanding economy that's ranked the sixth

largest in the world (Research FDI, 2021). India has advanced rapidly and sought avenues to acquire material and military power that will transform India into a leading power (Jaishankar, 2015). Presently India is no longer classified as a less developed nation but as an emerging power (Ganguly & Pardesi, 2009).

Nigeria's foreign policy objectives though viewed as welfarist has certain national interest of becoming a regional power. However they did not take the right diplomatic steps to achieve their interests. The misinterpretation of national interests, goals, strategies, and the purpose of foreign policy has resulted in the downfall of the once upon a time "great Nigeria". There's an increasing global dislike and disrespect for the country and its people. This cannot be separated from the attendant image crisis (Mbara & Gopal, 2020). Nigeria, which was once the "giant of Africa", always spearheading significant projects such as the formation of ECOWAS and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), now African Union (AU) in Africa and others beyond, which African countries looked up to in decision making and its stance on global issues in order to rally behind its back, now follows the initiatives of other African countries. This is seen in the formation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), spearheaded by Ghana and Rwanda. Nigeria is presently ranked as one of the poorest nations in the world with a world ranking of 143rd in the prosperity index (Legatum Prosperity Index, 2021).

Nigeria's pompous and inconsistent foreign policy since independence only gave it a fleeting title of "Africa's Big Brother". Nigeria's foreign policy history has affected its contemporary foreign policy objectives. The inconsistency in Nigeria's foreign policy has worsened the economic situation of the country and exasperated the image crisis of the country. Insecurity issues, a crumbling economy, worsening rate of unemployment and the negative consequences of globalization are all a result of misplaced priorities on the part of the nation's foreign policy principles (Mbara, 2019).

Nigeria's present political and economic state is a result of piled up years of charity begins abroad, while neglecting the domestic issues of the nation (Akinboye, 2013). Since independence, Nigeria has wasted over ten billion dollars on peacekeeping around the world, which could have been used to develop the country's infrastructure, human resources, and infrastructure. Over two-thirds of Nigeria's population survives on less than a dollar per day (Ajayi, Njoaguani, Olorunyomi, & Folarin, 2015). Failure to develop its economy, human resources, and infrastructure has resulted in a deteriorated economy causing an increase in unemployment and high rate of crime. Nigeria chose to pursue power without doing its homework of silently and diplomatically building its economic base which would have enabled it to pursue long term power goals (Warner, 2017).

11. Conclusion and Recommendations

Nigeria's economy at independence was not doing badly as a result of its wealth of natural resources, especially during the oil boom days. Thus, it was able to

carry out a busybody Father Christmas foreign policy, spending frivolously on defense expenses that did not profit it, acting as a regional power while aspiring to be a world power. While India had the geographical status of a regional power, it was plagued by a weak economy and defense. India, shying away from defense expenses, is focused on developing its economy. Even when India's economy began to grow, it denied being an emerging power in order not to elicit reactions from world powers that would shut down its dream of becoming a leading power.

India pursued its foreign policy from a geo-economic standpoint, while Nigeria pursued it from a geopolitical standpoint. Thus, just like a young child learning to walk and who started running but could not go far because his bones and feet were not firm yet, Nigeria fell. Thus, India made it and Nigeria broke it with foreign policy. It becomes safe to say, "Seek first the economic development of a country, then power and glory shall be added to it."

In the light of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made;

Countries should build their economies first. This way, they can successfully pursue the power status they desire. A firm economy will guarantee a firm foreign policy stance; this will, in turn, ensure the successful pursuit of foreign policy objectives.

Nigeria should revise her foreign policy to reflect domestic growth which will propel it forward and announce it to the global world. Growth and development start from within before it manifests outwardly. Domestic economic growth equals international relevance.

By dealing with insecurity issues and improving infrastructure such as electricity and good roads, Nigeria can use its neglected resource, its "population" strength, to make the nation better again. It will attract several investments and form strategic alliances that will help its economy, aside from depending on natural resources.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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