

Nigeria's National Interest and its Afrocentric Foreign Policy 2007-2015: A Critical Analysis

Ntagu, Miracle Promise, PhD

Department of Political Science and Defence Studies, Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna,
Nigeria

Email: pmntagu@nda.edu.ng

Aguiyi, Chukwuebuka Cornelius

Institute of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria

Email: chukwuebuka.aguiyi@unn.edu.ng

Ummnakwe-Okorie, Cynthia Ekene

Linkages and Advancement Unit, Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Nigeria

Email: cynthiaumnnakwe@yahoo.com

Abstract

Overtime, the complex linkage between national interest and foreign policy has been ignored in Nigeria's Afrocentric foreign policy. It is the downgrading of this vital connection that necessitated this paper. This paper assessed critically Nigeria's national interest and her Afrocentric policy from 2007-2015. The study aimed at promoting a pragmatic and robust relationship between Nigeria's national interest and her foreign policy objectives. Due to the qualitative nature of this study, qualitative instrument of unstructured interview was deployed for sourcing primary data, while secondary data were sourced from archival materials, textbooks, online resources, government publications, conference papers, seminar lecture materials, among others. The paper adopted the realist theory as the theoretical basis for analysis. Data generated from the field were used to test the research assumptions. Findings from the study revealed among others that, the rationale for the adoption of Africa as the centerpiece of Nigeria's foreign policy was informed by altruistic and moral motives, and not by strategic economic interest. However, owing to her diminishing economic power, and the rise of other African countries, who have acquired independence and the capability to challenge her dominance in African politics, Nigeria should rethink her Afrocentric foreign policy to reflect realities of the international system. Therefore, the study advanced the following recommendations: Nigeria should revolutionize her foreign policy, by prioritizing the Afrocentric posture of her foreign policy, by being more national interest focused, in a bid to negotiate successfully, the murky waters of international politics, where might is right; since foreign policy is closely linked to national interest, Nigeria should ensure that her foreign policy objectives are closely tied to the core values of the state and its citizens, when investing in a crisis in another country, Nigeria should aim to benefit from the economic opportunities that are found in that country, after such crisis, like the United State of America often do. This way, Nigeria can repatriate the profits back home to boost her domestic economy.

Keywords: National Interest, Afrocentrism, Foreign Policy, Realist, International Politics.

Introduction

Nigeria deserves to be called the "Giant of Africa", due to her stupendous resource endowments and population. In her over sixty-four (64) years of nationhood, the influence wielded by Nigeria through the instrumentality of foreign policy can better be assessed within the context of its regional and continental leadership aspirations. The principle implies that in Nigeria's foreign relations, African related matters shall be accorded utmost attention and priority. Fawole (2003) as well as Olusanya and Akindele (1990) have attempted to explain the rationale for this principle. They argued that,

given the fact that Nigeria is geo-politically located on the continent of Africa, and because she is indisputably Africa's and Black race's most populous country, Nigeria carried the burden of history. The realisation of these historical and geographical status of Nigeria before independence in 1960, had probably informed an Afro-centric conception of Nigerian foreign policy after independence (Chazan, Lewis, Mortimer, Rothchild, and Stedman 2018).

The benevolent gesture of Nigerian leaders hitherto till the present has generated argument and counterarguments in Nigeria concerning the country's regional power aspirations. Generally, the debate involves on the one hand, public officials, politicians and foreign policy practitioners who are in no doubt, as to the strength and credibility of Nigeria within and outside the country. To this group, Nigeria is a "giant," "leader" and "spokes country" in Africa. The liberation of Africa from all forms of domination, exploitation and foreign manipulation is and will remain dependent on Nigeria (Mbachu, 2011). Nigeria's pursuit of Africa's affairs has cost the nation huge financial and human resources. Nigeria also played and is still playing an active role in the African Union (AU), the New Partnership for Africa's Development, (NEPAD) and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) this commitment is to the detriment of her national interest. Consequently, this paper critically interrogated Nigeria's national interest and its Afrocentric foreign policy, with particular focus on the year 2007-2015

Problem Statement

Since political independence in 1960, Nigeria has been widely regarded as the "Giant of Africa", but Nigeria's image abroad appears to contradict this posture. Most Nigerians are humiliated and sometimes given un-dignifying treatments abroad. Nigeria's relationship with the contiguous states of Republic of Benin, Chad, Cameroon and Niger is equally not that cordial, in spite of official pronouncements to that effect. For example, Nigerians are suffering from xenophobic attacks in South Africa, from time to time (Ade-Ibijola, 2013). Also, the Nigerian-Cameroonian palaver over the Bakassi Peninsular, resulted in Nigeria's ceding of the oil-rich peninsular, following the resolution by the International Court of Justice (ICJ). Amidst this growing disillusionment, there is now an increasing political and intellectual interest in redefining what really constitutes Nigeria's national interest, aside her Afrocentrism, in the light of contemporary global events.

Nigeria's foreign policy over the years seems to be static, whereas Nigeria professes Afrocentric foreign policy. There are very acute challenges of the foreign policy paradigm. Odetunde, (2018) remarked that:

Unfortunately, for Nigeria, our foreign policy is static unprogressive and is not benevolent to most Nigerians in the country and those in the diaspora. In most countries, Nigeria is represented by diplomats who have no idea of their functional responsibilities hence they cannot defend Nigeria's national interest feverishly even in the face of brazen violations. There are serious allegations by Nigerians at home and in Diaspora that Nigeria's foreign policy is designed to be benevolent to other nations but ruthless to fellow Nigerians. There seems to be consensus among critics that Nigeria's foreign policy lacks internationalism and even fails on Pan-African measure. The foreign policy has historically exhibited stagnancy, political favoritism and cronyism contradiction about this foreign policy posture (Oyetunde, 2018: 4).

Generally, Nigerians do not even enjoy social welfare, and basic fundamental rights within the country, yet Nigeria spent billions of dollars to restore peace in Liberia and Sierra Leone, without

any tangible economic benefits to the nation, (Ajayi, Lady, and Tobi Njoaguani, 2016). Nigeria parades a robust profile of peace keeping experience, yet peace has eluded the nation at home. Ukaeje (2017) asserted that, “Our false generosity abroad and penury at home are proof that we are pretending to be what we are not, because in reality we have been overstretching ourselves”. In Africa, Nigerians suffer rejection wherever they go; they are being subjected to xenophobic attacks in South Africa, tortured by the Gabonese security agents, and brutalized by the Libyan Government before deportation (Mahmoud, 2013).

Today in Africa, Egypt and South Africa, who have practically contributed little towards solving African problems are now emerging powers in Africa with fast growing economies, and are seriously contesting for the UN Security Council seat. While on the contrary, Nigeria which is supposed to be on the front line, is rather plagued with a battered and wobbling economy that could make one to take time to re-assess what actually are the very attributes of a true “giant of Africa” Alli, (2012). While it may be asserted that Nigeria’s national interest tends to promote the core values and objectives of her diplomacy in principle, there is now an urgent need to forge a more pragmatic approach to issues rather than engage in populist and unrewarding ideological loyalty and nebulous diplomatic permutations. As Nigeria progressively loses its competitive edge in Africa, the nation needs to provide a more viable framework to articulate and implement a diplomacy that positively affects the collective esteem of the people and trigger socio-economic development in a sustainable manner. Thus, this study critically interrogated Nigeria’s national interest and its Afrocentric foreign policy, with particular reference to 2007-2015 purposely to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the foreign policy posture.

This paper therefore asks the following questions:

- i. What are the internal and external dynamics shaping Nigeria’s Afrocentric Foreign Policy Posture?
- ii. What is the nexus between Nigeria’s national interest and her foreign policy posture?
- iii. How has Afrocentrism impacted on Nigeria’s national interest?
- iv. How relevant is Nigeria’s Afrocentric foreign policy in the post-cold war international environment?

National Interest

The notion of national interest is vague and so it is difficult to give a precise definition of the term. In spite of this, national interest is defined as the general long term and continuing purpose which the state, nation and the government see themselves as serving. In practice, the national interest of a country is synthesized and checked by political leaders or policy makers.

The generally acceptable view is that, national interest is a manifestation of the core values, objectives and philosophy underlying the actions of leaders, whereas the grand norm provides a veritable basis for the collective actions of leaders, their preferences, predilections and sentiments of leaders making the national interest an expression of leadership interests pursued across national boundaries. National interest is inextricably wedded to the leadership of a nation. Apparently, leadership itself depends on the aggregate need disposition, ideology and perceptions of the role incumbents. In Nigeria, whereas it may be true that certain core values are pursued within the context of national interest, the perception of leaders always differ. Thus, Obasanjo (1978) defined the national interest of Nigeria as consisting of four components: namely:

- a. The creation of a suitable political and economic environment in Africa and the world at large, which will facilitate the defence of the territorial integrity of African States;
- b. The promotion of equality and self-reliance in Africa and the World;
- c. Defence of social justice and human dignity of the Black man; and
- d. The defence and promotion of world peace.

Foreign Policy

Foreign policy is an important element to the rational explanation of international behaviour. Gambari (1989) defines foreign policy as an interaction between identifiable domestic forces and the dynamics of international political relations. Here, Gambari's attention is concentrated on the domestic political environment of a state and its international implications. However, there is more to foreign policy than a mere political exchange. Aluko (1981) defines foreign policy as an interaction between internal and external forces. This view is in line with the one expressed by Northedge (1968), who defines foreign policy as the product of environmental factors both internal and external to it. For Agbu (2018), foreign policy could also be understood as the interactions, actions, and reactions of states targeted at the external. As laudable as this may sound, foreign policy of a state is not a unilateral expression of feelings towards other states, as some states get friendly interactions than others. Foreign policy has also been described as the course of actions adopted by a nation in the interest of the welfare of its people. In other words, foreign policy of a state is pursued by the state in the interest of the welfare of its people.

Afrocentrism

Afrocentrism, which means African centeredness, does not violently confront any person or people, but is a resolute attempt to put the records right, (Chawane, 2016). This concept which means African centeredness was created by Afro-American intellectuals in asserting that Africans should be given their intellectual pride of place as the originators of civilization, (Chukwuokolo 2010). According to Chibundu (2014), the Afrocentric movement is a series of activities by concerned African and African-American scholars and educators and directed towards achieving the particular end of ensuring that the African heritage and culture, its history and contribution to world civilization and scholarship are reflected in the curricula on every level of academic instruction. Advocates of Afrocentrism demand a reconstruction and rewriting of the whole panorama of human history in its account of the origin of mankind, the origin of philosophy, science, medicine, agriculture architecture etc.

It is about placing African people within their own historical framework. It is a demand that the contributions of Africans in all areas of civilisation be reflected in world history. Afrocentrism is a discourse originally developed in African American studies in the early 1930s, with the primary aim to 'create a substantive knowledge about the African world experience. In recent years, it has been successfully applied to the African continent and to the black peoples in the African diaspora. It was first traced to the African-American historian W.E.B. Du Bois, who employed it in some of his key works to project black experience and practices. Notable amongst these are: *The Study of the Negro Problem* (1898), *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), *Black Reconstruction in America* (1935), *The World and Africa* (1946), and *Africa in Battle Against Colonialism, Racialism, Imperialism* (1960).

For the early Afrocentrists, or the Afrocentric-educators, the goal of Afrocentrism was to break what they saw as a vicious cycle of the reproduction of black self-abnegation. As Fanon (2014), argued, the leaders of the movement are very much aware of the roles of education in character formation. They trace the root of African-Americans' frustration, self-alienation and inferiority to the education

(mis-education) that the system has imposed on them, an education that has stuffed them with an overdose of western ideology and denied them of any knowledge of their own ancestral history and culture. Afrocentrism became a response to this unfair situation of African-Americans.

Realist Theory

Realism is a theory that has several interrelated parts and constructs. The sub-sets include behaviouralism, national interest, power politics and balance of power. Realist paradigm is based on the principle of dominance and reciprocity in the international relations and foreign policy formulations and executions or foreign policy making and implementation, (Okeke, Barrister., and Onyekwelu 2014). Realists believe that the actions of states in the international system is best when they identify their national interests, and define these national interests of states as national survival interest, national security interests or national self-preservation. This interest is, therefore, and objective reality, in other words, it exists irrespective of whether or not it is perceived by decision makers or foreign policy makers (Okeke & Aniche 2011).

Morgenthau (1948) succinctly observes that states are only motivated by self-interest than benevolent feelings towards other states. Morgenthau is convinced that this self-interest, identified as national interest, is fundamentally defined in terms of power. He specifically explained exercise of power as a predominant use of force which states must not hesitate to apply in the protection and furtherance of their national interests. It rejects legalistic-moralistic inhibitions in realistic political actions.

Realists believe that the actions of states can best by identifying their national interests, and defining these national interests of states are national survival or national security interests or nationals' self-preservation. This interest is, therefore, and objective reality, in other words, it exists irrespective of whether or not it is perceived by decision makers or foreign policy makers Okeke and Aniche, (2011). The unit level of analysis, for realist therefore is the state. The nation-state is ipso facto regarded as the sole or principal actor in the international system. The analysis of pressures that emanate from the states domestic and external environment which shape the action of the government (Asobie, 2011).

Methodology

In this paper, the design specifies the techniques and procedure of data collection and analysis to be used in ascertaining Nigeria's National Interest and its Afrocentric Posture; it assists the researcher in identifying variables and their relationship to one another, and enable the researcher test assumptions, that answered the research questions. This study adopted a qualitative research design. Thus, it used qualitative instrument of unstructured interview and archival materials. The study specifically sampled opinions of respondents from the relevant section of the study population. Eight (8) centers were used for data collection and this includes the National Institute for International Affairs (NIIA), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS), Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR), Scholars of Political Science and Defence Studies (DPSDS NDA), University off Abuja, Members of the Senate and House of Representative Committees on Foreign Affairs (NASS), and Scholars of International Relations in University of Lagos (UNILAG) were sampled through interview. Also, as expected, the secondary source of data collection was applied. This depended on data readily documented by scholars and analysts overtime on the subject matter. These include among others, textbooks, journal, magazines, historical documents, and other sources of published information.

Data Presentation and Analysis

The interview questions opened by asking respondents what they understand by the Nigerian Foreign Policy thrust of Afrocentrism. In the words of Dr. Muhammed Haruna a research fellow at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA):

My understanding of Nigeria's foreign policy of Afrocentrism is that, in the formulation and execution of its foreign policy objectives, Nigeria as a nation state, will consider Africa as the centerpiece of its foreign policy initiative. (Dr. Muhammed Haruna, interview held on 14th October, 2023 at Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA), Lagos).

In the words of an erudite scholar of international relations, Prof D.O Alabi

Afrocentrism a concept that emerge from the Nigeria's foreign policy as far back as 1960 when Nigeria became independent. And it became a major factor in the Balewa's government, in Balewa's foreign policy. Probably because as of that time, many Africa country were not yet independent. The Apartheid in South Africa was one, and Nigeria because of its population and size, they felt it became a manifest destiny of the country to protect other African countries. Hence the idea of making Africa a centerpiece of the country's foreign policy. This is so because the leaders of that time felt that the dependent nations of Africa and the Apartheid policy of Africa should be fought to a standstill. Those dependent nations should be supported to gain independence (Prof D.O. Alabi, interview held on 8th Feb. 2023 at Nigerian Defence Academy).

Similarly, in the perspective of an astute politician, member of the Nigeria House of Representatives, Rt. Hon Nnena Elendu (Chairman House Committee on Foreign Affairs)

When we look at the word Afrocentrism itself, it tells us that our focus is on Africa, and that everything we do revolve around Africa, so when we talk of Nigeria Foreign Policy thrust of Afrocentrism well, it means that the Nigeria foreign policy was established to take care of African interest (Rt. Hon. Nnena Elendu, interview held on 18th Oct. 2023 at National Assembly, Abuja).

Contributing to the above submissions, a research fellow at the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, Dr Maurice Ogbonnaya conceived Afrocentrism thus;

Afrocentrism in Nigeria Foreign Policy means that Africa is the centerpiece of Nigeria's Foreign Policy. It also means that Nigeria Foreign Policy thrust will at all times and in all circumstances take into serious and critical consideration the interest of Africa first and foremost. So, it is geared towards ensuring that Nigeria plays a significant role in African continent, that the interest of Africa is well accommodated in Nigeria foreign Policy and diplomatic Posture (Dr Maurice Ogbonnaya, interview held on 17th Mar. 2023 at National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies).

Respondents were also asked during the interview to comment on the rationale behind Nigeria's adoption of Afrocentrism as the centerpiece of Nigeria's foreign policy. All the respondents interviewed agreed that, Nigeria's adoption of Africa as the core of her foreign policy was informed by altruistic and humanitarian motives. According to Dr Peter Okpara, who is the director of Internal Conflict Prevention and Resolution, Institute of Peace and Conflict Resolution (ICPR), Abuja:

Afrocentrism was enunciated immediately after Nigeria assumed independence. In this pursuit, we pioneered and helped many African countries to get their own independence. Particularly, those that got entangled with one issue or the other; apartheid in South Africa, and Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, whose independence got tangled in protracted war. Nigeria played a major role in getting the world to pay attention to Africa's interests in these countries, so much so that, notwithstanding our geographical distance from South Africa, we are considered frontline state because of the role (s) we played. . . Nigeria being the largest African country saw it as her role to be her brothers' keeper (Dr. Peter Okpara interview held on 26, sep 2023 IPCR, Abuja).

To another respondent (Mr Folorunsho Olowu), who is a civil servant with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), the mainline ministry charged with foreign policy formulation and implementation in Nigeria,

As we all know, Nigeria is best suited as the giant of Africa, owing to the abundance resources. Right from independence, Nigeria made it clear that Nigeria will be her centerpiece because most Africa countries had been under one colonialism or the other. Secondly is the backwardness of the continent (Mr Folorunsho Olowo, interview held on 18th Nov 2023 at Ministry of Foreign affairs Abuja).

Aligning his voice with other respondents on the rationale behind Nigeria's adoption of Afrocentrism as the lynchpin of her foreign policy, Also, according to Dr. Godwin Ichimi, a research fellow in the National Institute for International Affairs, who is a consultant for the senate committee foreign Affairs who responded on behalf of Senator Shehu Sani, submitted that:

Nigeria's foreign policy thrust of Afrocentrism is premised on the basis that, Nigeria is better positioned in Africa to identify with and the legitimate interest of Africa than any other nation. Thus, it means that Nigeria's engagement in the international system will be looked at through the binoculars of Africa. . . Also, to pursue and unite African efforts in preventing Africa from becoming the theatre of world crises, as a result of the ideological rivalries that penetrated Africa at that time. . . The idea has been that, Nigeria's independence would not be complete without the total liberation of African states. Thus, successive governments in Nigeria have premised their broad strands of Nigeria's foreign policy on the national interest of the federation and its citizens, and the adoption of African centred policy. Specifically, section 19 of the 1999 constitution specifies that the foreign policy objectives shall be: promotion and protection of the national interest; and promotion of African integration and support, etc. (Senator Shehu Sani interview held on 25th Oct. 2023 NASS, Abuja).

In the opinion of a professor of Political Science in the National Institute of Policy and Strategic Studies, Professor Leonard Kursim Fwa,

Honestly the reason can be as many as we envisage, we have a vision, our leaders had a vision of been greater African country, leading the curse of emancipation of Africa from the tide of colonial exigencies. The truth of the matter is we wanted to lead by example, to show Africa that our interest is keenly tied to Africa not just Nigeria. Although we have our internal interest, but our leaders thought of tying it to Africa, perhaps a gathering of ten black persons, one is a Nigerian (Prof

Leonard Kursim Fwa, interview held on 17th Mar. 2023 at National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, NIPSS, Jos)

In the perception an erudite scholar of political Science, Professor BE Mijah, in explaining the rationale for the adoption of Africa as the centerpiece of Nigeria's foreign policy, he submitted that:

My opinion is that the choice of Africa as the centerpiece of Nigeria's foreign policy definitely must have been informed by factors arriving from colonial experience and giving the context of int politics after Nigeria attained independence, you know the cold war was there, and if you were not aligned within the options opened to Nigeria was to identify with the rest of Africa and give its own support to African countries. But come to look at it very closely, the choice of Africa been central to Nigeria's national interest can also be rationalize or the realization arising from this concentric circle. That when you are in cordial relationship with those that are closer to you. A good neighbor is better than a brother that is far off, isn't it? Europe America and the rest of the world are too far from Africa. Africa shared the same experience of exploitation of slavery, of colonialism, of neo-colonialism with Nigeria, right? All those give Nigeria the ground (Prof BE Mijah, interview held on 16th Feb. 2023 at Nigerian Defence Academy Kaduna).

According to Dr. Muhammed Haruna, who is a staff of the National Institute for International Affairs (NIIA), the rationale behind Nigeria's Afrocentric policy is purely non-economic. He argued that:

The good thing about Nigeria's Afrocentric policy is that, no country has ever accused us of imperialistic tendencies; we have never had that tendency of trying to attack or acquire the territories of our neighbours. Our row with Cameroun ended amicably. Almost all the countries around us have at one time or the other committed offences that would have led to war, but we have never gone to war with any of our neighbours. We are surrounded by French speaking countries, and in spite of the antics of the French and their constant beef with us, we have never gone to war with anyone (Dr. Mohammed Haruna, interview held on 14th Oct. 2023 at Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos).

Furthermore, a scholar of international politics alluded to the dominion theory as part of the rationale for Nigeria's adoption of Afrocentrism. He said:

There is this dominion theory that states that, whatever happens here will happen there. So, we don't want the bad ones to happen around us. Obviously, we would have to be interested in what is going on around us not just because we are big brothers but because this is the best way to protect yourself; we have to mind what is happening across the fence (Professor Solomon Ogbu, interview held at University of Abuja on 13th Oct. 2023).

The preceding suggestion by the various respondents is in line with the viewpoints of some researchers of international relations. Writing on the rationale for Nigeria's adoption of Afrocentrism, Adeniyi (2016), argued that, Nigeria believes it is moral duty to sponsor peace among all states and peoples; she sees it as a moral obligation to contest for equal rights and respect for all Africans, and black people worldwide. He further posited that, that Nigeria considers itself duty-bound to play a principal role in addressing Africa's security concerns. Ashiru and George (2013), offered their views on the subject matter, and argued that, for Nigeria:

The principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states; respect for existing boundaries which must, in the interest of peace in Africa, remain the recognized boundaries until such a time as the peoples concerned decide of their own free will to merge into one unit or redraw boundaries; peaceful settlement of disputes by negotiation, conciliation and arbitration; equality of States, no matter their size, population, military or economic might; and promotion of functional cooperation throughout Africa (Ashiru and George, 2013).

They further stated that, this pronouncement laid the basis of our foreign policy thrust from 1960 till the present time. It is against the background of this policy thrust that Nigeria's contributions towards ensuring unity, development, peace and security in African continent must be fully appreciated. Yet, the rationales for Nigeria's Afrocentric foreign policy are basically underscored by moral motivations.

According to another respondent, Prof BE Mijah, who was interviewed on the 6th of February, 2018, the internal dynamics which influenced Nigeria's Afrocentric foreign policy must have been informed by factors arising from her colonial experience and the prevailing circumstances in international politics, the Cold War era. In his words:

During the Cold War period, it was necessary for states to be aligned. So, what Nigeria did was to align with the rest of Africa and try to build her support base. Also, the choice of Africa being central to Nigeria's foreign policy was also based on the idea of concentric circle that you are stronger when you are in closer relationship with those who are your neighbours. That a good neighbor is better than a brother that is far off (Prof. BE Mijah, interview held on 6th Feb. 2023 at Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna).

Thus, the respondents' views and those of various scholars are in agreement with the postulation of Walzer (2000), who posited that, at the heart of Nigeria's Afrocentric foreign policy, lie the issue of morality that the internal and external dynamics that shaped Nigeria's Afrocentric foreign posture are largely informed by moral issues rather than economic considerations.

In answering on the impact of Afrocentrism on Nigeria's national interest, respondents were first asked to comment on the relationship between foreign policy and national interest. Respondents unanimously agree that, there is a nexus between foreign policy and national interest, and by extension, national security. Here are some respondents' views. According to a diplomat in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Amb Kigsley Ebonyi:

Foreign Policy is not done in isolation; foreign Policy is reflection of the countries national interest. So, whatever any country want to achieve outside is based on the internal need of such country. Like the present administration is focused on economic diversification, fight against corruption, job creation, these are our core national interest. So, we as a ministry have interpreted that into our foreign policy, so our engagement with other African countries are inclined towards promoting our own national interest. It makes no sense for us to engage in foreign policy to promote the interest of some other countries. Although we have seen that happening, a lot of country wanting to coarsen Nigeria into doing what they

want, i.e to promote their own national interest (Amb. Kingsley Ebenyi, interview held on 18th Oct. 2023 at Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Abuja).

In agreement with the foregoing view, Dr Moses Akangbe, a research fellow with the Institute for peace and conflict resolution said:

The national interest of Nigeria is the hallmark of Nigeria's foreign policy. We cannot do anything without national interest of the Nigerian state, because the national interest is germane, it is important; it is the hallmark of any development. You cannot talk about the foreign policy of any country without talking about the domestic economy. Thus, we cannot discuss foreign policy in isolation (Dr Moses Akangbe, interview held on 26th Nov. 2023 at National Institute for peace and conflict resolution).

In discussing the relationship between Nigeria's national interest and her foreign policy, Dr Awosika Olanrewaju a lecturer at the University of Lagos offered his views thus:

I will like to be very objective while answering that question, we have continue to ask ourselves why Afrocentrism. We cannot love Africa more than our self, yes Nigeria sees it as a manifest destiny to champion the curse or the curses of Africa, but along the line, a lot of the countries Nigeria expended energy to liberate during the apartheid era, they are now coming to stand against Nigeria in the international organizations and fora. So we are now saying it not enough to project Africa to the detriment of your own foreign policy. You will realize that Trump is now saying Americans first, so we are getting to that level where we will have to emphasize Nigeria first (Dr Awosika Olanrewaju, interview held on 14th Nov. 2023 at University of Lagos, Akoka).

More, so while commenting on the nexus between Nigeria national interest and her foreign policy, Mr Folorunsho Olowu, a staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, submitted that;

In all foreign policies of the superpower, there is always a connect between what you intend to achieve outside and what your own national interest is all about. National interest is the aspiration, and ambition, goals, set by a country which he tends to achieve outside. But in the case of Nigeria, there is a big gap so to say in the nexus between its foreign policy and national interest. Most at times Nigeria just relate for the sake of relationship. At times they don't bring out anything out of the relationship. So I will say there is a big disconnect and a big gap. In US, in France, these people go into relationship for the sake of something. It might be economic; it might be military, cultural (Mr Folorunsho Olowu, interview held on 18th Nov 2023 at Ministry of Foreign affairs Abuja).

Contributing to the nexus between Nigeria's national interest and her foreign policy, Dr Ghali Ibrahim, a lecturer of international politics;

If the Nigeria's interest was to see the freedom of Palestine, then Palestine is part of national interest of Nigeria, if Nigeria will like to see the freedom of South Africa and Liberia, then it is our own national interest. In terms of alliance, if we have an alliance with other people, then whatever happen to the happen to us. Then therefore if we should help our sisters and brothers, then it is part of our national interest. It's my own interest to help my neighbor, it's my own interest to help my brother, I'm in Abuja but that my brother is in Lagos, so therefore, it was still part of national interest even though it was Africa not the domestic interest

(Dr. Ghali Ibrahim, interview held on 28th Oct. 2023 at University of Abuja, Abuja).

Interviewees commented on the impact of Nigeria's Afrocentric foreign policy on Nigeria's broad foreign policy and her national security. They all agreed that, Nigeria's Afrocentric policy has done more harm than good to the nation's foreign policy and national security. According to Dr. Peter Okpara, who is an expert on conflict resolution with the Institute of Peace and Conflict Resolution (ICPR), Abuja:

Though, most people will dispute, most African countries (whether they say it or not), regard Nigeria as the leading nation in this continent. Our voice is strong, whenever we galvanise opinion in the international arena, it receives strong support from our African neighbours, even though they are ones who will argue that they have not benefited immensely from our contributions. Nowadays, you find smaller countries challenging us. Whenever we aspire to head any regional, continental and international Organisations, they put up their own candidates, rather support us. For instance, the struggle for the African seat of the U.N. Security Council, you have Egypt, South Africa, and even Algeria, all contesting against Nigeria. This is a position that should be taken as a given thing, due to our population, our resources, our role in liberating other African countries. Thabo Mbeki schooled here; many other African frontline nationalists had some support or the other from Nigeria. See, I was a student in Unilag in the 1970s, and you find a very large population of South African students on Nigerian government scholarship, they earned huge pocket money which we Nigerian students didn't receive. We were jealous, they had more than enough, and the boys were always drinking and not even reading. So, there's that thought that, what is it that we have gained? Whenever we travel to other African countries, they discriminate against us through heavy taxes, xenophobic attacks on Nigerians; these are attacks are experienced everywhere, is just that, that of South Africa is more pronounced, it happens in Ghana, even in Equatorial Guinea. These countries, you will think owe us a lot, but our Afrocentric foreign policy, does not rob off on our international relations. We can say categorically that, we have not benefited from Afrocentrism (Dr. Peter Okpara interview held on 26, Sep 2023 ICPR, Abuja).

Speaking further, on the negative impact of Nigeria's Afrocentric policy, Mr Emmanuel B. Mammuh, who is a public servant, said:

I believe that, the big brother role we are playing actually impinged on our own national interest, whereby we have spent too much money, time and resources on catering for Africa more than Nigeria itself. We have abandoned, jettisoned our national interest. Though, the big brother role has helped us in some ways. But again, the national interest of Nigeria should be paramount in our foreign policy pursuit. Look at a country like America, they put their interest first; these interests may be outside the shores of America, as they go to war, they go with their businessmen and contractors, who are positioned to seize the opportunities that come up after the military operations. In the case of Nigeria, we are busy talking about Africa. We spent billions of dollars in Liberia and Sierra Leone, but at the end of the war, we really did not invest as such in Liberia, our businessmen were

not helped to reap financial benefits. This to my mind has a negative impact on our national economy (Emmanuel B. Mammuh interview held on 26, sep 2023 IPCR, Abuja).

Also, according to Dr. Godwin Ichimi, a research fellow in the National Institute for International Affairs, who is a consultant for the senate committee foreign Affairs who responded on behalf of senator Shehu Sani, submitted that:

It has been so bad for the country. Personally, I can't say we've gained much from making Africa the centerpiece of our foreign policy. During Murtala Mohammed's regime, when he changed the British Petroleum (BP) to African Petroleum (AP), our foreign policy became a bit radicalised. Thereafter, we have been spending huge amount of money on liberation struggles, among others. What have we benefited in return? Most of the African countries we spent these resources on have from time to time refused to support us when it comes to international politics. We have wasted resources and energy pursuing Afrocentrism; it is far-far counterproductive, we cannot point out to any gain. Even the good neighbourliness we enjoy from our immediate neighbours, is because of the selfish benefits they get from Nigeria. Cameroun has been hostile to us, killing so many of our people in the Bakassi; Niger and Chad have not been that friendly, Boko Haram have used their territories to attack us. They have been forced of recent to be friendly due to the CT-COIN operations being carried out by the Multi National Joint Force, which is being 100% bankrolled by the Nigerian government (Senator Shehu Sani interview held on 25th Oct. 2023 NASS, Abuja).

In the same vein Mr Ernest Nwabuariri a staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs argued,

If we agree that our national interest has not been attached to this Afrocentric thing, then it equally followed that we have not gain as much as we should. Recall that Foreign Policy is simply the projection of a country in the international community. You cannot be holier than the pope, you can never cry more than the bereaved. But Nigeria has always cried more than the bereaved. Nigeria has always cried more than the bereaved as far as African issues are concern. So we cannot say we have actually gained as much as we have invested in Africa, rather we can say Nigeria has become Africa beast of burden and not the giant we claim. So we can rightly conclude that since our national interest has been divorced from this Afrocentric thing, then we have not gained much. Then again, charity must begin at home. If we can go to restore democracy, It is an aberration to that in the days of Liberian civil war, the Nigeria government was a military one and Nigeria government was pushing for a democratic government in Liberia as well as in Sierra Leone. So the two wouldn't follow. So we cannot go outside to pretend that we are advancing African curse, we cannot claim that we are advancing human right, democracy and what have you, without entrenching the same thing at home, charity begins at home, and of course your external appearance reflects your domestic reality, so if we must play the role of leader in Africa, we must also put our house in order (Mr Ernest Nwabuariri, interview held on 18th Nov 2023 at Ministry of Foreign affairs Abuja).

According to Senator Sunmonu Monsurat, the chairman senate committee on foreign Affairs, while commenting on the impact of Afrocentrism on Nigeria's national interest

Nigeria has not felt the impact, because when we look at the manner of reciprocity from brother African states. They fail us when we need their support in the international fora, the gesture of these African states we stick our neck in salvaging are bad towards Nigerians abroad. We spend quantum amount of money in resolving crisis in Sierra Leone, Angola amidst others, yet what we have in response is brutality of Nigerians in these countries. The worst of it all is South Africa that we tirelessly fought for during the Apartheid regime. Nigerians are victims of xenophobic business attacks without any meaningful step by South African government to ameliorate this situation, so for me I will say the cost of this benevolence gesture outweigh the gain (Sen. Sunmonu Monsurat, interview held on 25th Oct. 2023 at National Assembly Abuja).

The respondents' views on the negative impact of Afrocentrism on Nigeria's national interest are in agreement with the views of some scholars. According to Hamman, Mustapha and Omojuwa (2014) argued that, the benefits if at all there are any, when compared with Nigeria's contributions towards African peace and development is nothing but a colossal loss, as there appear to be a seeming gulf between national interest and Nigeria's Afrocentric foreign policy. In the same vein, Asobie (2017), argued that, Nigeria has over the years has overtaxed itself to preserve peace in other African countries, whereas at home it is palpable that all is not well; as manifested by the social depravity, infrastructural backwardness, and escalating insecurity that manifests in insurgency, militancy in the Niger Delta, and all manner of social vices; arguing that, Nigerians in other African countries are suffering denial, expulsion, brutalisation and censure, among others, as demonstrated by the torture of a Nigerian, Mr. Adumekwe, by the Gabonese security agents who were alleged to have set his back on fire for 20 minutes.

Furthermore, Mahmoud (2013) argued that, Nigeria has been a leading actor in Africa all the good things Nigeria has done in service of Africa stand ought to stand as investments. However, when one invests, one would expect a return on outlay; unfortunately, this has not been the case with Nigeria when talking of her Afro-centric foreign policy. However, there is a minority view that Nigeria is benefiting from her Afrocentric foreign policy. This view is contrary to the wide held opinion, on the above assumption. According to Dr. Ghali Ibrahim:

I believe that Nigeria has benefited from her Afrocentric foreign policy. Internationally, Nigeria has a voice and is recognised; to be so recognised is a plus. Recently, at the U.N. General Assembly, President Muhammadu Buhari was the 8th person to address the congress, immediately after the US President, and ahead of other bigger countries like France. Also, there are hardly issues that concerns Africa that would be deliberated and Nigeria would be relegated to the background. Most international organisations that are coming to help Nigeria solve the problems arising from the Boko Haram insurgency are doing so because they believe that, if Nigeria is not at peace, the whole of Africa cannot be at peace. For me, I believe Afrocentrism is a plus for Nigeria (Dr. Ghali Ibrahim, interview held on 28th Oct. 2023 at University of Abuja, Abuja).

The above viewpoint, though with its merit, represents a very minority view, as only one respondent out of the thirty (30) that were interviewed, hold this opinion. Therefore, the researcher has elected

to go with the majority viewpoint, in validating the above assumption, as most scholars and majority of our respondents are of the view that, the cost of an Afrocentric foreign policy far outweighs the gains for Nigeria. Consequently, it could be concluded that, Nigeria has done so much in the African continent without corresponding encouraging consequence.

Interviewees were asked during the interview to comment on whether there are challenges being faced by Nigeria in the pursuit of her Afrocentric policy. All the respondents agreed that, there are challenges hindering the pursuit of an Afrocentric foreign policy posture by Nigeria. We shall look at some selected quotes from the respondents, which reflect the majority views. According to Dr Maurice Ogbonnaya, a research fellow at the National Institute for Policy and Strategic studies;

The weak state and appendage nature of Nigeria's economy has debilitated the ability of Nigeria's foreign policy to protect the national interest. To be a hegemon, you need a sound economic base to truly dominate and discharge the responsibility expected by countries you seek to lead. Unfortunately, the dwindling state of Nigeria's economy cannot support her leadership ambitions. If you can no longer provide financial support, who will respect you? (Dr Maurice Ogbonnaya, interview held on 17th Mar. 2023 at National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies).

Talking about the challenges befalling Nigerian foreign policy, Dr Uhelejit Renner Ikuru a staff of the Nigerian Institute for International Affairs, submitted that

Your foreign policy is as strong as your local currency, so the economy of the country, and funding of the foreign policy machinery. Recently the country has been seeing a lot of interest on security, we have more funding channeled towards security, whereas I believe we should also have funding channeled towards building viable partnerships, building solid foreign policy exertion outside. Building your network internationally not just domestically. Because eventually, there is hardly any conflict limited to any country, so the foreign policy angle needs to be catered for. Then, the politicization of foreign policy. In French we call it "politik exterior", Foreign policy should not be politicized. You don't want to score political point with foreign policy machinery. Foreign policy machinery across the globe are the preserve of the foreign ministry because they have the resources to work it out. A situation whereby we have to delist ourselves from about ninety three international organizations, situation where we have various NGO's CSO or whatever going out to sign agreement on behalf of Nigeria with the backing of one high and mighty man somewhere, that is the politicization of Foreign policy, It makes rubbish of our institution (Dr Uhelejit Renner Ikuru , interview held on 25th Oct. 2023 at NIIA Lagos).

In the view of Senator Olugbenga Ashafa (member senate committee foreign Affairs)

Nigeria has for many years pursued without gains, after the good and well being of other African nations at the expense of the wellbeing of its own citizens, the impression that has been ingrained in the mind of Nigeria is that Nigeria does not care about the need of its citizens (Sen. Olugbenga Ashafa , interview held on 25th Oct. 2017 at National Assembly Abuja).

Finally, according to another, respondent, who is a Professor of Political Science, the challenges with Nigeria's Afrocentric foreign policy and her broad foreign policy, is that of improper articulation and mismanagement, by those charged foreign policy formulation and implementation. He argued that:

Every nation's foreign policy should be in the service of its national interest; core values in the foreign policy aims must be related to the survival of the state and its citizens. However, this is not centrally the case with Nigeria, as what constitutes national interest is not clearly defined in our constitutions. How then do we pursue our foreign policy goals? Also, Nigeria's foreign policy lack good managers; from the Presidency, down to the Ministries and Departments, charged with policy formulation and implementation. The last time the President had the opportunity at the U.N. General Assembly to call the world's attention to Nigeria's problems back home, we deviated into the Rohingya brouhaha (Professor Solomon Ogbu, interview held at University of Abuja on 13th oct. 2023).

However, respondents believe that, though the challenges confronting Nigeria's Afrocentric foreign are enormous, they are not insurmountable. They therefore offered their views on the way forward. Here are some respondents' views. According to Mr Adeyinka Samson a staff of the ministry of Foreign Affairs:

The world that we are living now is dynamic; the current world order will suggest that Nigeria should be more pro-active, Nigeria should be more precise in the foreign Policy. What does Nigeria stand to gain for adopting a principle? Each of our principle should be tied to some benefit that we will get. Even though we cannot do without helping, there are some that we will help, that we must get something in return, Nigeria citizens should be given premium not all these xenophobic attacks we are having in south Africa. On no account should we hear such of Nigerians. Two, Nigeria should be more economic with our spending outside, some countries have the opportunity to help themselves, it's just for Nigeria to contribute personnel or help them to train there personnel's. But they should be able to provide the financial responsibility to prosecute the help. Especially when it comes to peace keeping. Nigeria should not be over ambitious. We don't have the resources as it were, we need to overstretch ourselves (Mr Adeyinka Adeniji, interview held on 18th Nov 2023 at Ministry of Foreign affairs Abuja).

Speaking in the same vein as the respondent above, a research fellow at the National Institute for International Affairs, Mr Tanko Ahmed recommend for:

Good governance at home, and when you have good governance at home, automatically it comes with a lot of packages. You have a country that is strong economically. I will say viable economically, and you have a country that has strong structured fibre, and you have a political group that is really dedicated. You have this is like having a good football team, who play outside there and you can win the world cup (Dr Maurice Ogbonnaya, interview held on 17th Mar. 2023 at National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies).

Furthermore, Senator Monsurat Sunmonu, the chairman senate committee on foreign affairs, recommended that, it is high time Nigeria begin to mix humanitarian goals with business objectives. She said:

When we are investing in a crisis in a country, after the crises, we should aim to benefit from the economic opportunities that are found in the country, like the

Americans often do. This way, we can repatriate the profits back home to boost our economy. Look at France, when they came to assist Mali when Al-Shabaab attack the country, the moment the crisis was over, French businessmen and contractors we brought in to help recoup their expenditures. We must stop investing our financial resources without reaping anything in return (Sen. Sunmonu Monsurat, interview held on 25th Oct. 2023 at National Assembly Abuja).

Finally, a research fellow with the Institute of Peace and Conflict Resolution (ICPR), Abuja Mr Sunday Amarachukwu, opined that:

There is a need to review our foreign policy, especially our Afrocentric posture. We have to focus on those countries who respect and reciprocate our good gestures and dealings with them. We must not be a jack-of-all-trade! It is time we identify our “true” friends. However, we must at the same time remain “friendly” with those that are our “enemies” (Mr Sunday Amarachukwu, interview held on 26, Sep. 2023 IPCR, Abuja).

Scholars agree with respondents’ views that, Nigeria’s Afrocentric posture require a rethink, as so many African countries by their actions seem not to appreciate Nigeria’s selfless gestures. Nwanolue and Victor (2012) argued that, Nigeria’s dominance has waned in recent times, due to the emergence of several “powerful” nations in the continent, like South Africa; so many African countries’ perceptions about Nigeria have equally decline. They pointed to what happened in 2009, during the election of Nigeria as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, which would be for two years, from the beginning of 2010 to the end of 2011. Sierra Leone, Togo and Liberia voted for themselves even though they were not candidates, neither were they listed for the election; they vied against the candidature of Nigeria indirectly. It would have cost them nothing to vote for Nigeria. Sierra Leone and Liberia are countries Nigeria has helped most especially in peace support operations, so where is the principle of reciprocity?

As stated much earlier in the study, Nigeria at the time it adopted an Afrocentric posture, ticked as the boxes as a hegemonic power in the African continent (context). According to the hegemonic stability theory, in order for a nation-state to rise to the level of hegemon, there are some attributes it must possess. First, it must have political strength, military force, and superior national power, that is necessary for its ability to forge new international laws and organizations (like the role Nigeria played in the formation of OAU and ECOWAS); a hegemon must have a large and growing economy at that point Nigeria had the largest economy in the African continent; thirdly, a hegemon must have the will to lead, and the will to establish a hegemonic regime, as well as the capability to lead and enforce the rules of the system.

However, following the attainment of independence by most African countries, and the emergence of dominant countries like South Africa, among others, with fast growing economies, while Nigeria’s economy on the other hand is on the decline, there is a need for Nigeria to have a rethink. According to Kindleberger (1973), to be considered hegemonic in the world political economy, a country must have access to crucial raw materials, control major sources of capital, maintain a large market for imports, and hold comparative advantages in goods with high value added, yielding relatively high wages and profits. It must be stronger on these dimensions taken as a whole than any other country; he emphasized the economic factors most. Thus, on this ground, Nigeria would have to reassess her political, socio-cultural and economic strength if it must maintain hegemony.

Additionally, according to prominent scholar of international relation, Aluko (1990), the vast size, and population, and abundance of resources do not guarantee in any automatic way the leadership of this (Africa) continent. Until we are able to establish a stable political order at home, industrialize and take-off technologically and improve the quality of life of our people, no country within and outside Africa will accept our claim to leadership in Africa seriously except to flatter us.

Accordingly, the study argues that, though Nigeria's rationale for adopting an Afrocentric foreign policy at the beginning was based on humanitarian grounds, there is a need for the country to rethink her Afrocentric foreign policy, in the light of prevailing circumstances in the international political system, in general and the African continent in particular.

Findings

Based on the views of our respondents which were gathered through unstructured interviews and other secondary data sources, the work established the following findings;

1. The study revealed that, the rationale for the adoption of Africa as the centerpiece of Nigeria's foreign policy was informed by altruistic and moral motives, and not by strategic economic interest, as postulated by Walzer (2000), who stressed the place of morality in humanitarian intervention;
2. The study revealed that, Nigeria's Afrocentric posture is not properly articulated in relation to the national interest, hence, there is a disconnect in the relationship between Nigeria's national interest and her Afrocentric foreign policy;
3. The study revealed that, there is a nexus between national interest and foreign policy, and that this balance must be maintained to achieve a robust and pragmatic foreign policy-unfortunately, Nigeria's Afrocentric policy has failed thus far, to properly maintain this linkage. Thus, Afrocentrism has impacted negatively on Nigeria's national interest;
4. The study revealed that, Nigeria's Afrocentric foreign policy is only but a myth; this policy failed to take into cognizance, the reality of power relations in the international system, which are driven by selfish and parochial interest, often referred to as national interest;
5. The study revealed that, during the period 2007-2015, Nigeria's foreign policy experienced a new direction, as attention shifted to investment and economic co-operation, a radical departure from the old one which has Africa as the centre piece. The new foreign policy laid more emphasis on investment rather than political drive as it is the only avenue to deliver the dividends of democracy to the electorate
6. The study revealed that, Nigeria has no tangible benefits to show for her Afrocentric foreign policy; and
7. The study revealed that, Nigeria's foreign policy is lacking good management from the Presidency down to the Ministries and Departments that are charged with foreign policy formulation and implementation.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study carried out an assessment of "Nigeria's National Interest and its Afrocentric Policy, 2007-2015: A Critical Analysis". The scope of the study is confined to Nigeria's Afrocentric posture and how it affects her national interest. The aim was to find out the reasons why Nigeria adopted Africa as the centerpiece of her foreign policy, how Afrocentrism have impacted on Nigeria's foreign policy, and the challenges of and prospects of Nigeria's Afrocentric foreign policy. Findings discovered that, Nigeria's Afrocentric posture is not properly articulated in relation to the national interest. Hence, there is a disconnect in the relationship between Nigeria's national interest and her Afrocentric foreign policy.

Accordingly, to address the challenges bedeviling the relationship between Nigeria's national interest and her Afrocentric foreign policy, therefore, the Federal Government of Nigeria and the Ministries and Departments, that are charged with the responsibility of managing Nigeria's foreign policy, should rethink her foreign policy, to be pragmatic, forward-looking and realistic in the light of prevailing situation in the international system, where nation states are more focused on the pursuit of this is germane, if food security must be achieved at the present and sustained in the future.

From the findings of this study, the following recommendations are suggested, to address the challenges of Nigeria's Afrocentric foreign policy, with a view to achieving a robust and pragmatic foreign policy:

1. Nigeria should revolutionize her foreign policy, by prioritizing the Afrocentric posture of her foreign policy, by being more national interest focused, in a bid to negotiate successfully, the murky waters of international politics, where might is right; since foreign policy is closely linked to national interests, Nigeria should ensure that her foreign policy objectives are closely tied to the core values of the state and its citizens;
2. There is a need for Nigeria to review her foreign policy, especially her Afrocentric posture, to focus on those countries that respect and reciprocate her good gestures and dealings with her. She must identify her "true" friends, but at the same time remain "friendly" with those that are her "enemies";
3. According to the hegemonic stability theory, a strong economic base is necessary for a hegemonic power to ensure stability in the system and assure its own dominance. Consequently, Nigeria should endeavour to build an endogenously focused economic base, with a view to enhance her economic independence, and continental dominance;
4. When investing in a crisis in another country, Nigeria should aim to benefit from the economic opportunities that are found in that country, after such crisis, like the Americans often do. This way, Nigeria can repatriate the profits back home to boost her domestic economy; she must stop investing her financial resources without reaping anything in return;
5. Being the largest and most populous black nation in the world, Nigeria have to rise up to the challenges and responsibilities that are expected of her. However, on the long run, she must have to show some selfishness necessary to tackle her own immediate domestic challenges and needs;
6. Nigeria should have incurred enormous benefits from her many and varied humanitarian policies towards fellow African countries, but reverse has been the case. As such, the way forward is for Nigeria to rethink her foreign policy to be pragmatic, forward-looking, and realistic, in the light of the prevailing situation in the international system;
7. The Nigerian government should ensure a well-articulated national interest exists in theory and practice at all times; this will enable that, those charged with the country's foreign policy formulation and implementation are properly guided at all times.

References

- Ade-Ibijola, A. (2013). Overview of National Interest, Continuities and Flaws in Nigeria Foreign Policy. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, January, Vol. 3, No.1, pp. 565-572.
- Agbu, O. (2018). Nigerian Foreign Policy Under President Umaru Musa Yar'adua: Challenges and prospects. The Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA), Lagos.
- Ajayi, Lady, and Tobi Njoaguani. Nigeria's Foreign Policy and Codification of National Interest: A Prescriptive Analysis." 2016, <https://core.ac.uk/download/524930797.pdf>.)

- Alli, W.O. (2012), The Role of Nigeria in Regional Security Policy, Abuja: Friedrich Ebert-Stiftung, online at: www.fes-westafrica.org/abuja
- Aluko, O. (1981). Essays in Nigerian Foreign Policy. London: George Allen and Unwin.
- Asobie, H. A (2007), Nigeria's National Interest in a Globalising World: A Theoretical Perspective in Akinteriwa, B (ed) *Nigeria's National Interests in a Globalising World*, Ibadan: Bolytag International Publishers.
- Chawane, M.H. "The Development of Afrocentricity: A Historical Survey." 2016, <https://core.ac.uk/download/74246562.pdf>. Chazan, N., Lewis, P., Mortimer, R., Rothchild, D., and Stedman, S.J. (1988). *Politics and Society in Contemporary Africa*. London: Macmillan.
- Chibundu, N. V. (2014). Foreign Policy with Particular Reference to Nigeria (1961-2002). Ibadan: Spectrum Books.
- Chukwuokolo, JC. "Afrocentrism Or Eurocentrism: The Dilemma Of African Development." 2010, <https://doi.org/10.4314/og.v6i1.52333>
- EGERAN, TOMWARRI. "International Law, Boundary Dispute and Territorial Redistribution between Nigeria and Cameroon on Bakassi Peninsula: Limits and Possibilities for Nigeria." 2015, <https://core.ac.uk/download/234626333.pdf>
- Fanon F. (2014) *"The Wretched of the Earth"*. New York: Grove Press.
- Fawole, A. (2003). "Nigeria's External Relations and Foreign Policy Under Military Rule (1966-1999)". Ile-Ife: Obafemi Awolowo University Press Ltd.
- Gambari, I. A. (1975). Nigeria and the World: A Growing Internal Stability, Wealth, and External Influence. *Journal of International Affairs*, 29(2), 155-169.
- Hamman, S; Mustafa, K. I. and Omojuwa O. K. (2014). "The Role of Nigeria in Peacekeeping
- Mahmood, A. (2013). "Nigeria's Africa Policy in Perspective". Retrieved: <http://webcache>.
- Mbachu, O. (2011), *"Foreign Policy Analysis: The Nigerian Perspective"*. Kaduna Medusa Academic Publishers Ltd.
- Morgenthau, H J (1948), *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. New York: Alfred A Knopf.
- NIIA, (2005). *Think Tanks in Foreign Policy: The NIIA*. Lagos: The Nigerian Institute of international Affairs Publication.
- Northedge, F. S. (1961). *International Relations*. 2nd ed., London: Macmillan Press Ltd. Obi, E. A. (2006). *Fundamentals of Nigeria's Foreign Policy: A Study on the Role of National Interest in Foreign policy Making*. Onitsha. Bookpoint Ltd.
- Northedge, F.S (ed) (1968) *"The Foreign Policy of the Powers"*, New York: The Free Press.
- Obasanjo O. (2000) "New Year Speech at the May Day Parade of 1st May 2000" in *RECALL NO. 2* (January 2000).
- Odetunde, C. (2018). Our Foreign Policy: Path to Global Development. *Nigeria world*. Retrieved: nigeriaworld.com/feature/publication/odetunde/041308.html.
- Okeke, V. O S. (2014). "Citizen-Centric Diplomacy: The Challenges for Nigeria's Defence and Security in the 21st Century." *International Affairs and Global Strategy, Vol.27, pg. 22- 34*. Available from www.iiste.org
- Olusanya, G. and Akindele R. (1986). The Domestic structure and processes of Nigeria's Foreign Policy in Nigeria's External Relations' the First Twenty-Five Years, NIIA, University Press United Ibadan.
- Ukeaje, I. (2017). *Fundamentals of Nigerian Foreign Policy: A Study on the Role of National Interest in Foreign Policy Making*. Onitsha: Bookpoint Ltd.