



National Interest as an Imaginary Concept: An Evaluation of Nigerian Foreign Policy Implementation

Stephen Ogbodo

Department of Political Science Faculty of Social Science and Humanities Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT), Nigeria.

ABSTRACT

Nigeria's foreign policy, since its independence, has been heavily influenced by an Afrocentric approach, which prioritizes the protection of African interests over the domestic needs and priorities of the Nigerian populace. This paper critically examines the long-standing focus on African unity, security, and regional cooperation in Nigerian foreign policy, exploring the reasons behind this orientation and the neglect of Nigeria's national interests. The study argues that while Nigeria has garnered respect as a regional leader in West Africa, her foreign policy decisions often overlook the concerns of her own citizens, thereby weakening the efficacy and relevance of her diplomatic efforts. This paper also investigates the implications of such a foreign policy for Nigeria's domestic welfare, and suggests reforms that could realign Nigerian diplomacy to better serve both regional and national interests. Through analysis of the political elites' role in foreign policy formulation, the study questions the lack of inclusive decision-making processes and recommends a more consultative approach that incorporates the will of the Nigerian people in shaping the country's foreign policy.

Keywords: Nigeria, foreign policy, national interest, Afrocentrism, diplomacy, political elites, regional cooperation, West Africa, national welfare, policy reform.

INTRODUCTION

National interest according to [1], is regarded as "the main determination of what a country should or ought to do through its leaders or decision makers". [2], who in turn quoted Morgenthau that "national interest is national power". He went ahead to say that "there can be no national interest without the power to ensure national security and predominance over other rivals. And that "national interest without the power to protect and promote it is meaningless". Therefore, national interest lies on a struggle for power. According to [3], foreign policy is usually defined as "the action of a state toward the external environment and condition under which these actions are formulated". As we were made to know in the book of [2], who presented here [4] says that "foreign policy is the search for the preservation of a country's independence and security the pursuit and protect interest. Taking cognizance to these; national interest, is the interest of a nation or a country in the foreign policy environment. Further more, a country which is making any foreign policy, ideally, must consider her national interest. As a foreign policy maker, or a leader the interest of your subjects should be paramount or considered as a priority when making foreign policy. This has become worrisome to scholars and stakeholders within the nation- space [6]. To some, Nigeria only operates a Father Christmas style of foreign policy which had somehow contributed to the economic misery of the nation. The paper argues that Nigeria should embark on a reform of her foreign policy as a matter of urgency as what obtains presently can best be described as diplomatic prodigality [7]. This is the summation of what Nigeria had ever done in realm of foreign relations. For a country to relate effectively and gainfully with another, it's foreign policy must be well defined and well thought. Since independence with Jaja Nwachukwu as the first minister of foreign affairs and commonwealth relations later called external affairs, Nigeria foreign policy has been characterized by a focus on Africa as a regional power and by attachment to several fundamental principles African unity and independence; capitalist to exercise hegemonic influence in the region, peaceful settlement of dispute; non-alignment and non-intentional interference the international affairs of other nations and regional-economic appropriation and development in carrying out these principles, Nigeria participation in the organization of African Unity (OAU) now known as the African union, the economic community of West African State (ECOWAS), the non- aligned movement, the commonwealth and the United Nations [8].

In pursuing the goal of regional economic cooperation and development, Nigeria help create ECOWAS which seeks to harmonize trade and investment, practices, for its 16 west African members countries and ultimately to achieve a full customs union. Nigeria also has taken the lead in articulating the views of developing nations on the need for modification of the existing international economic order Nigeria has played a central role in ECOWAS effort to end civil war in Liberia and contributed the bulk of the ECOWAS peace keeping forces sent there in 1990. Nigeria also has provided to bulk of troops for ECOWAS forces in Sierra-Leone. Nigeria has enjoyed generally and relations with its immediate neighbours [9]. Ghana Nigeria Relations have been both bitter and sweet. In 1969 numerous Nigerians were deported from Ghana. Relations in the 70s were good. Ghana-Nigeria relations began on a sour note in the early period of PNDC Rule. Tension rose immediately after the PNDC deposed Limann in 1981 [11]. In protest, Nigeria refused to continue much-needed oil supplies to Ghana. At that time, Ghana owed Nigeria about US\$150 million dollars for crude oil supplies and depended on Nigeria for about 90 percent of its petroleum needed. Nigerians expulsion of more than one million Ghanaians immigrants in early 1983 when Ghana was facing severe drought and economic problems, and of another 300,000 in early on short notice [12]. Further strained relations between the two countries, in April 1988, a joint commission for co-operation was established between Ghana and Nigeria bloodless coup in August, 1985 had brought major general Ibrahim Babangida to power in Nigeria and rulings took advantage of the administration to pay an official visit. The two leaders discussed a wide range of issues focusing on peace and prosperity within west-Africa, bilateral trade and transition to Democracy to both countries. In early January 1989, Babangida reciprocated an official visit to Ghana, which the PNDC hailed as a watershed in Ghana-Nigeria official visit to Ghana, which the PNDC hailed as a watershed in Ghana-Nigeria relations [13]. Subsequent setbacks that initiated in the democratic process in Nigeria clearly disappointed Accra. Nonetheless the political crisis that followed Babangida's annulment of the result of the June 1993 Nigeria presidential election and Babangida's resignation from the army and presidency two months later did not significantly alter the existing close relations between Ghana and Nigeria, two of the most important members of the ECO WAS and commonwealth of nation. After the take over in November 1993 by General Sani Abacha as the new Nigerian head of state, Ghana and Nigeria continued to consult on, economic political and security issues affecting the countries and West Africa as a whole [14]. Between early August 1994 when Rawlings became ECOWAS chairman and the end of the following October, the Ghanaian president visited Nigeria three times to discuss the peace process in Liberia and measures to restore democracy in the country. However, Nigeria and Ghana have a close relationship, and they collaborate on various issues. [7] the original continental organization-of African unity (OAU)-organized around the principle of decolonizing Africa. But it did not have a mandate to intervene as a regional military organization or adjudicate military dispute. Thus in past-cold war period continental power blocs have begun to develop and act in conjunction with the OAU [15]. The stem mostly from Economic unions, the best example being the economic community of West African state cease-fire monitoring group (ECOMOG), dominated by regional power in Nigeria, ECOMOG has served in Liberia, Sierra-Leone and Guinea-Bissau earning both respect and ridicule. Finally and conclusively Nigeria has gone a long way through her AFROCENTRIC nature of foreign policy in protecting the interest of West African countries. Nigeria is regarded as a big brother by other countries in West Africa but where is the effect of the big brother hood in the side of her subjects?

STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Nigerian foreign policy from the beginning centers on AFROCENTRICISM. The Afrocentric nature of Nigeria foreign policy especially in West Africa has made her popular both in Africa and the world at large. Unfortunately, Nigeria national interests which suppose to be the bed rock or the spring board of her foreign policy are always neglected.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- (a) To ascertain the reason why Nigeria' foreign policy anchored on protection of African's interest.
- (b) To discover the reason why Nigeria political elites formulate her foreign policy alone without conducting first plebiscite.
- (c) To find out solutions that will change Nigeria's foreign policy in order to recognize the interest of her citizenry.
- (d) To look for a measure by which sanctity could be restored in Nigeria domestic relations this would help in making her foreign policy.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- (a) Why do Nigeria. Centers her foreign policy on protecting the interest of Africa?
- (b) Why do Nigerian foreign policy made by the political elites?
- (c) How can Nigeria's foreign policy be revolutionized to bring about recognition of her nation's interest?
- (d) What measure could be used to bring sanctity in Nigeria domestic relations as regards to making her foreign policy?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

One, who wants to embark on a research-work, will always have in mind of things they want to achieve or put correctly. Therefore, this research work is embarked upon with the view to serving as a guideline to any policy that

may be made by the foreign policy maker. It is also the aim of the researcher that this work would add to the existing knowledge in the field of political science in particular and in social sciences in general. Furthermore, this research work is to serve as basis for further theorizing. This is because, just like the researcher made use of other people's work by citing them so do this particular work is made to be cited at any point in time.

SCOPE OF STUDY

This research work is aimed at verifying the foreign policy formulation as it concerns the Nigerian national interest. Therefore, the researcher restricted the scope of this research work on Nigerian foreign policy formulation.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

According to oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary 7th Edition...: 975, National connected with a particular nation shared by a whole Nation. Owned, controlled or paid for by the government. According to oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary 7th Edition...: 778: Interest, the feeling that you have when you want to know or learn more about sb/sth. The quality that something has when it attracts somebody's attention or makes them want to know more about it. Foreign policy: [3], foreign policy is the actions of a state toward the external environment and the conditions under which these actions are formulated"

Foreign policy formulation: is to create or prepare foreign policy carefully by a state through her foreign policy makers with the aim to protecting her national interest.

Formulation: According, oxford learners Dictionary 7th edition (:586), to create or prepare something carefully, giving particular attention to the details; to express your ideas in carefully chosen words **Policy:** According to oxford learner's dictionary 7th edition...: 1122) policy is a plan of action agreed or chosen by a political party a business, etc a principle that you, believe in the that influences how you behave; a way in which you usually behave.

Examination: According to Oxford Learner's dictionary, 7th edition (...:501), the act of looking at or considering something very carefully a close look at sth./sb, especially to see if there is anything wrong to find the cause of a problem.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theoretical framework that would be made used in this research work, is decision making theory. In other words, decision making theory is the theory the researcher has chosen to embark on this project work. According to [16], Decision making approach is an attempt to understand politics from the stand point of the decision making process. Its major promise is that decision makers are human beings who have their strengths weaknesses, emotions, bias, personal, preferences and word views. These they get to bear on the particular decision which they take in the name of the state. The approach demystifies the state, and reduces its actions to that of the leaders. It essentially, adopts an interdisciplinary approach as it draws substantially from sociology, psychology, administrative theory and organizational theory. The approach sees the states as the decision unites and the actors are the decision makers. For it's perception of actors Van Dyke (1960) in [8] posits that; every actor is a decision-maker. Those acting for political parties, decide which candidate to nominate, voters decide whether to vote and for whom legislators decide which proposals to advance or support. Executives decide what legislation seek whether to sign or veto acts of the legislative body, precisely which steps to take in executing or administering the law and what policies to pursue were action is left to their discretion. [17], asserts that decision making approach is concerned with analysis of political systems, process and behaviour in terms of their decision. Mechanism and it's functions. He subsequently points that decision making approach involves the following;

- a) Identification of the issues on which decisions are made
- (b) The structures involved in decision making Hic) The actors involved in decision making (this may involve study of personality if necessary)
- d) The alternative course of action or options that were considered before making a choice.
- e) The factors influencing the choice of the decision makers, that ie. their range o preferences visa vis the utilities attached to each of the alternative.
- f) Any external factors, pressured or constraints which influence their decision and;
- g) The out-come of the decision including it's political costs.

The introduction of the approach to the study of international relations is traced mainly to Richard Snyder, and two of his junior colleagues H.W. Bruck and Burton Sapin. According to [9] "Snyder developed in 1954 what is perhaps the first published explicit theoretical model on foreign policy decision making" while [10], believes that Snyders work was the "first extended and systematic attempt to conceptualize the role of decision making on the formulation of foreign policy and in the processes of international politics. He further sees the approach to the study of international political phenomena, and in the end the decision-making approach proved to be a crucial front in the behavioural revolution in political science. Since their concern was developing a method of explaining state behaviours, they believed in understanding of any one state through the use of a scheme which will permit the analytical construction of properties of action which will be shared in common by all specific states [11]. Being quite aware of differences that exist among states, they advised that a typology of states could be constructed depending on basic political organization, range of decision making systems, strengths and weakness of decision-making system

types of foreign policy strategies employed [19]. The approach proceeds with the assumption that the key to political action lies in the way which decision makers define their situation. Thus the setting is conceived as consisting of internal and external parts. The internal setting includes 4 personalities, roles, organizations in the decisional unit, the governmental structure within which the decision makers functions, the physical and technological conditions, the basic values and goals and the various influences operating in the society. The external setting includes all the relevant factors in the society the total situation of the international system existing at a particular time [12]. In Snyder's own model they identified three main sets of stimuli that shapes foreign policy. They are internal setting, external setting and decision-making process. The internal setting refers to domestic politics public opinion or geographical position. [10] posits that in Snyder's conceptual model the term suggests the hypothesis that clues to the way any state behaves towards the world must be sought in the way it's society is organized and functions (i.e. the basic social structure and behaviour) in the character and behaviour of it's people and in it's physical habit. Paying attention to factors and conditions under internal setting especially the component titled social structure and behaviour is important because it ensures that foreign policy analysis is carried to the fundamental level of linking social organization etc.) with external political behaviour. The external setting means basically those factors and conditions that are outside the boundaries of the state. These include the actions and reactions of other states as represented by their decision makers [20]. The third stimuli which Snyder and his colleagues consider the most important is the decision making process. Once again [10], sees the decision making process in this framework as consisting of a sequence of activities carried on by members of a unit whose behaviours is determined by organizational variables, information variables and motivational factors. Organizational variables include the size and composition of the decisional units, the degree of role differentiation and the pattern of authority relations, as well as the communication network. Information variable constant of the amount and kinds of information possessed by the decision makers and provided by the information gathering structure and the way information flows through the decisional system. And motivational factors encompass the motives, personality perception, values and learning attitudes of the decision makers. In foreign policy decision-making, the officials who act on behalf of the state supposed to under go an intellectual process which involves combining values, attitudes and perception. With the aid of a diagram, Snyder and his team were able to demonstrate how the three stimuli combine in the foreign policy making process [21]. The domestic social forces have an important impact on the formulation and execution of foreign policy: in turn a state's external actions may have serious consequences for domestic society itself; and then again, the external and internal settings are related to each other in the sense that inter-societal; inter-cultural non- governmental interaction condition the state's official action. The critical point here, however, is that these links are filtered and fashioned through the perception motives, experiences and interactions of decision-makers operating from different states. [10]. It is necessary at this point to state that though Snyder and his team recognized the existence and role of supranational organizations in international politics, they insist that the national state remains the dominant actor in this sphere. Coming down to the nation-state, they see it basically as a reflection of its decision makers. Thus according to them, It is one of our basic methodological choices to define the state as its official decision-makers those whose authoritative acts are to all intents and purpose, the acts of the state. State actions are the action of those acting in the name of the state. Hence the state is the decision makers. The perception of the state from the above perception derives from facts that beyond its reification, the actions attributable to a state are in the final analysis, actions by human beings who are the official decision makers of that state. Thus when we say America has done this or Nigeria did that we are simply referring to actions, reactions or probably the inactions of political actors in these countries.

AN EVALUATION OF SNYDER'S DECISION MAKING MODELS

Snyder and his associates really made a meaningful impact to the study of foreign policy. According to [13], who in any case was Snyder's student at Princeton University at the time of the study, the major contribution of Snyder and his associates is that it was the first significant step in the process of modernization of foreign policy analysis. This was by bringing to an end quite conclusively the method of foreign policy analysis that was characterized by reification of the state and objectification of its circumstances. The model also provides a way of empirically tracing the role of domestic variables or sources of foreign policy behaviour. In his own analysis of the model [10] believes the most important aspect of Snyder's contributions is that it smashed the traditional assumption of a direct link between external stimuli and state response. What the model did in this regard was to show that the contents of state decision depend partly on some cases on how it is formulated as well as on the circumstances to which it is response. The work also brought about a terminological shift in foreign policy analysis because it made analysis to now focus on decision-makers instead of states as was hitherto done. On the reverse side, it has been observed that the model lacks no theoretical formulation. This is because there are no clearly specified unit between it's vast array of categories and sub-categories of variables. While Snyder underlined the need to assess and compare the strength of relevant variables, he did not outline a method for assessing them or a basis for comparing them. Furthermore, though the model contains a detailed elaboration of the organizational variables, it does not contain a details enumeration of the variables in the internal and external settings. There is no surprise then, that this model was

unable to move to the point of formulating, or serving as a basis for the formulation of if then hypothesis that is propositions which indicate that if certain circumstances are operative then certain decisions and actions are likely to ensue [11]. Other writers who have furthered Snyder's model and who have tried to improve on it include [12], among others. On a general note, [12] sees the major defects of the decision making approach from three angles. First, it is based on the principles of indeterminism as it fails to suggest as to which of the elements is really relevant. Second, the approach is not value oriented, because it does not bother about the right and wrong of a decision. Further international politics is not normally made of highly conscious moves and choices which can be analyzed in terms of neat categories. Lastly, it ignores the objective nature of international developments:- In conclusion, the decision making approach despite its inherent weakness which has hindered its wide acceptance as a theory of international relations, is still very helpful in that it helps the analyst to look beyond the states as actors but to focus on those who act on behalf of the state- decision makers. This is very helpful, because it helps to unveil the motivations, values, personality and perceptions of the people who take decisions, the sum of which forms what are known as international relations.

HYPOTHETICAL STATEMENT

- (a) National political leaders spend the country's resources outside Nigeria while their subjects are dying in hunger and starvation.
- (b) The Nigerian political leaders used the AFROCENTRIC nature of Nigeria's foreign policy to boost their individual recognition in the international politics.
- (c) Diversity of culture and regulation in Nigeria can never allow the foreign policy dividend reach to the grass root.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, literatures like books, magazines, journals, News papers etc. from various authors, editors and journalist respectively, are going to be treated on how they concern formulation of foreign policy and National interest in Nigeria, with the view to enhancing or developing the Nigeria interest in the world politics in general and African politics in particular. Thus, these political ideas like: AFROCENTRICISM and National Deprivation, Foreign policy makers and Electoral process, Leadership and Domestic Relations, Federal character and meritocracy.

AFROCENTRICISM AND NATIONAL DEPRIVATION AFTER

As a matter of fact, AFROCENTRICISM is the center piece of Nigeria's foreign policy would aim at unification of Africa and an ideological approach to African's problems. Etymologically, AFROCENTRICISM according to [14], for it was the United States let that in its misunderstanding and mishandling of the crisis of the imminent Angolan independence, handed Nigerian the foreign policy issue that would catapult it to the centre stage, and not just Africa's stage. According to [14] General Yakubu Gowon had sent a message of congratulations to leaders i.e. the three components of us, parties which were formed by Government of National union which include (MPLA, OAU and UNITA). He said, we Nigeria conference rejoice with you on this happy occasion and salute your wisdom, patriotism, statesmanship and realism in reaching agreement for the common good of your fatherland. The event which you are celebrating today is of great importance not only to the Angolan people who have sacrificed so much but also to Africa and indeed all lovers of freedom justice and human dignity, throughout the world." But my question is this; do we love ourselves and cherish our national interest? Our leaders always plunged themselves into unnecessary expenditure and neglect the national interest of the citizens which suppose to be the paramount especially to the underprivileged ones. According to [14] Nigerian Foreign policy under Gowon seemed to become one handout after another. Let me say straight-way that governments must use money to achieve certain foreign policy objectives. Thus our government would give twenty million dollars to Angola as an outright grant, and a few hundred thousand to countries like Cape-Verd Guyana and Benin. But all those were for specific security related purposes. When we were later inundated by requests for development aid we channeled them to the African development Bank where we had placed a trust fund of \$100 million; Gowon and his advisers; however seemed to believe in dramatic personal largesse. The case of Grenada will serve to illustrate this point. For reasons unfathomable be of US, Gowon decided to pay official visits to two obscure countries in the western Hemisphere follow in the common wealth conference in Kingston, Jamaica, early in 1975. In Grenada, a tiny impoverished Islands of 90,000 people, about 15,000. Miles and from Nigeria had paid the salaries of all civil servants'. A Nigerian police canting police Government was also sent to train the Grenadian there police at our expense, and a soft loan of Eric Gairy. Gowon did not care to find out that the preoccupation of the Grenadian which prime minister at that time was not the have development of this island or the welfare of its inhabitants, but with his personal aggrandizement.

According to [15], Brig Joseph N. Garba, the external affairs commissioner and an exponent of aggressive foreign policy took the initiative in trying to settle the Kenya-Tanzania and Zaire-Angola disputes. Nigeria provided aid for the poorer members of the Economic community of West African states in particular the four francophone counties, partly to wean the Latter from France aid in the form of cheap gasoline was given to Zambia and other landlocked

states. Festac 2, postponed twice since 1970, opened in mid- January at the staggering cost of about £ 71, 000, million. The festival attracted 80,000 visitors from member countries of organization of African unity, liberation movements and black communities all over the world. Fundamentally, AFROCENTRICISM never play a significant role in Nigerian polity, rather it tends to put down the economy of Nigeria and deprived the Nigerian people their national interests such as freedom of education, freedom of natural resources thereby making nonsense of her foreign policy. When we talk about national interest there must be national plan, rule of law, education must come first, due-process so that foreign policy will bring political accountability to the entire nation (domestic Relations.) the money which our political elites so end aimlessly could have been used to revitalize the Nigerian economy and standardize the life of her citizenry. Hence, Foreign policy makers should be chosen by the populace or by the electorate so that there would be appropriate recognition of national interest.

FOREIGN PROCESSES: POLICY MAKERS AND ELECTORAL

Society in a state of nature doesn't make foreign policy. Some of the foreign policy makers in African example in Nigeria make foreign policy as if they are in a state of nature where they consider themselves as survivors of the fittest. There is no checks and balances in Nigerian foreign policy processes [13], made us known that ... the state is a human creation, the result of a contract," in the same book, Hobbes also said "the only way to peace is for men to give up so much of their natural right as are inconsistent with living in peace..." The contracting parties are not the community and the government, but the subject and subject. Every man says to every other I authorize and give up my right of governing myself to this man or this assembly of men (government) on this condition that thou give up my right to him and authorize all his actions in like manner. Generally, Nigerian policy makers hypothetically not chosen by their subject or the electorate. [14] "truly democratic elections can remove bad, corrupt, or merely ineffectual Leaders. Free and fair elections' also provide an incentive for political leaders to govern more effectively in the public interest. A strong body of law and a system of effective check and balances- with an independent judiciary and a network of counter-corruption, audit, And other oversight agencies can deter abuse of power. A free press and civil society help to consolidate democratic institutions and processes, and can expose wrong doing and hold government officials accountable before society and the Law". The above illustrations of what good governance is not applicable to Nigerian context but the opposite. This is because there is nothing like free and fair election in Nigerian political system. The only accepted free and fair election conducted In Nigeria on 12th June 1993 was nullified by the then political leaders. But accepted election that brought in the fourth republic which the representative of international organization said to be (below acceptable standard.) why, Madeline said (the election process failed the Nigerian people). Annual Editions comparative politics (08/09:189.) Conclusively, foreign policy makers in Nigeria make foreign policy as regard to their own personal interest neglecting the national interest and making nonsense of the importance of election.

LEADERSHIP AND DOMESTIC RELATIONS

In this context the domestic relations or their ideology, ideally should determine their leadership. Leadership is associated with little group of individual who are representing the whole or a Large group of individuals. Leaders are meant to serve and not to be served. Democratically, a leader should be accountable to their subjects in all aspects of political activities. Luck quoted by Appadorai "The legislative power constituted by the consent of the people, becomes the supreme power in the commonwealth, but is not arbitrary. It must be exercised as it is given, for the good of the subjects. Government is in the nature of a trust and embraces only such powers as were transferred at the time of the change from a state of nature. The legislatures must dispense justice by standing laws and authorize. Neither judge no man can be deprived of his property, without his consent, nor can taxes be levied without the consent the people or their representative. Finally, the legislatures cannot transfer its powers to any other person or body. But it is a delegate power from the people who alone can dispose of it. The people, however, can remove or alter the legislative, when they find that it acts are contrary to trust reposed in it"... (The substance of political 1974:24-25).The failure of Nigerian leadership and Domestic Relations, according to Obi et-al (2005:266) is historically traceable to its intense authoritarian and predatory rule, political repression, and human rights abuse and most important of all corruption and abuse of office. No doubt, colonizing imperialism contributed enormously in shaping this process of misrule, reinforced as it were, by the antics of a political elite which is allergic mass democratic aspiration as it is neurotic in the pursuit of power for primitive accumulation... [7]" It is leadership that mobilizes the people and arouses in them various levels of political consciousness. It is also leadership that sets the goals of political community and ultimately determines their fate and destinies" Countries' Infact, making a foreign policy by an individuals or group of individuals without considering the domestic or the national interest is just as saying that Nigeria is still in the state of nature where the fittest takes it all and weakest loses it all. Leadership of this country Nigeria should not only have the fear of God in them but the fears of their subjects or the electorates who have chosen them through the contract theory and also have the power to persecute them where they have gone wrong in representing their affairs.

FEDERAL CHARACTER AND MERITOCRACY CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

Interestingly, federal character and National integration are related. The former is applied, to achieve the latter. The application of federal character in revenue sharing, education, employment and location of industries and other development programs, will guarantee national integration, stability and development. Then what is federal character?

FEDERAL CHARACTER

Federalism emerge either through coerced authority of a foreign power hence institutive federalism or through voluntary agreement of the constituent units hence constitutive federalism, Nigerian federalism conforms to the former type as the Nigerian federal constitution was imposed by the British colonial power. Meanwhile, the US federalism was an example of the latter type of federalism as constituting states willfully joined the confederation and subsequently federation. Federal character suggested an attempt to build a nation where every individual must feel that he has equal chance to participate. Without bias or ethnic affiliations [16], Federal character is both a reaction as well as a system. It is a positive reaction to correct those practices of the past, especially in the conduct of public management which tended to exploit the diversities of the nation and by so doing cause ill will. Also, it is a reaction to those practices which tended to reflect selfish and parochial consideration, especially those negative forces which placed the self interests above national interest. The federal character principles involve a deliberate plan to construct means of insuring the proper distribution of amenities and government project in the country.

[17], identified some stages of evolution of federal character which is originally a Colonial heritage. These stages include: The period of informal federation, 1900-1946: the period of formal federation second Phase: 1967. To present [17], noted that the principle arose out of a compromise among the protagonists of the 1976 CDC. It was seen as oily formula to silence the troubled waters in Nigeria and the panacea to the issues of political, economic instability which obstructs the balance of the north and south on the one hand and various ethnic groups mainly the three dominant ethnic groups (Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa/ Fulani) and also other minority ethnic groups on the other land. [18], also defined federal character as a deliberate design to accommodate less dominant but often forcibly expressed interest... Essentially, it is a design which is aimed at depoliticizing new demand through an institutional arrangement hence this principle should be modified and gradually applied ever to the private sector.

MERITOCRACY AS A PANACEA TO NIGERIA LEADERSHIP CRISIS

When we Athenians are met together in the assembly, and the matter in hand relate to building, the builders are summoned as advisers" when the question is of shipbuilding, the ship rights. But when the question is an affair of state, then everybody is free to have a say carpenter, thinker, cobbler, merchant, sea-captain, Rich and poor, High and low any who lights gets up and one reproaches him, as in the former case, without having learned [15]. Yet giving advice, Plato's point as quoted above, from his philosophical dialogue Protagoras is that governing a society is not a free for all fan fare but I skill that requires specialized and intensive training. For Plato, leadership or perhaps governing a state is an art exclusively reserved for those, who has soaked their intellectual cum moral cloaks in the blood stream of ethics and science of state craft. State (i.e. country) which is to day the highest from of human civilization requires leaders who trained to man it three important arms of government should not be left in the hands of the gullible masses who are ignorant of the nature and working of government. Nigeria which ought to be model to other Africa states is to day a compact history of leadership failures [16]. Since her attainment of self-rule on 1st October, 1960, Nigeria has not experienced pragmatic, incorruptible and patriotic leadership at all level of government. The cause of this appalling situation is not far-fetched in that we fail to evolves pragmatic models and mechanisms through which we can sustain political structures that colonialism be equated to us, so as to transcend the problems we face. The geographical area we now call Nigeria was formally made up of about 250 Ethnic nationalities who have distinctly achieved social life and have rules themselves according to their diver societal mores, ethos, customs and traditions long before advent of British colonialism [17]. Out of mercantile interest which is the summum bonum of denialism, they were amalgamated into a single unit and were administered differently under the British colonial advice of divide and rule. On the attainment of self rule, political power was seen as the be all and end all of Nigerian politics as elite of various ethnic nationalities fought to control the government machineries at the centre. This saw to the emergence of parochialism ethno-religious politics as well as enthronement of mediocrity. Plato in one of his treaties on state—Graft- republic- offered the theory of ideal state as a panacea for achieving the end of state which is ensuring the greatest happiness' of the greatest numbers. The pragmatic strands of these principles are what I referred to as meritocracy [18]. The principles of meritocracy posits that political power should be vested on individuals with uncanny ability of making morally informed political judgment as well as demonstrable achievement in their field of study For Confucius, political meritocracy starts from the assumption that everybody will emerge from the process with equal ability of making morally political judgment. Hence an important task of a political system is to select the best for political recruitment. The people's republic of china however their human rights record represents a fascinating 21st century model for political meritocracy. Under the tutelage of Chinese communist party (EPC) Chinese potential leaders-prince- ling are

groomed for leadership position. In Nigerian political milieu, meritocracy can be nurtured by creating institute for leadership training in which people having interest in occupying public offices should go for leadership training. The duration of the training should last for six months for political scientist and two years for non-political scientist Jonathan Asikason [19].

THE NATURE OF NIGERIAN FOREIGN POLICY TO WEST AFRICA

Countries all over the world according to [19], design and implement foreign policies in order to guide their external national relations as well as protect, promote and defend their vital national interest. This could be in areas like defense of territorial integrity, the promotion of economic, military, strategic and diplomatic interest, and whatever a country might consider as its national interest. It is therefore, naturally expected that Nigerian's foreign policy ought to be fundamentally, guided by her national interest which should be ordinarily serve to either justify or repudiate the nation's action or inaction in the international relations. Since the first republic Nigeria foreign policy had been largely tilted towards AFROCENTRIC posture [20]. In an official statement just before independence, on August 20, 1960, Prime Minister Tafawa Belewa at the federal House of Assembly stated that Nigeria was adopting clear and practical policies with regards to Africa; it will be our aim to assist any country to find solution to it's problem". Similarly, one significant event that took place under late general Ironsi's regime was the June 1966 Ambassador's conference held in Lagos to reexamine the premises and directions of Nigerian's foreign policy. Among many other things the conference re-educated Nigeria to the total emancipation of all African territories still under Colonial tutelage and racial discrimination [21]. This position was further reinforced when general Ironsi stated that "in the whole sphere of external relations, the government attaches greatest important to our African policy'. It is under the above foreign policy direction, among others, that Nigeria ventured, into the complex theater of international relations. This position could be appreciated when we consider the fact that successive regimes in Nigeria accorded significant attention to Africa as the centre piece of the Nigerian foreign policy. The continent as well as other bilateral and multilateral aid she rendered in the continent would to a very large extent show that they omnibus nature of the principle of African centeredness in the Nigerian foreign policy does not appear to the well aligned to the country national interests or has not served the national interest in a commensurate measure [18]. Nigeria has been in the fore front in the establishment and sustaining various continental and regional organizations. For instance, Organization of African Unity (OAU) established on May 26, 1963 was primarily aimed at achieving two important objectives namely: to ensure the quick de-colonization of the remaining colonies in Africa and secondly to facilitate the rapid socio- economic growth and development of the African states. In this respect, Nigeria did a lot in ensuring implementation of the primary objectives upon which OAU was founded. For instance, in 1975 Nigeria granted the sum of 13.5 million and military assistance to Angola's MPLA and also enlisted diplomatic supports to the Angolan government within the OAU; this had greatly accorded recognition to the Angolan government by many African states who were hitherto unwilling to give such recognition [19]. In addition to this, Nigeria contributed enormously to several liberation movements in the continents. This had therefore greatly contributed towards the political independence of most African countries. For instance, on February 13, 1976, Nigeria donated the sum of \$2 million to South African ANC and five hundred thousand dollars to Namibian's SWAPO. SWAPO was later granted permission to open office in Lagos. At about the same time, the federal ministry of information inaugurated a committee for dissemination of information about the evil of apartheid. Fundamentally, the committee was estimate the government with current news and activities of the racist regime in South Africa and advice the government on the best way to approach her anti apartheid policies as well as enlighten the public on the situation in South Africa [20]. That is not all, as the federal government nationalities British assets in Nigeria when they later choose to continue consequently, in March 1978 the federal government directed all its ministries and parastatals to stop dealing with Barclays bank owned by Britain. In the same vain, the British petroleum company (BP) was also nationalized in July, 1979. In addition to all these, it general Obasanjo, in December 1976 launched the southern African relief fund [21]. The money collected was sent to Angola, Namibia Land South Africa. Similarly taken into cognizance fundamental role of economic integration among contiguous states and given the very small nature of many west Africa states in terms of population and economic output, Nigeria under the leadership of General Yakuba Gowon spearheaded the formation of 16 members regional integration body ECOWAS the treaties of which was signed on May 28, 1975. It is therefore essential to note that the phenomenal contributions made by Nigeria in the two phenomenal contributions made by Nigeria in the two organizations mentioned above greatly contributed to the economic prosperity and political independence of many African countries [19]. Nigerians did involvement in Africa affairs, a pursuit that had cost the country both financial and human resources could be seen from other endeavours undertaken by the country in other African states. Let's take for example Nigerians involvement in the ECOMOG. As desirable as it was to bring peace and stability to the West African sub region, the venture had to cost the nation enormous financial resources and unspecified number of troops who lost their lives. The above scenario was succinctly captured by Ambassador F. George who state that "the historic contributions of Nigeria to regional peace missions in Liberia and Sierra-Leon which cost the country the whooping sons of 10 million US dollars, not to mention the gallant men and women

of Nigeria armed forces who the supreme sacrifice in the cause of peace are badly acknowledge by the international community". He further emphasized that this does not include the sum of about 90 million US dollars that Nigeria single handedly incurred in the OAU peace keeping force that was deployed to Chad in 1980s [19]. This is in addition to the sum of eight hundred million US dollars Nigeria Trust Fund established under ABB to assist African countries obtain soft loan to execute vital projects. Surprisingly, it is with connivance of some of some of these African states that Nigeria was denied the presidency of ABB; what a backstab. Lastly, the regime of president Obasanjo intended to re-focus Nigerian's foreign policy in order to de-emphasis the overly African bias when he announced to the newly appointed ambassadors in 1999 that "Nigerian foreign policy today extend, however, far beyond our concern for the well- being of our continent, Africa". He further pointed that "the debt burden, for instance, he is not an exclusively African predicament. Many countries in Asia, the Caribbean and South Africa are facing similar problems. It is imperative; therefore, that these religions harmonize their efforts in the search for a fairer bill from the industrialized nations of the west; and this requires of us a more global approach to world affairs than was previously the case." The above statement spurred great expectations from various foreign policy experts, hoping that Nigeria would now enunciate and articulate more global vision in her foreign pursuits [20]. Paradoxically, the national became more involved in Africa agenda. It could therefore be noted that Nigerians role and initiative in drawing up the constitutive act of Africa Union (AU), The New Partnership for African's Development (NEPAD) and the African peer review mechanism have greatly engrossed the country even more deeply not African affairs. Also under NEPAD Nigeria initiated joint Africa/G8 plan to enhance Africa's capability to undertake peace support operation [21]. In addition to the above endeavors, Nigeria's high profile engagement in the continent continued with several summits and conferences such as the role-pack malaria summit held in Abuja on 24 August 2000; which was closely followed by the HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and infectious diseases summit also held in Abuja 2001. While these engagements are worthy undertaken, they however tend to suck Nigeria intimately into the unending African problems. Nigeria's enviable commitment towards solving Africa problems could also be seen in various peace and mediation talks between Sudanese government and Darfurian rebel factions [18]. She also mediated severally between, various rebel factions in the Liberian crisis and eventually asylum to the former Liberian president Charles Taylor in order to end crisis in that country. Further to this, the restoration to power of the president Sao-Tome and principle Mr. Fradique Menezes, after military take over in July 2003 was largely credited to Nigeria under the leadership of President Obasanjo. In a similar vain, Nigeria succeeded in ensuring that due constitution process was followed in installing democratically elected government in Togo after the death of President Gnassingbe Eyadema in February 2005. Further to all this peaceful diplomatic engagements which were aimed at solving other Africa nation problems, Nigeria recently lost about 44 soldiers in a ghastly motor accident along Gombe-Potiskum Road. It could be recalled that the soldiers were just back from peace keeping operations in Darfur. What a national tragedy in an attempt to keep peace in a sister Africa country [19-20].

Recent xenophobia violence in South Africa where Nigerians were brutalized tempted one to ask if Nigerians deserve such brutality taken into consideration to fundamental role played by the country in dismantling apartheid. Also the torture of Nigeria, Mr. Adumekwe by the Gabonese security agents who were said to have set his back on fire for 20 minutes is a big slap to Nigeria. This kind of inhuman treatment should have cursed serious diplomatic raw between the two countries. Certainly, the Gabonese security may eventually do worst considering the way the case was treated by Nigeria. Therefore, taken into cognizance the contributions made by Nigeria towards Africa peace and development, one fundamental question that needs to be raised is that upon all these enviable roles and contributions which Nigeria made in the continent could the nation afford to continue to pursuing an African agenda as such a monumental cost without visible tangible benefit to the country's national interest. It seems that there is apparent disconnect between national interest and Nigeria-Africa relations. It is apparent that nation is doing too much in the Africa continent without corresponding positive outcome. This phenomenon had attracted several comments by commentators on Nigeria's external relations. For instance, a policy and economic affairs analyst, Dr. Obadia Mailafuya while commenting on the Nigeria foreign policy framework, graphically captured the above scenario when he says that "a centre piece of any country's foreign policy to be that country itself if it seriously considers itself a rational actor on the world stage... Every single action shall be adjusted by how much it advances our national power and influence and how much it advances our interest, objectives and purposes". Similarly, another international relations expert Professor Inno Ukaeje, while commencing on Nigerian foreign policy has this to say "our false generosity aboard and penury at home are proof that we are pretending to be what we are not because in relating we have been overstretching ourselves". One seems to agree with the above assertions taken into consideration the enormous funds the nation spent in trying to solve various problems in Africa while internally almost all the sectors in the country are yearning for massive injection of funds a above all the standard of living has been grossly low. Although Nigeria is rich in strategic mineral resources through which the nation earned excessive wealth with which it funds several activities towards solving other Africans problems, the scale of such expenditure greatly hurt our domestic aspirations.

NIGERIA AND HER NATIONAL INTEREST IN THE CAURSE OF AFROCENTRICISM

Since independence on October 1, 1960, according to [1] “the leaders of successive Nigeria governments have expressed views on Nigeria’s foreign policy goals or national interests. To a considerable extent, the country’s national interest has been promoting capitalist interest since independence. This assertion is shared by Kunle Amuwo who asserted that the foreign policy conduct of successive civil and military administrations in Nigeria has been such that the country’s interest coincides, more often than not, with imperialist interests. Also, Nigeria foreign policy goals or objectives have been world and Africa-centered. Indeed, since the Belewa administration, successive Nigerian governments have declared Africa as the center-piece of Nigeria’s foreign policy. There are many reasons for the country’s Afrocentricism. One is security. Nigeria’s decision-makers believe that foreign security is national security because any threat to Africa n security represents a direct or indirect threat to the survival of Nigeria. Secondly, Nigeria’s independence is closely tied to total African liberation. Nigeria cannot be said to be truly independent unless the goals of pan-Africanism are realized. Lastly, there is economic consideration. Nigeria is interested in the ultimate political and economic integration of Africa. Nigeria’s Afrocentricism is clearly reflected in the address or speeches of Nigeria’s decision-makers. For example in his address or speech to the members of the House of Representatives on 20 August, 1960, Prime Minister Belewa stated that “we belong to Africa and Africa must claim first attention in our external affairs’ 1. With regard to the commonwealth and the United Nations Prime Minister Belewa stated that Nigeria would join both organizations in so far as each organization is compatible with Nigeria’s national interest. At this juncture, it is essential to note that it was not until mid-seventies that Nigeria’s national interests or foreign policy goals were clearly spelt out or documented. The documentation however was due to the effort of the Adedeji panel on the review of Nigerian foreign policy in May 1976 and accepted by Murtala/Obasanjo administration in June 1976. Essentially, the major component parts of Nigeria’s national interests of foreign policy goals which were recommended by the Adedeji panel were the following:

- (1) The defense of our sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity.
- (2) The creation of the necessary political conditions in Africa and the rest of the world which would facilitate the defense of our sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity.
- (3) The creation of the necessary economic and political conditions in Africa and the rest of the world which would foster Nigeria’s national self-reliance and rapid economic development.
- (4) The achievement of collective self-reliance in Africa and the rest of the developing world.
- (5) The promotion and defense of social justice and respect for human dignity and
- (6) The promotion and defense of world pace.

Apart from the Adedeji panel of the review of Nigerian foreign policy, the 1979 constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria (with the Amendments) enumerates in broad terms Nigeria’s national interest or objectives. In this regard, section 19 of the 1979 constitution says: The state shall promote African unity as well as total political economic social and cultural liberation of Africa and all other forms of consideration of universal peace and mutual respect and friendship among all people and states, and combat racial discrimination in all its manifestations. Consequently, the Shagari administration was guided strictly by the above mentioned foreign policy objectives. President Shagari’s initiative and diplomacy, however led to the Lagos plan of action which has been described as the greatest achievement of his administration’s foreign policy with the overthrow of his administration on 31 December 1983, the Buhari/Idiagbon regime declared five fundamental foreign policy objectives or goals which are designed to;

- (i) Safeguard Nigerian’s national interest.
- (ii) Promote the economic and social well-being of her citizens.
- (iii) Enhance her image and status in the world at large especially in Africa.
- (iv) Defend the independence and territorial integrity of America citizen; and
- (v) Contribute to the promotion of world peace and security”.

[2], stated that “state pursue their foreign policies in order to protect and promote their national interests. National interests are identified when a state domestic conditions, problems and worries are not considered. The domestic problems of a state are of different kinds. Some are economic, political and military. Others may be in the area of education or in the natural environment of the state. They may be in many other areas in deciding on the solutions to these internal matters, the government engages in various types of discussions with various governmental and non-governmental bodies and individuals in order to get their views and suggestions. This is domestic politics. Some of the solution to be suggested may involve interaction with other states. The government may than formulate different policies of interaction with different states in order to deal with some of those domestic matters. Now some specific examples will be given to illustrate the point. According to Ray Ofoegbu, the African and other new states outside Africa realized, at a certain stage that day have common problems. They realized that each of them was very weak in a world dominated by advanced and powerful countries. Under-development and poverty were among the problems worrying each of those new states. Exploitation by the advanced countries and the continuation of

colonialism were also worrying those new states. Each of them was also worrying by the frequent conflict between it and its neighbor a situation often exploited by the advanced countries. Each of them knows that it lacked the resources and the means tackling those different problems. As a way of ensuring the survival and the development of each of the new states, those states considered it necessary to form their own organizations and movements. This led to the formation of the nonaligned movement, the organization of Africa unit, the organization of Africa unity, the Economic community of West Africa states, The Arab league, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and other organizations. Before the independence, Nigerians were advocating nonalignment. It is not surprising therefore, that the country adopted the policy nonalignment. Again the Nigeria's warned them against undue dependence on foreign powers on economic matters. The country's membership in OPEC should therefore be seen as the logical conclusion on based on domestic political pressure. Further, Nigeria's had asked the government to work hard for African unity Nigeria has accordingly been playing her role in the formation and activities of the OAU. In 1960, during Babangida regime, Nigerian public kicked against the international monetary fund (IMF) Loan. Nigeria's also supported in strong terms that Nigeria should continue to support Liberia and Sierra-Leone in the hostilities in those countries. All these and many more are showing that foreign policy is a continuation of domestic politics. Most recently the American attack on Afghanistan to eradicate terrorism (2001), has been viewed by many Moslems in Nigeria as Moslem-Christian conflict many demonstrations have taken place in Kano, Ibadan (burning of American flag by, Moslem youths). Kaduna, Zamfara states and other Moslem dominated areas of Nigeria have a frowned at American bombardment of Afghanistan. They see Osama Bin Laden's a terrorism as a fight against Christians.

PERCEPTION AND ATTITUDE IN FOREIGN POLICY

Perception and attitudes are very important in foreign policy. Perception is the kind of meaning or interpretation which a state or its leader gives to the event in international environment. It is also the way in which a state or its leader comprehends or views an event or action of another state in external environment. Perception or interpretation of the event is the factor which makes you the state or its leaders take one kind of action or another in response. The type reaction made the state or its leader depends on many factors. One of such factors is the attitude of such a state or leader towards the type of incident which has taken place in the external environment. For instance, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Belewa (1912-1966), perceived or interpreted the liberation struggle in Southern Africa as a very important and necessary struggle against colonialism. At the same time his attitude was that Nigeria should not think of giving arms to those nationalists. It is belief was that as those nationalists were having internal conflicts and divisions among themselves Nigeria should not give them arm for they could use the arms to kill one another. To Belewa, it could be immoral for Nigeria to supply them with military weapons. However, Murtala Mohammed (1938- 1976) then head of state of Nigeria assassinated in a coup d'état in February (1976) perceived the liberation struggle in South Africa as African which Nigeria must support with arms and troops. This explains what made Nigeria to send arms troops and money to join the MPLA in the struggle against Portuguese soldiers and their supporters, like South Africa, Rhodesia and other western soldiers. If Murtala had seen the struggle in the same way with Belewa, Nigeria should not have sent arms and troops to Angola to implement Nigeria's foreign policy against colonialism. Another important example was the issue of Liberia and Sierra-Leone hostilities. Nigeria under general Babangida, Sani Abacha were bent on sending troops and arms to those war torn areas in spite of the fact that many observers saw it as economic waste. But those leaders wanted to maintain Nigeria foreign policy of good neighborliness and to maintain her status as giant of Africa. This explains the importance of perception and attitudes of each state or its leaders concerning some events in the external environment.

TEST OF HYPOTHESES

The three hypothesis posed in chapter one of this work, would be tested to either prove or disapproved. These hypotheses include;

- (a) Nigerian political leathers spend the country's resources outside Nigeria while their subjects are dying in hunger and starvation.
- (b) The Nigerian political leathers used the Afrocentric nature of Nigeria's foreign policy to boost their individual recognition in the international politic.
- (c) Diversity of culture and religion in Nigeria can never allow the foreign policy dividient research to the grass root.

Having brought into focus the hypothesis to be tested in this segment of the work, the researcher will now proceed to pick and test them, one after the other in order to achieve clarity, rationality and objectivity.

HYPOTHESIS 1

Nigerian political leaders spend the country's resources outside Nigeria while their subject are dying in hunger and starvation. Properly speaking, Nigeria political leaders always plunged themselves into frivolous and unnecessary expenditure (extravagance) for the purpose of their ego boosting and leave nothing to the masses to quench their throats. To put with somewhat differently, the entire parliament of Nigeria from state to the centre, engross themselves in a luxurious, voluptuous indolent governance, without considering the plight of their subjects or the

national interests which is in concordance with every civilized jurisprudence in the world especially in this new era of generational politics where government administers with justice. The worst is that these unconscionable leaders keep on assisting other nations of the world, both human and material resources to the extent grinding political asylum to a leader of other nation without minding whether he is a despotic and at the expenses of this country (Nigeria), while their subjects are ravaging in poverty some people retired to another country because of the appalling conditions of this nation (Nigeria). This is exemplified in new African February, (2012). Kabbah was elected president of Sierra-Leone, the country's first Muslim head of state. He immediately began negotiating peace with the revolutionary united front (RUF) rebels, but in 1997 Kabbah was forced into exile after a bloody military coup, Nigeria troops and Kamajors (civil defence fighters) restored Kabbah to power in 1998. The war officially ended in 2002 Kabbah was re-elected to a second term that expired in 2007. He was woken up at 3am by a Nigerian military commander (from the west African military intervention force, ECOMOG, then based in Freetown), and was taken to Government wharf (the grimy oceanfront celebrated in Graham Greene's *Heart of the Matter*) to board a boat that would take him to a Nigerian warship anchored a few miles away. All these were at the detriment of the nation and economic adversity. What irrational governance. Furthermore, General Gowon (former head of state) is another case study for squandering of Nigerian's resources abroad leaving her subjects in penury. The question here is whether Nigeria money during the regime of Gowon was meant for Afrocentricism or was it meant to help other countries of the world and living her citizens in poor state? According to [6], Gowon's government "gave twenty million dollars to Angola as an outright grant, and a few hundred thousand to countries like Cape Verde, Guyana and Benin. But all those were for special security-related purposes. When we were later inundated by requests for development aid, we channeled them to the African development bank where we had placed a trust fund of \$100 million. Gowon and his Advisers, however, seemed to believe in dramatic personal largesse. The case of Grenada will serve to illustrate this point. For reasons unfathomable by many of us, Gowon decided to pay official visits to two obscure countries in the western hemisphere following the commonwealth conference in Kingstone, Jamaica, early in 1975. In 1972 Nigeria almost dispatched troops of the neighboring republic of Niger to help in forestalling an imminent coup, aimed at overthrowing Gowon's friend, Hamani Diori. I Joseph N. Garba was ordered to assemble this force at Ikeja, and kept them at combat readiness for about a week before the coup threat passed. No one seemed to have thought through the consequences short or long term, of interfering so directly in the internal affairs of a neighbor". According to [18] Brig. Joseph N. Garba, the external affairs commissioner and an exponent of aggressive foreign policy, took the initiative in trying to settle the Kenya-Tanzania and Zaire-Angola disputes; Nigeria provided aid for the poorer members Economic community of West African states in particular the four francophone countries, partly to wean the latter from France. Aid in the cheap gasoline was given to Zambia and other landlocked states... festac 2, postponed twice since 1970, opened in mid-January the staggering cost of about £1,000 million. The festive attracted 80,000 visitors from member's countries of organization of African unity, liberation movements, and black communities all over the world. Though Nigeria is anti-hegemonic counter culture in the process, jeopardize the lives of her citizenry earning both respect and ridicule.

THE NIGERIAN POLITICAL LEADERS USED THE AFROCENTRIC NATURE OF NIGERIA'S FOREIGN POLICY TO BOOST THEIR INDIVIDUAL RECOGNITION IN THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

Ab initio, all the Nigerian statesmen from the first republics inception till the current fourth republic, strictly adhere to the concept (Afrocentricism) which is conversely, the center piece of the Nigerian foreign policy issue as the platform of her foreign policy formulation with the view to promoting their personal official recognition in the international system, instead of harnessing or revitalizing national interests of the country (Nigeria). Ironically, perhaps the Nigerian political leaders would take a stand firmly counter to that of its, unwitting benefactor, providing for African countries and world at large while their subjects were savagery exploited and living in abject poverty. In the words of Uzoma Ahamefula, Vienna, Austria "why did you do that Obasanjo"?... Bakasi peninsular is located at the extreme eastern end of the gulf of Guinea and had been in dispute between Nigeria and Cameroun until 10th of October, 2002, when the international court of justice unjustly ruled that Nigerian should hand over the disputed area to Cameroun. The judgment was condemned both locally and internationally by those that have got conscience. A living member of the Nigerian's legal team and a former Nigeria Attorney General and minister of Justice chief Richard Kinjide condemned the Judgment saying, "this Judgment is a complete fraud, 50% international law and 50% international politics, blatantly biased unfair and a total disaster". How did Obasanjo treat what had been tagged a national disaster? Constitutionally, the national Assembly was supposed to ratify the Green Tree Treaty that gave Bakasi peninsular to Cameroun before the execution but Obasanjo without regard to the feeling and future of the Bakasi people horridly ceded Bakasi to Cameroun in a suspicious manner. Such abuse of power was an impeachable offence which many social commentators wanted the senators to enforce against Obasanjo. However, According to unconfirmed source Obasanjo was dreaded and feared and had intimidated the senators to submission of his ruling era, therefore no senator had had the liver to move such motion in this regard against him because those who had tried to impeach him for his other constitutional flaws and failed were doomed. But as soon as Obasanjo transferred

power to late president Umaru Musa Yaradua on 29 April 2007, approximately six months later the Nigerian senate passed a resolution declaring that the withdrawal of Nigeria from the Bakasi peninsular was illegal. According to [21], A person cant give out something that doesn't belong to him as a gift (Igbo-proverb) a well announced war doesn't kill a lame (Igbo proverb) The fear of death should not be a reason to avoid war (Igbo-proverb) Conscience is merely our own, judgment of the moral rectitude or turpitude of our own (John Lucke). If a child starts learning how to plant tree, the mother will start learning how to cry (Igbo-proverb). The best, way to come to truth being to examine things as really they are, and not to conclude they are, as we fancy of ourselves, or have been thought by others to imagine. (John Lucke). Anybody that wants war immediately should bring out his first son to lead it. (Igbo-proverb.) Men in general judge more from appearance than from reality. All men have eyes but few have the gift of penetration (Machiavelli.) Frowning it face doesn't stop the sale of the he goat (Igbo-proverb).

ADVANCEMENT

The senate on Thursday rejected the transfer of oil rich Bakasi peninsular to Cameroun by the administration of former president Olusegun Obasanjo. The senate said the decision by Obasanjo to sign the August 14, 2006 Green Tree Agreement ceding the area to Cameroun, was unilateral and contrary to section 12 (1) Section of the 1999 constitution. The senate has point here, they re right, but, they should be very careful as Bakasi issue is such a delicate case that must be handled with care. Any wrong decision again on that peninsular might have chain reactions that no body envisaged of and it might not be all that easy for Nigeria to chain, back that territory. Coil-heads should reign and honorable senators should weigh their resolution against all odds before making any further move(s) on the issue. That issue wreak havoc if not well handled. Obasanjo made an error of judgment by the rush hand-over of the peninsular to Cameroun, but he should take the blame alone Obasanjo was mere selfish by the j hand-over, because, his predecessors have all avoided the Bakasi issue like plague, even he Him himself, the time he was the, head of state from 1976-1979, refused to give away, the territory. In as much as Obasanjo gave Bakasi peninsular away, he was not the person that signed it away in the first instance. The whole buck stops at the door step of Yakubu Gowon. Gowon signed away Bakasi peninsular many years before Obasanjo let it go. Bakasi in the gulf of Guinea an area which contains about 10% of the world's Oil and Gas Reserves. It is also rich in fish and marine life. The peninsular has been administered by Nigeria since independence from Britain in 1960 and will finally go over to Cameroun's administration in 2008. The question becomes: why did Obasanjo horridly surrender Bakasi. After the international court of Justice's ruling against Nigeria? Even Gowon that signed away Bakasi in the first instance during the war to score cheap military victory against the Igbo's started dragging his feet against the agreement immediately after the war, started moving away from the agreement having discovered lately then that he made wrong political calculation unimaginable consequences. He was deceived any way into signing away that chunk of land by Igbo haters who were in his government then. He was going through the mental torture and moral dilemma of that wrong decision before he was overthrown. All the successive governments after him had Bakasi issue to grapple with and none wanted to seen as the person that gave Nigeria territory away. It is ironic that Obasanjo disobeyed some court rulings in Nigeria but decided to obey the ruling of international court of justice at Hague, thereby given away Bakasi to Cameroun without first conducting plebiscite on this issue and without the approval of the national assembly. Why did Obasanjo give up on bakasi in a jiffy? France, Germany and Britain played on Obasanjo's intelligent by selling to him the idea that if he gives up on Bakasi he will be awarded the noble peace prize and the dummy bought that idea into to because, he was all about to win the prize. Bakasi was hurriedly given away without the national assembly's blessing or plebiscite, conducted to know the opinions of the Bakasi people as they are the people that bearing much of the brunt of that decision. Obasanjo was only out to win the noble peace prize and anything else matters loss. My people say that (temptation comes to one through what he or she loves most). The western countries understand Obasanjo well as a man that is honour drunk they used "one of the insiders" in his administration to sell to him the Idea of peace prize going to him if he hands over Bakasi to Cameroun as the citation during the award of the noble peace prize to him will include among other things that he "Obasanjo averted a war between Cameroun and Nigeria by handling over Bakasi peninsular to Cameroun", thereby avoiding the shade of innocent bloods. Obasanjo jump at that, he was tricked. The international court of justice ruling in favour of Cameroun shouldn't have been a factor here. The ICJ and its ruling are not binding on any country. If a country chooses, it can ignore the ICJ and its rulings; it is a toothless bull-dog. United State, Britain, Israel and host of other countries have at one time or the other ignored the ICT'S ruling without any penalty paid for that, why should Nigeria rush and obey the ICJ's ruling against the wishes and aspirations of the indigenous people of Bakasi in particular and Nigeria in general? It was shameful to honour the ICJ's ruling while ignoring what our constitution says. That shows that the ruling elite have no respect for our laws.

DIVERSITY OF CULTURE AND RELIGION IN NIGERIA CANNEVER ALLOW THE FOREIGN POLICY DIVIDENT REACH TO THE GRASS ROOT

Nigeria with more than 250 ethnic groups and their different culture and their different culture and religion has suffered a lot in protecting the affinities of these groups. Nigeria had her worst foreign policy or international relations during the regime of General Sani Abacha. The remote course of this was as a result of Ethno-religious

quest; to protect the interest of Northern part of Nigeria and promote Islamism. That was why he intended to Islamize the country (Nigeria) before the Almighty death wiped him out of the face of the earth. It is this Ethno-religious quest that every past Nigerian president has exhibited in one way or the other. Nigeria is like a goat generally own but always starves by the owner; this is a result of diversity of culture and religion. No human feelings in the discharge of duties by our political leaders because they thing their subjects visitors instead of brothers and sisters. They prefer taking other African countries as their brothers and sisters that is why Afrocentricism. Another case study here was that of Babangida, Shenokan and Abacha after the annulment of June 12 election by IBB and, cunningly, placed Shenokan as the interim- president to be driven away by his brother Abacha thereby making nonsense of c: Nigeria we used to term ourselves. Most at times, we are the architect of our problems; our leaders sometime impose a reform that will be at our detriment. [10], in his article, "made us to know that the problem with our foreign policy and any other domestic problem cannot be attributed only to the leadership, but as the followers are great contributors to the over-all achievements and failures that Nigeria has recorded. Please recall again, the public call for-Abacha, which when carefully retrospectively pondered was the intended product of annulment of presidential election of June 12, 1993. This was preceded that retention of the general as minister of defense and enabling Decree that was horridly signed by IBB on August 26th before he left office. Though could not remember the exact wording of the Decree, the important message was that Chief Earnest Shenokan (head of interim government) would vacate the place for the senior ministers which was later rationalized to be Abacha based on the seating arrangement in the cabinet chambers. Agreeably that it was wrong to the collective intelligence of Nigerians, he crafting and successful execution of the grand design of installing the probably most infamous of these leaders at this point in the Nigerian history presents a particular genius for which the military rulership and their civilian collaborators at this period in Nigeria excel. I must clearly state that I do not glorify the military coups, but I am inclined to appreciate "effective strategy" whenever I found one. For instance, even in defeat by the west European after World War I, the late Ataturk, president of Turkey magnanimously believed that was their superiority that fetched the success and he so declared that Turkish people should dress like the Europeans (suits) to different them from Arabs. I believe there are some lessons to learn from the military strategy of managing emergency of leaders in Nigeria including president Obasanjo.

It goes further that perhaps if we Nigerians could possibly utilize our God's giving intelligence surely our country will develop greatly, and utilization that makes Nigerians to shine productively when they find themselves outside the country together. In a quick digression, could we ask whether Nigeria social-cultural environment affects the average achievements of the citizen compared to the citizens Achievements in foreign lass? What special characteristic do we acquire in Nigeria society that makes the average Nigerian perform better in foreign land? Clarifying my submissions on the emergence of Abacha, the Nigerian public especially the south- western political epicenter with all their intelligential consciously played into the waiting hand of the perceived savior, Abacha, whose at surreptitious agenda was progressing like pregnancy fathered disguisedly by a Yoruba, general "Dya and eventually gave birth to a child of circumstance on ember, 1993, this is a true situation of the manipulation of public conscience effective suggestions to the inferiorly intelligent crowd (followers) to attend inordinate interest of cabal that eventually determine the course of domestic foreign policies of Nigeria for five years. The US government considers ta relationship with Nigeria, African's producer of oil and it's second largest economy, to be among the most important on the continent, Nigeria is African's most populous country with more than hundred and seventy million people, roughly divided between Moslems and Christians. US diplomatic relations with Nigeria which is regularly among the third suppliers of US oil import, have improved since the country made the transition from military to civilian rule in 1999, and Nigeria is a major recipients of US foreign aid. The country is an influential actor in Africa politics, having mediated disputes in several African countries and ranking the top five troop contributors to UN peace keeping missions. Nigeria is a country of significance promise, but it also faces serious social economic, and security challenges that have the potential to threaten both states and regional security and to affect global oil crisis the country has faced intermittent political turmoil and economic crisis since independent, political life has been scarred by conflict along ethnic, geography and religious fines and corruption and mis-rule have undermined the state's authority and legitimacy. Despite extensive oil and natural gas resources, Nigeria's human development indicator are among the world's lowest, and the majority of the population faces extreme poverty... Boko Haram has increasingly targeted churches, among other states and civilian targets, sometimes triggering and threatening to influence religious tension. While the group remains primarily focused on a domestic agenda, some its members appears. To have expanded ties with other violent Islamist group, including Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Marghred (AQIM.) A Boko Haram splinter group, Ansaru, appears intent on Kidnapping foreigners, The state department designated both Boko Haram and Ansaruas foreign terrorist organizations (FTOs), in November, 2013". Conclusively, because of insecurity coursed by the Boko Haram sect in Nigeria, foreign investors like the multinational companies (MNCs) have the country as a grave yard where you will no only be killed but also buried instantly by the unfriendly bomb of the Boko Haram. This act consequently withdraws foreign investors from Nigeria and further scares the incoming ones. Because of diversity of culture and religion, the foreign affairs ministry

has been politicized and this is as a result of lack of checks and balances. Games theory as effective foreign decision making approach is longer to be found in Nigerian context which has to do with sacrifices by the opposite country. But bribery and corruption including lobbying from this opposing country to our decision makers who have neglected the integrity, development and security of this Nation because of their ethno-religious negativity have made them think only about themselves and families.

CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this work is to explore the in-depth knowledge of National interests of Nigeria and her citizenry at foreign policy formulation and to investigate her foreign policy particularly in West Africa. To put it bare, attempt has been made in this work and I have discovered that all facets of Nigerian foreign policy as regards her Domestic relation have led to budgetary constraint concomitantly with the negligence of the core (National interests) and embrace periphery which has to do with other countries interests. Decades, a number of factors have served to sustain the linkages between the "core" and the "periphery" usually to the detriment of the former. For... example the emergency of the lost privilege and inherent inequity, ethno- religious differences ethnic agenda federal character, and selfish interest of our political leaders who took wrong decision of foreign policy process etc, compounded by the country's economic decline in the past brought a turning point (problems), worsened by the ex-presidents in the persons of General Yakuba Gowon and President Olusegun Obasanjo. For instance, [7], Gowon's government "gave twenty million dollars to Angola as an outright grant, and a few hundred thousand to countries like cape Verde, Guyana, and Benin" while their subjects are ravaging in poverty Thus, Obasanjo in his ill- motive, conceded Bakasi to Cameroun as a result of Afrocentricism (the center piece of Nigeria foreign policy), which brought embitterment to Domestic relations. As a matter of fact, President Obasanjo did that because he wanted to achieve the noble piece prize for his personal aggrandizement and accumulation of wealth without first conducting plebiscite on this issue and without the approval of he national Assembly. He also used human and material resources of the country (Nigeria) to wage war in Liberia Le (ECOMOG) for the purpose of peace keeping in the process creating economic adversity in Nigeria. The resulting economic slump has angered finger-posting among patriotic citizen. According to the [5], as noted by [10], wittingly or unwittingly, Nigeria had produced a negative verdict against herself, awarding the Bakasi Peninsular to Cameroun long before the ICJ ruling of 2002. Long term national interest was sacrificed for short-term partly gains a triumph of parochialism over patriotism. Interesting in Asobie's findings are basic truths that are relevant to this paper. It is not necessarily national interest and consideration of Nigerian people's welfare. "rather bureaucratic politics, driven by selfish or organizational interest, that drives Nigeria's foreign policy" [10] Hence, Nigeria earning respect outside particularly west-African countries and ridicule herself at home.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I recommend that our foreign policy makers should consider the interest of their citizens when making foreign policy. Let it be that they put it in practice that national interest is the core interest of any foreign policy formulation, not just by saying, but by doing it. Formulation of foreign policy in Nigeria should not just be the work of the political elite, Nigerian pupils like; Students Unions, Market Association, Pressure Groups f all kinds, political parties and even artisans should be included with the view to making popular foreign policy that would represent the interest of Nigeria as a hole. Nigeria leaders should reduce the way they spend our resources and also the way hey waste the life of out soldiers in the name of Afrocentricism. They should concentrate more on using such resources to better the lot of Nigerian citizens.

REFERENCES

1. Asogwa, F. (2009).Anatomy of foreign policy, Enugu-Nigeria. John-Jocab's Class Publication Ltd.
2. Anthony, et al (2007). International Politics a Contemporary Perspective. Enugu Nigeria Zik Chuks Press.
3. Adeed, *et al.*, (1995) "The Making of Foreign Policy in Russia and The New States of EURASIA, United States of America. M.E Sharpe, Inc.
4. Deutsch, K.W. (1968).The Analysis of International Relations. Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs.
5. International journal of academic research in Business and in social sciences January 2013, vol. 3, no.1ISSN:2222-6990565 www.hrmar.com/journals over-view of national interest; continuities and flaws in Nigerian foreign policy
6. Helen, E. (2001/2002).Annual Editions world politics 01/02. United States of America. Mc Graw, Hill Coy.
7. Obi, E (2006) Basic Concepts and Theories of International Relations. Onitsha. Bookprint ltd.
8. Catlin GEG. Political Science: A Philosophical Analysis. By Vernon Van Dyke. (Stanford University Press, 1960, pp. xi+235, \$5.00.). *American Political Science Review*. 1961;55(1):154-155. doi:10.1017/S0003055400124438
9. Gauda, O.P (2003) "Am introduction to political theory (4t Ed.) Delhi Macmillan Indian Ltd.
10. Asobie, H.A (1990) "Decision making models revisited: an analysis of he Application of theories and models of foreign decision making to he study of Nigeria's foreign policy" in Olusanya, G.O
11. Obi, *et al.*, (2005:267) State and Economy, Nigeria Book Ltd.

12. Chandra, P. (1986) International Politics. New Delhi: Vikas publishing houses. Deutsch K.W (1963) the nerves of government New York: the free press of Glencoe.
13. Appadorai, A. (1975). The Substance of Politics. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
14. Gregory *et al.*, (2004:35.) 21 Debated issues in world politics, second Edition, United States of America. Pearson Education, Inc. Joe, G, (1987:11-12) Diplomatic Soldiering. Nigeria Spectrum Books Ltd.
15. Chikendu, P.N. (1998:1) Theoretical and methodological issues in the study of political leadership" ESUT Journal of social sciences and Humanities vol. No. 2.
16. Osnyder R, Bruck, J and Sapin, B,(1962) Foreign Policy Decision Making an Approach to the Study of International Politics. New York: the free press of Glencoe, Hadiya(www.ganiji.com/article9000/news9139.htm).
17. Adebimpe Onifade, Ph.D (2002.) Thoughts, on Domestic Issues Imparting on Nigeria foreign policy, E-mail, New York, USA.
18. Appadorai, (1974:24-25). The Substance of Politics India, Manzer Khan, Oxford University Press.
19. New African (2012.) The best selling Pan-African magazine. ANIC Publication. Encyclopedia Britannica (1978), USA. Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc.
20. Tempo Chima Ubochi (2007) Ubocho @Yahoo.com Bonn, Germany Nigeria, World. Feature article ceding of Bakasi Peninsular.
21. Mohammed Aly Sergie, and Toni Johnson, Akintunde Akinleye/Courtesy Reuters (2014.) Nigeria: Current Issue and US policy. Lauren Ploth Specialist in African Affairs. November 15, 2013.

CITE AS: Stephen Ogbodo (2024). National Interest as an Imaginary Concept: An Evaluation of Nigerian Foreign Policy Implementation. Research Output Journal of Arts and Management 3(3):102-117.