



**Relationship between National Interest  
and Global Interest in Foreign Policy of  
a State**

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## Abstract

International socialization has undeniably reshaped international relations. Similarly, the internationalization of national interests and national politics cannot be discounted. The national and global interests are readily distinct notions since both elements play a key role in developing external policy. Thus this paper examined the relationship between national interest and global interest in the foreign policy of a State. The study will take an all encompassing view of national interest and foreign approach. It will examine a state's national interest and her Afro centric foreign policy. Consideration will be paid to those techniques put in place for the accomplishment of a state's national interest. The paper utilized secondary data sourced from the internet, journals, magazines, newspapers and the internet. The paper argued vehemently that foreign policy is "primarily generated within states and that the influence of global interest forms the basis of national interest, overshadowing but not discounting the remaining elements. The paper concluded that the correlation between national and global interest areas is of great strength.

**Keyword:** *Diplomacy, foreign policy, global interest, interest, state.*

## **Introduction**

All countries, big or little, must establish their foreign policies on the foundation of national interests. A country's foreign policy must be well-defined and well-considered in order for it to interact successfully and profitably with others. States do not advance their national interests by becoming self-centred. In today's world, where the world is a global village, states can no longer afford to ignore the rest of the world. As a result, states look beyond their borders and consider other important factors to their national interests economically, socially, and politically. As a result, this study examines the connection between national and global interests in a country's foreign policy

This paper will examine the relationship between national interest and global interest in foreign policy of states. The study conceptualized foreign policy, national interest, diplomacy and national interest. The study will take a view of national interest and foreign policy. It will examine a state's national interest and her Afrocentric foreign policy. Attention will be paid to those strategies put in place for the achievement of national interest.

## **Conceptual Clarification Foreign Policy**

This work describes a foreign policy in terms of its relative importance; it is utilized in this article to illustrate the driving force behind Nigeria's interactions with other countries. It may be summarized as a state's proclaimed aims.

## **National Interest**

The term "national interest" is used to describe the motivations driving Nigeria's international relations. The nation's international policy is guided by principles and goals that the government intends to achieve in its interactions with other nations.

Hence, national interest is defined as the sum of the interests of all groups in a particular state.

## **Diplomacy**

Diplomacy is the primary means of foreign policy; it has existed throughout history, from the ancient Greeks to African tribal systems. These have utilised diplomacy to resolve disagreements and defuse possible wars. Negotiation is used in diplomacy to regulate state relations. It is arguably the most visible weapon accessible to players in foreign policy for resolving conflicts. Diplomats in foreign offices and ministries frequently urge that diplomatic means should be exhausted before resorting to war. Concessions with enemies should avoid confrontation (Mansbach, Rafferty, Mansbach, Rafferty, Mansbach, Rafferty (Mansbach, Rafferty, cited in UK Essays, 2015). Emerging nations with little resources rely on their UN representative to meet and discuss concerns with other UN ambassadors from across the world in New York. While affluent nations, such as the United States, designate ambassadors to represent their interests almost anywhere globally, impoverished countries with little resources rely on their UN ambassadors to meet and debate concerns with other UN ambassadors from across the world in New York. Diplomats come and go throughout time, but governments retain diplomatic missions around the world. Diplomats' job is to evaluate their country's aims in light of its current and potential power and analyze the objectives of other countries in light of their might. Diplomats must also determine if their country's goals are consistent with those of other countries and then decide whether to pursue their goals by persuasion, compromise, or force. (UK Essays, 2015, citing Mansbach & Rafferty.)

## **The Concept of Foreign Policy**

The idea of foreign policy has no universally accepted definition. It is due to the

numerous definitions offered by various international relations experts. As a result, no one has developed a generally acceptable definition of the idea, according to Aluko (1981), and the chances of someone doing so are quite small. This study will look at a few definitions of foreign policy, regardless of how many there are. According to Folarin (2014), foreign policy is a "wedding ring" with which a nation's internal context solemnises its relationship with the worldwide community. Northedge, as quoted by Ajayi, Njoaguani, Olorunyomi, and Folarin (2015), defines foreign policy as the use of political clout to persuade other nations to exercise their law-making authority in the way that the states involved wish. It results from a conflict between troops operating on both sides of the country's boundaries and those operating within them (cited in Oviasogie & Shodipo, 2013).

Akinboye (1999) describes foreign policy as a dynamic process including the interaction between the internal and external contexts, which is similar to the previous description. Morgenthau (1989), on the other hand, links a country's foreign policy aims to what he refers to as national interest, which serves as a guide to foreign policy formation. In conclusion, and based on the various definitions of the foreign policy provided above, one may say that foreign policy is a state's attitude toward the international environment. It means that the state considers its aims, interests, ambitions, and difficulties and the objectives, interests, aspirations, and issues of other states. As a result, without adopting national interest as a guide, no nation can have a real guide as to what to do, not to do and what it has to accomplish in foreign policy.

### **National Interest**

To comprehend the idea of national interest, we must first comprehend the meaning of interest. According to Marchall, quoted in Ajayi et al. (2015), Interests relate to everything that adds to an individual's overall well-being or achievement of a goal. On

the other hand, Thomas Hobbes links self-preservation with interest, a viewpoint rooted in a materialist theory of human nature. According to this viewpoint, self-preservation is the fundamental motivation of all human behaviours regarding other humans. Since the formation of nation-states, statesmen and intellectuals have used the phrase "national interest" to define the aspirations and aims of sovereign entities in the international arena (Neuchterlein, 1976). Neuchterlein (1976) defined national interest as a sovereign state with perceived wants and desires regarding other sovereign states in the external environment. National interest, according to Rosati quoted in Ajayi et al. (2015), may be seen as the ideal aims on which a state's internal and international policies are based.

### **The Relationship between National Interest and Global Interest in Foreign Policy of States**

The impact of domestic culture, with a significant emphasis on social groupings and social attitudes within nations, is frequently connected to the relationship between national interest and foreign policy (Hill, 2003). South Africa was marked by racial conflict throughout the twentieth century, with apartheid revealing the white minority's intrinsic bigotry. However, South Africa's domestic suppression of black civil rights was overlooked in its foreign policy structure. Measures to boost the country's economy were carried out through trade deals with black African countries (Hill, 2003). The domestic and international policy can be differentiated as two distinct ideas in International Relations since a state does not have a consistent set of aims. It was believed in the best interests of South Africa to retain elite social institutions, but economic power was required to assure stability. However, the realities of global society, particularly worries about human rights and morality, made it difficult to separate the two notions. Apartheid was widely denounced internationally, and as a result, the lines between the states are

internal and foreign policies blurred. External forces did not want to relate with a historically doomed structure (Hill, 2003:227).

International factors, it might be argued, have a critical role in shaping foreign policy. If the world community agrees on a certain problem, a state is under pressure to adapt in the same way; otherwise, whatever foreign ambitions it may have would be thwarted by external forces. For example, Zimbabwe's lack of the rule of law and the country's human rights violations have led to several economic penalties, including those levied by the European Union in 2002. (BBC, 2002). Zimbabwe's international agenda is restricted, and its domestic and foreign policy framework is confused amid social turmoil and disagreement. Problematic domestic culture reflects on the government's image, overshadowing both internal and exterior operations; as a result, the elite's capacity to build its image and ideology in domestic and international affairs is harmed. Perhaps it can be inferred that the home role imposes "constraints on foreign policymakers," a view that is also popular in industrialised countries (Hill, 2003). The interests of French farmers stifle any desire by the Paris government to reform the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy (Hill, 2003); losing the support of such a powerful group would have disastrous consequences for the French economy, not to mention a reduction in France's international

Similarly, an Irish vote on the Lisbon Treaty in 2008 yielded a resounding "No," with Irish residents thinking Europe had lost touch with domestic concerns (The Times, 2008). The link between national interest and international affairs is clear here; national interest serves as a link between elected officials and the people they represent. It prevents the political elite from becoming disconnected from society and reduces external factors (i.e. other countries) on foreign policy formulation.

Another important element is how, like its domestic counterpart, the international sphere

results from continuity and sustainability despite "the vagaries of political politics" (Hill, 2003). Throughout the United States, in the twentieth and early twenty-first century, conflicting views on foreign policy were visible, with conflicts like Vietnam and Iraq being carried out by both Republican and Democratic administrations. In terms of domestic principles, despite swings in the two-party system, individuality, accountability, and self-determination continue to thrive in American culture. It is due to hegemonic class structures inside governments that influence policy formulation (Hill, 2003). The middle class, which makes up 47 percent of the population and primarily comprises professionals, craftspeople, and managers, is America's greatest socioeconomic stratum. They value private enterprise but favour government involvement when required (Thompson & Hickey, 2007).

The policy agenda is shaped by class, which shapes the formation of ideas and values inside government. In terms of domestic policy, President Barack Obama's current healthcare proposal exemplifies this, establishing basic healthcare for all Americans but still enabling private health insurance to continue to be a viable alternative. In the case of US foreign policy, the same may be stated. The intervention has long been viewed with mistrust in American society, as seen by the country's isolationism in the 1930s and Congress's refusal to join the League of Nations in 1919. According to Noam Chomsky, governments must persuade their citizens that conflictual behaviour is important, which they often do through the media (Chomsky, 2006). The fear of WMDs was intended to elicit frenzy among the American people, making the invasion of Iraq appear to be the only option (Chomsky, 2006:92). In terms of political expediency, there is little difference between foreign and domestic policy. The techniques used by politicians in democratic nations sustain the function of an interventionist government. At the same time, they are legitimizing it by protecting realms of individuality and the common good.

However, it should be recognized that international dynamics, particularly the function of

international institutions and global economic policy, impact national interests. The Maastricht Treaty (1992) have produced shared foreign and security values inside the European Union.

All member nations must adhere to the Treaty's agenda; desires to promote international cooperation and protect human rights are the foundations of the Treaty's agenda and unavoidably set the framework for countries involver's foreign agenda (Evans, 2009). It is hard to overlook the involvement of international players in the formation of foreign policy in several states, such as the United Kingdom, where European law is put above British law (as created by the European Communities Act of 1972). Similarly, the role of globalization in the international community must be taken into account. The migration of multinational companies (MNCs) throughout the world, frequently using labour in emerging countries while keeping their business structures in wealthy countries, refutes the notion that states operate in full anarchy. The behaviour of the state in the international arena can no longer be entirely isolationist; in order to exist economically, foreign relations must be expanded to nations all over the world, allowing for an organized and efficient flow of products and services. Global institutionalism plays a key role in current global society and state behaviour in modern international relations. The link between the domestic and foreign policy is separate.

## **Conclusion**

Finally, although separated, the relationship between national and global interests is an enormous strength. Politicians rule on a common level of populism. In doing so, they play on a subset of values in connection to their state; nationalist and religious embodiments may be found in both policy domains. Domestic culture, whether through domestic atrocities or homogenised class structures, imposes significant constraints on governments and serves as a check on their activities. Despite this, the role of globalisation and international institutions



continues to affect foreign external relations, restricting ideas of state sovereignty and isolationism and ensuring international cooperation.

## **Recommendations**

- i Existing international institutions and institutional capacities should be strengthened; • Organisations, procedures, and tools (including new ones, if necessary) should be easily available both locally and globally for addressing contemporary global issues.
- ii It is important to promote global innovation and exchange best practices in dealing with public concerns.
- iii Leaders with a global outlook should be nurtured;
- iv Globalization should be reflected in teaching, research, and lessons learnt.

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