

**NIGERIA'S AFROCENTRIC FOREIGN
POLICY: AN APPRAISAL OF
RECIPROCITY DYNAMICS****SUNNY MENE PIATE**

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ABSTRACT

The study evaluates Nigeria's Afrocentric Foreign Policy emphasis and its dynamics of reciprocity by investigating whether the dissatisfaction with the policy is due to its lack of a solid foundation in reciprocity principles. Although the policy initiative has achieved certain milestones, including the elimination of colonialism and apartheid in Africa, the expansion of Nigeria's diplomatic presence, global acknowledgement, and significant influence in international organisations, as well as being the preferred nation for resolving African conflicts, it has concurrently depleted its developmental resources and failed to optimise its objectives in the context of economic and industrial advancement. An initial examination of Nigeria's Afrocentric foreign policy indicates a prioritisation of national prestige over more critical objectives, such as achieving firm economic targets that could lead to enhanced economic opportunities and prosperity for both the populace and the Nigerian State. The adverse consequence of this is that Nigeria's ephemeral perception of a leadership role in Africa cannot be validated or recognised by recipient African nations, despite its contributions. The theoretical elucidation of the discourse is political realism. The theory's relevance in the research lies in the assertion that nations in international relations are perpetually driven by their national interests, which they can only achieve by enhancing their national strength in respect to other states. The study's findings indicated that Nigeria's Africa-centered foreign policy did not arise from a strategic decision based on the nation's fundamental interests, but rather was a consequence of the significant influence of major Western powers, primarily Britain and the United States, within the framework of their Cold War priorities in Africa and their global containment strategy against the Soviet Union and communist expansion beyond Eastern Europe. The reason the reciprocity dynamics seem to adversely affect Nigeria is due to Nigeria's power position and the significant influence of other players in the international system throughout Africa. The study advised that Nigeria's Afrocentric foreign policy should adopt a more inward orientation, focussing on enhancing national development by stimulating the domestic economy, generating employment, and ultimately decreasing unemployment rates.

I. INTRODUCTION

Foreign policy is the externalization of domestic needs cum interest (Piate, 2013). It is the interaction of internal and exterior as well as the projection abroad of domestic politics. That activity of state towards its external environment or self-interest; strategy selected by state to defend its national interest in order to attain its aims in the international arena. It is that conscious conduct of a nation state towards the external environment or collection of domestic reactions to external stimuli. The impulses emerge from the structure and dynamics of the international system, while the reaction is moulded by the factors in the domestic environment, including importantly, the perceptual prisms of the policy-makers. It is that instrumentality via which governments strive to influence in the international arena in order to reach those aims that are in consonance with their considered national

interest (Piate and Eminue, 2022). It is a nation's reaction to the current strategic environment, reflecting the government's judgment on what is required and achievable in pursuit of the national interest (Ogomudia, 2005). Afrocentric foreign policy push is a diplomatic style that focusses Africa and its interests in a nation's international relations. It aims to raise Africa's profile on the international stage, encourages African governments to work together, and promotes African solutions to African issues. Supporting economic growth and integration throughout the continent, encouraging cultural interaction and understanding, and fighting for the rights and self-determination of African peoples are all part of it. When Nigeria first gained her political independence in 1960, she made an effort to prove to the world that she would be the ideal leader for Africa. Many matters pertaining to Africa's advancement and development have been taken up by the nation. With her massive population, vast economy, and towering stature, Nigeria weighed in on the hegemonic issue in Africa and beyond. Its foreign policy included all of these endeavours. The focus of Nigeria's foreign policy shifted to Africa very rapidly. Obasanjo (2001) echoes this sentiment, arguing that Africa would inherently continue to be the focal point of Nigeria's foreign policy and a platform for the country's leadership abilities so long as the continent is home to Nigeria's economic and security concerns. In a similar vein, he said that Nigeria's obvious national endowments—its size, population, human capital, and natural resources—have always doomed the country to a prominent position in Africa. He said that the way Nigeria handled the Congo issue, its role in forming the Organisation of African Unity, its prohibition on atomic testing in the Sahara, its anti-apartheid campaign, and its participation in UN peacekeeping were all evidence of these efforts. According to Saliu (2005), the desire for a regional hegemonic role, the country's relatively better resource profile, the country's location, the fact that its population is still the highest in Africa, and global pressures requiring the country to lead in Africa are all factors that have contributed to the unanimous resolve of successive regimes and administrations to focus much more on African issues. In his view, the country's efforts to project an African-centered foreign policy included the following: the provision of loans, grants, technical support, joint ventures, and the role of representative for Africa at the global Fora. In a nutshell, he listed some of the accomplishments as follows: the end of apartheid and colonialism in Africa; the growth of Nigeria's diplomatic sphere; the fact that Nigeria is an African leader has helped it forge relationships with other nations; the country's prominence as a peacekeeping force; its influence within international organisations like the African Union and ECOWAS; and its status as the go-to nation for settling African conflicts. Being the most populous Black country in the world may have forced Nigeria to shoulder, wittingly or unwittingly, the leadership of the Black world; this is just one of several factors that have shaped her foreign policy since independence. Because of this, Nigeria began to feel a sense of duty towards causes beyond her boundaries. According to Ornelle (2004) and Osuntokun (2005), some might argue that it is beyond her means.

But Ate (2011) argued that when Nigeria gained independence, she was really serving as an adjunct leader for the West since she lacked the resources to support her leadership ambitions. He believed that the idea of an Africa-centered foreign policy in Nigeria was not based on the country's fundamental interests but rather on the tremendous influence of the major western powers, especially the US and Britain, during the cold war. This influence was part of the US's global containment strategy against the Soviet Union and the spread of Communism outside of Eastern Europe. Similarly, Ate said that the subsequent regional (i.e., African) alliance between Nigeria and the West persisted up to the start of the Nigerian civil war and subsequent shifts in the country's political and economic landscape. That is, the Federal Government had asked for military aid to quell the Biafran uprising in the country's eastern region, but its western allies had shockingly declined to send it, and, more importantly, post-war Nigeria was flush with oil money. The pressure on Nigerian governments to comply with western demands in bilateral and regional relations subsided when they realised they could implement their national development plans without the financial support of the West. In a nutshell, he said that Nigerian leaders have institutionalised the Africa-centeredness syndrome due to their focus on regional issues (such as political liberation, peacekeeping missions, and conflict resolution) rather than the development benefits to the country's economy that result from foreign policy decisions. That is to say, in the model of Malaysia, India, and China, the necessity to transform the national economy was never originally associated with foreign policy initiatives, and the fact that weak domestic economic capacity was never seen as a fundamental limitation on such initiatives. Underdevelopment, corruption, poverty, and poor governance persisted as a result of a foreign policy that prioritised Africa. Consequently, following a number of years of independence, the Nigerian political leadership's track record in foreign policy was determined to be anti-

development. This perspective exemplifies the Afrocentric foreign policy thrust of Nigeria, which is rooted in the misery-story school of thought. It goes against the grain of what the political leaders in Nigeria had in mind when they crafted the country's lofty African agenda, which squanders development funds without accomplishing everything that the country's leaders had hoped for in terms of economic and industrial progress. Even a quick review of Nigeria's Afrocentric foreign policy thrusts shows that the country's pride seems to be more important than achieving concrete economic goals that would benefit the Nigerian people and the country as a whole. Unfortunately, this means that recipient African nations will never recognise or validate Nigeria's precarious leadership position in Africa, no matter how much she sacrifices. It would appear that Nigeria's attempts to centre her foreign policy on Africa since gaining independence have been fruitless. For all the money and people that Nigeria has spent to secure the independence of her fellow African nations and the establishment of peace on the continent, the vast majority of those nations have returned the favour with animosity. From independence until the latter half of Babangida's presidency, each of Nigeria's administrations had pledged to do their share in freeing Africa, particularly Southern Africa, from colonialism and racism. Tragically, Nigerians residing in South Africa are often victims of violent xenophobic assaults, which result in the loss of life and extensive property damage. More than sixty (60) people were killed, thousands were displaced, and their shops were looted during the xenophobic attack in South Africa, which Akubar (2021) pointed out was targeted at Nigerians. The victims lost over 4.6 million Rand (N84 million), had their properties marked out for destruction, and faced horrific displacement. This also was the situation in 2012, when Ghana slapped foreign businesses, predominantly Nigeria with a \$300,000 (N64 million) company setup charge and reportedly ordered those who could not pay packing. It got much more humiliating when efforts by the Nigerian government to intercede via diplomatic methods were refused down.

In West African nations where Nigeria spent a lot of money to bring stability back, the same thing happens to Nigerians. Despite Nigeria's Good Neighborlines Policy and the material and financial donations received from Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and the Benin Republic during the Gowon administration, these countries are now utilising their borders and bases for criminal activity and militants who are continually terrorising Nigeria and her people. Many West African nations, particularly those in the francophone subregion, hold the Nigerian people with contempt, seeing them as foreign invaders and domestic imperialists. First and foremost, the majority of African nations see Nigeria's rising profile in global affairs as a danger to their own interests and very existence. Hostility and unfavourable attitudes against Nigeria, her population, and her interests have frequently grown as a result of this predicament. If Nigeria wants to link its foreign policy to tangible rewards, it should follow the lead of the West, particularly the United States. Free passage via the Suez Canal is a key component of US-Egypt ties, and oil is essential to US foreign policy in the Middle East. Also, Russia's strategic goals in getting involved in the Syrian crisis include preventing the rebels from toppling self-exiled president Assad and re-establishing Russia as a dominant force in the Middle East, a position it lost after the Cold War when the Soviet Union collapsed. In this light, the research asks whether the lack of a commitment to reciprocity was the root reason of the criticism levelled at Nigeria's Afrocentric foreign policy push. How much of an impact Nigeria's assistance had on the events that unfolded in the countries that received it, and why, therefore, those nations did not recognise or appreciate it?

Theoretical Explication of the Discourse

For its topic analysis, the research used political realism, often called the Power Approach. One school of thinking that frames international relations through the lens of power dynamics is known as the power approach. Classical thinkers such as Machiavelli, Thucydides, Hobbes, and Hans Morgenthau provide credence to realist traditions as the conventional wisdom about the study of international relations through the prism of national interests. Their primary goal in international relations politics is to gain power. The two main premises upon which it is based are the fallibility of humans and the international system's inherent anarchy. Because there are no strong enforcement mechanisms in the current international system, every state is always trying to amass more and more power. Updating its armament on a regular basis is crucial for maintaining its existence and achieving national interests. According to this view, the possession of power may serve as either a deterrent or a means of real deployment in protecting national interests. A country's foreign policy reflects its internal policies. In this way, a nation's foreign policy serves to both advance and protect its national interests. However, countries are always seeking methods to strengthen their power position in

relation to each other in order to guarantee the utmost protection of their national interests. This matters because, in international relations, each nation acts in its own self-interest, meaning that one country's success may come at the expense of another. The effectiveness of such manipulation is dependent on the national might of the country in question. The position of a nation in global politics is determined by its capabilities. Its capacity to accomplish its foreign policy goals is directly related to the way it combines its many skills. A reevaluating and realigning foreign policy goal is necessary when a country's international vision and assumed responsibilities have a detrimental effect on internal matters. According to the idea, states' national interests are paramount in international relations, and they can only advance these interests by strengthening their national power in comparison to other nations.

Nigeria's Afrocentric Foreign Policy-cum-Reciprocity Dynamics

The African center-piece approach has been a recurring issue in analyses of Nigeria's foreign policy. After Nigeria gained its independence in 1960, it was chosen for certain reasons. The nation's comparatively stronger resource profile, geographical reasons, the country's population, which is still the highest in Africa, global pressures demanding the country to lead in Africa, and, of course, the craving for regional hegemony all played a part (Saliu, 2005). Many analysts believe that the radicalisation of the 1970s is to blame for Nigeria's heavily Afrocentric foreign policy, which is fuelled by the prestige of continental leadership. After gaining its independence, Nigeria wasted no time taking a stand for Africa, and in 1961, it formally severed ties with France in protest at what was supposedly an atomic test in the Sahara (Aremu, 2005). An apparent cause of the prestige illusion may be traced back to Nigeria's involvement in providing and rallying support for liberation movements in Southern Africa during and after the 1970s. There is still a lack of conclusive evidence in the literature about whether or not Nigeria's assistance was a deciding factor in the final result and/or how much the receivers really respected and appreciated it (Aremu, 2010). The rises of Nigeria as a diplomatic powerhouse, the end of apartheid and colonialism in Africa, the country's prominence in UN peacekeeping missions, its influence within regional organisations like ECOWAS and the African Union, and its status as the go-to mediator in African conflicts are all results of this policy's documented successes (Saliu, 2018).

There has been debate on the effects of the Afrocentric policy. Some people don't think there's anything wrong with such a promise, while others think it hurts Nigeria's interests. Proponents of the view that finds no fault with such dedication contend that our national interest is served by an African center-piece strategy. It is evident that Nigeria is ensnared in the African dilemma due to her geographical, historical, and demographic conditions, according to Chibundu, who is a proponent of this school of thought. Previous administrations in Nigeria have pushed for the preservation of Afrocentric policies as a means to achieve their foreign policy goals, as previously mentioned. To de-emphasise, displace, or destroy the core notion that Nigeria should continue to advocate the cause of Black and African peoples would be to inflict severe harm to the national mentality. The Afrocentric policy will not be budged no matter what, and it is something that the world, including Nigeria, must keep in mind (Chibuadu, 2002).

It would be unfair to place the responsibility solely on African countries, according to Saliu (2018), who argues that other non-African nations have also shown a propensity to be unfriendly towards Nigeria in their relationships, and that this is why African policy does not have reciprocal relationships with some African countries. When deciding whether or not to provide reciprocity, he believes that a country's power standing matters. That a weak country would not be able to induce reciprocity from other nations. To this list, one may also include the policy climate that influences foreign policy choices. It could assist put more pressure on nations that have reaped the benefits of another's generosity if it is seen to be neat and clean. In the same vein, he elaborated that the US can do diplomacy of importance, but Nigeria, with her current strength and the fact that other players in the global system have heavily penetrated Africa, can only attempt to demand exchange. Another point he made was that the mountain of economic data that consistently shows Nigeria has not made the most of her growth potential is to blame for the pessimism surrounding African policy. When Nigerians experience injustice in any African nation, they automatically assume that the government's African policy is flawed. Saliu also brings out the fact that Nigeria's foreign policy goals are vague, which is a great obstacle to the country's ability to implement an effective African strategy. Other African nations have a hard time understanding the country's goals in the continent. Some argue that corrupt practices were inherent in Nigeria's assistance to African nations in the past. Saliu concluded

by saying that Nigeria cannot just abandon its African policy because there is too much at stake, particularly since other global players are growing to value the degree of recognition that currently defines the international system. That no contemporary country can or should shun international interactions in order to focus on its own internal problems, despite the fact that every nation has more domestic challenges than ever before. Using the unsolvable domestic crises as an excuse, Nigeria cannot afford to distance herself from international participation. Her prior investments in Africa might be wiped out by any withdrawal or even thinking of it. Others in the world system will have supplanted Nigeria by the time she chooses to reconnect with it, robbing her of her pride. There is no such thing as a barren foreign policy; even if it doesn't pay off immediately, it will in the end. Foreign policy in Nigeria should not be based only on African concerns, according to some academics who believe such pledges hurt Nigeria's national interest. Their main point is that African nations have given a lot to Nigeria without receiving much in return (Okpokpo, 2002). According to Reuben Abati, Nigeria has shown extraordinary naiveté in its foreign policy by focussing only on Africa. To him, it's clear that Nigeria has sacrificed a lot to make sure its foreign policy sticks. He sees this as a sign that Nigeria's genuine national interest has been compromised in favour of its regional leadership position. According to this school of thinking, the foundational basis of Nigeria's African policy is the lack of a strong reciprocity principle, which has led to widespread dissatisfaction and concerns among Nigerians about the state's African policy. Ate backed up this claim by saying that after gaining independence, Nigeria was only acting as an auxiliary leader for the West since it lacked the resources to maintain an aggressive and powerful foreign policy. He believed that the idea of an African-centeredness in Nigerian foreign policy was not born out of a strategic decision made by the country's new political leadership based on the country's basic national interests, but rather was a byproduct of the tremendous influence it had from Western powers, especially the United States and Britain, during their cold war priorities in Africa. The idea being put forward is that the Nigerian government's fixation on regional matters such as political liberation, peacekeeping missions, and conflict resolution has led to an institutionalisation of the Africa-centredness syndrome. What the leadership has failed to do is seriously evaluate the potential development benefits to Nigeria's economy that could be achieved through its foreign policy decisions. That is to say, the need of reshaping the national economy was never initially viewed as an essential limitation on foreign policy objectives, and neither was the fact that the home economy was inherently weak.

During this time, Nigeria's foreign policy stood out for its extraordinary dedication to the entire emancipation of Africa. Colonialism and apartheid were challenged, faced, and eventually eradicated. The emancipation process was directly impacted by Nigeria's activities. After rebel leader Ian Smith unilaterally declared independence in southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), the British government faced the nationalisation of British petroleum, and it seemed like the "kit and kin" feeling confused British view on the topic.

It was not until Rhodesia gained its independence that denationalisation took place (Eze, 2011). Eze presented a similar argument, stating that the OAU was fragmented during the Angolan war, which put MPLA against FLNA and UNITA, with each side backed by different groupings of states and resulting in an unnecessary protracted fight. The downfall of UNITA started with the Nigerian acknowledgement of Augustino Neto's MPLA. The downfall of South Africa's settler racist minority dictatorship was hastened in equal measure by Nigeria's steadfast and unwavering backing as head of the United Nations committee on apartheid. Two institutions established by Nigeria to aid the freedom war were responsible for this. The Southern African Relief Fund and the National Committee Against Apartheid. In the first, members worked to develop ideas and rally behind the liberation cause, while in the second, they raised money from various sources, including the Nigerian government, businesses, and individuals.

The assistance program that the government has run since gaining independence was a key instrument in carrying out this strategy. The oil money served as a lubricant for the humanitarian effort. Almost every African country has received aid from Nigeria in some way. The liberation warriors, Nigeria's neighbours, the nations on the front lines of the West African subregion, national calamities, and other regions of Africa were the primary recipients of the assistance program. When things were looking up economically, this is what it looked like (Adebayo, 1983). Why do nations provide aid to those in need when we live in a global community where allegiances do not transcend national boundaries? The phenomena of assistance providing has several interpretations in international relations theory (Holsti, 1994). Hollis and Smith (1991) state categorically that "explaining" and "understanding" the events unfolding on a global scale are distinct

concepts within the field of international relations epistemology. Although realist theory provides sufficient justification for the games that countries play, the moral or idealist perspective may also provide light on the reasons behind nations' actions. The most basic explanation for why nations aid one another is their purposeful pursuit of self-interest. The term "imperialism" was first popularised by Hayler (1971) at the height of the cold war, when "aid" was one of the tools of informal empire, a way to win over friends and allies and entice satellite governments on the perimeter of global capitalism. In addition to its oil and mining investments, China backs infrastructure projects in a number of African nations (Mailafia, 2010).

To generate goodwill and encourage social and economic development in partner nations, Nigeria unilaterally formed the Technical Aid Corps Scheme (TAC) in 1986 as an instrument of its foreign policy. Unfortunately, the exact amount that was spent on the initiative is still unknown. Multilateral institutions have benefited greatly from Nigeria's contributions. Among African institutions, the nation has played a significant role as a donor or leading stakeholder in the African Development Bank Group, Afrexim Bank, Shelter Afrique, and the ECOWAS Fund for Compensation and Development. Indeed, there was a time when Nigeria essentially footed the bill for the whole operating budget of the then-OAU, now-AU (Salim quoted in Mailafia, 2010). The Nigeria Trust Fund (NTP) was established in 1976 by Nigeria in collaboration with the African Development Bank Group. Its purpose is to support the development initiatives of the low-income member countries of the ADB's regional bloc, whose social and economic situations necessitate concessional financing (ADB, 2009). To supplement the NTF's resources, Nigeria also set up the Nigerian Technical Co-operation Fund (NTCF) in 2004. Recipient nations from the African diaspora would pool their human capital to aid war-torn nations in rebuilding, and private technical assistance funds would be used to find and prepare bankable projects. All signs point to these results being, at most, a mixed blessing. While the nations that have received its resources have been grateful, it is unclear whether this has resulted in positive sentiment or even bargaining power for Nigeria. Countries who invest in multilateral banks do so out of a sense of philanthropy and, as we learnt from the past, for their own national benefit. Donor countries diligently preserve their voting power to influence these institutions and, by extension, regional member countries, because of the tremendous influence these institutions have on recipient countries' national development policies (Mailafia, 2010; Daura, 2006). Nigeria has never really used its standing and voting power to its full potential, according to experience. According to Mailafia, who is looking at Nigerian economic diplomacy through the lens of the country's bilateral and multilateral aid to other African nations, the contradiction between Nigeria's lofty economic development ambitions and its actual performance is like the story of the enslaved Prometheus. Nigeria was about to become the first great blackpower in contemporary foreign policy, according to Ali Mazrui's 1977 observation, due to its enormous population and abundant natural resources. When Ajulo said that this nation will be the world's leading power by the century's end, it lent credence to this view. The irony is immense that at the turn of the millennium, Nigeria is in a far worse position than what Mazrui and Ajulo had predicted. The reputation and influence of Nigeria in African politics have been devastated by a conglomeration of issues, including inadequate economic management, ineffective leadership, enormous corruption, and ethno-religious conflicts.

Two unique objectives, the system goals and the actor goals, have emerged from the international system's matrix. Whereas system objectives are those that actors work towards together, actor goals are those that each actor sets for itself according to its own preferences and whims (Agwu, 2009). Every country's focus in its bilateral and multilateral interactions should have been on the actor's objectives. For example, in the coalition of the willing to topple Saddam Hussein, France broke away from the US in order to prioritise oil. For this reason, the United States and the United Kingdom, led by Margaret Thatcher, opted for constructive engagement over sanctioning South Africa's apartheid administration. Issues connected to great nations' economic interests are the only ones in which they become engaged. What this means is that their foreign policy are driven by purely economic concerns. Iranian liquefied natural gas pipeline to China and missile deal with Russia influenced China and Russia's vote to consider having the security council address Iran's history of UN mandate violations related to its nuclear weapons program, similar to how France's opposition to Saddam was weakened by billion-dollar contracts (Shawn, 2006). Similarly, the United States had little interest in Africa outside of North Africa—a region that shares a border with the Arabian Peninsula, has abundant oil resources, and is vitally linked to the Middle East conflict—until the Gulf of Guinea's hydrocarbon potentials became a draw.

In international relations, a country's "centrepiece policy" refers to its one and only priority area of focus, where it will not tolerate interference from other countries or groups. However, a country's national authorities determine how far it can define and effectively enforce its exclusive perimeter zone of influence (Agwu, 2013). In the aftermath of the unilateral invasion to depose Saddam Hussein, the United States' foreign policy "establishment" asserted that Iraq is the focal point of American foreign policy, casting doubt on the idea that centrepiece doctrine is static and based on a country's regional interests alone. This declaration came at a time when the United States was engaged in a military campaign in Iraq. Nigeria has wasted a lot of money since it came up with the idea for its Africa centrepiece foreign strategy. Academics agree that Nigeria's approach towards Africa has remained mostly selfless. The technical assistance corps program, peacekeeping operations, and other forms of financial and in-kind help have been criticised by some as meaningless acts of charity. Simply put, Nigeria's kind policies and program in Africa were and still are not reciprocated.

Mohammed Haruna, writing in the new Nigerian newspaper on September 28, 1986, blamed Nigeria's conservative and Anglophile policies for the country's undeserved advantages in Angola and Zimbabwe (Akinyemi, 2002). Haruna stated that in the early days of the struggle, Nigeria, through Garba, was not very fond of the MPLA, preferring instead the so-called government of national unity, and the Angolans were aware of this. This, he said, may have informed the MPLA government in Angola's refusal to recognise Nigeria's assistance in gaining independence and the cold reception that Joe Garba received in Luanda. Nigeria only adopted a vague ideological stance in response to apartheid South Africa's invasion of Angola, which prompted Nigeria to recognise the MPLA. Zimbabwe had the same situation. It was the country's Anglophilia; under General Obasanjo, Nigeria was bitterly opposed to Mugabe and strongly backed Nkomo, perhaps because the British liked him more. This suggests that Nigeria's policies in these nations were tainted by the country's indecision in the outset, which may have irritated the purported aid recipients due to the vagueness and lack of clarity in its stances. This lack of competence in policymaking also led to Nigeria's 1978–1979 operation "Harmony 1" in Chad, which was meant to help that country recover from a crippling conflict (Agwu, 2009). However, France used this to their advantage, portraying the operation as an occupation force, and ultimately helped oust Hissein Habre from power, deposing Libya's sponsor Goukouni Quedde. The failure of Nigeria's African centrepiece strategy to consistently implement any one policy stance is therefore a major drawback of the policy.

II. CONCLUSION

The research analysed the dynamics of reciprocity and the Afrocentric orientation of Nigeria's foreign policy. The policy has had some successes, such as ending apartheid and colonialism in Africa, increasing Nigeria's diplomatic sphere, gaining international renown and influence, and becoming the go-to nation for African conflict resolution. However, it has also wasted development funds and fallen short of its strategic policy goals in terms of industrial and economic development. Just glancing at Nigeria's Afrocentric foreign policy thrust makes it seem like the country is more concerned with boosting its national reputation than achieving concrete economic goals that would benefit the Nigerian people and government. The unfortunate consequence of this is that recipient African nations will not recognise or validate Nigeria's pretended leadership position in Africa, no matter how much she sacrifices. In its last section, the study posits that the idea of an Africa-centeredness in Nigeria's foreign policy was not something the country's new political leadership decided upon based on the country's basic national interests, but rather something that evolved from the tremendous influence of the major Western powers, especially the US and Britain, within the framework of their cold war objectives in Africa. This included the US's global containment strategy towards the Soviet Union and the Communist expansion beyond Eastern Europe. Because of Nigeria's power standing and the fact that other players in the international system have heavily penetrated Africa, the reciprocity dynamics seem to have worked havoc against Nigeria. To go ahead, Nigeria's Afrocentric foreign policy should turn inward, with the goal of contributing to the country's development—specifically, it should be shaped to stimulate the local economy, provide employment opportunities, and decrease unemployment rates in general.

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