

AN ASSESSMENT OF NIGERIA'S ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA IN THE FOURTH REPUBLIC

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ABSTRACT

Nigeria and Russia relations though tilted more on military supply and training also it has serious economic undertone. Simplistically, these military armaments, hardware, weapons and equipments are not supplied to Nigeria free of charge; rather at colossal cost to the country. Herein, lies the utility of bilateral economic relations between the two countries that actively started during the Nigerian civil war. Apart from the economic relations involving military supplies, other aspects of bilateral economic relations on primary products and commodities were carried out. In spite of the over four decades of active economic relations between the two countries the tip of the benefit is still tilting more in favour of Russia; which informed the motivation for the study. The study is a qualitative one where secondary sources such as textbooks, academic journals, magazines and internet materials were used for generating data for the study. Concepts of foreign policy, economic relations as well as theories of interdependence and global political economy were adopted as framework for the study. The data generated was analyzed through discourse and explanatory methods. At the end of the study recommendations were made towards making Nigeria-Russia economic relations to earned more rewards/benefits for Nigeria in line with the interdependence theory. Principal among the recommendations is the need for Nigerian political leadership to woo Russian military industrial entrepreneurs to bring in and establish their military industrial complex in the country for local manufacture of all our military supply needs.

Key Words: Foreign policy, Economic Relations, Military Industrial Entrepreneurs, Bilateral, Benefits, Rewards.

Introduction

Before the end of the cold war, Nigeria related with the entire Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). Nigeria's colonial background molded her relation with the defunct USSR; which was indeed very low at the height of the cold war. Even then, events of the Nigerian civil war (1967-1970) and the

assassination of Nigeria's Military Head of State General Murtala Ramat Mohammed in 1976, made the military regime of that period to shift emphasis to the east (more particularly Russia). The active Soviet support for all decolonization struggles throughout Africa endeared her to most African countries

more particularly Nigeria. The first diplomatic mission between the two countries was, established in 1961. On the economic diplomacy front, trade between Nigeria and USSR was very low between 1960 and 1969 (Ogunbadejo, 1986; Saliu, 2006).

A turning point in the Nigeria-USSR relations took place in 1975. The unilateral recognition and support the Nigerian military leaders gave to the pro-Soviet MPLA government of Augustinho Neto against the pro-Western UNITA faction of Jonas Savimbi. Nigeria backed the MPLA government with direct cash grant of \$20 million and an additional \$80 million grant in military and logistic aids. The military regimes of the late 1970s saw new eastward relations as the only alternative to the hitherto unwelcoming attitude of the West towards their coup d'état which overthrew General Yakubu Gowon. Here, the foreign policy of a radical break from the West was neither borne out of astuteness or rationality on the part of the military leadership, nor was it based on the ingenuity of foreign policy managers of that time; but largely based on the circumstances (legitimacy problem and external support for their fragile regime) they found themselves in. If the West had supported their coup in the first instance, they would have allied with the West in supporting the pro-West UNITA group of Jonas Savimbi. Thus, the so-called ascription of a radical posture to the military regime of the late 1970s; was loosely anchored. Moreover, the Obasanjo military regime later turned to the West for his political reform, where he imported and adopted wholesale the United States model of Presidential system of democratic government which he later handed over power to its subsequent operators on October 1, 1979 (Kolade, 2000).

However, the USSR continued to have monopoly of Nigeria's Steel Development Programme between 1979 and 1983. The Soviet dominated steel companies in Nigeria were located at: Itakpe, Jos, Aladja, Ajaokuta,

Oshogbo, and Katsina where their indigenous Nigerian staff were sent to USSR for training and human capital development. Pursuant to this, Nigeria's Minister of Steel Development Alhaji Mamman Ali Makele visited Moscow Russia to improve relations between the two countries for the actualization, as well as for the commissioning and take-off of all the steel companies and the rolling mills in Nigeria. Dr Rilwanu Lukman Minister of Steel in this regard made another visit in 1984 as a follow-up for the delayed commissioning of all the Steel projects in Nigeria by the Soviet companies. The Nigeria Steel Development Programmes with all infrastructures suffered massive blow throughout the late 1980s and the 1990s when they were allowed to rot away due to neglect (Ogunbadejo, 1986; Bala, 2001).

Therefore, it is the underperformance of Nigeria's foreign policy to direct its economic relations instrument at maximizing more economic rewards and benefits for the country, which informed the motivation for the study.

Conceptual/Theoretical Framework

The concepts of foreign policy and economic relations as well as theories of comparative administration and interdependence have been, defined and clarified that served as frameworks for the study below:

Foreign Policy

Foreign policy has been defined by Kegly, (1993) as those goals that officials representing nation-states seek abroad, the values that underline these goals and the means/instruments used to pursue them. Useful as their views are, but they seem to limit foreign policy to the domain of public officials where critical inputs from the private sector and the citizens are shutout. A more simplistic definition by Northedge, (1968) sees foreign policy as an inter-play between the outside and the inside. The definition suggests

that foreign policy is a reaction to external stimuli while reflecting domestic realities. Iyan, (1993, p.44) is of the view that foreign policy is mostly prosecuted for the protection of the national interests. These national interests according to him constitutes such factors as; economic and social wellbeing of citizens as well as security and integrity of the country. This view seems to fit the purpose of Nigeria's foreign policy and economic relations towards expanding the country's foreign revenue sources.

Frankel, (1978) refers to foreign policy as a dynamic process of interaction between the changing domestic demands and support, as well as the changing external circumstances. His view has the highest likelihood of engendering the good conduct of external relations more especially under an administration operating good governance where the demands of the domestic elements have not only been met by those who governed; but their inputs incorporated into the country's foreign policy. Under this condition the foreign policy outputs will be, supported by the citizens.

Holsti, (1992) views foreign policy as the action of a state towards the external environment, which is, determined by the dynamics of the domestic environment under which these policies are, formulated. That foreign policy is the articulated action of states in their relations with other states. To add to his position, a well-planned foreign policy takes its root from the domestic environment by taking into consideration the realities of events in the local scene such as the dynamics of governance. Lerche and Abdulaziz (1979) viewed foreign policy as the general principles that guide a state in its interaction with other actors in the international environment. While relevant, this concept fails to highlight the condition(s) under which these principles are made which is a function of the leadership style (i.e. qualities of leaders) as well as the motive for such principles towards the

conduct of external relations. This study is of the view that the benefit of external relations should be such that it will promote and protect the national interest outside its geographical borders (boundaries).

Economic Relations

Economic relations has been broadly defined by Olusanya, and Akindele, (1986, p.11) as a critically important component, the heart and cobweb of a country's international pre-occupation, engagement and foreign policy transactions; where the guaranteeing of the economic wellbeing of a nation's citizens is the ultimate or hallmark of a successful public policy. They went on to add that, it is for this reason that great attention is usually being paid to external economic relations by government of most countries. The views of Olusanya, and Akindele, above, seem to bring clarity to the fact that economic relations is increasingly being placed at the front burner of a nation's foreign policy pre-occupation; more especially in a mutually interdependent globalize world.

Uya, (1992) in his contribution states that the thrust of Nigeria's economic relations is to make the country's foreign policy serve the purpose of economic development domestically. That it was aimed at seeking and securing goodwill and support from both traditional allies and new friendly nations which will help achieve thriving economic relations. He went further to add that economic relations encourages and promotes investment, protect deals from inception to signing of contracts and in fact markets an entire nation as if it is a business outfit itself. On the roles of diplomats in Nigeria's economic relations, Uya further posits that they are expected to conduct trade events and seminars, attend trade shows, visit potential investors and be proactive in marketing the attributes of their country. The attainment of this requires knowledge of the business process of the home country and of

salesmanship. Hence, with proper training, diplomats will serve as essential link in the strengthening of their economies by private investors with government facilitating the process. He went further to stress that for the proper execution of Nigeria's foreign policy and its economic relations, there is the need for personnel of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment (FMIT&I) as well as our embassies/missions (abroad) to have basic qualities such as versatility, sound judgment and strong business skills. That the possession of these qualities are necessary because globalization and the resultant interdependence among states, has made economic relations to go deeper into domestic decision-making to cover policies relating to production, exchange of goods, services and instruments. Uya's stress on qualitative personnel is well appreciated. However, he could have done better if he had advocated for a corresponding effective communication between the levels of Nigeria's foreign policy making and output through the conduct of its economic relations.

This study not only agrees with Uya's conceptualization of economic relations; but also would like to emphasize that it is so comprehensive that it succeeded in capturing almost all its necessary ingredients. However, he failed to stress on the need for directing all these attributes towards boosting the industrial and manufacturing base of the country's economy, which is the current vogue of international finance and politics. Another big problem is the political-will towards the implementation of all these reward-yielding economic relations dividends. If the political-will to implement all these beautiful attributes of Nigeria's economic relations is lacking, then they all amount to mere 'wishful thinking'.

Interdependence Theory

The 'Theory of Interdependence' was, first introduced by two American Psychologists

Harold Kelley and John Thibaut in 1959. It was completely formalized as a Theory in 1978 by Kelley and Thibaut. According to them, interdependence is the manner in which, and the degree to which interacting individuals (organizations or state actors) act upon or influence one another's experiences with reference to the fact that the preferences, motives and behavior of the individuals (organizations or state actors); are relevant to those of the interacting partner(s). The defining feature of interpersonal (inter-group) relationships is the interdependence between partners (be it individuals, corporate groups or even nation states). Interdependence is an elemental feature of social experience. Interdependence theory identifies interaction as a core feature of all interpersonal (inter-organizational or inter-state) relationships. Like all social exchange theories, outcomes can be, conceptualized in terms of rewards and costs. Rewards equal positive consequences of an interaction; and costs refer to negative consequences. Individuals (organizations or state actors) are, assumed to be, goal-oriented; implicitly seeking to obtain good outcomes and avoid bad outcomes in their relationships (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978).

Keohane and Nye (1977) were among the pioneering scholars who adapted a hitherto psychological theory of interdependence to serve as a framework for the analysis of phenomena in international relations. This was further, hinged on their perceived limitations of behaviouralism in international relations, which they believe is, clouded in large intuitive judgment that is often; brought to bear in the analysis of phenomena whose background conditions to use Nye's words, "were in a state of flux". They were of the views that state actors armed with sovereign power; can effectively utilize economic relations instrument of foreign policy to earn greater economic reward in an interdependent and competitive international system. Here, the use of force occasioned by high cost in

international economic relations is, downplayed.

In a separate work, Keohane and Nye (1987), stress that from the foreign policy standpoint, the problem of individual governments is how to benefit from international exchanges while maintaining as much autonomy as possible. Their position in the two works serve as a strong anchor for the analysis of how economic relations as a foreign policy instrument, has been effectively utilized by successive administrations in Nigeria in the Fourth Republic to attract more foreign capital and expand the country's foreign revenue sources. It will as well reap greater economic reward for the country; since the theory of interdependence is all about maximizing rewards and eliminating cost in international interactions.

Daniel Ballet, Joshua Tybur, Paul and Van Lange, positing from a psychological perspective came up with Functional Interdependence Theory (FIT). They are of the views that interdependence theory provides clues regarding structure of interdependence. In addition, they uphold that FIT offers insight into how people initiate and maintain cooperative relationships, select social partners and allies, and identify opportunities to signal social motives. These motives more especially by nation states are the desire to maximize benefits and rewards and minimize cost in international transactions (Ballet et-al, 2016).

Therefore, in a competitive World where success depends on your ability to get desired outcomes because others want what you want; it is highly unlikely that your co-competitors would sell to you development ideas that will make you surpass and outdo them in the global economic contest. Thus, the need for a re-course to local content strategic thinking will enable Nigeria come up with unique manufactured products that she can market with ease in the international market under the interdependence paradigm. This is

non-negotiable for a country that is aspiring to be one of the 20 big global economies by the year 2020. Hence, the interdependence theory, which is all about maximizing rewards (benefits) and minimizing (eliminating) costs in international relations, is quite suitable and hereby adopted as a framework for the study.

Global Political Economy Theory (International Political Economy Theory)

The Global Political Economy also called International Political Economy Theory was, popularized by Robert Cox (1987) and Robert Gilpin (2001). The theory looks at how power relations, international economics and politics interact in the international environment. They maintain that there are three main strands of International Political Economy, which include Economic Liberalism, Mercantilism and Marxism. However, economic globalization is the fourth strand, which they omitted.

Economic Liberalism, following in the tradition of Adam Smith and David Ricardo, stresses the value of a capitalist market economy that operates according to its own laws and, when freely allowed to do so, maximizes benefits for individuals, companies and nations. The World Trade Organization (WTO) embodies the values espoused by this strand of International Political Economy.

Mercantilism holds that the economy should be, used to enhance state power, and thus be subordinate to politics. Protectionist and other policies that minimize dependence on other states are, promoted, as are policies of state-led development.

Marxism sees the economy as a crucible of exploitation and inequality between classes, one in which the dominant economic class also dominates politically. It holds that capitalist development contains contradictions that will eventually produce crisis conditions affecting both social classes and nation states. Within International Political Economy Theory,

“world system theory” describes the capitalist international economic system as consisting of core, peripheral and semi peripheral areas defined by their modes of labor control and specializations. In doing so, these theorists promote greater recognition of how underdeveloped countries are exploited by those with the monopoly of global capital.

- Economic globalization is the fourth strand of the nascent international political economy, which the western worlds have devised through the New Global Agenda. The economic liberalization agenda was so fashioned by the industrialized north to, further entangle the unfortunate underdeveloped countries by perpetually incorporating them into the traps of international finance and capital. With this subtle global economic policy, it will further opened-up the economies of third world countries to more exploitation by the industrialized countries. This will further exacerbate the entanglement of their economies to International Finance Capital and of their perpetuation to the shackles of dependency (Saleh, 2008).

As such, as it was with economic liberalism and mercantilism, economic globalism shielded by convergence theory, is an advance form and a more lethal instrument for the plunder and exploitation of the resources of third world countries. This is because the formulation of these New Global Agenda, are exclusive to the Northern hemisphere. The unfortunate countries of the South were not, consulted at the formulation stage; but were, forced not only to accept, but also to domesticate these New Global Agenda at their perils. This is to further increase Western prosperity and their perpetual dominance of international affairs (Saleh, 2008).

Assessment of Nigeria-Russia

Economic relations in the Fourth Republic

In as much as the Nigeria-Russia relations suffered a massive setback between 1985 and 1998, there was however a rejuvenation of relationship between the two countries with the setting in of the Fourth Republic in 1999. Chief Olusegun Obasanjo on assumption of power as the civilian President of Nigeria embarked on the highest diplomatic visit to Russia in March, 2001 where he and his Russian counterpart signed a declaration on the principles of friendly relationship and partnership as well as a programme on cultural and scientific cooperation (Letiche, 2007). Almost ten years after Obasanjo’s visit to Moscow, Russian President Dymitri Medvedev visited Nigeria in 2010 where both countries discussed on wide ranging issues including the need for stronger economic cooperation. (Adebajo, 2008).

To further boost economic relations between the two countries, trade between Nigeria and Russia tremendously improved from its paltry position between 1960 and 1998 where it peaked at \$1.5 billion in 2009. This remarkable performance was preceded by the signing of an agreement on investment promotion in the same year (2009) between the two countries. Mr Ojo Maduekwe Nigerian Foreign Minister and his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov in 2010 met and discussed various areas of collaboration (economic, technical, social, etc.) between the two countries. In the same 2010, trade between the two countries reached \$3 billion. The ascendancy of Nigeria as the second largest trading partner to Russia in Sub-Saharan Africa within the space of less than fifteen years is the fruit of an improving foreign policy and economic relations in the fourth republic. Agricultural products are the main articles of trade from Nigeria to Russia. Whereas, Russian products exported to Nigeria include metals,

fertilizers and oil consumables (Osagie, 2010; Ajaebili, 2011; Akinterinwa, 2012).

Diplomatic and trade relations between Nigeria and Russia, equally raised the pattern of cultural and military relations between the two countries. Although cultural relation between the two countries dates back to former USSR, Nigerians in Russia have been imparting African culture on Russians and vice versa through intermarriages and employment. The subsequent establishment of Nigeria's cultural Attaché in Moscow is in fulfillment of this goal. The Russian government has also encouraged Nigerian students to study in its country through the granting of scholarship to qualified Nigerians under the Nigeria-Russia Educational Bilateral Cooperation. There has been increasing military cooperation between Nigeria and Russia. Russian built heavy and light military equipments such as armour cars, warships, mortars, helicopter gunships, UAVs, troops/logistic vehicles are still in use by the Nigerian military (Anofi, 2010). Pursuant to this active military cooperation, the Nigerian government collaborated with Russia and launched military satellite in September, 2003 targeted at boosting surveillance of Nigeria's military and crude oil facilities. Russia's Rowbow Export in Plesetsk built the NigeriaSat 1 at the cost of \$13 billion in partnership with Nigerian National Space Agency (Awolusi, 2013).

An agreement was, signed in Moscow on June 6, 2012 between Nigeria and Russia on Cooperation in the Design, Construction, Operation and Decommissioning of Nuclear power in Nigeria. Both the Nigerian Atomic Energy Commission (NAEC) and Russian Atomic Energy Agency (ROSATOM) did the signing. The Nigerian Mission in Moscow participated in the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum held separately in 2011 (as from June 16-19, 2011) and in 2012 (as from June 21-23, 2012). The Mission also authenticated Nigerian and Russian documents (MFA-AR, 2012).

In spite of the improving trade relations between Nigeria and Russia in the Fourth Republic, the level of FDI inflow from Russia to Nigeria is so negligible. As such, Nigerian foreign policy managers should effectively utilize the economic relations instrument to woo foreign investors from Russia to invest in Nigeria's industrial/manufacturing sector/sub-sector; more especially in the steel and military industrial complex (Osagie, 2010; Akinterinwa, 2012).

Summary of Nigeria-Russia Economic Relations

The net-benefit and reward accruable to Nigeria in the Fourth Republic in its economic relations with Russia; is as presented in both statistical and graphical forms as in Table 1 and Figure 1 below:

Table 1: Inflow of Foreign Revenue from Russia to Nigeria in the Fourth Republic

S/No.	Foreign Revenue from Russia	Amount (\$ billions)
1.	2009	1.5
2.	2010	3.1
3.	2011	4.7
4.	2012	6.0
5.	2013	7.3
6.	2014	9.1
7.	2015	10.8
8.	2016	12.7
9.	2017	13.5

Source: Generated by the Researcher in 2017 as Adapted from Osagie, 2010; Ajaebili, 2011; Akinterinwa, 2012; Anofi, 2010, MFA-AR, 2012; Awolusi, 2013; World Bank, 2017

Conclusion

From the analysis so far, conclusion can be drawn that there has been steady improvement in Nigeria's economic relations with Russia in the Fourth Republic. However, apart from the Aladja steel company (which has been moribund for almost four decades), there is no large Russian investment in the country. The study has established that there has been steady Inflow of Foreign Revenue from Russia to Nigeria in the Fourth Republic which peaked at over \$13 billion in 2018. Notwithstanding this inflow of foreign revenue from Russia, yet Nigeria remains one of the largest consumers of Russian military supplies as well as market for her metals, fertilizers and

oil consumables. Furthermore, the study has observed that there is no record of home remittances from Nigerians in the Diaspora Organization (NIDO) in Russia to Nigeria for the period of the study. As Nigeria's traditional partner in all forms of interactions, there should be more Russian direct investments in the country more especially in the industrial and manufacturing sectors of the economy. Russia should also review her domestic monetary policies that will allow Nigerians working and doing business in that country to remit parts of their income/profits back home.

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