

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL STUDIES

Buhari's Personality and Its Influence on Nigeria's Foreign Policy Agenda under Civilian Rule (2015-2019)

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Abstract:

Leaders' inputs shape foreign policy at the highest echelon of a State decision-making apparatus. President Buhari is the 15th Head of State of Nigeria (2015-2019) and is in charge of the Nation's foreign policy. Hence, this study emerged to assess the influence of his personality on Nigeria's foreign policy under his first civilian rule (2015-2019). In doing this, the study adopted a qualitative method, descriptive design, primary and secondary, and the role theory to arrive at its findings. This study revealed that Buhari's personality traits were shaped by his military background, childhood upbringing, life and leadership experiences. Such manifested in Buhari being a disciplinarian, a conserve and reserve person, slow to take decisions but committed to them when they are taken, and suspicious of lavish living. This translated into Nigeria's foreign policy Agenda of 'Anti-Corruption, Security and the Economy' under his first civilian rule. His personality was also a plus for Nigeria's Foreign policy in pursuing these agendas. The international community accepted his antecedence and personality as representing a trusted leader with integrity to work with as a global partner

Keywords: Foreign policy, personality, civilian rule, buhari's personality, Nigeria's foreign policy

1. Introduction

Within the realm of the international system, the foreign policy serves as the guiding framework that chaperon states interactions with their external environment. Such guides are most especially anchored on the national interest of such actors as conveyed by their officials, one of the most crucial of which are Head of States or Governments. Of consideration is that States are abstract entities, which means that they are made up of representatives saddled with the authority to exercise the agency of a broad range of State powers legitimately in the conduct of their external affairs, (Shitta, 2010). Such representatives are essential components that man the decision-making organs responsible for the inputs that make up foreign policy. Hence, foreign policy decision-makers are introduced, as they influence the outcome of a State's foreign policy choices. As decision making goes, the highest executive authority (e.g., the Head of State or Government) is tasked with setting the direction of their State's foreign policy, but this does not translate into a monopoly of the foreign policy decision-making process as the inputs of members of the bureaucracy, public opinion, arms of government and other relevant stakeholders come to view. Therefore, while the decisions made by the Head of State or Government in the sphere of foreign policy matters greatly, it carries weight to the extent that other factors influencing foreign policy allow it to operate.

Nonetheless, the agency power of a State, as exercised by its Chief Executives placed in their hand's immense power to shape the foreign policy agenda of their States, (Shitta, 2010). That said, it is pertinent to understand what drives a States Chief Executive in arriving at the decision they make, how their world views, experiences, ideology, socialization etc., shape their decision-making process and belief system, which form influencers in setting their state foreign policy agenda. One concept captures this, and that is 'Personality', the personality of the chief promoter (e.g., Head of State or Government) of the foreign policy of a State, shapes their input into their State foreign policy. So, personality matters greatly but only to the extent that other factors allow them to reign freely.

Granted that, Nigeria's has interacted with the world as a sovereign nation since 1960 via the positions extols in its foreign policy. Such positions have been shaped by the personalities of her leaders, both under civilian and military dispensation (i.e., administration or regime, etc.), which have been adjudged to be strong. Adding to the strong input of leader's personalities in shaping Nigeria's foreign policy is the lacuna of a broad consensus of the country's national interest, which should serve as the cardinal point for guiding foreign policy formulation. Of note is Amuko (2016) views, who identified that Nigeria is found wanting in what is considered to be in her National Interest. Amuko traces such to absenteeism of a strong national identity to rely on for our national interest. Instead, Nigeria national interest is shaped by the directions of officials of government, the pressing challenge of the Nation and the threat from abroad, all of which influence our National Interest choice at any moment. And so, the personality of these leaders exercises greater agency in determining the agenda to be pursued in foreign policy. Of all of Nigeria's Head of State, then Major General Muhammadu Buhari inputs into Nigeria foreign policy comes into consideration, firstly, due to the perception of his admirers that his

integrity and personality are intangible assets accredited with shaping the destiny of Nigeria. Hence, looking at how Buhari's personality crafted Nigeria's foreign policy agenda under his civilian rule is germane. Also, this is pertinent to building a background into Buhari's foreign policy administration style. Buhari has returned via the democratic process as the President of Nigeria in 2015, (Fayemi, Chidozie and Ajayi, 2015).

2. Concept of Foreign Policy

Holsti defines foreign policy as actions of a state towards its external environment and the domestic conditions under which those actions are formulated, (as cited in Boma, Terfa, and Tsegay, 2015). Boma et al. (2015) situated their views on foreign policy as encompassing different goals and objectives pursued by sovereign states in the governance process that can be attained individually with the co-operative or active support of external polities. To them, this is performed by taking a decision and by actions or reactions to address issues. Such requires the co-operation or active support of other states, to which a state's foreign policy goals can be achieved either to maintain the desired aspect of state relations towards its external environment or to amend the undesirable to them. Also, they exhumed foreign policy as a calculated and goal-oriented activity that deals with defence, security, international political relations, and economic relations that are purposive (i.e., it alternates or creates conditions outside borders to achieve national interest and produce benefit either tangible or intangible). Hence, they also extrapolate the goal of foreign policy is to establish and maintain cordial relations with other states to build a good image for a nation and meet its national and domestic interests. In another guise, foreign policy can be summed as those sets of tools or activities developed by states to drive their interests in the international system as well as the internal and external factors that influence them. The decision-making process of foreign policy makes the personalities of the decision-makers and foreign policy environments play an essential role in a state foreign policy (Bello, Dutse and Othman, 2017).

Hence, foreign policy can be summed up as a menu of several determinate factors that influence the directions of a State external relations. The decision-makers of a state's foreign policy mechanism play leading roles in determining their Nation's directions. So, foreign policy decision-makers make policy decisions by interrogating from a list of possible options what foreign policy choice in their interpretation is best for their State. Such decisions are not made in isolation, as the situation they face in the international systems and the domestic conditions faced at home influence their choices. In making such a choice, a leader's personality make-up is of great weight, like his background, ideological believe, temperance and other attributes will serve as a compass for making decisions. As such, foreign policy can be interpreted as the combination of the personality of the decision-maker, the domestic agenda at the front burner and the external situation, all of which, when geared towards nation interest, present opportunity, threat, strength and weakness that guides a nation's action in the international system.

3. Foreign Policy under Civilian Rule

This entails a scenario where power resides with the people (directly or indirectly exercised by them) via a free, fair and periodic election of citizens to represent the masses within a society. Here, civilian rule maintains the feature of democratic government such as an independent judiciary, respect for fundamental human rights, and a multi-party system, which ensures alternative and competition of candidates to present to citizens for an election, (Bello et al., 2017). Granted that, foreign policy decision making involves the multiplicity of institutions and processes such as the Presidency, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Legislature. Such multiplicities of parties involved in foreign policy decision-making ensure the process is drawn-out due to broad consensus via debates, approval of ministerial appointment, ambassadorial positions, treaties, and budget by the national assembly. Under civilian rule, foreign policy involves several stages, from planning to execution (Bello et al., 2017). Ojeh (2015) regards foreign policy under civilian regimes as characterized by a group of organized political institutions, which allows for a plethora of public opinions on foreign policy to be made. Such submission serves as a check on the ability of the highest foreign policy decision-maker to act arbitrarily, as a consensus on the direction of the State's foreign policy is made.

Nonetheless, at the heart of this is the agenda shaped by the highest executive decision-maker (i.e., the Head of State or/and Government), who determines the direction and/or conversation around foreign policy. Hence, the personality attribute of a said leader is a goldmine to understanding their decision-making process. Likewise, such agency does not monopolize foreign policy to leaders' whims and caprices only, as other factors come to play. So, although the State foreign policy elites influence foreign policy under civilian rule, there are several alternative views on the direction a state foreign policy should take. Under the civilian rule, the democratic process of foreign policy prevents a single view of a state's external world, but its crafting is championed by its highest decision-maker.

4. Nigeria's Foreign Policy under Buhari First Civilian Rule (2015-2019)

President Muhammadu Buhari assumed office (first civilian rule) on the 29th of May, 2015, following his predecessor President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan's defeat at the March 28th, 2015, general election (Jiddere and Manu, n.d). It was a unique scenario as it was the first time an opposition party came to power in Nigeria's Fourth Republic (Analyzing Buhari 170 promises, n.d). Under Buhari's first civilian rule, Nigeria's foreign policy was extracted from Buhari's campaign manifesto. He regarded national interest and a focus on the West African sub-region as the driver of his foreign policy agenda. The aforementioned supplemented his campaign promise and anchored it on Anti-corruption, the Economy and Security, (Abdullahi, 2016).

For Buhari, the first year of Nigeria's foreign policy under Buhari's first civilian rule was ascribed as Buhari embarking on '*junketing foreign trips abroad*'. At the same time, Nigeria domestic scene remains in flux (Obaze, 2016).

Hence, Nigeria's foreign policy was regarded with a label as citizen-driven, which could be intentional with a skeptical level of solvency that has questions to answers in terms of the return on investment or trade-off to enhance the Nation's economic, political and military wherewithal, (Obaze, 2016). Buhari engaged in economic diplomacy to attract development aid and foreign direct investment in pursuit of such. One such was his annual trips to China, where he secured a loan deal worth over six (6) billion dollars. These currency swap deals strengthened China lopsided trade imbalance with Nigeria and undermined the US dollars as Nigeria's main foreign exchange reserve (Obaze, 2016).

Furthermore, under his first civilian ascension to the Presidency, Buhari presented a triad to drive his agenda, which are Anti-corruption, reviving the Economy and Security. Such translated into the focal point of his domestic and external pursuits leading to Buhari's main role in foreign policy to improve relations with our neighbours. Other considerations include the defeat of Boko Haram through Nigerian leadership efforts and multi-national partnership to fight against terrorism, gaining intelligence and the resources towards improving the economy and fighting corruption, improved relations with China to foster economic development via needed infrastructure (Bello et al., 2017).

To achieve his foreign policy agenda, the Buhari government sought engagements with the international community and with leaders in BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). He also engaged the G7 (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States and the European Union). And he likewise reached out to countries in the Lake Chad Basin and the Gulf of Guinea regions. Buhari strategy for achieving this is forging closer diplomatic ties with world leaders and countries worldwide to coordinate efforts to combat insurgencies, oil theft, and criminality. Also, Buhari's first civilian administration reached out to Nigeria's neighbours. It solicited their help to reactivate the Multinational Joint Task Force (MJTF) to defeat Boko Haram, which he regarded as downgraded and technically defeated. Likewise, Buhari's first civilian administration secured the international buy-in of the United Kingdom (UK), France, the European Union (EU) and others, (Analyzing Buhari 170 promises, n.d). Buhari has also established a special relationship with South Africa and other countries in the region and sub-region to enable Nigeria to be visible with all global powers. Buhari hosted the South Africa President and other West African leaders on the African continent in a summit in Abuja. His administration sent a delegation to Burkina Faso in the wake of the failed coup. In another vein, the Buhari Administration further established special relations with BRICS and other strategic partners worldwide (Steinbock, 2016). President Buhari has visited China thrice and renewed diplomatic efforts with Russia. For India, President Buhari sought-after energy policy and trade. For Brazil, it's trade, energy policy and cultural exchanges (Analyzing Buhari 170 promises, n.d). Buhari's first civilian administration targeted a sound micro-macro-economic policy amid a loud call for devaluation. Due to the foreign exchange (forex) values spike at the parallel markets. Such signaled for observers' indication to the allegation that the economic and monetary policy of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) was being dictated to them from Aso Rock, Abuja (Analyzing Buhari 170 promises, n.d).

Buhari's first civilian administration organized what was dubbed the '*Security Summit*' with neighbouring countries of Niger, Chad, Cameroon, Benin Republic to curtail sub-regional threats in West Africa. Such was to discuss their sub-regional offensive to help achieve peace and stability, as well as re-organize the Multi-National Joint Task Force (MNJTF) headquarters (HQ) (NAN, 2019). Buhari personal outreach to these states was able to limit the capability of Boko Haram by reducing their tactic of conducting strikes in Nigeria and retreating to neighbouring jurisdictions to hide and recuperate. It's of note that in furtherance of Nigeria's commitment to peace and security within the sub-region of West Africa, Buhari stepped in as the crucial negotiator in solving the constitutional impasse in the Gambia in 2017. This was due to President Yahaya Jammeh refusal to hand over power to Adama Barrow, the winner of the Gambian Presidential Election of 2016 (Finnan, 2017). The Buhari Administration acting through its Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) partners were able to negotiate with Jammeh to transition power to Barrow to avoid the incidence of violence, war and possible humanitarian disaster (Babani and Cain, 2019). To achieve this, Nigerian troops deployed to the Gambia include a ground combat component, an air force contingent, and a Nigerian Warship (Babani and Cain, 2019). These dispatches were a means of hard power to show the Buhari's first civilian administration commitment to the democratic process while the negotiation was ongoing; as these were part of the multilateral ECOWAS forces contingent sent to The Gambia to ensure Jammeh's hands over power to Barrow (Babani and Cain, 2019). The Buhari first civilian administration relations with the West were cordial. Buhari met with President Barack Obama of the United States of America (USA) at a high-level diplomatic engagement at the oval office on 20th July 2016 (Goyal, 2015). Obama stated his commitment to assisting Nigeria with Boko Haram. Also, Buhari requested help from the US to assist Nigeria's fight against corruption and improve the economy. The USA assured Nigeria of their commitment; the pronouncement of the USA Vice President Joe Biden and other officials of the United States (US) government served as a reassurance (Goyal, 2015). Under Donald Trump, the same commitment made under Obama was re-confirmed. Trump further reinforced the US commitment by going forward to grant an exemption to Nigeria concerning the Leah Act of U.S. Congress (i.e., which allowed the US to block the sale of arms to foreign nations) (Husted and Blanchard, 2020). The Obama administration used the act previously to stop the sale of arms from the US to Nigeria under former President Jonathan (Husted and Blanchard, 2020).

Concerning Nigeria Relations with China, due to China potentiality for Nigeria, the Buhari first civilian administration sought to balance economic and diplomatic relations (Steinbock, 2016). China has been regarded as a development partner, as the interest on their infrastructural loan was lower than that of the Bretton Woods Institution (BWI). Such attractions influenced the decision of Buhari to honour the invitation of Xi Jinping to China to solidify trade, diplomatic and economic relations (Steinbock, 2016). He also signed the framework for enhancing infrastructure development and industrial activities in Nigeria with China (Steinbock, 2016). These resulted in an agreement between both governments to co-operate on scientific and technological development. The Buhari first civilian administration has

obtained financing for the rail projects and infrastructure loans. Buhari has also courted China support in Nigeria quest for a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). He also reaffirmed Nigeria support for the One China Policy; hence, the Taiwanese embassy relocation from Abuja to Lagos to show the downgrading of the relations to consular and trade base. Like his predecessors, President Buhari used economic diplomacy as a means to revive the economy, a cornerstone of his agenda. This informed his visits to the USA and other friendly states, seeking international support and co-operation to address the challenge at home to achieve sustainable national economic rejuvenation.

For Anti-corruption, the first tripod of the Buhari agenda, Buhari was battling Nigeria's corruption image. Various international anti-corruption organizations have rated Nigeria as one of the most corrupt nations in the world. Transparency International reports presented Nigeria as a corrupt country that aggravates the Nation's economic well-being (Transparency International ranks Nigeria....., 2018). The allegations of the mismanagement of public resources within the Nigerian economy affect other sectors, thereby distorting growth. For the Buhari, he has been able to gain a statement of commitment from foreign governments to aid Nigeria in their fight against corruption and assist Nigeria in the repatriation of stolen loots stashed abroad (Jiddere and Manu, n.d). Buhari administration also pursued internal transparency drive programmes to gain international recognition, support and partnerships. His efforts to attract global confidence in his anti-corruption push were by creating a waste-cutting unit/efficiency unit in the finance ministry. Likewise, the implementation of the Treasury Single Account (TSA) for all federal government revenue, partnering with Switzerland, the United Kingdom (U.K), the United Arab Emirate (U.A.E) and the USA to help repatriate stolen assets to Nigeria was all in pursuit of a said goal (Buharimeter, 2015).

On the economic front, Buhari's first civilian administration viewed the poverty and unemployment level increment as accentuated by the phenomena of corruption in the country. To address this, Buhari's first civilian government has sought foreign partners to develop internal capacity to re-engineer the economy. Such they embark on, by firstly concentrating on the agricultural sector (Buharimeter, 2015). Here, the Buhari administration, via the Ministry of Agricultural and Rural Development, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with an Indian firm to establish a Bio-fertilizers factory and research centre in Abuja (Buharimeter, 2015). In addition, Buhari's first civilian administration also signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on marine certification with Egypt, Australia and three (3) others (Buharimeter, 2015). In support of that is the collaborative effort with Morocco to re-vamp fertilizer production in Nigeria and the commitment of co-operation to build a gas export pipeline from Nigeria to Morocco and other collaborations (Buharimeter, 2015). Furthermore, to strengthen the economy, Buhari encouraged access to foreign currency to stop a slide in the Naira. This measure forestalled Nigeria's dollar-dominated economy from external shock (Analysis of Buhari, n.d). In addition, the federal government created a power investment catalogue to guide foreign investors, signed an agreement on solar power with the UK government, established a partnership with the Chinese government to develop Nigeria's rail sector (Buharimeter, 2016).

In another guise, the Buhari administration focus on insecurity was the third of his tripod agenda. Here, the country's general insecurity affected politics and the country's economy. Politically, the Nation's image in the comity of nations was damaged drastically due to the Niger-Delta militants' activity in the country's south-south geopolitical region (Igwe, 2020). In the North-Eastern theatre of the country, the country was held ransom with the actions of the terrorist group Boko Haram, whose insurgency brought terror to the northeast and other parts of the country (Ayitago, 2021). In the southwest, we had the criminal acts of the Badoo cult gang and Egbesu (Ayitago, 2021). The south-east geopolitical region of the country was not spared from security concerns with the activities of Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) (Ayitago, 2021). These security challenges gained Nigerian the rank of the third (3rd) most terrorized country in the globe after Iraq and Afghanistan as ranked by the global terrorism index 2015 (Igwe, 2020). Hence, several countries issued travel warnings to their citizens on the danger of travelling or doing business in Nigeria in response to such. The Buhari government solution is the diversification of the economy and the stabilization of the macroeconomic structure of the economy, as well as re-vamping the Nation's security architecture (Jiddere and Manu, n.d.).

The Boko Haram issue had morphed beyond security, as it impacted every part of the economy ranging from tourism, banking, agriculture, commerce, trading, and manufacturing. The Niger-Delta Avengers (NDA) activities in the Niger-Delta region amounted to heavy economic losses and fear of insecurity due to oil theft. Moreover, the IPOB secessionist threats meant attempts to woo investors are limited by uncertainty. In response, the Buhari government has channeled Billions of dollars to maintain peace and stability across the country (Jiddere and Manu, n.d). Likewise, Buhari rejigged the Nation's counter-terrorism architecture to handle the security threat, forged regional alliances, and appointed new security chiefs (Buharimeter, 2016). Also, on the Boko Haram front, the administration has a technical victory as Boko Haram capability from an organized fighting group that held Nigerian territory and levied a tax. In an interview with the BBC Buhari, expressing the viewpoint: *'They have been reduced to that; Boko Haram has been reduced from an organized fighting group. I assure you we have dealt with them'* (as cited in Buharimeter, 2017).

Despite such success recorded, Amnesty International in this epoch issued a report, *'Stars on their Shoulders, Blood on their hands'*, which indicted the Nigerian military for its wanton killings in the war against the insurgency. Not in isolation, the Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF), led by Nigeria, stands accused of allegedly committing war crimes on Boko Haram and civilians (Buharimeter, 2015). In response to the insecurity in the North-East, Buhari relocated the military command and control centre from Abuja to Maiduguri in Borno state and revitalized the establishment of the multi-national joint task made up of Nigeria, Chad, Niger, Cameroon and Benin. This strengthened the sub-regional structures and international alliances with the US, France, India, and Hungary to fight Book Haram. To cushion the devastation of Boko Haram destructive activities in the North-East, Buhari was able to sign a 0.3 billion-dollar grant from

the United States International Agencies for Development (Buharimeter, 2017). It is of note that under Buhari, Nigeria sought friendly relations with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). He also aimed to maintain a good relationship with China. The target was to improve the economy, gain security assistance, and receive global support for the war on corruption (Bello et al., 2017). To achieve this above-mentioned agenda, President Muhammadu Buhari targeted improved relations with neighbouring states (i.e., Equatorial Guinea, Cameroun, Niger, Chad, Benin and Togo) and maintained ties with the United States (US) China, amongst others in the world. (Bello et al., 2017).

5. Personality

An individual's personality comprises their perceptions, choices, attitudes, behaviours, ideology, background, and experiences, which form the basis for explaining their foreign policy choices and influences. For Rosenau (1966), personality is the first and most important factor in foreign policy action (as cited in Jiddere and Manu, n.d). In itemizing the influencers on the foreign policy ideology of leaders, it is difficult to divorce their personality from the way and manner they would make a decision and run their foreign policy department. Although personality contributes to a leader's policy direction, it is not the only weight that influences foreign policy as other conditions and elements play their roles (Bello et al., 2017). The role of the decision-makers is prime as they serve as the highest echelon of the decision-making process. In summary, the responsibility starts and stops at their table.

6. Buhari Personality

President Muhammadu Buhari has been perceived as having a reserved personality locally and internationally, attributed to his perception as an upright and incorruptible person (Jiddere and Manu, n.d). An extract of correspondence with the New York Times regarded Buhari as *'a man very much in control of himself'* (Davison, 2016, p.1). An observation by a diplomat interprets his personality as *'he thinks about what he says before he says it, he is a worldly disciplined man, not your typical strong man'* (Davison, 2016, p.1). A sum of this shows a man much in control of his temperance with a disciplined focus. In another image, his critic expresses his personality as that of a dictator at heart who claimed to be a converted diplomat (Davison, 2016, p.1). Such claims stem from the observations and claim that he truncated the Second Republic and was involved in major successful coups throughout Nigeria's history and attempted to image-manage the authoritarianism of his military era to show himself as a Democrat who accepts democracy. Buhari's origin shows a man that grew in Northern Nigeria, socialized by conservative values. Such include being born in Daura, Katsina, to Adama and Hajib, both devoted Muslims on December 17, 1942, as the 23rd child of his father (Davison, 2016, p.2). His mother raised him when his father died when he was aged 4, which shaped his world view of finding his way and being strong as he had other siblings to take care of (Davison, 2016, p.2). Buhari attended primary and secondary school in Northern Nigeria in Katsina (1946-1961) before enrolling at the Nigerian Military Training School, Kaduna (Davison, 2016, p.2). Buhari background expanded in the political and military environment of an independent nation, Nigeria. This allowed Buhari to be shaped by British and Nigerian Military traditions (Davison, 2016, p.2 & 3). Friends at the military training school in Kaduna regarded him as *'full of devotion to his training, religion and disciplines'* (Davison, 2016, p.5).

In addition, Buhari is described as knowing how to handle his environment to avoid trouble. That skill set allowed him to prevent himself from being distracted from his goals. As such, this attitude was part of his demeanour and psyche (Davison, 2016, p.1). During the post-independence political turmoil in Nigeria, Buhari grew abhorred by the degradation of the Nigerian political elite of that period (Paden, 2016, p.8). Adrian Davison (2016) regards such scenery as what led to his participation in the counter-coup of July 28, 1966 (p.8). His career took him around most regions of the nations, where Adrian Davison (2016) identified his attempt to learn Yoruba when he was posted to Ibadan as alluding to his desire to understand the people of Nigeria. To him, the Biafra war was a bad experience where he had to show devotion and loyalty to ensure Nigeria is kept as one earning him the respect of prominent Nigerians (Davison, 2016, p.21). During his career and posting to different fields, Adrian Davieson (2016) noted Buhari's weakness as self-doubt, which he overcomes due to his incorruptible and honest nature (p.30 & 38). All of such informed his decision to embark on a rescue mission for his country. It spun Buhari to take over the government as he observed the rout of corruption as degrading the country. Such further fuelled his abhorrence for unexplained lavish living as well as for corruption. Buhari's dislike for anything that threatens what he regarded as being in the best interest of his country came to play here. His suspicion of worldly luxury made him suspicious of opulence, and his reserved nature ensured that he did thorough thinking before he embarks on a decision. Buhari Military discipline provides for him an attribute of high handedness, and his religion presented for him pious devotion to his ethnic brethren and his association with the poor in society. Such characteristic he transported into his first civilian era (2015-2019), although his personality appears moderated under democratic settings.

7. Buhari's Personality Influence on Nigeria's Foreign Policy

Here, Nigeria's foreign policy under Buhari first civilian term (2015-2019) was shaped by his conviction and background as a military leader (Obaze, 2016). He also had a strong leadership disposition under his military rule, shown by his clarity of vision, national dedication and discipline, (Abdullahi, 2016). Such allowed Nigeria's foreign policy agenda under Buhari first civilian rule to be categorized as vibrant, dynamic and purposeful as it was tied to the domestic scene. Indeed, the military era and Buhari military rule shaped his personality traits. And so, these experiences shaped his near relentless altitude to pursue those he believed had wronged the country through corruption, (e.g., his effort to recover Nigeria's looted assets from around the world). Buhari's belief in the primacy of national interest led to his decision to close Nigeria's border with her neighbour in the name of security and economic interest (Kwarkye and Matongbada, 2021). Buhari's conviction in Nigeria leadership role prompted his acceptance of the African Union (AU) appointment as

the continent anti-corruption champion in 2018 (Nyeyen, 2020). For Buhari first civilian administration, the perception of Buhari personality by the international community as an upright and incorruptible person is a core reason for his invitation by world leaders to major international gatherings aimed at charting a new course for Nigeria under his leadership. In addition, Nigeria enjoys co-operation, pledges of assistance and investment attributed to Buhari personality. Such renewed commitment by world leaders can enhance co-operation and improve the economic potential of Nigeria under Buhari (Jiddere and Manu, n.d). Buhari's personality here allowed him to balance between the domestic scene of internal contradiction and the external environment that is competitive, dynamic, fluid and volatile at the same time. He can cope with this because of an image brand that his personality reflects integrity and truthfulness (Abdullahi, 2016).

8. Analysis of Buhari's Personality Influence on Nigeria's Foreign Policy

For Buhari first civilian administration (2015-2019), the perception of Buhari personality by the international community as an upright and incorruptible person is a core reason for his invitation by world leaders to major international gatherings aimed at charting a new course for Nigeria under his leadership. In addition, Nigeria enjoys co-operation, pledges of assistance and investment attributed to Buhari personality. Such renewed commitment by world leaders can enhance co-operation and improve the economic potential of Nigeria under Buhari (Jiddere and Manu, n.d). Buhari's personality here allowed him to balance between the domestic scene of internal contradiction and the external environment that is competitive, dynamic, fluid and volatile at the same time. He can cope with this because of an image brand that his personality reflects integrity and truthfulness (Abdullahi, 2016). Hence, personality is an important factor in foreign policy action (as cited in Jiddere and Manu, n.d.). In itemizing the influencers on the foreign policy ideology of leaders, it is difficult to divorce their personality from the way and manner they would make a decision and run their foreign policy department. Although personality is a contributing factor to the leader's policy direction, it is not the only weight that influences foreign policy as other conditions and elements also play their roles. The role of the decision-makers is prime as they serve as the highest echelon of the decision-making process. In summary, the responsibility starts and stops at the decision maker's table.

For Buhari, his background shows a man that grew in Northern Nigeria socialized by conservative values (Davison, 2016, p.2). Such informed the conservative inputs that came into Nigeria's Foreign Policy under Buhari. Shadam Wapmuk (2019) reinforces this by extolling values that Buhari exemplified in his foreign policy under first civilian rule (2015-2019). His conservative and disciplined personality trait can be viewed with

'his trips to foreign countries to appeal to them in his fight against corruption and the repatriation of stolen funds. In terms of economics, Buhari's disciplined personality influenced his decision not to support the World Bank and International Monetary Fund recommendation to encourage the free float of the Naira. Under security, his disciplinarian trait made the defeat of Boko Haram a priority leading to his re-vamping the Multinational Joint Taskforce with the rest of our Neighbours of Chad, Niger and Cameroun to enclose Boko Haram'.

Wapmuk stated that Buhari personality influenced his foreign policy gains Nigerian many positive in-roads in the international system as the Nation was viewed positively. The international community was more receptive to Buhari under his first civilian rule than military rule. Wapmuk summed this up by stating

'By 2015 – 2019, Buhari's confrontational approach has changed positively. This could be seen as Buhari was invited to international gatherings due to the image generated by his personality as an anti-corruption crusader. Buhari used that avenue to solicit aid from the international community to assist Nigeria in terms of Anti-Corruption, Economy and Security'.

Buhari's other personality traits are his pious, reserved, disciplined, and quiet nature. Added to these is Buhari's military discipline that ensures an attribute of high handedness and his religious conservatism. Such characteristics he transported into the civilian era, although his personality appears moderated under democratic settings (Bolarinwa, 2019). Bolarinwa supported this by stating.

'Buhari personality traits are seen as one that is pious, not corrupt, reserved, disciplined and quiet. Such traits influenced Nigeria's foreign policy under Buhari in terms of perception. For example, he desired to stop economic sabotage, which was alleged to be foreigners, leading him to close the border. However, given his military background, his sense of discipline prevented him from easily relenting to reverse the border closure policy citing national security. Hence, Buhari enjoyed goodwill from the world leaders as he has been invited to the G 20 and G 7, an honour for Nigeria'.

Such translated positively in Nigeria's favour in terms of the foreign policy agenda set by Buhari, as the international community saw a better, they could work with due to Buhari attributes. Hence, Olawale Olusola (2019) agrees with Bolarinwa point of view, adding that

'Buhari's personality is viewed as one that has integrity, having a military background. He is disciplined. He takes his time to come to a decision, acts swiftly when he takes a decision, such as when Buhari responded to the crises in the Gambia with a commitment to democratic rule. Buhari's pursuit of support from the international community for the repatriation of Nigeria's stolen loots was shaped by his deep conviction that those who had wronged the Nigerian State must be brought to justice. Now, he is a celebrated leader worldwide because of the hope the rest of the world holds for Nigeria due to Buhari. As a result, Nigeria image has enjoyed renewed vigour from what it used to be in the past'.

On the influence of Buhari's personality on Nigeria's foreign policy, Aboyade and Bolarinwa agree with other interviewees that under civilian rule, Buhari's personality reflected negatively on Nigeria enjoyed a pride of place and support because of how Buhari is perceived. Yet another personality trait attributed to Buhari is that of an upright and incorruptible person (Jiddere and Manu, n.d). All interviewees agree with this perspective. They viewed Buhari personality as having the appellation of anti-corruption; he is considered disciplined given his military background. This aforementioned view has encouraged world leaders to support Buhari three cardinal programmes of anti-corruption, economy and security. In assessing Buhari's personality influence on Nigeria's foreign policy, the interviewee's response combined with secondary data from literature leads this study to conclude that Buhari's personality is comprised of a conservative man who is pious, upright and disciplined. His personality also presents a man of integrity and who is incorruptible. These personalities feed into Nigeria's foreign policy under Buhari's Administrations. Also, it was deduced that Buhari's personality influenced Nigeria's Foreign Policy positively under his first civilian regime. It also shaped his tripod agenda in Nigeria's Foreign Policy.

9. Methodology

This study was conducted using the qualitative method and the descriptive design. For its analysis, this study made use of content analysis. In making its submission, this study used both primary (i.e., structured oral interview) and secondary (i.e., textbooks, journals, internet and reports). The interview research instrument used the quota sampling technique to arrive at respondents. And so, the respondents are individuals with academic or research backgrounds, persons with intimate knowledge about Muhammadu Buhari and Nigeria's foreign policy, and being associated with a research or academic background. As such, three (3) respondents were interviewed for this Article. The demographic characterizes of the respondent include an all-male set with an age bracket of 30 to 60. Their educational characteristic included two (2) respondents with PhD qualifications and one (1) other with PhD qualification in view. In addition, the occupations of the respond comprise one (1) respondent from academia and (2) from a research institution. The respondent's location includes Lagos with two (2) respondents and Ekiti with one (1). Two of the respondents were from the Nigeria Institute of International Affairs (NIIA), Nigeria's foremost foreign policy think tank, attached to the Nigerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, thereby providing valuable insights into the subject matter of this study. The other is an academic in the Nigerian Education system.

10. The Role Theory

This theory held that humans behave in different and predictable ways depending on personality, which is shaped by their respective social identities and situation (Hunter, 2015). Hence, it presumes that personality is shaped by an individual being a member of society and holding a particular social position (Hunter, 2015). Such develops said individual personality and determines their behaviours and decision-making expectations (Hunter, 2015). Here, social structure and interactions guide and shape individual personality development, which translates into their behaviours that influence the norms, expectations and behaviours associated with their roles (Fayomi et al., 2015). Granted, it's from this that an understanding is gained of the foreign policy behaviours of the Nigerian State, as represented by the personality imprint or influence of their leader. This understanding explains how personalities shape the roles played by Nigeria's leaders, such as Buhari, in conceptualizing, formulating and implementing Nigeria's Foreign Policy. Hence, President Muhammadu Buhari's personality determined the role he had to play in Foreign policy. Such determined his foreign policy direction based on national interest and security given his ascribed role from the military. Also, Buhari's military ancestry implanted in him a dutiful sense for national services and discipline, as his maternal and paternal great-grandfather and maternal grandfather serve in security posts in pre-colonial Nigeria (David-West, 2009, p.32).

Also, Buhari's personality ascribed for him a social identity that allowed him to identify as the direction of his foreign policy, Anti-Corruption, Security and the economic well-being of the nations. So, under Buhari civilian administration (2015 – 2019), his personality morphed him into adopting two roles. Firstly, the role he owed himself in leading his country in the external environment due to the debt he owed his country. Such arose due to his obligation for Nigeria for all it has given to him, which shaped his patriotism and disciplined drive to pursue national interest and his administration's agenda. Second is the role that society has placed on him to fight corruption, revive the economy and battle the security threats caused by maladministration (Fayemi et al., 2015). The roles adopted by Buhari under his stewardship of Nigeria are likened to his personality traits. This is because the social identity role he adopted reflected Buhari's upbringing, as influenced by his convictions and ideology, thereby forming the personality traits displayed under his administrations (2015 – 2019) which slipped into Nigeria's foreign policy.

11. Conclusion

This study has assessed the influence of Buhari personality on Nigeria's foreign policy under civilian (2015 – 2019) rule. It has done this by interrogating the personality influence of Muhammadu Buhari on Nigeria's foreign policy during this period, given the interplays between Buhari's personality and the foreign policy of Nigeria. Noted in this study was a deficiency in a national consensus of what could be attributed to the National Interest of Nigeria. Likewise, unclear was the anchor of what could be alluded to as strong foundational bases by which the adopted National interest of Nigeria can resist the assault of a strong-willed leader's personality or a small section of elites to subvert what in the National interest to suit Personal interest. In fairness, Nigeria does have a policy document ascribed as a direction of our national interest, but the dominance of the Personalization of institution or weak institution inability to resist its dominance by leaders' personality present a challenge. As such, Nigeria's national interest can be said to have been framed by the

direction the government in power accept it should go. Or in closer translation, the direction of its leaders is shaped by their personality traits. This research has revealed that Buhari's has a disciplined personality, quiet but decisive when he acts and a pious personality. This gives the perception that Buhari is not corrupt and is a man of integrity. Said personality traits have meant a favourable outlook of Nigeria as a partner in international affairs and the international community's acceptance of Nigeria leadership role in continental and international affairs. Hence, under Buhari's first civilian rule, Nigeria could reap benefits from Buhari's personality influence and his antecedent. Such is because Buhari's personality perception, especially by the international community as a man of integrity and uncorrupted, serve as valuable goodwill in lifting Nigeria's international profile. Also, the trajectory of Nigeria's foreign policy under Buhari identified him as pursuing the same agenda of Anti-corruption, Economic revival, security under this timeframe, with a great level of reception and support under his first civilian rule.

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