

**THE PRINT MEDIA AND IMAGE REBRANDING IN NIGERIA'S FOREIGN POLICY
(1999-2014)**

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to Almighty God who is the author and finisher of my life. And also to my parents Mr. Joseph Oguntuberu and Late Mrs Florence Oguntuberu, whose parental care and upbringing made me who I am today.

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ABBREVIATIONS

WAI – War Against Indiscipline

MAMSER – Mass Mobilization for Self Reliance Social Justice and Economic Recovery

OOH – Out of Home

CNN – Cable Network News

BBC – British Broadcasting Corporation

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization

USA – United States of America

FCT – Federal Capital Territory

NIIA – Nigerian Institute of International Affairs

NOA- National Orientation Agency

CIA – Central Intelligence Agency

NTA – Nigerian Television Authority

VON – Voice of Nigeria

NBC – Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation

NUJ – Nigerian Union of Journalist

CPJ – Committee to Protect Journalist

FGN – Federal Government of Nigeria

OPEC – Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries

MPLA – Movement for the Peoples’ Liberation of Angola

ECOWAS – Economic Community of West African States

IMF – International Monetary Fund

OIC - Organization of Islamic Conference

3Rs – Reconciliation, Reconstruction and Rehabilitation

IPI – International Press Institute

CBN – Central Bank of Nigeria

NYSC – National Youth Service Corps

SAP – Structural Adjustment Programme

AFF – Advance Fee Fraud (‘419’)

UN – United Nations

AU – African Union

NAM – Non-Align Movement

GTA – Green Tree Agreement

ICJ – International Court of Justice

EU – European Union

S&P – Standard & Poor’s Rating Services

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

EUEOM- European Union Election Observation Mission

PTDF- Petroleum Trust Development Fund

CPI – Corruption Perception Index

FSI – Failed State Index

TAC – Technical Aid Corp

ICPC – Independent Corruption Practices and Other Related Offences Commission

EFCC – Economic and Financial Crimes Commission

NEPAD – New Partnership for Africa’s Development

NADECO - National Democratic Coalition

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

ADB – African Development Bank

FDIs – Foreign Direct Investments

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ABSTRACT

The study identified Nigeria's image problems in foreign policy between 1999 and 2014; investigated the efforts made at addressing these image problems; examined the print media's role in rebranding Nigeria's image; and finally evaluated the factors that militated against the print media's contribution in the rebranding efforts. These were with the view to understanding the roles of the media (print media) in image rebranding in the context of Nigeria's foreign policy objectives.

The study utilised both primary and secondary data. Primary data were sourced through the conduct of in-depth interviews with scholars, staff and officials from different academic institutions; print media organizations; and federal government ministries and agencies. Thirteen respondents were interviewed. The 13 respondents were interviewed based on their knowledge in the area of the media, image rebranding and Nigeria's foreign policy. Four scholars who are experts in Nigeria's foreign policy and the media were interviewed, two each from the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife and University of Lagos, Akoka. In addition, one senior research fellow from the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA), Lagos was interviewed. The choice of these institutions was informed by the fact that they have conducted vast research in the area of Nigeria's foreign policy. Also two senior officers from the National Orientation Agency (NOA), Abuja and one senior officer, each from the Ministries of Information and Foreign Affairs, Abuja who played pioneering roles in past image rebranding initiatives/efforts were interviewed. Furthermore, four foreign news editors, each from the Nation Newspaper, Lagos; the Punch Newspaper, Lagos; Leadership Newspaper, Abuja and Guardian Newspaper, Lagos were interviewed. Secondary data were sourced from textbooks, journals, newspapers, reports and lecture series. Data collected were analysed using descriptive method of analysis.

The finding showed 92% of the respondents agreed that Nigeria had one form of image problem or the other between 1999 and 2014. The result also revealed that internal factors such as; corruption, insecurity, human rights violation, trans-border crimes and non-observance of democratic ethos were responsible for the Nigeria's image problem, as it made all efforts to rebrand its image a mere nomenclature. This was attested to by 85% of the respondents. The result further revealed that efforts/initiatives like the "Nigeria Image Project"; "Heart of Africa Project"; and "Rebranding Nigeria Project" launched by past administrations to address the Nigeria's image problems between 1999 and 2014 were misplacement of priorities which at best was an effort to 'market a bad product'. Finally, the study showed that the print media were not properly involved in past image rebranding efforts/initiatives between 1999 and 2014 as attested to by 62% of the respondents. Hence, it militated against the print media's contribution to rebranding the Nigeria's image.

The study concluded that attempts at incorporating image rebranding in Nigeria's foreign policy between 1999 and 2014 failed to yield significant results largely because the government neglected the influential role of the print media.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The perception of any country's image is an important gauge for judging its standing in the international system. A good image translates to respect, influence and prestige (Egwemi, 2010). On the other hand a bad or negative perception of a country's image indicates that such a country lacks respect, influence and prestige in the international system. As a consequence, all countries endeavour to build, maintain and enhance their images in relation to other countries. The factors that determine a nation's image (for good or for bad) can be both internal and external. Internally, a succession of regimes with bad policies and practice can impair the image of the country concern. Externally, it could be through participation in foreign military and humanitarian missions. An image problem usually occurs when there are both internal and external factors that sway the pendulum towards a bad/negative image. Whatever the source of an image problem, many a country would do all that is necessarily possible to overcome such an image (Egwemi, 2010). Holsti (1996) further clarifies this point when he define image as an individual's perception of an object, fact or condition in terms of badness or goodness as well as the meaning ascribed to, or deduced therefrom. It maybe extrapolated and concluded that image-building must necessarily constitute a fundamental element of a nation's foreign policy, suggesting that the way a country is perceived, especially in the 21st Century, is a function of its national image (Adeniyi, 2012, cited in Fayomi, Chidozie, Ajayi, 2015).

Nation branding is crucial in the current global order because it enhances public diplomacy, global socio-economic competitiveness, and soft-power promotion (Szondi, 2008).

The image and reputation of a country can attract both tangible and intangible benefits, including tourism revenue, investment capital, and foreign aid, and can boost its cultural and political influence in the global arena. Accordingly, there has been increasing awareness in recent years that the reputation of a country, city, or region behaves rather like the brand image of a product or company and is crucial to its progress and prosperity (Anholt, 1998). Images arising from an individual's cognitive systems will not become visible until they are communicated. This makes the media a key player in projection and laundering of a country's image (Kunczik, 1997). This is because, images of objects are embedded in the minds of individuals, limited by internal and external factors. The media is an essential channel through which people get information on both local and international issues, contributing heavily to national image projection. Every public image begins in the mind of individuals and only becomes public as it is transmitted and shared (Boulding, 1956).

Nigeria's external image has swung between periods of extreme positivity to periods of extreme negativity (Egwemi, 2010). Over the years in the country's political history, Nigeria juggled between a good image at certain periods (e.g., between 1960-1967, 1970-1983, 1999-2007) and a bad image at other periods (1993-1999, 2007-date) (Saliu, 2002; Egwemi, 1998, 2003, 2007; Egwemi and Usman, 2007). During periods of negative external image, the various governments have responded via different programmes and policies aimed at turning around and improving the negative image. For example, the Jaji Declaration by the Obasanjo military government (1975-1979), shortly after the Shagari-led civilian interlude, the Buhari/Idiagbon regime (1983-1985) launched the War Against Indiscipline (WAI) campaign. This was followed by the MAMSER and Not in Our Character initiatives, promoted by the Babangida and Abacha dictatorships, respectively (1985-1998). The return to civil rule witnessed a revamping of image

laundering in the country as exemplified by the Heart of Africa and Image Re-branding policies of the Obasanjo (1999-2007) and Yar'Adua (2007- 2010) administrations, respectively. To further fight corruption and ensure transparency, the Budget Monitoring and Price Intelligence Unit (BMPIU) that further instituted the 'Due process' system under the Oby Ezekwesili's watch was another effort of the government to ensure full compliance with laid-down guidelines and procedures for the procurement of capital and monitoring of capital projects as well as associated goods and services.

Despite the over three decades of re-branding efforts, Nigeria's image has remained "an insignia of dishonest, dishonour, and disrespect" (Bamiduro & Aremu, 2012). This call to mind some questions: Would the relative failure of past initiatives be linked to the limited role performed by the media? Which in the opinion of Alimi (2010), the media is supposed to form the 'strategy for foreign policy formulation and implementation in any country when well-focused...' Why would previous administration in the quest to rebrand Nigeria's image employ the services of foreign media firms thus, undermining the local media capability in rebranding the country's image?

Studies on Nigeria's foreign policy have affirmed that the long years of military rule had negative impacts on the image of Nigeria in the international community. The high point of this pathetic situation was the eventual pariah status that the country earned before the restoration of democratic government in 1999. Nigeria's transition to democratic regime in 1999 saw a shift in foreign policy which was directed towards reviving and rebranding Nigerian image. No doubt, various writers (Alimi, 2005; Adeniyi, 2012) have advanced unique positions vis-à-vis the quest to examine the role of mass media in Nigeria's foreign policy since the inception of the fourth republic in 1999. In fact mass media role as agenda setting actor, as watchdog, platform for

criticism, tool for enlightenment, agent of news and so on have received attention. But, little attention has been given to the role of local print media towards ensuring that Nigeria's image is rebranded for better diplomatic relations. It is against this backdrop that the study seeks to identify Nigeria's image problems between 1999 and 2014; investigate the various attempts at addressing Nigeria's image problems between 1999 and 2014; examine the print media's role in rebranding Nigeria's image in the period; and evaluate the factors militating against the print media in rebranding Nigeria's image within those years.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The role of the media in image building forms an essential element in foreign policy formulation and implementation in any country. Well focused foreign policy initiatives (image rebranding) help create and reinforce favourable images of a country to the external world. The media, therefore, has a central role to play in providing a proper understanding of a country's foreign policy to the larger population as well as the international community (Alimi, 2010).

Nigeria is one good example of nations that have experienced damaged international reputation and a long standing image problem that resulted from unpleasant human activities. As a matter of fact, there has been several issues of image crisis in Nigeria which erupted from unstable political situation, civil war in the 60s, biases of the global system towards African continents, corruption in the system of governance; most noticeably is the fallacious electoral process, amongst others (Egwemi, 2010). Furthermore, the spate of security challenges credited to the religious sects regarded as Boko Haram (literarily translated as western education is forbidden) threatens the business environment and the unity of the Nigerian state (Owuamanam *et al*, 2012). Also, internet scam by some Nigerian youths popularly known as yahoo boys

(Agunbiade & Ayotunde, 2011), and ethno-religious and inter-ethnic violence have attracted strong negative publicity (Osaghae & Suberu, 2005; Coleman, 2001).

Studies (Alimi, 2005; Adeniyi, 2012) on Nigeria's foreign policy have affirmed that protracted military rule, characterised by vicious abuse of fundamental human rights accorded Nigeria pariah status in the international community, which had negative implications on its foreign policy. However, with the restoration of civilian rule in 1999, the country's foreign policy has been geared towards rebranding its image for better diplomatic relations. The media is at the centre of this new drive.

Various writers (Alimi, 2005; Ajayi, 2005; Adeniyi, 2012) have advanced unique positions vis-à-vis the quest to examine the role of mass media in Nigeria's foreign policy since the inception of the fourth republic in 1999. In fact, mass media role as agenda setting actor, as watchdog, platform for criticism, tool for enlightenment, agent of news and so on have received attention. Extant literature on the role of the media in rebranding Nigeria's image largely focuses on electronic media. However, little attention has been given to the role of local print media towards ensuring that Nigeria's image is rebranded for better diplomatic relations. Considering, the provision of section 22 of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution (as amended) states that the media "shall at all times be free to uphold the fundamental objectives and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the government to the people". As further enshrined in Section 19, Nigeria's foreign policy objectives constitute a part of the country's Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy, which the media are constitutionally, empowered "to protect or uphold at all times". These sections suggest that the media is a strategic instrument of projecting the country's national image with a view to realizing its foreign policy objectives. This function

is, however, not absolute in that the media cannot project a country without taking into account its political development and socio-economic progress.

Furthermore, the trend of the Nigerian government in contracting the project of rebranding the country's image to foreign public relations firms largely signified the high point of the government to undermine the role of the local media in image rebranding efforts. For example, *Alder Consulting*, was contracted to promote the 'Heart of Africa project'. *Good Works International* was also contracted under the Yar A'dua's administration to further promote the 'Heart of Africa project' in the United States, for an annual fee of \$1.6million (Olukotun & Ayansola, 2012). Other international public relation firms that benefited from this largess include *Reroots*, the *James Mintz Group* as well as *Hill knowlton* (Olukotun & Ayansola, 2012). Thus, considering the print media, through its wide coverage of national issues and how it contributed to the re-emergence of democratic governance in 1999, it becomes apparent that vibrant print media exist in the country. Little wonder Thomas Jefferson in 1787 opines the print media as necessary in state building (including image building). To further express the important role of the print media, Jefferson compared government and the newspaper and said 'were it left to (him) to decide whether we should have a government without a newspaper, or newspaper without a government, (he) would not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter' (Yahaya, 1990). To further corroborate Jefferson, Walter Lippmann, as quoted in (Stapenhurst, 2000) opines 'the newspaper is in all literalness the bible of democracy, the book out of which a people determines its conduct. It is the only serious book most people read every day'.

Thus, it becomes imperative for scholars to mediate on why government considered the local media as insufficient to engender an adequate image rebranding efforts despite these huge contributions and roles of the print media. This is with the view to understanding the

constitutional roles of the media (print media) in image rebranding in the context of Nigeria's foreign policy objectives from 1999 to 2014.

1.3. Research Questions

The Research questions are:

- (a) What are the image problem(s) of Nigeria that are so sordid that they require rebranding?
- (b) What are the various efforts made at addressing Nigeria's image problems between 1999 and 2014?
- (c) What role did the print media play in rebranding Nigeria's image abroad between 1999 and 2014? and
- (d) What are the factors militating against the print media's effort in rebranding Nigeria's image between 1999 and 2014?

1.4 Research Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are to

- (a) identify Nigeria's image problems between 1999 and 2014;
- (b) investigate the various attempts at addressing Nigeria's image problems between 1999 and 2014;
- (c) examine the print media's role in rebranding Nigeria's image between 1999 and 2014; and
- (d) evaluate the factors militating against the print media's contribution in rebranding Nigeria's image vis-à-vis foreign policy formulation between 1999 and 2014.

1.5 Research Assumptions

This study is based on the assumption that:

- i. the print media, through its historical role in Nigeria's political development, plays pivotal roles in Nigeria's image rebranding quest in respect of foreign policy formulation.
- ii. non-involvement of the local print media led to the collapse of previous image rebranding initiatives.
- iii. Nigeria's image crisis has negative impact on its foreign policy.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study will contribute to extant literature on the role of the media, Nigeria's efforts at rebranding and the role of the print in the rebranding efforts from 1999 to 2014. Thus the findings of this study will help government in its image making/rebranding initiatives in future. Also, media outlets will find the outcome of the study useful given its capacity to give direction on what a workable outline of image rebranding project should reflect vis-à-vis the need to corroborate with the government. The information gathered from the study will be useful to students and teachers in further research.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study covers the period between 1999 and 2014. This time frame is significant because 1999 marks the restoration of civilian rule with the country's foreign policy geared towards reviving and rebranding the country's international image. This led to the

establishment of various rebranding initiatives like; Heart of Africa and Image Re-branding policies of the Obasanjo (1999-2007) and Yar'Adua (2007- 2010) administrations, respectively.

1.8 Limitation of the Study

The study experienced some limitation such as poor access to empirical data from some of selected sources to boost the analysis. This was to non-availability of respondents and their unwillingness to participate in the interviews. The few enthusiastic respondents available were highly emotional and their responses were laden with some level of bias. Access to primary data was further limited due to the sensitivity of the issue as most of the respondents especially in the government agencies were being careful of their responses.

1.9 Contribution to Knowledge

This study will provide information on the role of the local print media in rebranding Nigeria's image. The study will further add to extant body of knowledge on the media and Nigeria's foreign policy. It will therefore, serve as reference material for further research.

1.9 Definition of Terms

Print Media

“Print media” refers to publications that appear in print- generally newspapers and magazines. For example in Nigeria there are: *The Punch, The Nations, Vanguard, Guardian* etc newspapers. Newspapers are mostly daily or weekly publications, while on the other hand magazines are periodical- weekly or monthly, some examples are the *Newswatch, TELL,* magazine.

The print media is broadly categorized under the ‘traditional media’ which include; Broadcast Media (Broadcast media includes radio and television), and Out-of-home or OOH media. (Out-of-home medium include hoardings, billboards, posters, theater ads, banner displays on Automated Teller Machines (ATMs), sidewalk chalk messages etc). Fifty years ago, the term "media" was still not in common use, and the term used to be the “print press” (Halper, 2014). But today, they tend to be called the “print media” (‘media’ is the plural form of ‘medium’ - a newspaper is an example of a mass medium).

Traditional medium cover the medium that was the means of communication and expression before the digital era- advent of the Internet. However, with the advent of globalization and digitization, traditional medium has thus adopted the ‘new media’ (New Media is the whole term for all the media which emerged after the computer and internet which include Digital and social media) platform, thus expanding their coverage and audience. For instance, the newspapers and magazines have also adopted the new media platform hence making it relevant in information dissemination. Furthermore, for the purpose of this study, local print media will be the focus in order to understand its role in Nigeria’s foreign policy vis-à-vis image rebranding.

Image Rebranding

In order to understand the concept of image rebranding as it is used in this study, it is pertinent to understand both words separately. An image can be described as the impression, feeling or opinion, which somebody has, about an organization. According to Lippmann (1922) ‘images are pictures in peoples head’. He maintains that, people define first and then see, rather than see first and then define. Furthermore, scholars defined image from the socio-psychological

perspective. Boulding (1956) for instance, identifies image in respect to perceived image which he described as the 'total cognitive, affective and evaluative structure of the behaviour unit or its internal view of itself and the universe. It is the organized representation of an object in an individual cognitive system. This 'object' can be organisation or a nation (Boulding, 1956).

On the other hand, Rebranding is term commonly used in business circle as branding. Rebranding or branding in organisational term involves, the organisation's logo, slogan, it can also mean efficient communication of the organisations mission, goals and image. However, all these are components of a brand, but they do not capture the whole package in a brand. A brand is not tangible. A successful brand lives in the minds and hearts of the prospective audience, likewise the bad brand. A brand must provide what the public think of the product or service despite almost anything can be branded. Manufactured goods, a service, a location (country) even a person. For instance, Elivs, Paris Hilton, Amsterdam, Las Vegas, IPOD and Roles; are all established brands. The most successful brands hold a power positive position within our psyche.

Thus from the above, image rebranding in this study is applied to Nigeria in its quest to rebrand the already battered image that has negatively impacted its external relations with the rest of the world. Rebranding in the context of this study includes all initiatives and efforts at addressing Nigeria's image problem.

Foreign Policy

There is probably no concept in which it is so important to distinguish between myth and reality as foreign policy (Calvert, 1986). Foreign policy is a pattern of behaviour of a country in the international system, derived at attaining set goals and objectives. According to Frankel (1963) foreign policy are 'decisions and actions which involve to some appreciable extent

relations between the state and others' others as referred to by Frankel, include both domestic and international actors, among which is the media. This is also because foreign policy is predicated on domestic reality.

The concept of foreign policy refers to the strategy with which institutionally designed decision-makers seek to manipulate the international environment in order to achieve certain national interests. In effect, every country must have a foreign policy in order to live and survive as an independent state in the complex, chaotic international system driven by national interest. It therefore follows that foreign policy of any state is determined by a number of factors (internal and external), among which is the mass media (print media). Therefore for the purpose of this study, foreign policy is seen as the interplay between the internal and external environment of foreign policy. It is within the loci of this interaction that the print media plays a pivotal role. Thus, it is difficult to discuss Nigeria's foreign policy and its quest of rebranding its image without recourse to the role of the print media.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Theory is a pivotal phenomenon within the field of humanity given the need to put issues in proper perspective. Regarding mass media role in foreign policy there are several analytical approaches namely Marxism and Liberal-Pluralism which can be of help to analyse, predict and draw conclusion on salient issues. However, *impression management* theory has been adopted as the anchor for analysis of this study. Its relevance to this study is based on its basic assumptions on perception and image management. Impression management theory states that one tries to alter one's perception according to one's goals. In other words, the theory is about how individuals wish to present themselves, but in a way that satisfies their needs and goals. Impression management theory is used in this study to analyse efforts made by Nigeria to rebrand or change the perception of the international community about its image. Considering Nigeria like any other country in the world has been concerned with its image problems. The quest to gain both regional and global recognition has subjected the country to perpetual challenges. Insecurity, corruption, social crimes, lack of good governance, gross violation of human rights and constant killing have dented the country's image.

Impression management is a conscious or subconscious process in which people attempt to influence the perceptions of other people about a person, object or event. They do so by regulating and controlling information in social interaction (Piwinger and Helmut, 2001). It was first conceptualized by Erving Goffman in 1959, and then got expanded in 1967. Impression

management is usually used synonymously with self-presentation, in which a person tries to influence the perception of its image. The notion of impression management was first applied in face-to-face communication, but then was applied to computer-mediated communication. Also this concept was applied into different field of study from academic research in the field of Psychology and Sociology to practical fields such as corporate communication and media.

The foundation and the defining principles of Impression Management were created by Erving Goffman in his well-known work, *The Presentation of Self in Every Day Life*. It can sometimes be referred to as *Self-Presentation* theory or *Identity Management* theory. Goffman “proposed to focus on how people in daily work situations present themselves and, in so doing, what they are doing to others”, and he was “particularly interested in how a person guides and control how others form an impression of them and what a person may or may not do while performing before them” (Larry; Alf Steinar; Keri; Jan-Oddvar, 2010).

Consequently, impression management has been applied in the management of the image of cities. Twentieth-century New York emerged as a prime example of a town that fought a difficult battle to prove to the world that its “core” was indeed different than how it was perceived. Blake (2006) explores the issue in detail in her book “*How New York became American*”. She traces The Big Apple’s History from 1890 to 1924 and touches on all aspects of New Yorkers being perturbed by how tourists and external reporters were tarnishing their reputation by highlighting the crime rates, thanks to gangsters, illegal immigration, and riots, to name just a few problems. The city’s reformers and boosters (Blake, 2006) undertook a campaign to tell their own story, openly chiding tourists, and out-of-town journalists who engaged in yellow journalism, by choosing to tell sleazy stories of Broadway and inappropriate shows.

Another case in point is Moscow and St. Petersburg, capitals of the former Soviet Union, struggled with their images for decades. As the two metropolises took turns being the seat of government, the need to re-model both post-Soviet Union emerged soon (Gritsai & Wustern, 2000). The remodeling followed a Western make-over, complete with billboards, and updated architecture. This also showed the important role of the media in impression management as alluded to by Albritton and Manheim (1983) that press release as a method of disseminating information has progressively become a useful means of image laundering in international relations. It is a progressive means of restoring Nigerian image which the government has effectively explored; using the media to showcase its nature in order to attract foreign investors to the country.

A range of assumptions that govern impression management were identified:

1. There exist a kind of social situation whether real or imaginary
2. There exist set of strategy to address such social situation
3. There are set of goals that addressing such social situation tend to achieve

Thus analyzing these assumptions in the context of Nigeria's image rebranding effort, it can be stated that impression management becomes necessary whenever there exists a kind of social situation, whether real or imaginary. In the case of Nigeria, image problem which either wrongly perceived or not had been the bane in Nigeria's relations with the global community.

Another important assumption of impression management theory is the issue of strategy. There are many methods behind impression management, including self-disclosure (identifying what makes you "you" to another person), managing appearances (trying to fit in), ingratiation, aligning actions (making your actions seem appealing or understandable), and alter-casting (imposing identities on other people). These self-presentation methods can also be used on the

corporate and country level as impression management. Nigerian government responded to its image problem with the establishment of commissions and launching of image building campaigns. The country in the bid to repair the damaged image has primarily carried out three image building campaigns namely: “Nigeria Image Project” (2004), “Heart of Nigeria project” (2005) and “Rebranding of Nigeria” (2009). As secondary response, two anti-corruption agencies the ICPC (2001) and EFCC (2003) were introduced. Other government efforts were: transition to democratic system of government in 1999, granting Amnesty to Niger Delta militants in 2009, sending peacekeeping troops to troubled areas and establishment of Almajiris nomadic schools in 2012 and so on. All these were strategies at managing the country’s image.

Impression management has the assumption that there must be set goals that the person/organization or nation intend to achieve depending on how they want to influence their audience (International community) regarding a certain topic, presenting themselves in different ways can shape different impressions and reactions in the audience. In the case of Nigeria, the overall goal of the image management is to change Nigeria and Nigerians orientation and value. This was to further attract and improve its external relations both political and economically.

Impression management theory has been criticized for its assumptions on how reality is constructed. That notwithstanding, the theory is relevant to the understanding of the negative image of Nigeria and its context. It allows for perception management tools to be used and gives room for strategy like employing the media to communicate in order to improve perception.

2.2 Literature Review

This study adopts a thematic review of relevant literature in order to give an analytical base to the study. The key issues in the study will be conceptualized and themed for a comprehensive literature review. These include: Media in International Politics and

Humanitarian Intervention, Environment of Foreign Policy: The Domestic Environment, Media –Foreign Policy: the Nexus Debate, Conceptualizing Brand and Branding: An Introspect to Nation Branding, National Image-building and External Relations.

Over the years, a considerable amount of predominantly American academic research has addressed the relationship between media and foreign policy (Cohen, 1963; Entman, 2004; Nacos *et al.*, 2000), especially during international crises (e.g. Hallin, 1987; Mermin, 1999), but cross national research on the subject has remained relatively rare (Stolle & Hooghe 2005). Consequently, it is still unclear to what degree country characteristics, such as differences in national media systems, political systems and position in the international system, affect the generality of the US-originated theories of media-state relations.

However, most of these academic researchers (Chanan, 2002, Graber 2002, Baum, 2003) accept the commonplace assumption that mass media have a profound and direct impact on virtually every aspect of the political process. Media is an important component which ‘foreign policy decision-makers take into considerations as they develop their policies’ (Chanan, 2002) since it both constrains leaders and officials yet provides them with opportunities to advance their goals (Gilboa, 2002). The involvement of the media in this decision-making process is complex. However, in the environment of decision making there are major input components and factors that influence foreign policy; the civil society, media, leadership, geography, history, etc. Thus, the media plays both input and output role in foreign policy.

Past studies of foreign policy and media relations neglected to deal with this complex changing role of the media in foreign policy (especially in the area of image rebranding in countries with relatively battered international image) and how a nation’s ability to interact with other nations is reflected through media image branding. Previous studies on media and nation

branding largely focus on the influence and role of the electronic in image branding. However, little or no scholarly attention is given to the print media, thereby undermining the historical role the print media is playing in image building.

2.2.1 Media in International Politics and Humanitarian Intervention

The media is regarded as one of the pivotal factors underling the evolution of what prominent scholars of globalization and international politics, such as Manuel Castells and Gustavo Cardoso (2005), Ruggie (1998), have labelled ‘the global civil society’ and ‘the process of unbundling territoriality’. Already a decade ago, the long-time student of communications and international affairs, Livingston (1997), summarizes this tendency clearly: “The impact of these new global, real time media is typically regarded as substantial, if not profound”. Livingston singles out two factors that, in particular, have brought about the massive involvement of the media in international politics. The first was the end, in 1989, of the Cold War as the overarching and all-defining global conflict. The second factor involves the advances in communications technology that have made it possible to broadcast with only a few seconds’ delay from anywhere on earth particularly via satellite communication devices and fibre-optic cables. All of these developments offer, at first glance, evidence to suggest that the notion of media as a driving force might have greater validity in today’s media environment. On the one hand, it is certainly the case that communication technologies such as the internet, as well as the omnipresence of digital cameras and mobile phones, means that there is more information circling the global media sphere and, in some ways traditional patterns of indexing, whereby journalists are heavily dependent upon official sources, seems to be a thing of the past. Moreover, there is now unprecedented potential for individuals to readily seek out alternative

sources of information that present different viewpoints from those advocated by mainstream media and political elites.

Nik Gowing, 1994, Warren Strobel, 1997 and Larry Minear *et al.*, 1997 argue that the media drives international politics by analyzing media effects on humanitarian intervention. Gowing (1994) in an interview-based research in early 1990s with diplomatic and policy insiders reveals that media coverage pressures and influence policy makers in their performance of foreign policy making functions. He however argues that the relationship between policy makers and the media is not a "one-way" one; rather it is one of reciprocal influence. He concludes that media influence upon 'strategic' decisions to intervene during a humanitarian crisis was comparatively rare, whilst 'tactical' and 'cosmetic' impact was more frequent. So, for example, he found that media coverage was capable of influencing 'tactical' decisions such as the creation of 'safe areas' during the 1992-1995 civil war in Bosnia or limited airstrikes against Bosnian Serb nationalist artillery positions. More often, he found that a frequent response of politicians to media pressure was simply to develop 'cosmetic' policy responses, for example airlifting small numbers of injured children out of conflict zones. For Gowing, the superficial and limited nature of these 'cosmetic' policy responses was entirely intentional. Indeed, these policies were enacted in order to deflect media pressure for more substantive intervention.

However, Gowing was confronted with the difficulty in measuring exactly the precise impact which media has on policy, specifically whether or not the media can cause humanitarian intervention. He for example admits that media coverage can change 'overall (government) strategy', though only on a very rare occasion. He never really defines what he means by overall strategy and therefore leaves the reader unsure as to whether the media can cause humanitarian intervention.

One detects the same lack of precision in Strobel's study, when he argues at one point that there is 'little evidence of a *push* (that is cause intervention) effect . . . nor is there evidence of a pull (that is cause withdrawal) effect' (Strobel, 1997). But elsewhere he speculates that 'televised images of innocents' suffering people can be a factor in moving policy. He also asserts that the media 'can exert strong influence' on policy, (Strobel, 1997) that it only plays 'a supplementary role', (Strobel, 1997) that it can 'have a decided effect', (Strobel, 1997) but in the end does not 'cause intervention' (Strobel, 1997). This analytical confusion leaves one unsure as to what role the media does play exactly during humanitarian crises. The same lack of precision can be found in the volume, *The News Media, Civil Wars and Humanitarian Action* (Minear *et al.*, 1997). The different contributors to the volume look in detail the US intervention in Northern Iraq 1991. They argue that media pressure built upon a perceived Western obligation toward the Kurds was the rationale for humanitarian intervention (Minear *et al.*, 1997). Media pressure in this case, is understood to be the basis for intervention. Instead, the contributors presented a good deal of loose speculation about "complex systems", "fluid interplay" (Minear *et al.*, 1997) and a "rich and diverse relationship" between media coverage and policy outcome (Minear *et al.*, 1997)—all of which sounds reasonable enough but does little to clarify things or prove a direct causal relationship between news coverage and policy options.

If the interview based research fails to offer clear answers regarding the significance of media effect on humanitarian intervention, it does highlight the key role "policy certainty" plays in determining media influence. Gowing approvingly quotes Kofi Annan who has observed that "when governments have a clear policy, . . . then television has little impact"; however "when there is a problem, and the policy has not been thought" through "they have to do something or face a public relations disaster" (Gowing, 1994). Strobel is even more certain when he notes that

“the effect of realtime television is directly related to the . . . coherence . . . of existing policy” (Strobel, 1997). The contributors to the Minear volume come to much the same conclusion. Indeed, in their view, there is an inverse relationship between policy clarity and media influence. Hence, when policy is unclear or ill-defined the media can indeed have some influence on policy; on the other hand, “the media effect on policy decreases as the clarity of strategic interest increases” (Minear *et al.*, 1997).

Moving now to a consideration of the case study based research, Shaw’s *Civil Society and Media in Global Crises* contains a useful analysis of the impact that news media coverage is presumed to have had upon the Western decision to intervene in Northern Iraq in 1991. Shaw (1993) systematically analyses news bulletins and describes how coverage of the plight of Kurdish refugees became increasingly critical of Western inaction. When media criticism reached a crescendo, Shaw argues that the West was impelled to do something. His central and important claim, therefore, is that coverage of suffering Kurdish refugees actually caused the unprecedented proposal for Kurdish safe havens.

Significantly, Shaw’s careful analysis of news bulletins reveals that it was a particular type of coverage that pressured Western leaders to intervene. In his words:

The graphic portrayal of human tragedy and the victims’ belief in Western leaders was skillfully juxtaposed with the responsibility and the diplomatic evasions of those same leaders to create a political challenge which it became impossible for them to ignore (Shaw, 1993).

The important point that Shaw’s work reveals here is that the framing (Entman, 2004) of news media reports is crucial in determining their political impact. Media reports do not “objectively” report humanitarian crises. Rather, they report crises in particular, and often very different, ways. The emotive and graphic coverage of the Kurds clearly pressured politicians to “do something”. This pressure would not have existed if media reports had been framed in a less emotive and

more distancing manner. For example, with regard to the humanitarian crises in Liberia during the 1990s, Minear *et al.* point out that “the international media ventured into Liberia . . . to provide bizarre documentary style coverage from the ‘Heart of Darkness’ rather than news of a serious threat to international peace and security” (Minear *et al.*, 1997).

The problem with Shaw’s work however is a failure to analyse the policy process itself. He accepts that the “loss of policy certainty” in the “aftermath of the Cold War” may indeed have “opened up a particular window for the media” (Shaw, 1993). But beyond that he says very little about official policy. As a result he tends to privilege the role of the media while ignoring other possible motivations for the intervention. His claim that the news media precipitated intervention in Northern Iraq during 1991 is certainly plausible; but without a deeper discussion of the policy-makers and how they viewed the situation, his account is rendered less than convincing.

Like Shaw, Livingston and Eachus (1995) offer a systematic in-depth case study, not by analysing the Iraqi case but by looking at US intervention in Somalia in 1992. They base their discussion on a survey of official statements, the policy process in question and media coverage. As such, it is the most methodologically exacting research considered so far. Interestingly, what drives their discussion is not so much whether the media can influence policy but rather who determines the content of the news and therefore controls its capacity to influence. As such the authors actually assume that media influence on policy can and do occur (Livingston and Eachus, 1995). Importantly, for Livingston and Eachus, if it turns out to be journalists themselves setting the news agenda, then it might be concluded that the media effect was indeed in operation. They further posit that if on the other hand the news agenda was set by politicians then something else would be going on, in such instance, one could hardly talk of a media effect.



And by carefully unpacking how certain government officials worked hard to get Somalia on the political agenda, Livingston and Eachus convincingly demonstrate how media coverage actually reflected the agendas of certain government officials in Washington. These officials then used this media coverage to influence top executive policy makers to intervene in Somalia. However, because it was government officials (not journalists) setting the news agenda, Livingston and Eachus argue that the CNN effect (as they understand it) was not present in relation to US intervention in Somalia. Livingston and Eachus did not consider the role of media in framing to warrant external humanitarian intervention.

However, the general criticism and lacuna in the above studies, is that they largely focus on the influence and role of the electronic media (CNN, BBC etc) and their impact on humanitarian intervention. This study is more concern with the role of the print media and its changing role in foreign policy (especially in the area of image building in countries with relatively battered international image) and how it impacts on nation's ability to interact with other nations is reflected through media image rebranding.

2.2.2 Environment of Foreign Policy: The Domestic Environment

Foreign policy is made and implemented within an international and domestic political context. The focus of this theme is however on the domestic environment. According to Otubanjo (1999):

The domestic environment refer essentially to features, factors and forces...peculiar to the state,...foreign policy is being made. The domestic environment includes geographical location of the state, its peculiarity, natural and human resources, the nature of the political system, quality of leadership, the nature of interaction among groups in the society etc (Otubanjo, 1999).

Domestic environmental factors have great impact on the decision/policy making of a country. Little wonder, Northedge (1968) posits that the foreign policy of any country is a product of environmental factors both internal and external. The strength of a particular domestic factor in influencing a particular foreign policy option of a country however represents a complex calculus as evident in Babaginda administration's involvement of human and financial resources in the Liberian Crisis at a time when public opinion in Nigeria heavily tilted against an involvement in the crisis (Nwosu, 1993). As opines by Synder (1962), "...the number and complexity of factors that influence national action in the international arena are not only enormous, but the task of identifying the crucial variable is also unfinished"

Bartes (1968) on his part postulates that it is in the "home made" and aggregate of all the external conditions and influence that affect the life and development of organism, including also foreign policy. Ogene (1998) and Kissinger (1969) in their submissions examine the role domestic structures in a country's relations with other nations in the world system. Modern diplomatic history has portrayed the foreign policy of a nation as one determined by its domestic structures (Northedge, 1968). Domestic environment determines the role a nation plays in the international system.

It has become an axiomatic truth that the foreign policy of a country is to a large extent determined by its domestic environment. Many scholars and diplomats (Nweke, 1986, Akinyemi, 1970, Gambari, 1980, Chanan, 2002, Baum, 2003, Akinterinwa, 2010) have accepted this view. They have attempted to:

Demonstrate that the various constituent elements in the political system- the government, the political parties, pressure groups, civil service, the political and bureaucratic elites, public opinion, and the press- operating within the democratic process provided by the constitution, exert direct or indirect influence in shaping a country's foreign policy (Nweke, 1986).

Many scholars and diplomats have attempted an in-depth assessment of Nigeria's foreign policy. Idang, 1973, Akinyemi 1970, Gambari, 1980, Aluko, 1981, Akinterinwa, 2010 and Iroh, 2005 in analysing Nigeria's foreign policy focused exclusively on limited goals. Idang (1973) focused on the impacts of institutions and social forces, like parliament, political parties and foreign policy elites.

Akinyemi (1970) on the other hand examines the nature and character of the administrative structure in the foreign policy process when subjected to other "pressures" domestic environment, particularly political parties and attitudes of political elites. Gambari (1980) also posits that the domestic political structure and process are of great impact on the nature and character of Nigeria's foreign policy because they serve as the channel for internationalization of the international environment and events, thus making them intelligible and of value to the participants in domestic political roles.

Aluko (1981) on his part embarks on the imperative to resolve the impact of colonial heritage and the formative leadership. While Iroh (2005) in his assessment of Nigeria's foreign policy incorporated the role of public opinion. He however, opines that as a result of Nigeria's low level of political culture, awareness, literacy and a myriad of domestic problems the media remains the important arbiter, mediator and moderator of public opinion. Other studies have focused on the evolution of Nigeria's foreign policy by demonstrating how "internal pressures" both of administrative structure and of the society as well as how organisations really affect foreign policy formulation and implementation (Philips, 1973).

In spite of all these intellectual exercises in clarifying the link between the elements of domestic environment and foreign policy, there shortcoming hinges on the common thread that runs through all the studies. One of shortcoming is the issue of preference given to governmental

institutions with less consideration given to the impact of structures like the print media in influencing foreign policy. Another weakness is their failure to analyse beyond description and explanation. These studies in analysing Nigeria's foreign policy neglected to deal with the complex changing role of the print media in Nigeria's socio-political development, especially in the area of image rebranding in countries with relatively battered international image and how it promotes nation's ability to interact with other nations through its foreign policy which is the basis of this study.

2.2.3 Media-Foreign Policy: The Nexus Debate

In order to illustrate how the media have revolutionized the foreign policy making process, the image of the Soviet missile crisis in Bay of Pigs, during John F. Kennedy's government is often mentioned (Hoge, 1994; Livingston, 1997). During the first six days of the crisis, Kennedy and his advisers had the chance to deliberate in secrecy about which course of action they were to take. The capability of keeping the situation in secret kept foreign policy makers from dealing with "public hysteria" (Livingston, 1997) or media pressures. Nonetheless, the context has changed considerably since 1962.

Firstly, due to technological development, real time news coverage allows information to be broadcasted 24 hours a day from anywhere in the world, with no regards for diplomatic secrecy. Secondly, since the end of the Cold War, the world is no longer bipolar, leading towards a lack of definition of American national interests, for they are no longer constructed around the idea of stopping the spread of communism. The latter leads towards the third point: there is policy uncertainty about foreign affairs. These contextual changes have redefined the debt on the relationship between the news media and the foreign policy decision-making process in the West, though there is great debate about its influence and limitations.

On the one hand is the "**CNN effect**", which is understood in a variety of ways. It comes from being understood as the capability of the news media (television in particular) to "shape the policy agenda" (Gowing, 1994); the "power" of news journalism "to move governments" (Cohen, 1994); "the idea that real-time communications technology could provoke major responses from domestic audiences and political elites to global events" (Robinson, 1999); the argument that "the media drives Western conflict management by forcing Western governments to intervene militarily in humanitarian crises against their will" (Jacobsen, 2000); "elite decision makers' loss of policy control to news media" (Livingston and Eachus, 1995). For instance, Gleis (2010) argues with confidence that the "CNN Effect" ultimately led to NATO intervention in Libya in March, 2011.

While the **manufacturing consent theory** argues that "the media does not create policy, but rather that news media is mobilized (manipulated even) into supporting government policy" (Robinson, 1999). There are two ways in which manufacturing consent may take place: the executive version, in which there is framing that conforms to the official agenda; and the elite version, in which news coverage is critical of executive policy as a consequence of elite dissensus (Robinson, 1999).

When trying to understand the relationship between the media and foreign policy decision-making, both theories, the CNN effect and the manufacturing consent come into contest. In this part of the study, the conclusions that different researchers have reached regarding media-foreign policy nexus will be reviewed, in order to present a wide scope of the dimensions of their findings. Jacobsen (2000) studied the impact of media coverage on foreign conflict management in relation to the phases of violence of the conflict. He concludes that the direct impact of the media on foreign policy making is negligible in the pre and post-violence

phases, and limited during the violence phase. He notes that the CNN effect is necessary for interventions, but insufficient to cause them, for they are decided by other factors: action perceived as quick, with low risk of casualties and a clear exit strategy.

On the other hand, Livingston (1997) suggests a three-way typology of likely CNN effects. The three CNN effects are described as follows: First effect is **media as accelerants**, in this modality, media are presumed to shorten the time of decision-making response. Yet, the media can also become a “force multiplier”, a “method of sending signals” to the opponent. This effect is most plausible to appear in conventional warfare, strategic deterrence, and tactical deterrence (Livingston, 1997).

Second effect is **media as impediment**, this takes two forms, as an emotional inhibitor, and as a threat to operational security. One likely manifestation of the emotional inhibitor effect is the “Vietnam syndrome” (Livingston, 1997), in which, it is presumed, public support is undermined by the media coverage of casualties. As a threat to operational security, the media are said to compromise the success of an operation by broadcasting it and, thus, revealing strategic information to the enemy, frustrating the success of the operation. This kind of effect, Livingston notes, is likely to appear during conventional warfare, tactical deterrence, peacemaking and peace keeping operations.

Hoge (1994) describes the quality of media as accelerants as a pressure for politicians to “respond promptly to news accounts”. However, Hoge foresees a negative effect of media as accelerants, due to the fact that news accounts “by their very immediacy are incomplete, without context and sometimes wrong” (Hoge, 1994). In the case of Somalia, Mermin (1997) believes that media stories may have accelerated the movement in Washington towards intervention, yet those stories were clearly a product of that movement.

The “Vietnam Syndrome”, denominated “bodybag effect” by Freedman (2000) is an important consideration for intervention, even without the media; as Jacobsen (1996) describes, one of the requirements for intervention is a low risk of casualties. Therefore, it can be concluded that the fact of the casualties, not the broadcasting of them that has an effect on policy (Luttwak, 1994; Hoge, 1994), since casualties are “unacceptable if suffered for no purpose” (Freedman, 2000).

The third effect is the ability of the media to function **as an agenda setter** is the most questioned by Livingston (1997) since the CNN effect has been overestimated. “The majority of humanitarian operations are conducted without media attention (...) Furthermore, the eventual media coverage itself was the consequence of official actions” (Livingston, 1997). In the case of Somalia, Livingston (1997), Livingston and Eachus (1995) and Mermin (1997) conclude that the media were used by powerful elites to put pressure over other officials, and that coverage followed policy makers' actions.

Gowing (1994) by interviewing diplomatic and policy insiders finds that they often felt pressured and influenced by media coverage in their performance of foreign policy making. This fact reveals that the relationship between policy makers and the media is not "one-way", rather it is one of reciprocal influence. Both these theories are in clear confrontation, and they invalidate each other. But as Robinson (2001) notes, the debate about effect vs. non-effect is unconstructive. Rather, new approaches towards understanding more clearly the relationship between media and foreign policy making are to be achieved.

However, most of the literatures reviewed on media-foreign policy nexus are made from a Western point of view, based on the influence of the electronic media (Cable networks; CNN, BBC, Fox News etc) and it is focused on cases of humanitarian intervention, hence it is

insufficient to draw general conclusions about the impact of the media on foreign policy making as a whole. Furthermore, the conclusions achieved may not be accurate in the context of non-Western and or non-First World countries. Hence the need for new approaches in the study of media-foreign policy nexus from the role perspective of the media (print media) in foreign policy and image rebranding for better diplomatic relations.

2.2.4 Conceptualizing Brand and Branding: An Introspect to Nation Branding

The term *brand* can be used in three senses: to describe the designed identity of a product, to refer to the culture of the organization behind the product, and to approximate the product's or corporation's reputation in the minds of its target audience (Anholt, 1998).

Muzellec & Lambkin (2006) define Branding as a tool of marketing in which a new name, term, symbol, design, or a combination of these is created for a product with the aim of developing “a new differentiated identity in the minds of consumers, investors, and competitors” (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006). According to the Committee on Re-branding (2009), a brand is “the totality of consumers’ experience, perception, benefits and values.” Customers’ perception of a brand matters a great deal to the brand owner. This explains why in Stobarts opinion a brand image is carefully built, “maintained and positioned” (Stobart, 2002).

Though the term *brand* is often used in relation to products, it has recently been applied to countries (nation branding), as the Nigerian, Korean, Chinese, and American re-branding projects demonstrate. Szondi (2008) defines Nation branding as “the strategic self-presentation of a country with the aim of creating reputation capital through economic, political and social interest promotion at home and abroad” (Szondi, 2008). This may stem from self-defense, as when a country tells its own story in contradiction to foreign media portrayals, definitions by rival nations, or the perpetuation of national stereotypes (Dinnie, 2008). For example, a

Presidential Council on Nation Branding was established in South Korea in 2009 by President Lee Myung-Bak, who had taken exceptional interest in improving the international perception of the country. Also, since the US “War on Terror” response to the September 11, 2001 attacks, the name America has become largely circumspect, especially in the Islamic world, because of an alleged American imposition of its brand of liberal democracy that many believe is underpinned by the desire for access to oil in Iraq and elsewhere (Maass, 2009; Keen, 2006). The US image declined during this period, but for a new re-branding for change signaled by President Barack Obama.

Nation branding differs from product branding because the parameters for the former are far more intricate and they take considerable time to manifest. Such parameters include domestic social, economic, and political well-being. Therefore, re-branding a nation without proper governance is like putting the cart in front of the “social transformation” horse (Albert, 2009). The corporate reputation which re-branding engenders often enhances, regains, transfers, and/or recreates the corporate brand equity (Muzellec & Lambkin, 2006). It is often driven by internal and/or external factors. Nevertheless, it is not a magic formula, because to distil the vastness of a country’s national identity into something relevant and communicable to distinct audiences is often very challenging. Whether in nations, organizations, or individuals, reputation can be observed from behavioral patterns (Bryant, 2005).

From the above reviews, in trying to conceptualize brand and branding as introspect to Nation branding/re-branding more focus is placed on strategies of organizational brand/branding which in theory and practice have not been applied in nation branding. However, in cases where they are applied in nation branding like in US and other parts of the Western world, the focus is

largely on electronic media (CNN, BBC etc) with little attention on the influence of the print media.

2.2.5 National Image Building and External Relations

Since the twentieth century, particularly in the Cold War era, governments became aware of the significance of systematic image building. With the advent of globalized means of communication, there has been a surge in national image building. The current preoccupation of image building can serve a dual function if conducted effectively, it cannot only create domestic political support but also enlarge a country's international influence. The latter function is deemed to be more crucial today since nations desire to integrate with global markets, to participate in global affairs, and to enhance their status on the world stage. How a country is perceived and projected by the media can result in change in diplomatic relations.

The role of national image is an important aspect of soft power in external relations which according to Nye (2004), power encompasses hard and soft variants in today's global information era. The rationale for the role of national image in international relations has been encapsulated in the writings of; Nye (2004), Leonard (2002a), Kunczick (1997) and Boulding (1958).

Nye (2004) in trying to contrast soft and hard power contends that soft power is distinguishable from hard power in that preferred outcomes are achieved through co-option rather than coercion. He further posits that soft power of a state centres on its culture, its political values and its foreign policy. He further argues that the strength of a country's soft power rests on the extent to which its culture, political values and foreign policy appeals or repels those of the targeted country. Leonard (2002a) also corroborates Nye's argument on the inclusion of soft power as part of national image. But his point of departure differs from that of Nye in that

Leonard believes that the images of a nation are public goods that can serve to generate either a favourable or an unfavourable environment for the public and the state. According to him, “the nation’s reputation can politically and economically be an asset or liability”. Just like Nye, Leonard didn’t take cognizance of the role and place of the media in propagating this reputation in an increasing competing and global information age of international system. That is why the integration of the role media in foreign policy and national image building takes centre of this study. Nye and Leonard however failed to capture the place of media which in the context of this study is an important actor/instrument in building and projecting soft power for external relations especially in the area of image rebranding.

Further corroborating the arguments of Nye and Leonard, Kunczik (1997) and Boulding (1958) contend that positive reputation helps countries to attain foreign goal, attract overseas investment, tourists and education. According to them, “images of nations in permanent crisis or showing economic unreliability”, can discourage “investment, cause future crises”, even “military conflict”. However, like Nye and Leonard, Kunczik and Boulding failed to capture the possibility of the role of the media in revitalising crisis raiding states and resuscitating foreign investment by way of image rebranding.

In all, most of the literature (Chanan, 2002, Graber 2002, Baum, 2003) accept the commonplace assumption that mass media have a profound and direct impact on virtually every aspect of the political process (including foreign policy). However, previous studies on media and nation branding largely focus on the influence and role of the electronic or modern (social media) media in image branding with little or no scholarly attention given to the print media, thereby undermining the historical role the print media is playing in nation and image building.

Thus, the need to explore the role of the print media in rebranding Nigeria's image in the context of its foreign policy objectives.

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CHAPTER THREE

RESEACH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the data used for this study, including the study area, study population, sample selection and sample size, method of data collection, and data analysis. The research focuses on the role of the local print media and image rebranding in Nigeria's foreign policy.

3.2. Study Area

The study was designed to gather data from Lagos State, Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja and Kaduna States. This is in order to have a spread of views and opinions across different spectrum on issues of the local print media, image rebranding and Nigeria's foreign policy.

3.3 Study Population, Sample Selection and Sample Size

This study utilized primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through unstructured in-depth interviews (IDIs). The thirteen respondents who participated in the interviews conducted were categorized into three so as to ease collection of data on the media, image rebranding and Nigeria's foreign policy. The first category comprised two scholars each from the Department of International Relations at the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife and the Department of Political Science, University of Lagos, Akoka, Lagos. These scholars were selected based on their extensive research on Nigeria's foreign policy. The second category

consisted of one senior research fellow from the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA), Lagos, and one senior officer from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Abuja. One senior officer in the Ministry of Information, and a senior officer and a Director in the department of mass mobilization, National Orientation Agency, (NOA), Abuja, were interviewed. These officers and their agencies have been involved in the image rebranding effort which forms important subject of Nigeria's foreign policy implementation. They are well versed in the image rebranding initiative and thus were selected for the interviews. Finally, the third category of the respondents composed of one of the international correspondents of The *Guardian* Newspaper, and three news editors, one each from The *Nation* and *Punch* Newspapers in Lagos as well as *Leadership* Newspaper in Abuja. The choice for these national dailies was determined by the fact of their wide coverage on issues affecting Nigeria's foreign policy and image rebranding. Above all, their responses as stakeholders in the area of information dissemination and roles in nation building enriched the findings of this work.

3.4 Method of Data Collection

This research utilized primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through unstructured in-depth interviews. The thirteen respondents who participated in the interviews conducted were categorized into three so as to ease collection of data on the media, image rebranding and Nigeria's foreign policy.

Although, there were three sets of interviewees and the questions asked from each of the categories were different. Opportunities were given to the respondents to express their views and interest on the subject matter they have maximum knowledge in. In the first category, the questions centred on the conceptual clarifications, issues and theoretical foundations pertaining

to the subject matter. This category of respondents was purposively selected because of their extensive research in the area of media and Nigeria's foreign policy. For the second category, questions on Nigeria's foreign policy, government commitment and efforts at addressing Nigeria's image problems were asked. Respondents in this category were selected because of their involvement with the ministries, departments and agencies [Ministry of Information and National Orientation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA)], part of which responsibilities relates to foreign policy and image rebranding. For the third category, questions relating to issues of media reportage of Nigeria's foreign policy, nation building and the role of the print media in image rebranding efforts were ask.

Secondary data were sourced from published and unpublished books, articles and journals, official gazettes, parliamentary proceedings and other official publications by relevant government agencies such as; Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA), Ministry of Information, Ministry of foreign Affairs and the Internet.

3.6. Methods of Data Analysis

Descriptive analysis was used in analysing the interviewees' views as gathered by means of the unstructured interview. To this end, responses were quoted from the opinions of respondents and they were discussed. Views were also gathered during impromptu discussions, researcher's observations and literature was adopted, all of which have been useful in testing the validity of some of the issues concerning the subject matter of this research. Also salient points in the arguments were identified and discussed.

CHAPTER FOUR

MASS MEDIA, IMAGE CRISIS AND NIGERIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

4.1 Introduction

For the purpose of this study, this chapter is broadly categorised into three major themes with each having sub-themes. The first major theme deals with the historical overview of Nigerian Media with specific focus on the Nigerian print media and its role and contribution to nation building since 1960. The second theme looks at the historical overview of Nigeria's foreign policy since independence in 1960. The final theme deals with Nigeria's image crisis by exploring the changing nature in Nigeria's image crisis. It further explores the role of the media in Nigeria's image crisis. This is in order to have coherent understanding of the variables that make up the topic of the study.

4.2. Nigerian Media in Historical Perspective: Print Media Specific

Nigeria is a former political colony of Britain that got independence in 1960. The Federal Republic of Nigeria is a federal constitutional republic comprising 36 states and Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The country is located in West Africa and shares land borders with the Republic of Benin in the west, Chad and Cameroun in the east, and Niger in the north. Its coast in the south lies on the Gulf of Guinea on the Atlantic Ocean. Nigeria is divided in half between Christians who mostly live in South and Muslims concentrated mostly in the North. A minority of the population practise traditional religions. Nigeria is the most populous African country and

seventh most populous country in the world. According to Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), The World Fact Record, Nigerian population estimate of July, 2013 accounts roughly 175 million.

The press organisations started in Nigeria with *Iwe Iroyin* newspaper in 1859 by Henry Townsend in Abeokuta (Abati, 1998). Robbert Campbell established the second newspaper called *The Anglo-African* in 1863 primarily to promote the interactivity between Britain and Africa (Dare and Uyo, 1996). *The Lagos Times* and *Gold Coast Colony Advertiser* were established in 1880 by Rchard Beale Blaize (Abati, 1998). The success of *Lagos Times* became the precursor to the proliferation of print media in the country. However, about nine decades after the establishment of the press, broadcast media started up in the 1936 with the establishment of Radio Distribution Service in Lagos disseminated British Broadcasting Corporation programmes. In the 1950s, former Western Region established Western Nigeria Television, and then followed by rapid emergence of radio and television stations across the country. In 1961, Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation was mandated by law to regulate the broadcast media in the country.

There is a combination of both public (federal and state governments) and private media ownership. There are 48 television stations owned by the Federal Government which operate by Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), state governments have 37 stations, and 15 are privately owned. The Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria has 43 radio stations, 40 owned by states, 24 campus radio, and the Voice of Nigeria (VON) and 24 private (Nigeria Broadcasting Corporation website, 2013). In the case of print media, there are over 90 titles of newspaper publications and over 40 hundred magazines titles. The accurate figure cannot be easy to get

because of political and economic reasons that publications are closing down and new ones are coming up rapidly.

In Nigeria, after independence in October 1960, Decrees and regulations were promulgated to control and repress the press. Newspaper (Amendment) Act of 1964 and the Sedition Law of 1964 were among the several decrees of the government. During the Nigerian civil war in 1967, the military promulgated war time Newspaper Decree 17 and Decree 24. Decree 24 gave absolute power to the inspector-general of police and the army chief to detain without trial for an indefinite period anyone considered to a security risk (Sabowade, 1985). Among first generation of Nigerian press who experienced censorship during the military colonialism include: Peter Enahoro, Tom Borha, Wilson Uwaifo, Michael Asaju, Sam Amuka, Neville Ukoli, Lateef Jakande, Sam Eguavven, Dan Agbase, Ray Ekpu, Lade Bonuola and Iro Omorodion (Eribo & Jong-Ebot, 1997). Several cases of arrests have been documented where a number of journalists have been arrested, intimidated and jailed for news reports the government considered embarrassing. For example, Tampson Thompson, Ndika Irabor of the *Guardian* newspaper, Femi Akande of Fame Magazine, Nosa Igeibor, Kola Ilori, Onome Osifo-Wiskey and Ayodele Akinkouotu of *TELL* Magazine were incarcerated while discharging their journalistic duties. It was also recorded that, police attacked and arrested members of the press of *The Observer*, *The News* and *Daily Independent* from 1999 – 2003 of Obasanjo civilian administration (Onadipe, 2002). This cruelty of police was as a result of accusation on the press of being critical and unfair reports and editorials on the Nigerian Government. As it is the popular belief that, Nigerian media was only known for bringing down governments in Nigeria (Mgbejume, 1991). As such, the press function of watchdog and surveillance were curtailed and

repressed with marginalization of Nigerian populace. The Nigerian situation is among the bad cases of press freedom (Akinwale, 2010) especially prior 1999.

4.3. Roles of the Media in Nigeria

The media has been playing a multidimensional role in many aspects of nation building in Nigeria since independence in 1960. These roles have however been generally reactive and more critical when the media is not carried along but quite collaborative and supportive when media access to official information is facilitated (Akinterinwa, 2010). One major reason for this is the hostile environment and framework of relationship that was provided during Nigeria's First Republic.

4.3.1 Inimical Environment for Media Role Playing in Nigeria: The environmental conditioning of media roles in nation building are far from being pleasant. The genesis of this is traceable to colonial heritage. During the colonial times, the media primarily targeted the dismantlement of the colonial government, hence, defaming publications to destabilize the government. After independence in 1960, the strategy of combating government in power was maintained by the media (Akinterinwa, 2010). According to Jose Babatunde, former Managing Director of *Daily Times* and Chairman Nigeria Television Authority (NTA) 'African Press today could not use the strategy and weapons used against colonial government...' this according to him is because 'such sensational front-page stories could create inter-tribal disturbances or violent demonstration'.

In 1961, the Federal Defamation Act, under which both slander and libel were actionable in law, was promulgated. When broadcast defamation is addressed to the ear, it is slander, but



when read from a script, it is libel. In both cases, because of the sanctions and fear of losing their jobs, journalists were not forthcoming in a proactive manner in role playing, especially in light of another Act, the Defamation and Offensive Publications Decree No.44 of 1966. However, Decree No. 105 of 1979 which repealed the hostile Circulation of Newspapers Decree of 1966 and the Newspapers Prohibition of Circulation Decree of 1967 in preparation for the return to civil rule gave the hope of better relations between the media and government (Akinterinwa, 2010).

Another major cause of strain in the relationship between the media-government was the promulgation of the Nigerian Press Council Decree No. 31 of 1978 which established the Nigerian Press Council. The Decree provided for 18 members out of whom 4 were to be journalists. It provided for a quorum of 4 members. In which case, any offending journalist could be de-registered and the Nigerian Union of Journalist (NUJ) was not to be recognized as a trade union, meaning that, as a professional body, it could not declare a trade dispute (Akinterinwa, 2010).

Furthermore, to show the hostile deposition of the government to the media, in October 1984, Group Captain Samson Omerua, then Minister of Information and Culture, noted on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee celebration of Television in Nigeria, that the media was only known for bringing down governments in Nigeria (Mgbejume, 1991). Mgbejume (1991) has it that media policies were not federally directed until 1975 but was largely directed by State governments because of their autonomous character. It was as from 1975 that the need to use media for national unity and development was considered imperative. This was a result of the role of the media (especially the print) in the struggle for independence.

Another important milestone in the buildup of the strain in media-government relationship was the perceived lack of dignity and respect for journalist and journalism by other professionals, the disposition of Government may, therefore, not be totally condemned. For instance, in 1964, the Federal House of Parliament passed an Act which states:

Any person, who authorizes for publication, publishes, reproduces or circulates for sale in a newspaper any statement, rumour or report knowing or having reason to believe that such statement, rumour or report is false shall be guilty of an offense and liable on conviction to a fine of two hundred pounds or to imprisonment for a term of one year. It shall be no defence to a charge under this section that he did not know or did not have reason to believe that the statement, rumour or report was false unless he proves that prior to publication, he took reasonable measures to verify the accuracy of such statement, rumour or report.

The Act was however, intended to prevent the publication of false news, it also seeks to punish the publisher by all means because it is very difficult to take 'reasonable measures' before publication of news, especially having in mind that journalist generally 'write history in a hurry' as journalist are driven by the desire to be the first to break news. This is because in the world of journalism, stale news is no longer news. Another provision of the Act begging for answer is the fact that, when are measures considered reasonable?

Apart from this, there were also problems of censorship and attachment of offending materials before their publication, compulsory disclosure of ownership and discrimination in the grant of access to news. This type of situation was not cooperation-friendly. It censored the media as whole, and therefore made the environment of cooperation difficult until 1999. It was not surprising therefore that, in 1971, Minere Amakiri of the *Nigerian Observer*, was not only detained but also had his hair shaved. This was subsequently followed by the closure of

Newspaper houses like; *Newbreed Newspaper* in 1977; *The Tribune* in 1984 and *Newswatch* in 1988.

It is also worthy of note that same hostile environment existed in the Fourth Republic even though it was relatively minimal. The New York-based Committee to Protect Journalist (CPJ) has noted that ‘although a new Constitution was promulgated on May 5, 1999, it was modeled largely after the 1979 Constitution and offered the media no specific protection. As the report of CPJ validated the maltreatment of judicial reporter with *The Guardian* newspaper on 17th May, 2010. Mrs Zainab Bashir, a Chief Magistrate in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), presiding over the trial of a N7.5 billion fraud at the Zenith bank. She ordered all journalists that came to cover the trial to leave the court room. She however, allegedly considered that *The Guardian* reporter, Mr. Lemmy Ughegbe was too slow in getting out and therefore ordered her police security to handcuff him and put him in detention until the following day when she would be able to try him for contempt of court. As quoted by Emeka Anuforo of *The Guardian*, Mrs. Bashir said:

Police, get him. Handcuff him and take him to prison. Tomorrow I will listen to contempt charge against him. I am not a friend of journalist. They have reported nonsense three years against me. Let me teach them a lesson’ (Anuforo, 2010).

In spite of this hostile environment, the inclement environment has not prevented the media from playing active monitoring roles in both domestic and foreign policies. As the hostile environment only prolong the gap of understanding between the Government and the Nigeria media outfits.

4.3.2 Constitutional Role of the Media as a Watchdog for Good Governance: The Chapter 2, Section 22 of the Nigeria's 1999 Constitution which is a recap of Chapter 2, Section 14(1) paragraph 2(a) and 2(b) of 1979 Constitution and Section 22 of the 1989 Constitution, relating to the Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy, stipulates that 'the press, radio, television and other agencies of the mass media shall at all times be free to uphold the Fundamental Objectives contained in this Chapter and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the government to the people'.

The first notable point in the above Constitutional provision is that, there is no conditionality required of, nor time limitation for, the media in playing the roles defined by the Constitution. As the Constitution says the 'media shall at all times be free...' another notable observation is that the media is required to 'uphold the Fundamental Objectives' of Chapter 2 of the Constitution. This requirement is quite important for one major reason consideration: Chapter 2 is the only section of the Constitution that is considered not justiciable. Consequently, the role required of the media cannot but be important, especially intermediation between the government and the people. Perhaps more importantly, the objectives of Chapter 2 which the media is required to uphold are quite interesting and diversified. And most importantly, the Constitution says the media should 'uphold the responsibility and accountability of the government to the people.' In this regard, the 1999 Constitution makes the responsibility of an obligation for the media houses (Akinterinwa, 2010).

It is worthy of note that, before 1979, the media was not given any special responsibility. Section 24 and 25 of the 1963 Republican Constitution only guaranteed freedom of conscience and expression for every citizen of Nigeria. Put differently, the right of the ordinary citizen is the same as that of the media men. It was as from 1979, that a special role was considered for the

media and this cannot be separated from the lesson of long military rule from 1966 to 1979. The 1999 Constitution retained the 1979 provision as regards the role of the media. The challenge to address was to find out how the the media has been playing its constitutional roles.

Besides, the extent to which foreign policies can be separated from domestic policies is difficult (Akinterinwa, 2010). Foreign policies impact considerably on domestic policies and vice versa. For this consideration, the subsequent sub-themes in this theme will deal with the role of the media on issues and challenges of corruption and national development because both the foreign and domestic policies are specially affected by these issues.

4.3.3 Media's Role in the Fight against Corruption and Indiscipline: As earlier noted, the media is required to monitor governance in Nigeria. the media has done relatively well in this area, especially in the context of checkmating corruption and indiscipline in high and public places, as well as ensuring democratic order in the polity.

For instance, Olukotun & Seteolu (2001) have shown how the media, and particularly how *The News Magazine* uncovered the corrupt and indiscipline activities of Alhaji Salisu Buhari, when he was Speaker of the House of representatives, and Evan(s) Enwerem and Chuba Okadigbo when they were President of the Senate.

As noted by Olukotun & Seteolu:

In the best tradition of investigative journalism, *The News* thoroughly researched Buhari's claims about his age, which was lower than what the Constitution stipulated for the office, he now held, as well as debunked his claims to have attended the University of Toronto. The American angle of the research was conducted by Dapo Olorunyomi, who had lived in the U.S. on exile since 1996, as well as Kunle Ajibade, who was also in the U.S. to recuperate, after his release from a 3-year detention... entitled 'The Crook in the House', the story was a ghost edition of 12th July, 1999. The Nation was aghast (Olukotun & Seteolu, 2001).

Buhari, on his part, denied the allegations, slammed a hefty multi-million naira libel suit on *The News*' employing the services of Mr. Rotimi Williams, a well-heeled legal luminary and played the ethnic card by insinuating that a southern (Yoruba) Newspaper was out to get him, a Hausa-Fulani politician...

As a result of the media watchdog role, Burahi on 22nd July dropped his bravado, pleaded guilty to the allegations and resigned his office, thus paving the way for his prosecution. True enough, he was prosecuted, found guilty and indicted but president Olusegun Obasanjo, for what many observers considered 'selfish political reason,' gave Alhaji Salisu Buhari a presidential pardon.

In the same vein, the media compelled Evan(s) Enwerem to resign his appointment for charges of corruption and especially for inconsistency in his name (Olukotun & Seteolu, 2001). The inconsistency and controversy generated was about his first name and particularly whether it has 's' or not. In other words, should it be 'Evans' or 'Evan' a situation that enabled the election into office of Chuba Okadigbo on November 18, 1999. Chuba Okadigbo was similarly impeached by 81 to 11 votes on August 8, 2000 for an unauthorized expenditure of N30 million to purchase cars and another N37.5 million to furnish his official cars (Akinterinwa, 2010). However, whenever media reports accused highly placed government officials of sharp, and corrupt self-enrichment, the allegations have generally been politicized and vehemently refuted, but only to be confirmed by law courts and also for the indictment to be kept in the cooler of history.



4.3.4 Media Role in National Development: The media has also played an active part in the area of communication or development communication in which emphasis is placed on content and its message and on the extent to which the message is able to inform, encourage and convince the receiver of the message in the actualization of a developmental agenda. More important, development communication underscores what people should think about. In this regard, the media in Nigeria cannot at all be said to be found wanting.

However, one area of national development where the media and the Government have always been at loggerheads is in the area of national security. The question is when can the media broadcast or publish and information Government considers a source threat to national security but the media sees differently? When should information be disseminated? It should be recalled that, under Decree No. 4 of 1984, which was specifically promulgated to protect public officials against false accusations, two reporters with *The Guardian* newspapers, Nduka Irabo and Tunde Thompson were tried by a military tribunal and imprisoned for one calendar year while the newspaper was fined fifty thousand naira, not because it has disseminated any false information but for publishing the new posting of ambassadors which the military government had not made public (Mgbejume, 1991).

Under normal circumstance, the media is required to be a partner in development on the basis of the watchdog role provided for by the constitution. In this regard too, since the primary roles of the media include information, entertainment and education, emphasis has been more on domestic political questions than on foreign policy. The roles have been more reactive than creative. In some cases, the media have taken initiatives, especially in organizing interviews and debate on national development issues but hardly on foreign policy, except when is controversy-induced. The media ought to be engaged in organization of seminars and roundtable discussions

on foreign policy as an instrument of national development beyond news analyses and interviews. It is partly the responsibility of the Nigerian media to also explain, and to provide a basis for the understanding, of the image rebranding as thrust of foreign policy of Nigeria.

In any case, it can be rightly posited that there is no role played by the media that has not been development related. Dissemination of information not only educates but also develops. Even when the role generated controversies or was hostile to Government, it still enabled further policy re-positioning and re-articulation.

4.4. Nigeria's Foreign Policy: An Overview

To appreciate the role of the print in image rebranding in Nigeria's foreign policy, it is important to briefly take a look at Nigeria's foreign policy. Nigeria's foreign policy since independence has undergone various changes in emphasis and direction. However, in spite of the fluctuating commitment of successive governments, some basic characteristics are still discernable.

Indeed, Chapter 2, Section 19 of the 1999 Constitution, which is the fundamental objectives and directive principles as provided in Section 19 (a-e) encapsulates the Nigeria's foreign policy objectives to include:

- (a) promotion and protection of the national interest;
- (b) promotion of African integration and support for African unity;
- (c) promotion of international cooperation for the consolidation of universal peace and mutual respect among all nations, and elimination of discrimination in all its manifestations;



(d) respect for international law and treaty obligations as well as the seeking of settlement of international disputes by negotiation, mediation, conciliation, arbitration and adjudication; and

(e) promotion of a just world order (1999 Constitution of the FGN; Akindele, 2013; Saliu, 2013).

To be sure, it is generally asserted that there has been continuity in the substantive content or focus, meaning the principal objectives of Nigeria's foreign policy, since independence (Akinyemi, 1989; Akindele, 1990; Isah, 1991; Akinboye, 1993; Gambari, 1986; Saliu, 1999; Obiozor, 2007; Ayam, 2010; Akinboye, 2013). It is further stated that whatever difference there is or has been, is, by and large, a matter of style, emphasis, personality, institutional reform, and historical circumstances within and outside Nigeria. Akinboye (2013) boldly reaffirms the above submission, thus:

It is very clear that there is continuity across regimes in spite of changes in the pursuit of national interest. There is constancy in Nigeria's foreign policy objectives and foreign relations from the civilian regime of Prime Minister Abubakar Tafawa Balewa to President Goodluck Jonathan (Akinboye, 2013).

The pursuit of Nigerian foreign policy began in earnest after the attainment of independence in October 1, 1960. In the foreign policy statements made in August and December 1960, the first Prime Minister of Nigeria, Tafawa Balewa, outlined some objectives of the country's foreign policy. These objectives or goals of the Nigerian foreign policy have consistently been maintained despite numerous changes in government. At independence, the country's foreign policy sought to achieve the following objectives:

Promotion of the economic well-being of Nigerians and Africans; promotion of Nigeria's territorial integrity; eradication of all forms of racism and colonialism from African continent; protection of the rights of

black men all over the world; and promotion of international peace and security (Ogwu, 1986; Olusanya and Akindele, 1986).

However, the philosophical foundation of Nigeria's foreign policy in the first republic was connected to the country's colonial experience, the nature and structure of the world system, and the vocabulary of politics. It is the combination of these interrelated factors that provides the sources of the philosophical foundations of the country's foreign policy, at a time when the anti-colonial struggle and the crisis of collective racial identity of colonized peoples were critical issues in world politics (Jinadu, 2005).

Despite these lofty aspirations, Nigeria's foreign policy in the First Republic has often been generally described as timid, docile, ambivalent, dissonant, indecisive and inert (Akinboye, 2013). The colonial legacy which restricted the policy options of the immediate post-independence leaders, the relative poverty of the country at the time, the lack of experience in international affairs, the conservative outlook of the prime minister Tafawa Balewa and other members of his cabinet, and serious domestic divisions which led the regions to open different consulates abroad are some of the reasons that have been advanced for the low-profile foreign policy (Idang, 1973; Aluko, 1981; Osaghae, 2002).

The brief interregnum that ushered in the administration of General Aguiyi Ironsi, following the Nigerian military coup of January 15, 1966, led by Major Kaduna Nzeogwu, saw his government pursue essentially the same objectives that characterized Nigeria's foreign policy from independence (Ademoyega, 1981). This was based on General Ironsi's world view and perception of the hierarchy of Nigeria's interests, in relation to the concepts of solidarity and national interest as the philosophical building blocks of Nigeria's foreign policy. In all, it can be argued that the timid and moderate foreign policy that had become the hallmark of Balewa's

regime equally persisted under Ironsi's regime. Consequently, three main factors led to Nigeria's shift away from a 'moderate' and timid foreign policy during the 1960s to a relatively more activist and influential role during the 1970s.

First, the post-civil war military governments of Generals Yakubu Gowon, Murtala Mohammed and Olusegun Obasanjo succeeded in dramatically and effectively redressing the balance of power in favour of the central government in relation to Nigeria's regions and states; second, the Nigerian civil war of 1967-70 marked a watershed in the country's foreign policy; third, and perhaps most importantly, the increasing wealth from oil revenues and membership of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) provided Nigeria with the resources to pursue an activist foreign policy ((Aluko, 1971; Nwolise, 1989; Akinterinwa, 1999; Gambari, 2008:64). Much has been written in the scholarly circles about the 1970s being the "golden era" of Nigeria's foreign policy (Garba, 1987; Fawole, 2003; Saliu, 2006a).

However, the contradictions in Nigeria's foreign policy remained evident in the 1970s despite the zest and tempo that characterized it. In retrospect, Garba (1987) had argued that the Angolan policy of General Mohammed's administration which made Nigeria to collide with the USA was a barren adventure. He attributed this to the attitude of Popular Movement for the Peoples' Liberation of Angola (MPLA) leaders who only saw Nigeria in the light of 'Naira-spraying diplomacy', and never showed any commitment on their part to reciprocate Nigeria's role in the independence of their country. Garba (1987), puts it succinctly:

...at the first appearance of the MPLA Government at the OAU summit in Mauritius in July 1976, Nigeria's name was conspicuously absent from the list of countries to which they publicly paid tribute for assistance in achieving their independence (Garba, 1987).

Again, Garba (1987) regretted:

...the Prime Minister (Lopo do Nascimento of the MPLA) was very soft-spoken, but he was profuse in his expression of gratitude, and our subsequent conversation was full of the promise of intimate cooperation between our countries, a promise which....they never fulfilled (Garba, 1987).

Saliu (2006a) however, argues that Nigeria's African policy has always lacked the standard requirement which is reciprocity, which appears to be a recurring phenomenon in her diplomatic practice. According to him, the dictates of the global system frowned at giving without anything in return. He stressed that assistance is rendered without any visible reference to either the short or long term interests of Nigeria. Thus, the recipient nations do not know how to behave to meet the country's expectations afterwards. This, he concluded is interpreted to mean a show of ingratitude to Nigeria.

The next phase in the development of Nigeria's foreign policy started in 1979, with the return to civilian rule under the Presidency of Shehu Shagari. Shagari came to power after an election that had seen no significant debate on foreign policy issues (Chidozie, 2013). The presidential candidates were well aware that the overwhelming majority of Nigeria's electorates generally had little interest in foreign policy. The outcome was a lack of well-articulated foreign policy for the country right from the out-set of the Second Republic. In essence, in the sphere of foreign policy, the main challenge remained how to revive and sustain the momentum of the Murtala/Obasanjo era, which continued to enjoy the support of the informed public (Ogwu, 1986; Otubanjo, 1989).

There was a paradox that characterized Nigeria's foreign policy at this phase. It concerned the fact that the Nigeria's oil wealth and the technology that produced it came from

the West, and her national power was anchored in Africa, while seeking at the same time to borrow models of social and national emancipation from the East. Gambari puts it very clearly:

How could Nigeria's civilian regime be economically dependent on the West on the one hand, while looking (vaguely, and without deep conviction or sustained effort) to the Eastern bloc for models of social and national liberation on the other, and yet continue to walk in the ideological non-alignment middle? (Gambari, 2008).

Again, Nigeria's leadership in African affairs was seriously eroded as the country vacillated on issues such as Western Sahara, Chad and Namibia. As a result of these Afro-centric policy inconsistencies, coupled with crippling domestic challenges, Nigeria's neighbours had scant respect for the country, and some of them such as Cameroun and Chad, even crossed into Nigerian territory and attacked and killed its civilians and soldiers with impunity. Indeed, smaller neighbours disrespected Nigeria, using its borders for illegal smuggling and bunkering along with Nigerian partners, violated its territorial integrity and disregarded any threat or warning from the Nigerian authorities (Osaghae, 2002; Fawole, 2008; Osuntokun, 2008; Folarin, 2010; Akinboye, 2013).

General Buhari which came to power in 1983 strove to give clearer form to the country's foreign policy orientation. Africa was to constitute the area of primary concern to the country. It was also emphasized that Nigeria's national security and economic wellbeing would constitute the axis around which revolved its foreign policy, with a promise to put on a more constructive footing in relation with Nigeria's immediate neighbours. The Buhari administration believed that the old conception of Africa being the policy center-piece would be properly defined (Gambari, 1986: 74, cited in Folarin, 2010).

However, the articulation of Nigeria's foreign policy under Buhari's regime to accommodate 'good neighbourliness' became an issue of serious concern in literatures. In

essence, under Buhari's regime, relations with member-states of the sub-regional body, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) reached an all-time low. Not only were the nation's borders permanently closed against its neighbours, thus badly hurting their economies, the regime did not heed all the appeals for them to be re-opened (Akinrinade, 1992; Fawole, 2002; Adeniji, 2003 & 2004; Akinboye, 2013). The position of the Buhari regime's foreign policy towards its neighbours has been justified in literature as premised on the basic rationale behind the coup itself, which was to arrest the country's rapidly deteriorating economic situation, eliminate corruption and improve the well-being of the generality of Nigerians (Osaghae, 2002; Folarin, 2010).

The General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida regime was the sixth military rulership in Nigeria. He shot himself to power after sacking the regime of his former boss, General Muhammadu Buhari on August 27, 1985, and thereafter declared himself "Military President", thus becoming the first Military President in Africa and probably the world (Folarin, 2010). Babangida had demonstrated his dissatisfaction and disaffection with his predecessor's policies, especially in the external context which he felt was not in tune with the expectations of the international community. Thus, in the area of foreign policy he registered unmistakable doubt and what he considered as inconsistencies with the country's founding philosophy. According to Babangida:

Nigeria's foreign policy was characterized by inconsistency and incoherence. It lacked the clarity to make us know where we stood in matters of international concern to enable other countries relate to us with seriousness. Our external relations have been conducted by a policy of retaliatory reactions (cited in Saliu, 2006a).

Therefore, the regime of Babangida set out early to repair the damages done to Nigeria's foreign policy by the Buhari administration. Both the IMF loan stalemate and the frosty relations

with the West were quickly resolved. Nigeria soon resumed its diplomatic relations with Britain. In the same spirit, the closure of Nigeria's borders with her neighbours together with the vexing issue of illegal aliens, which had converged to worsen relations between Nigeria and her neighbours were astutely reversed to the admiration of West African countries (Saliu, 2006a), culminating in the provision of economic assistance to these countries, which won him the Chairmanship of ECOWAS for three consecutive terms (Adeniji, 2005).

In essence, this era, not only marked a high point of the country's rising international profile, it also conferred commensurate prestige to Nigeria in its foreign policy. Saliu (2006a) attributed the success of Babangida's foreign policy initiatives to the crop of intellectuals whom he assembled as members of his 'kitchen cabinet'. Among them were personalities such as Elaigwu, Obiozor, Ofoegbu, Akinyemi, Chime, Olagunju, Oyovbaire, Ogunsanwo, Oshuntokun, among others. Despite the remarkable contributions to Nigeria's foreign policy by these intellectual giants, Osaghae (2002) argued that the foreign policy arena under Babangida nonetheless, suffered great confusion and incoherence resulting in the arbitrary change in the ministers of external affairs.

This confusion was greatly reflected in the regime's bid to elevate religion as a conscious guide to Nigeria's foreign policy. This was demonstrated by the circumstances that surrounded Nigeria's membership of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) in 1987. The regime decided to change Nigeria's status from that of an observer status to a full-fledged member without due consideration of both domestic and international concerns. The direct result of this was a serious and lasting dent on the regime's credibility. For instance, Fawole (2012) argued that the decision by Babangida to make Nigeria a full member of a largely Islamic grouping of states generated considerable opposition at home and remains one of the most highly contentious

and unresolved issues in the country till date. It was all the more so, with the unending transition programme of the administration that permanently eroded the gains made at the external context (Olukoshi and Agbu, 1995; Akinboye, 2013).

This deliberate subversion of its own transition programme by the government became evident when the June 12 1993 presidential election was annulled. The emergence of Abacha administration in Nigeria on 17 November 1993 could be traceable to the annulment of June 12 1993 election, adjudged to be the ‘freest and fairest’, by the Babangida regime. The political instability that arose from the incident made the military believe Nigeria needed a more ‘radical’ approach to reverse the dangerous political trend in the country (Saliu, 2006a).

Indeed, radical and combative approach to foreign policy became almost synonymous with the Abacha regime, prompting Fawole (2002) to describe it as the most combative and defensive foreign policy in Nigeria’s history. For Abacha, his recognition meant ‘an eye for an eye’ approach to international relations (*The Guardian*, 1998), which prompted him to employ an “area boy” diplomatic style to survive the hostile domestic and international environment into which his regime was born. This explains the uncoordinated approach and misunderstanding of the international environment that occasioned the regime’s approach to foreign policy.

It is important to mention that Abacha’s adamant nationalism and autonomy consciousness which, led to the abrogation of liberalization policies and a sustained anti-Western stance on many issues, reinforced this hostility. Accordingly, the United States and other Western powers actively encouraged and supported opposition groups in the country as well as those based abroad, and on some occasions, issued statements which amounted to gross interference in the country’s internal affairs (Osaghae, 2002). This reached its height with the formation of National Democratic Coalition (NADECO) in May, 1994, a loose coalition of old

and new-breed ‘progressives’ mostly from the South-West of the country, which consistently promoted and fuelled anti-Abacha sentiment abroad (Zabadi, 2004).

However, some scholars have argued that Nigeria’s foreign policy under Abacha revealed that the military administration, in its own way, conducted the country’s foreign policy to an arguably level of delivery (Lipede & Adelus, 1995; Onadipe, 1997; Useni, 1997; Saliu, 2006a). This was evident in its ability to create policy confusion in the West; the latter did not know how to relate with the Nigerian administration. Its purported deft steps at shifting significantly to Asia and having political romance with some anti-Western countries in the world could be accepted as tangible achievements of the regime (Saliu, 2006a). But given Nigeria’s potentials and against the background of its past external involvement, these achievements are easily dismissible. In all, Abacha’s administration of Nigeria’s foreign policy could be said to be circumstantial. The regime was born when the domestic environment had been polarized, no less the external environment. Thus, the argument that “Nigeria’s foreign policy under the regime was to respond to the pressure from abroad and not to exert pressure abroad” becomes tenable (Olukoya, 1996).

Following General Abacha’s sudden death in June 1998, General Abdul salaam Abubakar, his successor, initiated a transition programme (ten months programme) that resulted in the coming of power of President Olusegun Obasanjo on 29 May, 1999. Indeed, the post-cold war international environment that characterized President Obasanjo’s accession to power in May, 1999 required new approach to Nigeria’s foreign policy. To be sure, the international security environment had altered significantly for Nigeria at this period, with the emergence of multivariate level of threats to the task of nation building. This period was marked

fundamentally with the linkage of domestic issues with international relations and the gradual erosion of the concept of absolutist sovereignty (Ayam, 2004; Dokubo, 2010; Alao, 2011).

As a matter of fact, the ‘concentric rings’ of Nigeria’s foreign policy priorities which relegated the global societies to the fourth level, indicating that national, sub-regional, and regional concerns should precede the international agenda was fast losing its relevance (Magbadelo, 2007). Abiodun Alao puts it succinctly:

...this new era of foreign policy differed from the preceding period in Nigeria’s diplomacy, in which it had always prioritized sub-regional and continental interest. The relative stability along these fronts enabled the country to strike a better balance between external policies and domestic interests. This was especially important because many Nigerians believed that the country had little to show for the generosity and sacrifices it had made in regional and continental diplomacy. Many also felt that Nigeria should replace its past practice of confronting major powers in the pursuit of an Africa-centred agenda with a new practice that better suited Nigeria’s national interests (Alao, 2011).

Akinterinwa (2004) argued that, with the emergence of President Obasanjo in 1999, there was a paradigm shift from an African-centred, to a global-focused, foreign policy. According to him, Nigeria’s foreign policy still remained essentially Africa-focused at the political level while it was global-centered at the economic level. The poor situation of the Nigerian economy inherited by Obasanjo, coupled with political vulnerability at the time, demanded new tactics and strategies, and indeed, prompted the need to focus greater attention on extra-African actors, without necessarily implying any form of neglect of Africa. Thus, Nigeria emphasized the economic factor to the detriment of political considerations. This dramatic shift was explicated by President Obasanjo, that Nigeria’s foreign policy interests extend:

...beyond our concern for the wellbeing of our continent. The debt burden is not an exclusively African predicament. Many countries in Asia, the Caribbean and South America are facing similar problems with it. It is

imperative therefore that the countries of these regions harmonize their efforts in their search for a fairer deal from the industrialized nations of the world and this requires of us a more global approach to world affairs than was previously the case (cited in Akinterinwa, 2004).

Additionally, Ambassador Oluyemi Adeniji, Obasanjo's Foreign Affairs Minister (2003-2006), expounded on this shift in Nigeria's foreign policy thrust from the original 'cornerstone' and 'centre-piece' trajectory that had informed it since independence. He argued that Nigeria's foreign policy direction had to lead to where there are development funds and technical assistance, particularly in the light of the weakness in intra-African cooperation, crisis and conflicts in Africa, as well as Africa's inability to bail Nigeria out of her economic doldrums. He submitted that Africa as cornerstone of Nigeria's foreign policy was geo-culturally- and proximity factor- induced, while the global setting was issue- and economic reality- compelled (Adeniji, 2003). Again Alao puts it this way:

A number of major trends are clearly discernible in Nigeria's foreign policy since 1999. Perhaps the most important of these is the desire to establish and maintain friendships with countries that have historically shaped global diplomacy, while cultivating deep alliances with emerging powers featured in recent global economic developments. Nigeria has also sought to align its diplomacy with domestic developments, especially as these relate to the consolidation of its new democracy... Consequently, the country's diplomacy from 1999 to 2011 has been a cautious balance of devotion to traditional obligations towards West Africa and African concerns, and the desire to ensure that external relations, especially with global powers, also assist in domestic concerns (Alao, 2011).

In fact, the logical explanation for the shift in Nigeria's foreign policy in 1999 can be located within the forceful and seemingly irresistible influence of globalization, which continued to encroach on national borders and by implication redefining the scope of sovereignty. In essence, the doctrines of capitalism and democratization had been elevated to the supreme standards of international relations by the key players in the international system (Ayam, 2004; Okolie, 2010).

The relevant point in Obasanjo's administration's fundamental shift of Nigeria's foreign policy thrust in a globalizing international environment is that Nigeria and more importantly, the Nigerian person, stood to benefit from globalization as thrust of Nigeria's foreign policy. Put differently, the 'concentric circles' principle that had guided Nigeria's foreign policy from 1980s was inadequate and needed to be reconceptualized to reflect contemporary realities by making its epicentral consideration the Nigerian person. In view of this, Ambassador Oluyemi Adeniji considers that, "concentricism, as a foreign policy guide, has to be made constructive and beneficial", and that "the focus of a constructive and beneficial foreign policy should, first of all, be the Nigerian people". By implication, anything 'Nigerian' should really be the focus (Akinterinwa, 2004). In Ambassador Adeniji's words:

The Nigerian has not really been made the main focus of our policy. Emphasis is placed on law but not on the man himself... the law cannot be more important than the man who made it and defending and protecting a nation whose people are valueless is at best also meaningless. In the same vein, Africa as cornerstone or centre-piece of our foreign policy is also meaningless without the Nigerians. Foreign policy successes in which the Nigerians are not direct beneficiaries are not likely to impact on, or enjoy the support of, the people... constructive and beneficial concentricism therefore, fills this gap in foreign policy thrust... (Adeniji, 2004).

It is important to mention that the author of 'concentricism' (predicated mainly on geo-political prioritization and operationalization of Nigeria's foreign policy) as Nigeria's foreign policy thrust in the 1980s, Professor Ibrahim Gambari, had articulated this direction of foreign policy based on what he perceived to be the discrepancy or asymmetry between Nigeria's foreign policy and the peoples' direct needs. He averred that:

Nigeria's foreign policy has never been directly related to the needs of the masses of the people; rather it is formulated, articulated and implemented in highly elitist circles. Hence, the country's foreign policy relations have reflected the needs and aspirations of a national super elite of business, bureaucratic, military and traditional ruling group... (cited in Akinterinwa, 2004).

In essence, constructive and beneficial foreign policy direction of the Obasanjo administration was intended to address and redress the perceived inadequacy inherent in concentricism: which was the fact that “concentricism was not at all an objective but a means; it was more or less a foreign policy tactic that had not been fully taken advantage of; and as a means to an end, concentricism had to have focus” (Akinterinwa, 2004).

Consequently, Obasanjo’s foreign policy was largely shaped by the above philosophy, which guided his diplomatic approaches to issues in regional and global politics. He nonetheless, set out in achieving this lofty principle through a number of approaches. The most visible was his deliberate decision to personally embark on shuttle political diplomacy, earning him the title of the most travelled Nigerian Head of State (Zabadi, 2004; Saliu, 2006a; The Punch Editorial 2007; Okolie, 2010).

President Obasanjo was succeeded by the Late Umaru Musa Yaradua who was reputed to have introduced the concept of “citizen diplomacy” as the thrust of Nigeria’s foreign policy (Ogunsanwo, 2009). According to Agbu (2009) citizen diplomacy is a political concept depicting the involvement of average citizens engaging representatives of another country or cause either inadvertently or by design. He stressed that the concept sometimes refers to “Track Two Diplomacy”, which connotes unofficial contacts between people of different nations, as differentiated from official contacts between governmental representatives. He argued that the concept was construed by Nigeria under President Yar’Adua to mean that Nigeria’s foreign policy would henceforth be focused on the Nigerian citizens at home and in the Diaspora.

The foreign policy of President Goodluck Jonathan which succeeded the late Yar’Adua is generally perceived as a continuation of the foreign policy thrust of his predecessor. Many commentators and scholars agree that there is no radical departure in terms of Nigeria’s foreign

policy transactions to warrant serious reflections. However, it will suffice to mention that the current spate and direction of Nigeria's domestic insecurity, corruption, human rights violation of past administration etc have intensified the debates on the country's national image vis-à-vis the need to evaluate the role of the local print media in image rebranding in Nigeria's foreign policy owing to previous governments attempt at addressing the Nigeria image problems through foreign public relations firms. This is necessary, owing to the historical role the print media, through its wide coverage of national issues, has contributed in Nigeria's political development.

4.5. The Media and Nigeria's Foreign Policy: An Historical View

The extent of media support for foreign policy is largely a function of the extent to which Government was able to promptly inform and convince the media about the rationale for foreign policy decisions.

Several major issues dominated foreign policy debate in Nigeria from 1960 to 2015. For instance between the period of 1960 to 1994, Nigeria's foreign policy was much concerned with 'non-alignment' and anti-apartheid struggle (Akinterinwa, 2010). Furthermore, the period from 1967 and 1975 the focus was on national unity and post-civil war rehabilitation and reconstruction. While Israeli-Arab dispute, crisis-induced insecurity in Africa, and the need for renewed efforts at total liberation of Africa were the major foreign policy pre-occupation thereafter. However, in this theme, the focus will be on those issues that had attracted much media and public interest focusing on the print media editorials.

4.5.1 Foreign Policy Leadership and Dynamism: Following the assassination of General Murtala Muhammed on 13 February, 1976, Nigerians began to feel despondent about national affairs and particularly foreign affairs (Akinterinwa, 2010). This situation prompted the then

Commissioner for Foreign Affairs, Brigadier Joe Garba, to declare during his lecture at the University of Ibadan that:

There has been an unfortunate feeling of despondency on the part of several Nigerians. There appears to be the feeling that, because of the death of General Muhammed, this administration or the nation as a whole, has lost the momentum with which the late Head of State guided the affairs of this nation for a regrettable short period of six months. Let me say straight away there is absolutely no reason to feel despondent (*Daily Sketch*, 1977, cited in Akinterinwa, 2010).

The newspaper noted that the problem facing Nigeria were many and formidable and therefore, ‘no individual or group of individuals possesses a magic wand to solve them overnight. The way to solve them is to face up to them and solve them (ibid). *Daily Sketch* appreciated Brigadier Garba’s re-assurance that the Murtala administration is not ‘a one man show’ and that ‘it came as a team and this team is still largely intact’

In the re-definition of Nigeria’s relationship with the rest of the world in September 1997, the then Foreign Minister, Chief Tom Ikimi, embarked on what he called a ‘basket of friends’ policy, which rejects making friend on the basis of ideological compatibility or traditional loyalties but which makes friends on perceived needs and interest. As much as *ThisDay* welcomed the policy, it also noted that ‘certain features of the new orientation which has been spelt out by the Foreign Minister are not compatible with the long interest of the Nigerian nation’ (*ThisDay*, 1997, cited in Akinterinwa, 2010). Consequently, *ThisDay* called for a ‘re-assessment of the major thrusts of Nigeria’s policy for the purpose of evolving a more focus and result-oriented foreign policy’ (*ThisDay*, 1997, cited in Akinterinwa, 2010).

Foreign policy under President Shehu Shagari was much criticized by the media. In 1984, *The Guardian* in its editorial stated as follows: ‘the last four years saw a return to the days of the sleepy giant of Africa as smaller countries dictated the tune in affairs of the continent... In

Chad, we were used as cat's paw for the implementation of the designs of Washington and Paris, spending our scarce resources and making a damn fool of ourselves' (*The Guardian*, 1984, cited in Akinterinwa, 2010). As noted also by the *National Concord*, President Shagari 'anchored his foreign policy, in theory at least, on the centrality of Africa. He also made verbal pretensions to operating a dynamic foreign policy. Yet Shagari's foreign policy served decidedly anti-African interests, and was the antithesis of dynamism, except we define African interests as corresponding to imperialist interests, or dynamism as consisting in global-trotting' (*National Concord*, 1984, cited in Akinterinwa, 2010).

National Concord also noted that President Shagari 'had no foreign policy worth the name. what (he) had was a system of disappointment responses to stimuli based on a herd mentality, else imperialist nudging... Shagari dictated a style of foreign policy based on waiting for the rest of Africa to take position, and then casting a lot with the majority... (He) preferred to be led, rather than lead'. Consequently, *National Concord* advised that the successor, General Muhammadu Buhari, 'must acquire a high vision and be more painstaking in defining our foreign policy goals, and means of actualizing them. Shagari's approach of junketing about must be jettisoned. So must his penchant for waiting for a consensus before casting his lot' (*National Concord*, 1984, cited in Akinterinwa, 2010).

The viewpoint of *Nigerian Tribune* is not different: 'the Shagari administration was...purposeless abroad as it was at home. It made three blunders...Africa was no longer the centerpiece of our foreign policy. Rather, it tilted where the leadership's destructive business interest and foreign accounts were: the West' (*Nigerian Tribune*, 1984, cited in Akinterinwa, 2010). Additionally, *Nigerian Tribune* said President Shagari 'committed the heresy of arguing, like the West, that Namibian independence be linked with the withdrawal of Cuban troops from

Angola’ and that he also ‘allowed neighbouring African countries to gain the impression that Nigeria was one big-for-nothing country. That was why both Cameroon and Chad could attack us and get away with it’ (*Nigerian Tribune*, 1984, cited in Akinterinwa, 2010). Most significantly, *Nigerian Tribune* said ‘Nigeria became ‘a moderate, that is a Western lackey, especially in regard to the Western Sahara... things got so bad that the Government toed the Western line when Russian jets shot down a Korean airliner carrying civilians last year (1983) but was mute when the US invaded tiny Grenada’ (*Nigerian Tribune*, cited in Akinterinwa, 2010).

In light of this, the *New Nigeria*, while welcoming Major-General Muhammadu Buhari’s promise, made at the World Press Conference, held in Lagos on Thursday, 5th January, 1984 of a dynamic foreign policy, also cautioned that ‘our dwindling material resources ought not debar us from returning to an activist role in African Affairs... A country need not be rich or strong to maintain a principled and respectable stand in world issues’ (*New Nigerian*, 1984, cited in Akinterinwa, 2010). The newspaper advised that ‘what Major-General Buhari and his colleagues ought to be doing is to ensure that the dwindling resources available for foreign affairs are well utilized by directing their efforts to a few areas where we are likely to make an impact...’ (*New Nigerian*, 1984, cited in Akinterinwa, 2010). As Nigeria had then lost its leadership position in Africa to South Africa.

4.5.2 Anti-Apartheid Struggle and Total Liberation of Africa: Regarding anti-apartheid struggle, all the media houses freely served as catalytic support tools in the dismantlement of the obnoxious policies of apartheid in South Africa. When Nigeria, under Lt-General Olusegun Obasanjo, told Mr. Andrew Young, US Ambassador to the United Nations, during his visit to

Nigeria in 1978, that the US and British 1977 Settlement Plan for Zimbabwe was dead and obsolete and that the Patriotic Front should step up its armed liberation efforts. *Daily Sketch* supported the position of Government. *Daily Sketch* position is that ‘Nigerians have lost faith in America’s promises as regards the Zimbabwe issue’, it suggested that ‘the Front should form a government in exile that will elevate it from its present position of just a liberation movement’ (*Daily Sketch*, 1978, cited in Akinterinwa, 2010).

Nigeria’s policy on apartheid, without doubt, is that of ‘no compromise’ when in 1976, Lt-General Obasanjo declared that South Africa must be free whether the racists and their collaborators like it or not (Akinterinwa, 2010). The policy against apartheid further involves active support for liberation movements, non-issuance of visas to ‘white supremacist’. For instance, delegates scheduled to attend the International Press Institute (IPI) Annual Assembly in Lagos were not issued visas. Another stringent action of the Nigeria’s government was the boycott of international games in which racialist or segregationists were to be involved, etc. in spite of this policy, some Nigerian businessmen visited and transacted business involving exchange of Nigerian oil and South African gold at the invitation of the South African government.

However, when the Head of State, General Yakubu Gowon, informed that Government was investigating the visit of the Nigerian businessmen involved, the *Daily Sketch* requested that the ‘investigation should be carried out with utmost thoroughness and speed... What role (if any) did Nigerian establishments as the Ministry of External Affairs, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, as well as the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) play in making their visit possible?’ the newspaper noted that the visit of the Nigerian businessmen, if true, was capable of damaging the public

image of the country as Africa's leading champion of black emancipation' (*Daily Sketch*, 1975, cited in Akinterinwa, 2010).

Following the hosting of an International Conference Against the Evils of Apartheid in Lagos in 1978, *The Nigerian Observer* said: 'it is imprudent and criminal for anyone to insinuate that Nigeria can, even very remotely, tacitly allow goods from the racists and their collaborators to find their way into the country...' (*The Nigerian Observer*, 1978, cited in Akinterinwa).

Another significant event worthy of note in the importance attached by the Nigerian media to the need for total eradication of foreign domination of Africa, end of obnoxious policy of apartheid and the need for African unity is encapsulated in the position of *Daily Sketch* in the case of Abdullahi Mongu, a black South African who entered Nigeria without a passport and other travelling documents was arrested and convicted for illegal violating immigration laws and was recommended for deportation. However, the *Daily Sketch* was of the opinion that his case should have been treated differently for been a South African. The newspaper contended that 'bureaucratic legalism may not always know it but millions of our brethren in South Africa and Namibia regard Nigeria as a sanctuary, a land where can expect to breathe the air of freedom and liberty once those who manage to escape from the giant prison camps the fascist colonizing white slave holders have been keeping them' (*Daily Sketch*, 1982, cited in Akinterinwa, 2010).

In the same vein, *Daily Sketch* took side with Brigadier Joe Garba, the then Commissioner of External Affairs, who rejected criticisms that Nigeria was going too far with its anti-apartheid policies and campaign. Th *Daily Sketch* agreed with the Commissioner that 'if you feel strongly about anything and you stick your neck out, you ought to know and must be prepared to make sacrifices' (*Daily Sketch*, 1977, cited in Akinterinwa, 2010). *Daily Sketch*, considered it unthinkable to allow foreign firms to stay in Nigeria 'when they are known to have

business transaction' with South Africa. Left to the *Daily Sketch* 'the option open to such firms is clear: they either sever their links with South Africa or pack out of Nigeria' (*Daily Sketch*, 1977, cited in Akinterinwa, 2010).

It is in this context, that the warning given by the *Sunday Times*, that 'the excellent economic relationship between Nigeria and France stands the dire threat of destruction if France does not desist forthwith from its sale of arms and other war materials to the racist regime in South Africa' (*Sunday Times*, 1977, cited in Akinterinwa, 2010).

4.5.3 Induced Crisis and Insecurity in Africa: One major conflict that warranted much public interest was the Tanzania-Uganda conflict which prompted the issuance of a statement by the Federal Military Government in 1979. The conflict involved rebels fighting the government of President Idi Amin and Nigeria offered mediation of the conflict. The Nigerian government is of the view that any change in the government of a country must follow the will of the people of that country themselves and not by external forces. However, the rebels considered that Nigeria was trying to support President Idi Amin and, therefore, rejected Nigeria's mediation efforts. Several print media houses not only supported Government's offer of mediation but also the promptness of action that characterized the offer. This was captured in the words of the *Daily Sketch*:

...the statement issued by the Federal Military Government clarifying Nigeria's position in the Tanzania-Uganda conflict is not only timely but in our view perfectly logical... The Federal Government has rightly given a reminder that Nigeria's mediation efforts started right from the beginning of the conflict when Ugandan armed forces invaded Tanzania and occupied Kigera. At that time, the Federal Government appealed to President Idi Amin to withdraw his forces and seek peaceful solution to the dispute in the African spirit of brotherhood and conviviality. Surely, no sensible person would regard that appeal to Amin as partisan in any sense (*Daily Sketch*, 1979, cited in Akinterinwa, 2010).

Nigerian Tide viewed ‘the statement from the Cabinet Office in Lagos on the matter as very proper and timely’. More importantly, *Nigerian Tide* noted that:

Apart from regretting the determination of the situation which had led to the desertion of towns and villages, as well as the disruption of normal life in Uganda, the statement rightly noted the diversionary effects of the war in the effort of African governments on the obnoxious apartheid and minority regimes in South Africa. We hardly need to further advance points to convince any dedicated African patriot to see the validity of the Federal Military Government’s stand on the whole issue (*Nigerian Tide*, 1979, cited in Akinterinwa, 2010)

The above editorials and contribution of the print in Nigeria’s foreign policy cannot be swept under the carpet. Most of its reportage and editorials spark up debates in both government and public circles.

4.6 The Changing Nature in Nigeria’s Image Crisis: An Historical Perspective

Nigeria’s image crisis can be traced to its history, nature of its independence, character of its federalism and complexities of its ethnic composition (Agbodike, 1998; Ayoade, 1998; Tamuno, 1998). In short, it is rooted in the “national question” as a recurring and nagging issue in its national discourse (Alapiki, 2005; Lalude, 2005; Nnadozie, 2005; Olasupo, 2005). Thus in order to understand Nigeria’s image crisis, an understanding of Nigeria’s national question is pertinent. Jonah Onuoha (2005) captures the interpenetration of the concept of national question and foreign policy enterprise most succinctly thus:

Essentially, the national question involves not only the territorial integrity of Nigeria, power sharing and management of Nigeria’s resources in terms of access, control and distribution, but also the issues of minority interests, ethnicity, citizenship, revenue allocation, the creation of states as well as religious, linguistic, cultural and educational policies. It is about resolving the antagonistic contradictions between the majority and minority ethnic groups, combating tribalism, racialism and any form of ethnic chauvinism....the central question is, to what extent does the issues of national question influence external relations between one country and another?

The point remains that a critical view of the above array of contradictions contained in the national question discourse portrays the stark reality about the origin, and changing nature in the character of Nigeria's image crisis. Hence, it is posited that the origin of Nigeria's image crisis is the violent electoral politics in the First Republic that culminated in the first military coup of January 15, 1966 (Ademoyega, 1981; Akinsanya, 2005). Indeed, this was followed by a counter coup on July 29, 1966 culminating in series of political drama that ultimately resulted in the civil war of 1967 (Achebe, 2012).

The Nigeria-Biafra civil war of 1967-1970 which was prompted by the collapse of the 'Aburi Accord' in Ghana and the consequent Igbo massacre in northern Nigeria followed after. Following the end of the civil war in 1970, the Federal Government of Nigeria initiated the 3Rs (Reconciliation; Reconstruction and Rehabilitation) as a post-civil war image-redeeming strategy to both pacify the aggrieved parties in the war and redeem Nigeria's troubled international image. But scholars have dismissed the venture as mere propaganda and thus, did not succeed in redressing the fundamental issues that caused the war (Aluko, 1971; Nwolise, 1989; Akinterinwa, 1999; Fawole, 2003; Achebe, 2012).

However, the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) scheme became a major image-booster for Nigeria and arguably one of the most enduring legacies of the civil war experience for the country, irrespective of its shortcomings. The introduction of the NYSC scheme, coincided with the oil politics of the 1970s, accentuated by the Yom-Kippur War, and attracted petroleum windfall for Nigeria, thus ushering the country into the "golden era" of her foreign policy (Garba, 1987; Olaitan, 1997). To be sure, other indices that attracted international recognition for Nigeria during the 1970s include the radical/revolutionary military administrations of the era, Nigeria's diplomatic credentials on the multilateral platforms and

Pan-Africanist and Afrocentrist foreign policy architecture of Nigeria (Ajala, 1986; Saliu, 1995; Osaghae, 2002; Enuka and Odife, 2005; Saliu, 2006a; Gambari, 2008; Akinboye, 2013).

The Second Republic began on a shaky note for Nigeria's image as a result of the widely faulted electoral process of 1979 that birthed the era (Nwolise, 1988). In the specific context of foreign policy, it was evident that Shehu Shagari was bestowed with relatively radical foreign policy credentials that both overwhelmed his introspective and taciturn milieu and dwarfed his professional and technocratic dispositions (Shoremekun, 1988). In essence, in the sphere of foreign policy, the main challenge remained how to revive and sustain the momentum of the Murtala/Obasanjo era, which continued to enjoy the support of the informed public. As Femi Otubanjo succinctly noted:

The ... regime of Shehu Shagari inherited a foreign policy which was very popular with the people as well as being the object of respect in the international system. But while adapting its principles, goals and rhetoric, the regime quickly showed that it neither had the zeal nor the competence to keep up the pace it inherited... The result was that Nigeria's foreign policy remained at the level of routine observance of existing relations and obligations... The four years of the regime were, therefore, a period of recess for Nigeria's foreign policy (Otubanjo, 1989).

The above assessment typified the foreign policy effort of Shagari. It is therefore, in order to affirm that the Second Republic administration of Shagari erased, indeed, reversed all the gains made in the earlier decades in Nigeria's foreign policy enterprise; and when the grossly inexperienced and revolutionary military administration of Idiagbon/Buhari is added to the picture, the negative impact on the country's international image becomes complete. The following accounted for this assessment: the excessive corruption and ineptitude of the ruling class, poor human rights records of the succeeding military administration, the "diplomatic baggage" involving Umaru Dikko that strained Nigeria's relations with Britain, highhandedness,

militarization and uncompromising posturing of the Idiagbon/Buhari military regime and crippling economic indices, which all connived to discredit the Nigeria's Second Republic and the succeeding military administration (Achebe, 1983; Akinsanya, 1983; Ogwu, 1986; Akinrinade, 1992; Soyinka, 1994; Osaghae, 2002; Fawole, 2008; Osuntokun, 2008; Folarin, 2010; Akinboye, 2013).

The aborted Third Republic which was supervised by the military administrations of General Ibrahim Babangida and General Sani Abacha have been adjudged respectively in scholarly circles as "the most hated" and "the most harassed" governments in Nigeria's post-independence history (Ayagi, 1997; Onadipe, 1997; Osaghae, 2002). In other words, the two administrations accounted for, indeed, supervised the worst era in the image crisis in Nigeria's external relations. For the Babangida's regime, a number of factors connived to sabotage his foreign policy efforts, in relation to Nigeria's external image.

For instance, under the Babangida regime, the poor handling of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank's Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) debates; the failure to address the allegations that the state supported and condoned the Advanced Fee Fraud (419) and other related corrupt practices; the circumstances that surrounded Nigeria's membership of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) in 1987; and the endless transitions that eventually led to the annulment of the June 12, 1993 Presidential Elections, adjudged by both local and international observers as the "freest and fairest" elections in Nigeria, all contributed immensely to undermine Nigeria's international image (Olukoshi & Agbu, 1995; Adeniji, 2005; Saliu, 2006a; Akinboye, 2013). From a more vintage position, Ibrahim Ayagi passed the verdict on the regime this way:

We have had a worst administration that any country could be unlucky to have (1985-1993)... The style of the administration was 'Maradonic'.

Within the eight (8) years (1985-1993), Nigeria joined the rank of the 13 world poorest countries...poverty has eaten deep into our living conditions, we are and have been poverty-stricken (Ayagi, 1997).

It was in this atmosphere of uncertainty and confusion that the General Abacha administration came into power on November 17, 1993. Abacha was fortunate to have supervised the termination of racism in South Africa in 1994 which marked the official end of colonialism in Africa, thus heralding a new international environment for the Nigerian state (Chidozie, 2013). However, Abacha squandered the opportunities created by the new international climate through poor understanding and assessment of Nigeria's foreign policy, prompting Fawole (2003), as earlier alluded, to describe the country's foreign policy during that era as the most combative and defensive foreign policy in Nigeria's history. This was amply demonstrated by the decision of Abacha to execute Ken Saro-Wiwa and his Ogoni brothers, popularly referred to as "Ogoni Nine", in November, 1995, at a time when the Commonwealth Auckland Summit in New Zealand was on (Zabadi, 2004). This singular incident attracted heavy sanctions on the Nigerian state and earned it a pariah status (Saliu, 2006a).

The Abacha regime also sustained its clamp-down on pro-democracy groups, especially the National Democratic Coalition (NADECO); continued the detention and harassment of political prisoners, prominent among whom were Chief M.K.O Abiola, the presumed winner of the annulled June 12, 1993 Presidential Elections, Olusegun Obasanjo, former Head of State and Chris Anyanwu, a civil right activists; assassinated many civil rights leaders, such as Chief Alfred Rewane, Mrs Kudirat Abiola, and Bagauda Kaltho, among others; and unleashed state terrorism on the Nigerian state (Akinyemi, 1995; Olukoya, 1996; Onadipe, 1997; Amuwo, 1998; Zabadi, 2004; Saliu, 2006). All these domestic developments attracted immense international

sanctions and isolation for the Nigerian state and earned Abacha the title of the most oppressive leader in the history of the country (Osaghae, 2002; Soyinka, 2006).

Scholars have reached the consensus that Nigeria's image crisis attained the peak under Abacha's regime and was in tatters when he left office through the historic "apple drama" on June 8, 1998. Fawole (1999) eloquently summarizes the scholarly verdict on Abacha's highly discredited regime, thus:

...in the five years he reigned, General Abacha presided over the most combative and defensive foreign policy in Nigerian history. Abacha's brand of diplomacy pitched the regime in conflict with the West, because of poor domestic policies particularly the issue of human rights which condemned the regime to a state of permanent isolation (cited in Akinboye, 2013).

The fourth republic arguably began with a transitional programme by the brief but exciting and circumstantial regime of General Abdulsalami Abubakar in 1998. To that effect, at its inception on June 9, 1998, General Abubakar's regime inherited an explosive, traumatized and volatile socio-political situation, which made his regime basically a corrective and reconciliatory one (Badmus & Ogunmola, 2003). Indeed, the apparent sincerity of General Abubakar's transition programme generated tremendous goodwill for the country and earned Nigeria a measure of international respectability (Adeniji, 2005; Saliu, 2006a; Dokubo, 2010).

What can however, be considered as the biggest hitch on the administration of General Abubakar was the sudden death in detention, of Chief MKO Abiola, the supposed winner of the aborted June 12, Presidential Elections, who was detained under Decree Number 2 by the former military administration of General Abacha. Chief Abiola's death on July 6, 1998, while at a meeting with a high profile delegation from the US led by Susan Rice was mired in controversy and attracted wide-scale violence domestically and international condemnation from notable figures like Reverend Jesse Jackson and Walter Carrington, the former US Ambassador to

Nigeria. Susan Rice gave a graphic detail of the sad event that resulted in the death of Chief Abiola's thus:

At the beginning of our discussion, Moshood Abiola had a coughing fit. First of all we thought that it was an irritation of his throat before it dawned upon us that it was a heart attack. We then decided to call a medical doctor who came immediately. Unfortunately, it was too late (cited in Badmus & Ogunmola, 2003).

With the successful completion of General Abubakar's transition to civil rule programme, President Olusegun Obasanjo assumed office on May 29, 1999, presumably the most experienced of all Nigeria's Head of State with impressive political pedigree and diplomatic credentials (Fawole, 2002; Saliu, 2006b; Folarin, 2010). Consequently, upon the realization of the damage that had been done to the international image of Nigeria and the likely disadvantaged position this would foist on the country in taking maximum advantage of globalization, the regime of Obasanjo set out early through shuttle diplomacy to redress the image problem of the country. In essence, the task before the new administration was how to change the pariah status of Nigeria and regain the lost ground in international reckoning. As President Obasanjo's National Security Adviser, Lt-General Aliyu Mohammed (rtd), opines, regarding the new direction of Nigeria's diplomacy:

The current thrust of Nigeria's foreign policy is to regain respectability and relevance in the international community... The grand strategy seeks the conversion of foreign policy activities into concrete achievements which are of direct benefit to Nigeria. The main objective is "peace, security and prosperity through friendship". The goals to be achieved are as follows: (a) Economic integration of ECOWAS; (b) Responsibilities in Multilateral organizations – UN, AU, the Commonwealth, OPEC, NAM, and G-77; (c) Cooperation with the Far East; (d) Promotion of foreign investment and trade; (e) Debt reduction (Mohammed, 2001, cited in Zabadi, 2004).

Furthermore, Obasanjo succeeded in re-positioning Nigeria to take its rightful place among the comity of civilized nations by "re-branding" its foreign policy especially through

personalization of the process and economic diplomacy. Despite Obasanjo's lofty achievements in Nigeria's foreign policy circle, a number of factors connived to dent the country's international image, and by implication blight Obasanjo's laudable legacy. These include, but not limited to the following: the controversial US\$30b debt negotiation and eventual "forgiveness" in 2006; the contested agreement on Bakassi Peninsula territory (Green Tree Agreement) facilitated by the United Nations (UN) between Nigeria and Cameroun in 2006; and the attempt to subvert the constitution in April 2006 to extend his tenure in office (Magbadelo, 2007; Mustapha, 2007; Saliu, 2007; Adebajo, 2008; Menkene and Fonkeng, 2010; Alao, 2011; Akinboye, 2013).

According to a survey by *Afrobarometre*, Obasanjo's approval rating dropped from 84 percent in 2000 to 32 percent by 2005, as Nigerians became increasingly disenchanted with his autocratic leadership style (Mustapha, 2007). In the specific case of the "Green Tree Agreement", arguably considered as Obasanjo's worst legacy in foreign policy transaction, Solomon Akinboye brilliantly submitted that:

The overriding import of the Green Tree Agreement was to ensure that the two parties (Nigeria and Cameroon) uphold the International Court of Justice (ICJ) verdict. Perhaps, one may conjecture that Obasanjo acted in order to curry favour of America and the other Western countries to secure their support for his third term agenda bid... Indeed, the general consensus, mostly in informed circle, is that Bakassi crisis constituted a major sore in the country's diplomatic pursuit (Akinboye, 2013).

In all appearances, President Obasanjo left a "big shoe" in the diplomatic circle for his successor, late Musa Yar'Adua to fill in. Hence, despite the introduction of citizen diplomacy as a thrust of Nigeria's foreign policy, alluded to earlier as one of the most practical approach to diplomacy, cleverly combining national image and national interest as critical components of Nigeria's foreign policy, Yar'Adua will be remembered for his 100-Day absence from office as

result of health-related problems which created an unprecedented leadership vacuum in the history of Nigeria. This singular incident is arguably one of the most damaging to the country's international image in recent time.

The controversy that saw the transfer of power to President Goodluck Jonathan through the activation of the alien 'doctrine of necessity' was another issue that the media brought before the public realm. Although the former President Goodluck Jonathan won the 2011 election, which was regarded by foreign observers (EU, AU) as a positive shift from the previous elections since 1999. However, this observation does not detract from the obvious national security challenges in the country involving the Boko Haram Islamic insurgency, which has been rightly considered as the most damaging factor to Nigeria's international image in recent times and the litmus test on the Jonathan's administration ability to manage Nigeria's national question (Danjuma, 2014; Omitola, 2014; Omotosho, 2014; Onuoha, 2014; Sampson, 2014). In short, Jacob and Akintola (2014) assert that the terrorist activities of Boko Haram sect have greatly affected Nigeria's external relations on international economic relations with serious consequences for the country's economic development. According to Standard and Poor's Rating Services (SP), an international rating agency:

Nigeria had a 'very high risk' in 'economic resilience', a 'high risk' in terms of 'economic imbalances', and a 'very high risk' in 'credit risk in the economy'. Nigeria is a country with a high political risk, low GDP per capita, and large infrastructure needs, all factors that contribute to a volatile and risky operating environment for banks... The industry risk score of '7' for the country was based on its opinion that the country faced 'very high risk' in its 'institutional framework' and 'competitive dynamics', and 'intermediate risk' in 'system wide funding' (*Daily Sun*, Monday March 05, 2012, cited in Jacob and Akintola, 2014).

It must be mentioned that, in addition to the Boko Haram insurgency, Nigeria is one good example of nations that have experienced damaged international reputation and a long

standing image problem that resulted from unpleasant human activities. As a matter of fact, there has been several issues of image crisis in Nigeria that erupted from unstable political situation, civil war in the 60s, biases of the global system towards African continents, corruption in the system of governance; most noticeably is the fallacious electoral process, amongst others (Egwemi 2010). Furthermore, internet scam predominately among some Nigerian youths popularly known as yahoo boys (Agunbiade & Ayotunde 2011), and ethno-religious and inter-ethnic violence has attracted strong negative publicity (Osaghae & Suberu 2005; Coleman 2001).

4.7. Nigeria's Image Crisis and the Media

From the foregoing, it is easy to understand the domestic issues that have dominated the media at different times and have in turn aided the making (or remaking) of Nigeria's external image. Of course, any cursory observer would wonder why negative issues have been countlessly alluded to. The fact of the matter is that for us to understand what we are dealing with we must quite necessarily play the devil's advocate because, if Wikileaks were any guide, these are most likely the issues that dominate the dispatches by diplomats to their home countries. And these issues have, to a large extent, shaped the outsiders' perception of Nigeria and its citizens.

For instance, one factor that today impinges on Nigeria's external image is the engagement by some unscrupulous citizens, in advance fee fraud commonly referred to as '419' (Zimako, 2009). This has attracted media attention both at home and abroad and contributed significantly into deepening the country's image crisis. Based on the activities of these few Nigerians, the former US Secretary of State, Mr. Collins Powell, once described Nigeria as a

nation of marvelous scammers (Ogunbiyi, 2010). Popular American television talk show host Oprah Winfrey also spoke in similar light on account of the *yahoo boys* (Ogunbiyi, 2010).

All these issues, among others, have complicated Nigeria's image problem especially with respect to the media attention they have generated. In an interview with *Sunday Tribune* (2001) as reported by Makinde, former Foreign Affairs Minister under the Obasanjo administration, Chief Gideon Dubem Onyia argued that the consequence of a flood of these reports is that the country is being portrayed in negative light in the global community. By implication, foreign investors, diplomats, development partners and other actors on the world stage most times base their perception of the country either on media reports or on their direct encounter with some Nigerian scam artists either at home or abroad.

To further point at the role of the media on Nigeria's image crisis, former President Obasanjo has also attributed Nigeria's image problem to the cynical disposition of the country's media which, according to him, have a fixation only with news that tend to be negative. On this note, Obasanjo argued that some publicity about Nigeria is informed by erroneous impressions created by the local media while the progress achieved in national reconstruction is under-reported. Nigeria, he argues, bears a huge cost for such negative reporting.

More so, Obasanjo's concern is not limited to the Nigerian media. In 2007, for instance, a Cable Network News (CNN) report titled *Big Guns; Big Oil Collide in Nigeria* by Jeff Koinange drew the ire of government. The Federal Government then protested the report by presenting to CNN its facts and findings that established how the documentary was stage-managed with hired med masquerading as militants. The CNN management later retracted the report, tendered apologies and duly disciplined its editorial staff member that authored the report (Zimako, 2009).

The slant of foreign media reports on Nigeria made Ogunbiyi (2010) to argue that there is a perceived conspiracy theory against Third World countries, generally, and Africa, in particular. But the question is, do we have to blame others for this? Even though some outrageous negative reporting contributes to the ill perception of Nigeria on the world stage, the truth also remains that the root of Nigeria's external image crisis is largely due to various forms of internal decadence ranging from corruption, failure in governance system, injustice and non-observance of democratic ethos and so on.

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CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter attempts to identify Nigeria's image problems and efforts made at addressing it. It also examines the role of local print media in image rebranding in Nigeria's foreign policy. It further evaluates the factors that militate against print media's contribution to the Nigeria's image rebranding quest.

The discussion and analysis is conducted under four research themes. The purpose of the themes is to simplify the analysis and facilitate reader's understanding of how the four research questions of the study were answered. Thus, one research question will be answered under each theme.

5.2 Theme One: Nigeria's Image Problems

A country's standing in the international system although dependent on some other factors (economic, military, etc), is highly dependent on its image perception being positive or negative. A good image results in respect, influence and prestige. While, a bad or negative perception of a country's image implies that such a country lacks respect, influence and prestige in the international system (Egwemi, 2010).

Professionals and scholars interviewed agreed that Nigeria over the years had one form of image problem or the other. Most of the respondents interviewed identified factors or what they aptly identified as 'brand spoilers' or 'eroders' to include corruption, lack of observance of

democratic ethos which includes good governance and equitable justice system, massive irregularities in elections, human rights violation, insecurity, trans-border crimes like; drug trafficking, human trafficking etc . Consequently, all these image problems identified by the respondents' may be perceived as internal and domestic. It will be erroneous, however, to believe that foreign policy is independent of the internal environment. What is valid is the fact that foreign policy is an extension of domestic policy. Actually, foreign policy takes off where domestic policy stops (Aluko, 1981; Nweke; 1986). By implication, the two do not exist in isolation of each other. This corroborates Ajayi (2005) views, when he opines that domestic stability and comforts of the citizenry are hallmarks of a viable foreign policy and yardsticks for gauging the image of a nation externally.

Ferdinand Ottoh, a senior lecturer from the department of political science, University of Lagos, who is an expert in image building when quizzed on Nigeria's image problem argued that Nigeria image has been battered with social vices such as corruption, insecurity, lack of good governance and leadership as these according to him, "directly impact on the country's values. In order to establish the linkage between domestic politics and foreign policy, he argued that though democracy and human rights are considered to be internal affairs, but international law today recognizes that none observance of democratic tenets and human rights by states are violation of international norms. According to him: "the recognition of issues of democratization and human rights is of international concern; it therefore means that image building by Nigeria should focus on the entrenchment of genuine democracy and the observance of human rights" which to him forms the new foreign policy of Nigeria since 1999. For instance, the 2003 elections, which he said: "were marred by massive rigging, as observed by the European Union Election Observation Mission (EUEOM) in some states, namely Cross River, Delta, Enugu,

Kaduna, Imo and Rivers”. He further argued that the group (EUEOM) also observed that the federal and state-owned media failed to provide equal access and fair coverage of political parties which demonstrated bias in favour of the ruling parties at federal and state levels. The general impression in such instance is that elections were fraught with problems and irregularities, thus not complying with international best practices with regards to electioneering process. Ottoh further cited the attempted tenure elongation for the president and the manipulation of the 1999 constitution to achieve this purpose as damaging to the country’s image. So has been the disclosure of corruption in The Presidency. As exemplified in the controversy surrounding the Petroleum Trust Development Fund (PTDF) between former President Obasanjo and his vice president which was widely reported in the media.

Corroborating Ottoh’s argument, Osita Agbo, the head, division of international politics at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA) agreed Nigeria has image problems which according to him “our image problem has been corruption and the penchant for violating the rule of law”. He also noted that trans-border crimes like drug trafficking and human trafficking as part of the image problem. But he however, argued that these problems have drastically reduced. In his words “but for the past one or two years, there has been a drastic reduction in such illegality” he further stated that “yes, we have image problems but not to the extent we had before 1999”.

Egwemi, (2010), further corroborated Ottoh and Agbo when he opines that Nigeria’s image crisis was largely attributed to Nigeria’s lack of democratic progress as a result of the image crisis that the country suffered between 1993 and 1999. This period was largely characterized by human rights violation, abuses and lack of observance of democratic ethos. Egwemi (2010) further posits that Nigeria’s image crisis was again compounded by the fraud

that characterized the 2007 general elections. For instance, Obama's shunning of Nigeria according to him was an indicator of Nigeria's international rating elsewhere, Egwemi (2007) expresses his opinion thus:

The last elections in Nigeria have brought her back to her pre-1999 image, is not in doubt Nigeria's new president... has promised to reform the electoral process. How urgently and sincerely he does this, would go a long way to shore up Nigeria's image in the international political system... in a globalized world where democracy has become the mantra, any tendency towards anti-democratic practices can only create an image crisis for the country involved.

When this opinion was expressed, the elections that produced Barrak Obama, were over a year away. Obama took power early 2009. In Obama's first visit to Africa, Nigeria was not on his itinerary giving the impression that the 2007 general election was not globally accepted to meet international best practice. This however, has variously been described as a slight on Nigeria (Adeleye, 2009; Nnanna, 2009; Kperogi, 2009; Odunga, 2009; Ogunbayo, 2009). Kperogi (2009) summed it up thus "it has been argued that Obama's administration warm relations with any country would be premised on good governance, social inclusion, transparency in government, fight against corruption and tolerance of the opposition". Nigeria was subsequently snubbed by the leading countries of the world. At the G20 summit in London, April 2, 2009, Nigeria was excluded because the country was not found worthy to be invited to the gathering of the 20 leading industrialized countries of the world (*Nigerian Compass*, 2009). At the end of the summit, President Yar' Adua could only lament Nigeria's absence (Aremu, 2009). But beyond all the lamentations of the president, Akuta (2009) opines that what is important for him to do is to "put Nigeria on the right track so that the outside world would take us seriously. Until this is done, Nigeria's international stature would continue to dim" (*Daily Trust*, 2009).

Furthermore, Ayo Olukotun, an expert in media and Nigerian politics when interviewed also enumerated Nigeria image problems when he responded thus:

Obviously, Nigeria has image problem, no doubt about it. Nigeria is seen as a very corrupt country, Transparency International rating has always rated Nigeria very high when it comes to corruption Perception Index (CPI) every year. Although there has been slight improvement but for the past ten years that has been the problem. He continued by saying, 'Nigeria is on the Failed State Index (FSI). It is rated as an unstable country that is approaching state failure' which according to him is due to factors like insecurity, insurgency, agitations- Niger Delta etc.

He further added the issue of 'weak power' of the state to enforce laws, as a problem in his words "...weak power of the state to enforce its capacity. When laws are made, are they enforced?" These according to him are yardstick to measure if a state is stable or coherent.

Corroborating Olukotun, Isiaka Adams, an expert in media and international politics in the department of political science, University of Lagos noted that corrupt practices by both the leadership and followers has not helped Nigeria's image. Quoting Monday (2010) he listed Nigeria's rating by the Transparency International starting from 1996 when it was rated as the most corrupt country in the world. The same occurred in 1997 and 2000 respectively. According to him, in 1999, 2001 and 2003, Nigeria was rated as the second most corrupt nation in the world. In 2004 and 2005, it was tagged the third most corrupt; in 2006, it became the fifth and subsequently the ninth and sixteenth in the year 2007 and 2008. Up until 2010, Nigeria holds the position of 134th out of 178 countries (Monday, 2010). In 2011 Nigeria was rated 143 out of 183 countries. In 2012 it was rated 139 out of 176 in the most corrupt nation index. While in 2013 it was ranked 144 out of 177 countries. Finally, in 2014, Nigeria was stood at 136 out of 174 (*The Nation*, 2015). This showed that nothing much has changed in the way Nigeria is viewed by the international community despite the attempts at re-branding the image of the country.

David Dogo, the director, mass mobilization department of the National Orientation Agency (NOA), Abuja, under whose office the responsibility of promoting government policies on image building was saddled. When quizzed, also agreed Nigeria has image problem, which according to him include fraud, drugs and human trafficking, corruption, bad leadership and followership. He argued that no country without image problem or crisis, but the case of Nigeria, had always been exaggerated by the international media and community. This was also the view of a senior officer in the Department of Media and Communication from the Ministry of Information who also said “the international media had also found joy at projecting Nigeria and Nigerians in bad light”. This was also the position of former minister of information and communication Prof. Dora Akunyili when she said at a special colloquium held in Lagos on “Managing Nigeria’s Image” “it is the international media that is mainly giving us a bad name. My bag was stolen on one occasion at the Charles De Gaulle Airport in France in a broad daylight and there was no mention of it in their media” in other words, the Western media selectively target or unduly focus on the vices associated with Nigeria and Nigerians. Interestingly, while for Baroness Lynda Chalker accused the Nigerian media for its negative reportage of the country. Chalker who spoke at the 13th Honorary International Investment Council in London said “even people who have not been to Nigeria make negative comments about the country. If you ask them how they formed their opinion, they will tell you they picked it from the Nigerian media and from Nigerians”. This debate further gives credence to the role and power of the media in demonising and stereotyping or building a country’s image both locally and internationally.

Ojo and Aghedo (2013) further posit that “Nigeria’s reputation is at its lowest ebb”. However, building on the works of some analysts and public commentators, they arguably

described Nigerians in general terms as “criminally minded”. While they blamed this on the behaviour of few Nigerians whose activities undermine the country, they also attributed this image deficit to the negative stereotyping of the country by some foreign media (Ojo and Aghedo, 2013). These accusations have wider ramifications and consequences on the image of the country.

Finally, to further buttress the arguments of the respondents, Akinboye (2013) opines that Nigeria had indeed been battling with image crisis for the past three decades. He identified the major issue inhibiting the image to be corruption and stated that until the government shows seriousness in fighting corruption, Nigeria will not be taken seriously at the international level. He also identified terrorism and insurgency to be other sources of the image crisis in Nigeria, alluding that until the fundamental domestic sources of Nigeria’s image crisis have been tackled, Nigeria’s aspiration to be a regional power would only be an illusion.

5.3 Theme Two: Efforts at Addressing Nigeria’s Image Problems

Everywhere the world over, nations have realized the need to portray themselves in a good light before the rest of the world, which is one of the reasons countries of the world establish external or foreign affairs ministries to mediate relationships between them and other nations as well as launder the country’s image at the international scene. A nation re-branding itself is not peculiar to Nigeria. Many countries including Germany and Japan were re-branded at the end of the Second World War. The governments of South Africa, United Kingdom, U.S.A, Greece, Turkey and Australia have variously launched successful national image campaigns. Nigeria therefore is no exception in this general trend (Nworah, 2006).

Nigeria's external image has swung between periods of extreme positivity to periods of extreme negativity. During periods of negative external image, past governments have responded through different programmes and policies aimed at turning around and improving the negative image. Most of the respondents held corroborating views that there were policy and initiative efforts at addressing Nigeria's image problems.

These programmes and initiatives launched by various administrations were either formal or informal in outlook. Formal in the sense that they were designed to specifically launder Nigeria's image (individual and national image) externally. For instance, the *Heart of Africa Project*, launched by former Minister of Information and National Orientation Chief Chukwuemeka Chikelu Jnr in 2004 which according to Dogo was an attempt to burnish Nigeria's battered image abroad while "remobilizing the citizens to eschew negative tendencies and embrace patriotism", *Citizen Diplomacy* launched by former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chief Ojo Madueke; *Rebranding Nigeria* launched by former Minister of Information and Communication, Prof. Dora Akunyili were examples of specific image laundering efforts.

Olukotun gave historical insight on efforts made at rebranding Nigeria's image. He argued that the country the country transited to civilian rule in 1999, following the protracted military rule of the 1980s and 1990s which according to him was marked by 'overt state repression, featuring pronounced violation of human rights, censorship laws, closure of media houses, detention and abduction of journalists and mysterious disappearance of key opposition figures'. According to him, Nigeria became a pariah state in the international community, especially during the period coinciding with the Abacha dictatorship. Particularly with the hanging in November, 1995 of an environmentalist, human right activist and writer, Mr. Ken



Saro Wiwa. In his words: ‘under the military efforts were made to reverse or at least ameliorate the image crisis occasioned by the descent into official terror and sadism’.

Consequently, according to him under the Babangida and Abacha governments, strenuous efforts were made to rebrand Nigeria’s battered image through the hiring of international public relations firms at exorbitant costs, which in his words featured ‘racketeering by Nigerian government officials who benefitted immensely from the associated deals’. Corroborating this view, Dogo asserted that the pattern of hiring of these image rebranding projects to foreign public relation firms was replicated under the civilian government through the association between President Obasanjo and Mr. Andrew Young, whose public relations firm *Good Works International*, was implicated in several deals as reported in a lengthy article in the *New York Times*. To further demonstrate the extent of racketeering of the rebranding project, Olatunji Dare (1995) informs that:

As at May 1993, the Federal government had 51 publicists in Europe on its retainership. Their brief was simply to polish Nigeria’s image. Each publicist owed his retainership to some influential person in government, who was more interested in earning a commission on the retainership (in hard currency) than in polishing Nigeria’s image.

In Fakuade’s view, before the democratic transition in 1999, there was little or no specific deliberate policy decision taken to create a positive perception of Nigeria’s image in the global arena. He noted that the Obasanjo’s administration understood the enormity of the challenge when it first assumed office on May 29, 1999, and actually made some efforts to redeem the country’s image. According to him, ‘the first well-thought national image policy was the *Heart of Africa Project* conceived under the former Minister of Information and National Orientation, Chief Chukwuemeka Chikelu in July, 2004’. Which was later succeeded by another

former Minister of Information and National Orientation, Mr. Frank Nweke Jnr. Fakuade argued the image-laundering initiative and blueprint came with the collaboration of the private-public sector and was both orientational and informational in approach. He further stated that ‘the *Heart of Africa Project* was designed to employ all facets of publicity mix including the print media’. He argued that the attempt was meant to burnish Nigeria’s battered image abroad.

Other specific efforts/programmes pointed out by the respondents were the two major policies specifically tailored at burnishing Nigeria’s external image under the Late President Yar’Adua. The first was the *Citizen Diplomacy* which according to Ottoh was described by then Foreign Affairs Minister, Chief Ojo Maduekwe as the main thrust of the country’s foreign policy. According to Ottoh, it was designed to address the increasing hostilities against Nigerians abroad while defending their legitimate interests wherever and whenever such interests are under threat. The second is the *Rebranding Nigeria Project* launched by the former Minister of Information and Communication, Prof. Dora Akunyili. In Dogo view, this project was introduced to create for the nation a desired positive image both at home and abroad. He argued that the Akunyili thesis was that ‘a country’s greatness is measured, not only on terms of its resources and economic advancement, but also in terms of the patriotic spirit of its people’

While the informal efforts were not directly designed to launder the country’s image, but had multiplier effects on the country image. For instance, Nigeria’s military prowess in peacekeeping missions in Congo, Mali, Sudan etc, Technical Aid Corp (TAC) where skilled Nigerians in the areas of health, education etc are sent to offer socio-economic services to other African countries. Some of the respondents are not limiting the efforts at addressing Nigeria’s image to formal efforts alone.

Most of the respondents interviewed were of the view that before 1999, Nigeria was seen as a non-conformist and a threat to efforts at ‘globalization, democratization, and maintenance of world peace and security’ (Akinterinwa, 2009). Which in Ottob’s view Nigeria suddenly became another centre of attraction with the return to democratic rule in May 1999. The administration of the then former President Olusegun Obasanjo was confronted with the task of rebranding, repackaging, reinventing and rebuilding a new Nigeria. Most importantly, the task of laying a new foundation for attitudinal change by Nigerians, both within and outside, and for proper disposition became the major concern of the new civilian government. This attitudinal change according to Ottob will crystallize into a new foreign policy orientation.

According to one of the senior officers interviewed in the Ministry of Information, Abuja, the Obasanjo civilian administration recognized the extensive damage done by predecessor regimes to Nigeria’s international image. Among the issues that bothered the administration was corruption “This informed the decision of this government to confront the monster headlong”. Hence, in the respondents’ view, one of the first steps taken by the administration was to send the Anti-corruption bill to the National Assembly, which, after a prolonged delay, was eventually passed and assented to by the president as law. This according to him led to the setting up of the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), to fight corruption and other related offences in Nigeria. He also pointed the establishment Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) as another government’s effort at fighting corruption and protecting national and foreign investment among other things.

Furthermore, another respondent also from the Ministry of Information corroborating the first respondent also pointed the establishment of the Budget Monitoring and Price Intelligence Unit (BMPIU) that further instituted the ‘Due process’ system under the auspices of Oby

Ezekwesili as another effort of the government to ensure full compliance with laid-down guidelines and procedures for the procurement of capital and monitoring of capital projects as well as associated goods and services. The respondent further pointed the establishment of National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) aimed at achieving the national goals of wealth creation and employment generation; the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) to monitor, co-ordinate and review poverty eradication efforts in the country so as to improve their impact and enhance equity and effectiveness on the use of resources. These were the internal efforts. However, there were other external efforts that projected Nigeria's image in a positive light.

A senior officer from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Abuja, pointed out efforts made at the international level. According to him, the government has demonstrated a strong commitment to reclaiming the country's leadership role in Africa. According to him "Nigeria has remained a major moving force behind regional and sub-regional organizations namely the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community for West African States (ECOWAS). He further stated that the government under the Obasanjo's administration, established the Ministry of Integration and Co-operation in Africa (now merged with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) to foster closer relationship among African states. He further opined that the government's commitment to African affairs was demonstrated in the transition from Organization of African Unity (OAU) to AU and in peacekeeping and peacemaking in the Sudan, which according to him "Nigeria and two other countries – South Africa and Egypt initiated the establishment of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), whose implementation committee is headed by Nigeria".

This further corroborated the opinion of Ajayi (2005) when he pointed that Nigeria's also hosted several international summits including those of the Commonwealth Heads of State and Government and the AU in 2004, the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) in 2005, and ECOWAS since 1999. The country had also hosted the All Africa Games in 2004. Obasanjo had been the guest of honour to the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in May 2004. All these according to Ajayi, showed that the international community had begun to have confidence again in Nigeria.

Another senior staff at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Abuja further pointed that former President Obasanjo's shuttle diplomacy was part of the administration's effort to project Nigeria's image. According to him the "incessant visits to foreign countries were meant to seek recognition for the government", which he further muted were aimed at "restoring good relationship with the outside world" and also correct "certain misconceptions about Nigeria". Again he pointed that such visits were also aimed at "projecting the country's economic agenda" by "attracting foreign investments and promoting tourism".

However, most of these efforts and image-making policies/initiatives suffered setbacks and were severely criticized. Most of the respondents were of the view that the efforts and initiatives were a misplacement of priorities. As some of the respondents referred to it as a 'silly idea' which at best was an effort to 'market a bad product', which in the respondents analogy is "like mopping the floor while is still raining through a leaking roof" or "trying to bath a pig close to a refuse dump". Most of the respondents were of the view that the best way to improve on the country's image and perception outside is to improve the standard of governance at the domestic level. For instance Agbo opined that the best way for a country to improve on its image and perception outside was to improve on its governance system at the domestic level. In his



view “when a country observes and adopts good governance, such a country does not have to bother about image promotion or branding”. This also corroborated Fawole’s view that the idea of trying to sanitize or whitewash Nigeria’s image was ‘silly’. He however, proffered that the best way of rebranding the country’s image was to first identify the ‘image eroders’ and ‘spoilors’, in his words “We need to know why the country had bad image in the first place...you correct all those things, institute good governance, allow democracy strife, rule of law, nothing makes good image better than that”.

However, all these image-making efforts (both formal and informal) suffered setbacks and were severely criticised. As observed in the *Guardian Editorial* (August 2004) branding cannot be done in an environment of corruption, ethno-religious conflicts, crime, human rights abuse as well as economic adversity. This position corroborated Ekundayo Fakuade, the foreign editor of *The Nation* assertion that the image of a country cannot be separated from its political and socio-economic conditions. Yet, the implementations of Nigeria’s image building projects have revealed a wide gap between image and reality.

5.4 Theme Three: Media’s Role in Rebranding Nigeria’s Image since 1999

Nigeria’s image had been a source of concern to both the Nigerian government and every enlightened citizen, as it seemed, as though there was a conspiracy amongst the global media community to tarnish the country’s image. It had become a feature in the local print media industry to display “sensational” headlines or captions that downgraded Nigeria, all for economic reasons at the expense of the nation’s image. The media being the fourth estate of the realm is expected to display decorum regarding their news reports on governance, must realize that whatever information they disseminate to the public about the happenings in Nigeria had to be primarily aimed at protecting and projecting the country in a positive light.

According to Hassan Gimba, news editor of *Leadership newspaper*, Abuja, the government and the mass media can make people aware of aspects of life that are not part of their personal experience of the audience members. The media can entertain and educate through music, drama and provide information on various subjects including agriculture and public health. Pool states that “all over the world, it has been found that those individuals and villagers that have access to printed pages or radio have more modern and progressive attitudes and have a tendency to move into modern roles faster than those who do not.

The mass media is the vehicle of communicating with large number of persons across human societies. It is a generally acknowledged fact that the media in Nigeria is very proactive and vibrant especially in issues of protecting and projecting the democratic sustainability in Nigeria. In light of this showering responsibility, it tends to get better when pushed to the wall by any anti-press policies of any government in power (whether civilian or military). However, the respondents were divided on the role of the print media in image building and rebranding. When interviewed, some of the respondents were of the opinion that the idea of arrogating the media the responsibility of rebranding the country’s image is counter-productive as it negates the very role of the media- which is to inform, educate and entertain. According to Fawole, the whole idea of rebranding was faulty as such the media cannot be used as an instrument of promoting bad image. In his words:

There is no rebranding, I keep saying it. The media will report what they see. If Nigerians are enjoying electricity, if there are no cues for petrol, if government officials are not stealing money, the hospitals are working and universities are functioning adequately and staff are not on strike because they are not paid. Then we will have a good image, but you cannot have a good image by mere advertising.

Corroborating Fawole's opinion, Olukotun's opined that, the media are not set up to rebrand image. In his view "it only amounts to conflict of role and objectives". According to him because the print media are largely profit oriented- only interested in stories that sale their newspapers even if it demonizes the country's image. He however, succumbed that the media still has a role to play in the rebranding quest. Agbo further corroborated this view when he opined that "the print media in Nigeria is largely owned by individuals and largely motivated by profit making". Thus according to him reporting negative news is perceived good news as that is what sales more in the 'media world'. Which in his opinion, the media can easily be influenced by interest within and outside the government circle to report either positively or negatively the activities of the government. In his view, the media reportage is largely dependent on ownership and interest of individuals or government.

However, some of the respondents were of the opposing opinion, as they were of the view that the media plays and would continue to play a pivotal role in rebranding any country's image. As some argued that the media can project a country's image either for good or bad. These views further corroborated some scholars' view who have written in the areas of media and Nigeria's external relations. Furthermore, has the Nigerian media done enough to re-brand Nigeria and dress her with the garb of a beautiful bride that must be courted by foreigners, tourists and investors? Have we not allowed the foreign media to dictate the tune and tenor of what our image and perception should be within the international community? Ozekhome (2009). These questions by the above named writer underscore the importance of the media in the success of the re-branding Nigeria project.

Isiaka Adams, an expert in media and foreign policy in the department of political science from University of Lagos when quizzed opined that "the mass media constitute a



veritable tool of enlightenment and social mobilization. They serve as catalysts for social engineering and re-engineering and harbinger for variegated societal development”. He further pointed that “the media spearhead the distribution of relevant information that is vital to human advancement in every sphere of life”. With their vantage position as information gateways, the media have the rare privilege of shaping the perception of their audience on issues that have relevance for the generality of the populace, thus serving as gatekeepers, the society’s conscience, change-agents, watchdog and the court of public opinion.

Consequently, the Nigeria press has been constitutionally empowered to take on the task of reporting critical economic, political, social as well as religious news of public importance. As Rodman (2006) acknowledges, “the media serve as gate-keepers who determine what news people are exposed to; and these news are shaped by a wide range of economic, ethical and legal considerations.

Ozekhome (2009) asserts that the Nigerian media plays a critical role in creating an image for Nigeria. According to him “it is usually the first source of information that the foreign media obtains and uses”. And given the background of their powerful role of the media, such news or opinions become powerfully loud especially if they are “negative”. The media in Nigeria provides information of a critical nature, and it shapes the discourse agenda in ways that project Nigeria’s image, this way or that way.

It was in recognition of the vital role of the media in the success of the re-branding project that Prof .Dora Akunyili cautioned the Nigerian media against reporting Nigeria negatively. Oluigbo (2010) states thus “Akunyili condemned the tendency among the Nigerian media to report negative things about Nigeria. She also admonished Nigerian journalists to concentrate on the good stories and not the negative ones and change their news focus away

from the 'man bite dog' viewpoint where only negative, queer occurrences are projected, but rather try as much as possible to balance their reports''. Aligning with the above, Nwachukwu (2009) maintains that:

The media practitioners are so pessimistic to the extent that even our good leaders are often not spared of bad journalism. This is why some of our leaders have chosen to steal from the public coffers because those who did not do so have also been criticized and condemned along with the bad ones due to political differences and variant interests.

Nneka (2009) also avers thus "The attitude of Nigerians and the publications in our media have not helped matters. No media criticize its government and people like our media does. The Nigerian media has a responsibility of emphasizing some of the positive aspects of our life". Further placing more emphasis on the powerful role of the media, Akeredolu (1993) notes that, it is difficult to think of any national objective which can be pursued effectively, let alone achieved, without adequate information and communication support. The media constitute one of such information and communication systems and perhaps, one of the most crucial. The mass media function in various ways. However, the media's basic function has to do with what Harold Lasswell (1971) defines as communication. That is, to tell people, who says what in the society, to whom, when and how? In carrying out this basic function, the media perform various tasks that have been classified into four functions by McQuail (1994) as cited in Akindele and Lamidi (2001). These are: (1) surveillance, (2) correlation of facts of the environment, (3) transmission of heritage, and (4) entertainment. The surveillance function involves mass media operators having to nose into the nooks and crannies of the society to fish out information that is of interest to the people. In correlation, the media act to mediate even the taste of the people because they interpret the information so gathered by sifting and discarding what may not be in the interest of

the people before purveying such information to them. By such interpretation, they help to create values (for culture), which are then transmitted from generation to generation. The three functions of the mass media, explained above, if closely examined, would reveal the role of the media as a powerful instrument in the re-branding Nigeria projects because it has the power to induce attitudinal change and also re-orient the minds of the populace toward positive behavior and this can also be effectively achieved through, positive commentaries, editorials, news, and reportage of events in the country. This means that while carrying out their sacred duty of keeping the public informed, they should endeavour to play down those negative and ugly aspects of our daily existence and project the good ones as long as the re-branding projects are concerned.

Abdulkadir Hassan, senior staff, from the Federal Ministry of Information, Abuja, viewed the media as strong instruments for advocacy in any given society. According to him, “in Nigeria, for instance, the press was at the forefront of ensuring the success of such programmes as Operation Feed the Nation (OFN), Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI), Oral Dehydration Therapy (ORT), War Against Indiscipline (WAI), among others. Furthermore, in his opinion, the Nigerian media had been acknowledged as being dodged and persistence in achieving a determined goal, this was evident in the roles they played towards the independence of Nigeria from the colonial master. While other countries in Africa fought for their independence on the battlefield, that of Nigeria was fought for, and won on the pages of newspapers expending millions of words, instead of ammunitions, in the process. It has also been argued by some authors (Oyovbaire, 2001; Oyero, 2008), that the media was at the forefront of the struggle for enthronement of democracy or better still, the return to civil rule in 1999.

For Ekundayo Fakuade, “the guts, fearlessness and daring attitude of the Nigerian media must be commended as an internal stimulus for political development and responsible governance in the country”. According to him, the Sharia law promulgation debate that was propagated by the Zamfara State government and trumpeted by some conservative state government in Northern Nigeria in 2000. It was observed that the Nigerian press rose up against the unrealistic and ill-motivated law. All of these were initiated to expunge corruption and restore the dignity and identity of Nigeria within and beyond. The Newspapers, radio and television stations, even Nigerians in Diaspora all joined the chorus in denouncing the obnoxious law which many saw as barbaric and uncivilized. The Sharia law imbroglio took an international dimension when in its 2000 annual report, the United States Department of State expressed concern over the constitutional liberties lost due to the implementation of the Sharia law in some Northern states of Nigeria. According to the report, “although Christians were exempted in the law, the societal ramifications of expanded Sharia law infringed upon the rights of non-Muslims in the North to live in a society governed by secular laws.” The report further exposed the fact that the “plan to implement expanded Sharia law in Kaduna State, which has a large Christian population sparked off violence in February, 2000 that lasted for several days and resulted in an estimated 1,000 to 1,500 deaths” (Ajayi, 2005).

Another contentious issue pointed out by a senior staff at the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs was the prominence given to the Debt Restructuring Deal” from the Paris Club and other multilateral creditor bodies by the Nigerian media. According to him, “the Nigerian press stood up gallantly to the occasion and this resulted in the signing of an International Monetary Fund (IMF) standby agreement in August 2000, and the country benefited from a soft loan facility of \$ 1 billion from the IMF and a restructuring deal worth over \$18 billion from the Paris Club and

others". Corroborating this view, Saliu (2007) opines that the saga was so internationalized by the Nigerian press, both local and in the Diaspora, that in 2004 Nigeria was elected the Chairman of the African Union (AU); the President-General of the South South Cooperation League of the Non-aligned nations in 2005, and a runner-up in the Headship of the African Development Bank (ADB) in 2006, due to her efforts in securing a debt cancellation deal estimated at \$40 billion for the African continent.

The analysis of Saliu (2007) about current issues and the media in Nigeria is pivotal. He stressed the impact of mass media on various issues which ranges from the war against corruption, poverty and development, electoral matters, the judicial intervention to foreign policy issues. But the effort of the mass media to perform the social responsibility role was crippled not only by the media structure in Nigeria (Oyero, 2008) but also by the unfriendly relationship of the apex leader with the media. Though, the number media organization assumed some growth with a conservative number of publications (weeklies, dailies and magazines) at 116 (Ogbodo, 1996).

Another foreign policy issue which appears not to excite the print media was on the deportation of Nigerians by some African States (Saliu, 2010). Nigerians were expelled from Libya, Gabon, South African etc for not possessing valid traveling documents. The third issue was on the federal government consideration to observe the verdict of the international court of justice on the Bakassi peninsula. The people and the civil societies employed the mass media to ventilate their sentiments against the decision of federal government to cede the peninsular to Cameroon. The initial rejection of the verdict by the government was not unconnected with the roles played by the mass media. Meanwhile, on assuming power, former president Obasanjo was compelled to withdraw the Nigerian soldiers from Sierra Leone. He was also criticized by the

print media for his foreign trips and was asked to defend himself. Another issue through which the print media showcased their efficiency was in speaking against the ‘third term agenda’ of president Obasanjo.

Interestingly, the print media did not only serve as a watchdog but guides the government towards changes as well as tackling the effects of the change. According to Adeyemi (2006), “the print media have always occupied the fore-front of socio-political and economic change”. The print media did not only agitate or draw attention to the bad policies of government, but also drum support for the positive initiatives and programmes of government. Some of these national issues that attracted print media agitation included fight against corruption, census, religions crises, elections and foreign policies. In past regimes efforts to combat corruption, led to the establishment of such bodies as Economic and financial crime commission (EFCC) and Independent corrupt practices and other related offences crime commission (ICPC), in which the media played a key role. Omoera (2006) appraises this role as “accountability or whistle blowing role”.

It is therefore expected that this same zeal should be adopted in projecting the re-branding project and changing the mindset of many Nigerians who do not see anything good about Nigeria and who do not believe that Nigeria can ever get it right.

5.5 Theme Four: Militating Factors against the Media’s Contribution to Image Rebranding in Nigeria.

The condition of Nigeria’s external image obviously showed that there was delink between the country’s image projection and the media, since the return to democratic rule in 1999. Despite that, the roles of the media to uphold a set of fundamental objectives are enshrined in the constitution. Most of the respondents who were of the opinion that the media was not set

up to rebrand Nigeria's image. Consequently, the media cannot be confronted with rebranding challenges as according to them it will only be tantamount to their major roles of informing, educating and entertaining.

However, a number of factors were pointed out by the respondents as factors responsible for the failure of most of the image rebranding policies and initiatives. This in some of the respondents' opinion can also impede on the role of the media to promote such image building initiatives and efforts. One of the factors was attributed to policy misdirection. According to Agbo, Nigeria must first address internal and domestic governance issues. In his words "we must solve our governance challenges...problems like corruption and penchant for violating the rule of law, if these are done there will be no need to advertise as the media will report it" which according to him would have widespread effect and thus boost the country's image. This shows that the print media seem hand bond to report the socio-political and economic decay in the country. Another challenge pointed out by some of the respondents is the issue of interest and media ownership as this plays role in their news value system. The factor of interest or media ownership can influence the direction of media reportage. Thus determining what news should be reported.

Close to the above mentioned challenges are the issues of cultural, language and religious differences which had always made any wholesome agreement on issues of national magnitude such as the present (image re-branding) initiatives or policies impossible. This could be attributed to the citizens' strong primordial attachments to their immediate core ethnic regions (Nworah, 2006). For instance, the lack of one national language is barrier to the success of the project because there are still a lot of people in the rural areas who do not speak or write English. To get the message across to them, the central theme of any re-branding project should be

packaged in their various native languages. This reflected the view of Dogo when he said “the coverage level of the print media is limited as a result of language barrier as most of the print media stories are mostly reported in English”. Olukotun had different but slightly corroborating view. He argued that weak national identity impacts negatively on the Nigerian media reportage. In his words “infact someone has said that in Nigeria, there is no national media that what it has at best is an ‘Ngbati’ media from the south-west, an ‘Arewa’ media from the north, ‘Nkenga’ media representing the east”. This in his views hinders the media to speak with one voice on issues of national unity and identity. The print media are largely owned by individuals whose core objectives are to promote their “primordial and personal interest”. Another challenge of the print media as pointed out by Fawole is the rising influence of new media (social media) to spread news within seconds across the globe. According to him, because the traditional media (print and electronic) are sometimes subjected to stringent regulations (journalism ethics and government policies on the media) which the new media are not subjected. The fact also that most of them are owned and operated by untrained and non-media professionals makes it difficult for them to be regulated. In Fawole’s words “...this I think is creating problems where you have all manner of rumours paraded on social media platform that sometimes tarnish the country’s image”.

Other factors mentioned by some of the respondents include but however not limited to these factors; the unfavourable political environment and government policies limited the media operations. There were constant acrimonies between the media and the government especially during the president Obasanjo’s administration. According to Ochonogor (2008), the president constantly expresses his disregard for the mass media organization. In a public interview he claimed that “the media have no special role in the polity.” At another time, he was quoted thus:

“whoever went to the university to study mass communication had nothing to do”. Ewekhare (2011) calls it “ding-dung manner.” Though, following the re-organization of the federal ministries, the ministry of information and orientation was not only retained but was re-christened ministry of information and communication and minister as well as special advisers on the media were appointed by him.

There are however, relating factors that have hindered the media’s contribution to Nigeria’s image rebranding quest. These factors are mostly internal factors but have largely led to the failure of past rebranding efforts and had thus, relatively made it difficult for the media to project or promote the country’s image. For instance, while the government was busy singing the song of re-branding the nation, sectarian and internal conflicts in some parts of the north such as Plateau State, Aguleri and Umuleri in Anambra State keep recurring seasonally denting further the reputation of the country. This poses a serious challenge to the campaign because nothing meaningful can be achieved in a place where people live in fear, distrust and strife. According to Nworah (2006) “long years of political and religious bickering between the three major ethnic groups (Yoruba, Hausa and Igbo) have made reaching a national consensus on major issues of national magnitude such as the present re-branding campaign almost impossible”. The arguments and counter arguments in Nigeria during the pre-election period on the political zoning system for the April, 2011 general elections is a vivid example. Politicians were busy fighting over the zoning system instead of concentrating in bringing out credible candidates for the presidential race.

Similarly, some of the respondents argued that the spate of insecurity, unemployment, bomb attacks, poverty, illiteracy, entrenched corruption, etc in Nigeria does not support an all demanding and important project like this. A hungry man they say is an angry man. There is

every tendency for people denied employment, education, and other basic necessities of life to reject socio-transformational messages and carry out other anti-social activities they think can fetch them means of livelihood. So for people to start absorbing the message of any re-branding project, their lives and conditions of living must be changed for the better. The high bureaucratic government structure in Nigeria, which Nworah (2006) observes while writing on the Nigeria Image Project was also pointed out as one of the basic challenge confronting the media in re-branding Nigeria image. It had over the years necessitated large scale duplication of efforts in several ministries, agencies and departments connected with the re-branding scheme which makes the coordination of the campaign problematic as several of these government departments all lay claim to being responsible for one or several aspects of the campaign. This is because there are countless spokespersons releasing information to the media, such that it becomes difficult to have a central coordinating point or strategy. Whereas with corporations, information is better managed by a unit of the business and employees can easily be indoctrinated with selling the business ideals and image, but this is almost impossible with countries, where reaching a consensus amongst the millions of its citizens is an impossible task.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

6.2 Summary

In general, this study attempts an appraisal of the role of the print media on image rebranding in Nigeria's foreign policy. The study further exposed the fact that Nigeria has image problems and crisis which ranged from corruption, lack of observance of democratic ethos which includes good governance; equitable justice system, massive irregularities in elections, human rights violation, insecurity, trans-border crimes like; drug trafficking, human trafficking and so on. It also pointed out factors responsible for these image problems and crisis to include but not limited to; bad leadership and followership, internal/domestic rot in governance system.

The study also pointed out efforts by various administrations since 1999 to address the country's image problems. It further exposed factors that led to the failure of these efforts. The study discovered that internal and domestic rot in the governance system were factors responsible for the failure of the past image laundering efforts. The study further exposed the fact that there were both formal and informal efforts at rebranding the country's image especially internal efforts at addressing corruption challenges and also repositioning the country to its leadership role among the community nations especially in the African region.

The study further examined the media's contribution to the image rebranding efforts by not only limiting the media's contribution to formal efforts alone but also extending its contribution to areas of agitating and complimenting the government efforts at sanitizing the political system especially by ensuring the promotion of good governance.

Finally, the study evaluated the factors that had over the years hindered the print media's contribution to rebranding Nigeria's image. The study identified factors militating against the media to include but not limited to; individual interest, media ownership, language barriers, weak national identity, lack of conducive political environment for the media to strife, conflict in editorial opinions with government policies and also the rising influence of the new media (social media).

6.2 Conclusion

From the study, it is obvious the country is confronted with image problems and crisis that are more internal and domestic than external. The study concluded that attempts at incorporating image rebranding in Nigeria's foreign policy between 1999 and 2014 failed to yield significant results largely because the government neglected the influential role of the print media as an instrument of mass mobilization, education and information, which it could have effectively deployed in its image rebranding efforts. Indeed, the government paid a heavy price for its inability to factor the print media into an enterprise of great national and international significance, hence the insignificant level of success recorded by high-profile image rebranding projects such as: "The Nigeria Image Project", "The Heart of Africa Project", and "The rebranding Nigeria project".

6.3 Recommendations

Given the diverse crises bedeviling Nigeria's external image, it therefore becomes essential that all the policies aimed at changing this perception need be refocused and redirected to achieve optimal outcomes. A policy redirection is required due mainly to the insignificant impact the previous image-building projects achieved. For instance, the flow of foreign

investment is still low. At the same time, a good number of conglomerates like Unilever Plc are relocating due to the irregular power supply among other reasons. Also, Nigerians are still treated with disdain and suspicion in other countries, even within the West African region in which the country has invested considerable funds and lives of our soldiers. This simply suggests an urgent need to reinvent Nigeria's image projects tailored to its socio-economic policies.

First, reinventing the country's image project must be built on the foundation of good leadership and patriotic followership. This means branding is a reflection of the quality of government as well as the character of its people.

Second, the image-building effort will continue to yield undesired outcome if no step is taken to ensure a thorough and genuine cleansing of the polity. This entails a conscientious and diligent growing of the economic and absolute adherence to social justice and the rule of law that can help develop and also strengthen state institutions. An effective justice system is a strategy that can attract the flow of foreign direct investments (FDIs), and its impact for the country's external image is significant because such a system portrays the country as conducive and enabling for investments. But anything short of this kind of system may not make much impact irrespective of how well packaged the country's image project is.

Third, building an internationally acceptable national image requires the need to measure the country's growth from the lens of social indicators. Critical to this is an effective education system, where a culture of patriotism and integrity can be taught and instilled at the school ages.

Fourth, building a sustained national image requires a strategic partnership with the media. Such partnership should be directed at developing a pragmatic image-building project and working out the modalities to properly project Nigeria in decades ahead. The partnership

must include the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Information and Communications and other stakeholders in the rebranding project. The federal government should adopt a strategy that will allow all stakeholders to make significant input into the process of working out how to market Nigeria and its products on the world stage.

There is no doubt that Nigeria's external image has been battered at different stages in the country's political development. That is why critical steps need to be taken both at home and abroad to change the negative perception of our people and country. To accomplish this task, however, requires a strategic partnership with the media, especially in the context of their constitutional responsibilities.

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APPENDIX I

Oral Interviews

Serial No	Name of Respondent	Designation	Place of Interview	Date of Interview
1.	Fakuade Ekundayo	Foreign News Editor (The Nation Newspaper)	Matori, Lagos	13/10/2015
2.	Victoria Ojugbana	Foreign News Correspondent (The Guardian Newspaper)	Oshodi, Lagos	14/10/2015
3.	Osita Agbo	Professor (Head, Division of International Politics)	Victoria Island, Lagos	15/10/2015
4.	Ferdinand Ottoh	Lecturer	Department of Political Science,	20/10/2015

			University of Lagos, Akoka, Lagos.	
5.	Adams Isiaka	Lecturer	Department of Political Science, University of Lagos, Akoka, Lagos.	20/10/2015
6.	Segun Olugbele	News Editor (Punch Newspaper)	Mowe, Ogun State	22/10/2015
7.	Alade Fawole	Professor	Department of International Relations, O.A.U, Ile-Ife.	29/10/2015
8.	Ayo Olukotun	Professor	Department of International Relations, O.A.U, Ile-Ife.	5/11/2015
9.	David Dogo	Director (Department of Mass Mobilization,	FCT, Abuja.	10/11/2015

		NOA).		
10.	Princess Nana	Senior Officer (Depart of Mass Mobilization, NOA)	FCT, Abuja.	10/11/2015
11.	Hassan Gimba	News Editor (Leadership Newspaper)	FCT, Abuja	12/11/2015
12.	Abdulkadir Hassan	Senior Staff (Department of Communication, Federal Ministry of Information and Culture)	FCT, Abuja.	13/11/2015
13.	Name Withheld	Senior Staff , Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs	FCT, Abuja.	14/11/2015

APPENDIX II

INTERVIEW GUIDE

- 1) What is your take on the view that mass media play crucial and profound roles in the political process of a nation?
- 2) Could you tell why you think the **PRINT MEDIA** is still relevant in nation building considering the impact of globalization?
- 3) The print media in Nigeria has been effective in mobilizing and galvanizing public opinion on foreign policy issues and processes. What factor do you think are responsible for this?
- 4) In your own opinion, what are the foreign policy thrust(s) of Nigeria since the return to democratic rule in 1999?
- 5) How crucial do you think is national image to a country's external relations?
- 6) What is your opinion about Nigeria image problem(s)?
- 7) What in your opinion are these image problem(s) and how has it affect Nigeria's external relations with the rest of the world?
- 8) What can you say regarding governments' efforts towards addressing these image problem(s) since 1999?
- 9) What are the impact(s) of these efforts/ initiatives?
- 10) What role(s) would you say the print media played in these efforts?
- 11) What implications do you think contracting the image laundering projects to foreign public relations firms would have on the role of local print media?
- 12) In your own opinion, how is the local print media projecting Nigeria's image abroad?
- 13) How conducive is the local environment to print media effort to rebrand Nigeria's image?
- 14) What are the challenges/prospects of the print media in the rebranding efforts?

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