KOGI JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT
VOL. 10 Issue 3, June 2024
https://kogmanjourn.org.ng

CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY INITIATIVES IN NIGERIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

[1]Jacob Angel Emobwese; [2]Shawai Joseph *PhD.* & [3]Jennifer Iheanacho Shahid

[1]Department of Political Science, Nasarawa State University, Keffi

[2]Department of Political Science, Bingham University Karu

[3]Center for Strategic Research and Studies, National Defence College,

Abstract

Nigeria's engagement in economic diplomacy has often lacked effective translation into tangible development outcomes. Despite initiatives, challenges persist in achieving measurable impacts on trade and investment. The disconnect underscores ongoing barriers hindering the realization of strategic foreign policy goals in economic spheres. To this end, this study challenges in implementing economic diplomacy initiatives in Nigeria's foreign policy. The paper was anchored on the institutional theory as its tool of analysis. Data for the study were based on primary and secondary method. The study identified several challenges impeding the effective implementation of economic diplomacy initiatives in Nigeria's foreign policy. These include bureaucratic inefficiencies, insufficient coordination among relevant ministries and agencies, inconsistent policy frameworks, and limited capacity in negotiation skills and strategy. Secondly, the study highlights that despite Nigeria's efforts in economic diplomacy, there remains a significant gap between intended outcomes and actual results. Challenges such as bureaucratic inefficiencies, inconsistent policy frameworks, and limited coordination among government agencies have hindered the effectiveness of these initiatives. The study recommends among others that addressing the challenges facing the implementation of economic diplomacy in Nigeria's foreign policy, Nigeria could implement streamlined bureaucratic procedures, ensuring quicker decision-making and responsiveness. Establishing clear, stable policy frameworks supported by long-term strategic planning would enhance predictability and investor confidence. Adequate resource allocation should prioritize funding and staffing for economic diplomacy initiatives, enabling sustained efforts in promoting Nigerian trade interests globally.

Keywords: *Economic Diplomacy, Foreign Policy, Implementation Challenges, Trade Relations, Policy Effectiveness, International Relations.*

INTRODUCTION

Economic diplomacy has become a central pillar in the foreign policy of many nations, aiming to foster economic growth through strategic international interactions. However, implementing these initiatives is fraught with challenges, especially in developing countries such as Nigeria. Understanding these challenges requires a comprehensive analysis that considers both global and African contexts. Globally, economic diplomacy is recognized as a powerful tool for achieving national economic goals. Countries like China and Germany have leveraged economic diplomacy to secure favorable trade agreements, attract foreign direct investment (FDI), and promote their national brands on the world stage (Bayne & Woolcock, 2017). These successes are often underpinned by stable political environments, robust legal frameworks, and strong institutions. Conversely, in many developing countries, the lack of such foundational elements can significantly hinder the effective implementation of economic diplomacy initiatives (Khandelwal & Teachout, 2016).

In Africa, the concept of economic diplomacy is not new. Many African nations have made concerted efforts to use economic diplomacy to enhance their economic prospects. However, the continent faces unique challenges that complicate these efforts. Political instability, weak institutions, and inadequate infrastructure are pervasive issues that undermine the efficacy of economic diplomacy initiatives (Taylor, 2016). For instance, political instability can deter potential investors, while weak institutions can lead to inefficiencies and corruption, further discouraging international business engagements (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2019).

Nigeria, as one of Africa's largest economies, exemplifies these challenges. Despite its vast natural resources and strategic geopolitical position, Nigeria has struggled to effectively implement economic diplomacy initiatives. One of the primary challenges is political instability. Frequent changes in government, coupled with the presence of various insurgent groups, create an unpredictable environment that is not conducive to long-term economic planning and international partnerships (Akindele, 2019). Another significant challenge is corruption. Transparency International consistently ranks Nigeria among the most corrupt countries in the world. Corruption undermines economic diplomacy by eroding trust in Nigerian institutions, both domestically and internationally (Oluwadare, 2020). For example, the mismanagement of public funds intended for infrastructure projects can lead to substandard facilities, which in turn hamper trade and investment. Additionally, Nigeria's legal and regulatory framework is often seen as opaque and cumbersome. This complexity can deter foreign investors who seek a stable and predictable business environment. The difficulty in navigating Nigeria's regulatory landscape can lead to delays and increased costs, making it less attractive compared to other emerging markets (Eke, 2021).

Furthermore, the lack of enforcement of existing laws exacerbates these issues, as businesses face uncertainties regarding property rights and contract enforcement. Infrastructure deficits present another formidable obstacle. Efficient economic diplomacy relies on adequate infrastructure to support trade and investment activities. Nigeria's infrastructure, however, is often inadequate, with frequent power outages, poor road networks, and insufficient port facilities (Akinola, 2021). These deficiencies not only increase the cost of doing business but also reduce the competitiveness of Nigerian products in the global market. Moreover, the educational and skill levels of the workforce are critical to attracting foreign investment and supporting complex economic engagements. Nigeria faces significant challenges in this area, with a high level of unemployment and underemployment, particularly among its youth. The education system struggles to produce graduates with the skills required by the modern economy, further hindering the country's ability to engage effectively in economic diplomacy (Adebayo, 2020). The global economic environment also poses challenges. International competition is fierce, and Nigeria often finds itself at a disadvantage due to its relatively low levels of industrialization and technological advancement. Countries with more advanced economies and better-developed infrastructures are more attractive to foreign investors and trading partners (Thirlwall, 2017). This disparity makes it difficult for Nigeria to secure favorable terms in international trade agreements and to attract the level of FDI needed to spur significant economic growth.

Despite these challenges, there have been efforts to address them. Nigeria has undertaken various reforms aimed at improving the business environment, such as the Ease of Doing Business initiative, which aims to simplify regulations and reduce the time required to start a business (World Bank, 2020). Additionally, there are ongoing efforts to combat corruption through measures such as the establishment of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the implementation of stricter anti-corruption laws (Ogbonnaya, 2019). Furthermore, Nigeria's participation in regional economic communities like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) presents opportunities to leverage regional integration for economic gains (Dinka & Kennes, 2020).

Therefore, the paper explores these challenges comprehensively, identifying the gaps and proposing strategic measures that can enhance the effectiveness of Nigeria's economic diplomacy. The study aims to provide an understanding of the barriers to successful implementation and to suggest pathways for improving Nigeria's foreign economic engagements.

Statement of the Problem

Nigeria's economic diplomacy initiatives face numerous challenges that hinder the effective implementation of its foreign policy. One significant challenge is inadequate funding. The Nigerian government allocates insufficient resources to its foreign missions, limiting their capacity to promote economic diplomacy effectively. For instance, the 2023 budget for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was a mere ₦94.9 billion, which is insufficient given the vast network of embassies and consulates worldwide (Federal Ministry of Finance, 2023). Another major challenge is the lack of coherent and consistent policy frameworks. Nigeria’s economic diplomacy efforts are often hampered by policy inconsistency and lack of continuity. Changes in government frequently lead to shifts in foreign policy direction, disrupting ongoing initiatives. This inconsistency undermines the confidence of potential foreign investors and trading partners, making it difficult to sustain long-term economic relationships (Adeniran & Onanuga, 2022).

Corruption is another significant barrier. Transparency International ranked Nigeria 154th out of 180 countries in its 2022 Corruption Perceptions Index, indicating pervasive corruption that affects all sectors, including foreign diplomacy. Corruption leads to inefficiency and misallocation of resources meant for economic diplomacy initiatives, further hampering their effectiveness (Transparency International, 2023). Bureaucratic inefficiencies also pose a substantial challenge. The cumbersome and often opaque bureaucratic processes in Nigeria can deter foreign investors and complicate international trade relations. According to the World Bank’s 2023 Doing Business Report, Nigeria ranks 131st out of 190 countries in ease of doing business, reflecting significant bureaucratic hurdles (World Bank, 2023).

Political instability and security concerns further complicate the implementation of economic diplomacy. The country has faced various security challenges, including terrorism, banditry, and communal conflicts, which not only affect domestic stability but also, deter foreign investment and economic cooperation. The Global Terrorism Index 2023 ranked Nigeria 6th among countries most affected by terrorism, highlighting the severe impact of insecurity on economic activities (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2023). Statistical evidence of recent cases underscores these challenges. For example, despite signing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement, Nigeria’s trade volume with other

African countries remains relatively low. In 2022, intra-African trade accounted for only 14.6% of Nigeria's total trade volume, indicating that the potential benefits of economic diplomacy initiatives under AfCFTA are yet to be realized (African Development Bank, 2023).

Research Questions

1. What are the challenges affecting effective implementation of economic diplomacy initiatives within Nigeria's foreign policy framework?
2. How effective have the measures implemented been in addressing these challenges and enhancing the outcomes of economic diplomacy efforts in Nigeria?

Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the challenges hindering the successful implementation of economic diplomacy initiatives in Nigeria's foreign policy.
2. To evaluate the effectiveness of existing measures aimed at mitigating these challenges and enhancing the impact of economic diplomacy on Nigeria's trade and diplomatic relations.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

This section of the paper covers the review of the following concepts:

Economic Diplomacy

Economic diplomacy refers to the process through which countries use economic tools, instruments, and policies to achieve their national interests in the international arena. It involves the management of economic relations and the use of economic resources and influence to achieve diplomatic objectives. This form of diplomacy encompasses a broad range of activities, including trade negotiations, investment promotion, the establishment of bilateral and multilateral trade agreements, and the resolution of economic disputes. Economic diplomacy aims to enhance a country's economic welfare, strengthen its global economic position, and foster international cooperation. In the modern globalized world, economic diplomacy has gained significant importance as countries strive to enhance their economic growth and stability through international cooperation and competition. Governments employ economic diplomacy to attract foreign investment, open up new markets for their exports, secure access to essential resources, and protect their economic interests abroad. Economic diplomacy also involves engaging with international economic institutions such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank to shape global economic policies and norms.

As Lee and Hocking (2018) argue, economic diplomacy is not merely about promoting trade and investment but also about shaping the global economic order and influencing international economic policies. Similarly, Bayne and Woolcock (2020) emphasize that economic diplomacy involves the strategic use of economic resources to achieve broader foreign policy goals, including security, environmental sustainability, and development. According to Rana and Chatterjee (2022), the rise of emerging economies and the increasing interconnectedness of global markets have led to a more complex and multi-faceted approach to economic diplomacy. Countries now engage in a range of activities, from traditional trade negotiations to digital diplomacy and economic statecraft, to navigate the intricate landscape of international economic relations.

Economic diplomacy also involves the participation of various non-state actors, including multinational corporations, non-governmental organizations, and civil society groups. These actors play a vital role in shaping economic policies and practices at both the national and international levels. As such, effective economic diplomacy requires coordination and collaboration among different stakeholders to address global economic challenges and opportunities.

Foreign Policy

Foreign policy refers to the strategies and decisions adopted by a nation to achieve its international objectives and protect its national interests. These strategies encompass a range of political, economic, military, and social actions that a state employs in its interactions with other international actors, such as other states, international organizations, and non-state entities. The primary aim of foreign policy is to navigate the complexities of international relations in a way that maximizes the benefits and minimizes the risks for the nation and its citizens. One widely accepted definition by Holsti (2021) characterizes foreign policy as "the actions and decisions of a state to conduct its international relations and safeguard its national interests." This perspective highlights the importance of state behavior in the international arena, emphasizing the role of government decision-makers in crafting policies that align with their country's strategic goals.

Foreign policy can be influenced by various factors, including historical experiences, geographic location, economic conditions, and domestic political dynamics. As Kissinger (2019) notes, "the conduct of foreign policy is influenced by a nation's historical context and its leaders' perception of the global environment." This underscores the notion that foreign policy is not created in a vacuum but is a product of both internal and external influences.

The complexity of foreign policy is further elaborated by Nye (2020), who argues that "foreign policy must balance the use of hard power—military and economic might—with soft power—the ability to shape the preferences of others through appeal and attraction." This dual approach ensures that a country can effectively promote its interests while maintaining a favorable international image. For example, the United States' foreign policy often combines military alliances and economic sanctions with cultural diplomacy and international aid. Contemporary foreign policy also reflects the impact of globalization and technological advancements. According to Keohane and Nye (2018), "globalization has intensified the interdependence among states, making foreign policy more complex and multifaceted." In this interconnected world, foreign policy must address a broad spectrum of issues, from cyber security and climate change to trade and migration.

Trade Relations

Trade relations refer to the economic interactions and transactions between different entities, typically countries or regions, which involve the exchange of goods, services, and capital. These interactions are governed by various policies, agreements, and regulations that aim to facilitate smooth and beneficial exchanges, while also protecting the economic interests of the involved parties. Trade relations can be bilateral, involving two entities, or multilateral, involving multiple entities. The nature of these relations is influenced by several factors, including comparative advantage, which suggests that entities should produce goods and services they can create most efficiently, and trade for those they produce less efficiently. This principle, first articulated by David Ricardo, remains foundational in understanding why countries engage in trade (Krugman, 2021).

Moreover, trade relations are shaped by trade policies and agreements. These include tariffs, quotas, and non-tariff barriers that governments use to control the flow of goods and services. For example, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), now replaced by the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), exemplifies how regional trade agreements can reduce barriers and promote economic integration among member countries (Burfisher, Robinson & Thierfelder, 2020). Another crucial aspect of trade relations is their impact on economic growth and development. Empirical studies have shown that countries with open trade policies tend to experience higher growth rates than those with restrictive policies (Wacziarg & Welch, 2008). Trade openness allows countries to access larger markets, acquire new technologies, and benefit from increased competition, which can enhance productivity and innovation (Bloom, Draca, & Van Reenen, 2016).

However, trade relations are not without challenges. Issues such as trade imbalances, where one country consistently exports more than it imports, can lead to economic tensions and conflicts. Additionally, the benefits of trade are often unevenly distributed within and between countries, leading to social and economic disparities (Rodrik, 2018). In recent years, the global trade landscape has been further complicated by geopolitical tensions and shifts in economic policies. The rise of protectionist measures and trade wars, particularly between major economies like the United States and China, has underscored the fragility and interconnectedness of global trade networks (Bown, 2020). These developments highlight the need for robust international institutions and mechanisms to manage trade disputes and promote fair and sustainable trade practices.

Theoretical Framework

This paper is anchored on institutional theory as its point of departure. Institutional theory, primarily developed by scholars such as John Meyer and Brian Rowan in the late 1970s, posits that organizational behavior is significantly shaped by the broader institutional environment, including norms, values, and regulations (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). The theory suggests that organizations, including states, strive for legitimacy by conforming to institutional expectations, which can sometimes lead to isomorphism, where organizations within the same field become increasingly similar.

One of the core assumptions of institutional theory is that institutions exert a powerful influence on organizational practices, often overriding purely technical considerations. This influence comes from formal structures, cultural norms, and social expectations that organizations feel compelled to adhere to in order to gain legitimacy, resources, and stability (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Institutions are seen not just as external pressures but also as internalized values that shape how actors within organizations perceive their goals and actions.

Applying institutional theory to the challenges in implementing economic diplomacy initiatives in Nigeria's foreign policy, it becomes evident that the institutional environment plays a crucial role. Nigeria's economic diplomacy efforts are often hindered by institutional weaknesses such as corruption, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and inconsistent policy frameworks. These challenges reflect the broader institutional context within which Nigeria operates, where informal norms and vested interests can undermine formal economic diplomacy initiatives (Ojo & Ogunkola, 2012).

Furthermore, institutional theory highlights the difficulty in changing entrenched practices and norms. Economic diplomacy requires not just technical expertise and strategic planning but also significant institutional reforms to align domestic institutions with international standards and expectations. This alignment is essential for gaining the credibility and trust of international partners, which is critical for successful economic diplomacy (Scott, 2014).

In sum, institutional theory is highly relevant to understanding the challenges faced by Nigeria in implementing its economic diplomacy initiatives. It provides a framework for analyzing how institutional constraints and normative pressures influence policy implementation, highlighting the need for comprehensive institutional reforms to achieve desired foreign policy outcomes. By focusing on the role of institutions, the theory underscores the importance of creating a conducive institutional environment for effective economic diplomacy.

Empirical Review

This section of the study reviews some of the relevant studies carried out or undertaken by other researchers on the topic under investigation.

Okonkwo (2023) investigate the Challenges and Prospects of Nigeria's Economic Diplomacy. The author employs mixed-method approach combining quantitative surveys and qualitative case studies. The research highlights the challenge of insufficient funding and resources allocated to diplomatic missions. He finds that many Nigerian embassies lack the necessary financial and human resources to effectively promote economic interests abroad. This underfunding is often due to budgetary constraints and competing domestic priorities. Additionally, the study points to the limited capacity and expertise of diplomatic staff in economic matters as a significant hurdle. Many diplomats, he notes, are not adequately trained in economic diplomacy, which limits their ability to engage effectively with international economic actors. The study recommends increased investment in the training and capacity building of diplomatic staff, as well as the allocation of adequate resources to embassies to support their economic diplomacy efforts. While Okonkwo highlight the challenges related to coordination, corruption, funding, and expertise, there is a need to explore the political dimensions of economic diplomacy more thoroughly. Political instability and the frequent changes in government policies can create an unpredictable environment that is detrimental to long-term economic diplomacy initiatives. This study investigate how political factors influence economic diplomacy and propose strategies to mitigate their negative impacts.

Okoro and Amadi (2023) in their work titled "Economic Diplomacy and Trade Relations in Nigeria: An Assessment of Current Policies" utilize a case study methodology focusing on Nigeria's bilateral relations with China, the United States, and the European Union. Through content analysis of policy documents and interviews with key stakeholders, the authors find that while economic diplomacy has led to increased Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from these regions, the benefits have not been equitably distributed across different sectors of the Nigerian economy. They attribute this to the lack of a comprehensive industrial policy that can guide foreign investments towards critical sectors such as manufacturing and technology. Their study recommends the development of a targeted industrial policy and improved inter-agency coordination to ensure that economic diplomacy efforts translate into tangible economic growth and development. The study have laid a solid foundation in identifying the barriers and proposing general recommendations. However, the present study advances this literature by focusing on the practical implementation of these recommendations and evaluating their long-term impacts.

Adekeye and Thomas (2022) in their study titled "Strategies for Enhancing Economic Diplomacy in Nigeria" employs mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative interviews with policymakers and quantitative analysis of trade data from 2000 to 2020. The findings highlight that while Nigeria has undertaken several initiatives to bolster its economic diplomacy, such as establishing economic sections in its embassies and participating in international trade fairs, these measures have been hampered by inconsistent policy implementation and bureaucratic inefficiencies. The study recommends that for Nigeria to achieve better outcomes in its economic diplomacy, there needs to be a coherent strategy that aligns with the country's broader economic goals. Additionally, the study stresses the importance of capacity building for diplomats and the integration of modern technology in diplomatic activities to enhance efficiency and responsiveness. Despite these recommendations, a significant gap remains in understanding how specific measures can be tailored to overcome these challenges and optimize the outcomes of economic diplomacy. The present study fills this gap by proposing a comprehensive framework that integrates policy consistency, inter-agency coordination, and capacity building into Nigeria's economic diplomacy strategy.

Adeyemi (2022) examines the Challenges and Prospects of Economic Diplomacy in Nigeria's Foreign Policy. The study utilizes mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews. The study highlights that one of the major challenges is the lack of a coherent strategy that aligns economic diplomacy with national development goals. The quantitative data from surveys indicate that there is a significant gap between policy formulation and implementation, often due to a lack of coordination among relevant government agencies. The qualitative interviews further reveal that inadequate funding for diplomatic missions abroad constrains their ability to effectively promote Nigeria's economic interests. The study also points out the challenge of limited human resources with the requisite skills and expertise in economic diplomacy, which affects the capacity to engage effectively on the international stage. The author emphasizes the need for a coherent strategic framework that aligns with national development goals, enhanced coordination among government agencies, increased funding for diplomatic missions, and capacity building for personnel involved in economic diplomacy. However, the role of regional economic integration initiatives, such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), in enhancing Nigeria's economic diplomacy has not been thoroughly explored. This study aims to delve deeper into these areas, providing a more granular analysis of sector-specific strategies and the potential benefits of regional economic integration for Nigeria's economic diplomacy.

Onyeji (2020) conducted a comparative analysis of Nigeria's economic diplomacy practices vis-à-vis other African nations, highlighting deficiencies in policy coherence and institutional capacity. Through a mixed-methods approach, Onyeji revealed that while Nigeria possesses substantial economic potential, fragmented policies and inconsistent implementation hinder effective economic diplomacy outcomes. The findings underscore the critical need for comprehensive policy frameworks that integrate economic goals with diplomatic strategies. Recommendations include enhancing inter-agency coordination, streamlining bureaucratic processes, and leveraging digital diplomacy tools to expand Nigeria's diplomatic footprint. These measures aim to address institutional weaknesses identified in current literature and improve the efficacy of economic diplomacy initiatives. Despite the extensive literature on economic diplomacy challenges in Nigeria, several gaps persist. The study overlooks the role of geopolitical dynamics and regional integration in shaping economic diplomacy outcomes. This study fill these gaps by proposing measures that align Nigeria's diplomatic strategies with regional economic agendas and global economic shifts.

Udeala (2020) in his study titled "Economic Diplomacy in Nigeria's Foreign Policy: Issues, Challenges and Prospects" employs a qualitative methodology, utilizing primary data from interviews with key stakeholders in Nigeria's foreign policy and secondary data from policy documents and academic articles. The findings reveal that the primary challenges include inadequate infrastructure, corruption, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and inconsistent policies. The author notes that the infrastructural deficit, particularly in the power sector, hampers the ability to attract and sustain foreign investments. Corruption, pervasive in both public and private sectors, deters potential investors due to the lack of transparency and predictability in the business environment. Bureaucratic inefficiencies, characterized by cumbersome procedures and red tape, further complicate the ease of doing business in Nigeria. Additionally, policy inconsistency, where successive governments fail to sustain economic policies of their predecessors, creates an unstable environment that is unattractive to foreign investors. The study recommends a multi-faceted approach to overcoming these challenges. The author suggests a comprehensive infrastructure development plan, anti-corruption measures, streamlining of bureaucratic processes, and ensuring policy continuity to create a more conducive environment for economic diplomacy. Despite the valuable insights provided by this study, there are gaps that the present study seeks to fill. The study primarily focuses on the macro-level challenges and provide broad recommendations. There is a lack of detailed analysis on the specific sectors where economic diplomacy could be most effective and the particular strategies that could be employed within these sectors.

METHODOLOGY

The population of this study was 553 people comprising of staff from Department for Culture and Protocol of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS), and the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA). The sample size of the study was 227 determined using Krejcie and Morgan formula for sample size. Data for the study were collected using questionnaire. The 227 questionnaire copies were distributed to the respondents to elicit their opinions on the questions raised in the paper, of which 211 were retrieved for analysis. The collected data were then analyzed using simple percentages and frequencies.

Data Analysis

Table 1: Respondents view on the challenges affecting effective implementation of economic diplomacy initiatives within Nigeria's foreign policy framework

Responses	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
The lack of coordination between government agencies hinders the implementation of economic diplomacy initiatives.	87 (41.2%)	90 (42.7%)	2 (0.9%)	12 (5.7%)	20 (9.5%)	211 (100%)
Inadequate funding is a significant barrier to the effective execution of economic diplomacy strategies.	103 (48.8%)	78 (37%)	2 (0.9%)	13 (6.2%)	15 (7.1%)	211 (100%)
Corruption within government institutions impedes the progress of economic diplomacy efforts.	56 (26.5%)	77 (36.5%)	3 (1.4%)	45 (21.3%)	30 (14.2%)	211 (100%)

Bureaucratic inefficiencies slow down the execution of economic diplomacy policies.	98 (46.4%)	88 (41.7%)	2 (0.9%)	15 (7.1%)	8 (3.8%)	211 (100%)
The lack of clear and consistent foreign policy objectives weakens the impact of economic diplomacy.	123 (58.3%)	73 (34.6%)	4 (1.9%)	5 (2.4%)	6 (2.8%)	211 (100%)

Source: *Field Survey, 2024*

From the above table, the analysis of respondents' views on the statement "The lack of coordination between government agencies hinders the implementation of economic diplomacy initiatives" shows that a significant majority, 87 respondents (41.2%) strongly agree and 90 respondents (42.7%) agree, totaling 83.9% who believe that poor inter-agency coordination is a major impediment. Only 2 respondents (0.9%) are undecided, while 12 respondents (5.7%) disagree and 20 respondents (9.5%) strongly disagree, indicating a minority opinion against this view. The overwhelming agreement highlights a critical issue in the effectiveness of economic diplomacy initiatives. This lack of coordination can lead to fragmented efforts, misaligned priorities, and inefficient use of resources, ultimately undermining the success of these initiatives.

Similarly, the data indicates that a significant majority of respondents believe inadequate funding is a major obstacle to effectively executing economic diplomacy strategies. Specifically, 48.8% (103 respondents) strongly agree, and 37% (78 respondents) agree with this statement. In contrast, only a small fraction are undecided (0.9% or 2 respondents), disagree (6.2% or 13 respondents), or strongly disagree (7.1% or 15 respondents). This suggests a broad consensus that funding constraints are a critical issue. The implication of this analysis is clear: policymakers and stakeholders must address funding deficiencies to enhance the efficacy of economic diplomacy initiatives, as the current financial limitations significantly hinder strategic implementation and potential outcomes.

The analysis of respondents' views on whether "corruption within government institutions impedes the progress of economic diplomacy efforts" reveals a significant consensus on the matter. Out of 211 respondents, 56 (26.5%) strongly agree and 77 (36.5%) agree, indicating that a substantial majority (63%) believe corruption is a considerable obstacle to economic diplomacy. Only a small fraction, 3 respondents (1.4%), were undecided, suggesting that the issue is clear-cut to most participants. In contrast, 45 respondents (21.3%) disagree and 30 (14.2%) strongly disagree, making up 35.5% who do not see corruption as a significant hindrance. The clear majority agreement implies that tackling corruption could be critical to enhancing the effectiveness of economic diplomacy efforts, as it is perceived as a major impediment by most stakeholders. Addressing this issue might lead to more efficient diplomatic processes and improved trade relations, aligning with broader efforts to boost economic outcomes.

The analysis of respondents' views on whether bureaucratic inefficiencies slow down the execution of economic diplomacy policies reveals a significant consensus. Out of 211 respondents, 98 (46.4%) strongly agree, and 88 (41.7%) agree, making a combined total of 88.1% who believe that bureaucratic inefficiencies are indeed a hindrance. A negligible 2 respondents (0.9%) are undecided, while 15 (7.1%) disagree, and 8 (3.8%) strongly disagree with the statement. This overwhelming agreement indicates a prevalent perception of bureaucratic hurdles as a major impediment to the effective implementation of economic diplomacy policies. The implication of this analysis is that there is a strong call for reforms aimed at reducing bureaucratic bottlenecks to enhance the efficiency and impact of economic diplomacy initiatives.

Respondents' views on whether bureaucratic inefficiencies slow down the execution of economic diplomacy policies indicate a strong consensus. Out of 211 respondents, 98 (46.4%) strongly agree and 88 (41.7%) agree, totalling 186 (88.1%) in agreement. Only 2 respondents (0.9%) are undecided, while 15 (7.1%) disagree and 8 (3.8%) strongly disagree. The overwhelming agreement suggests that bureaucratic inefficiencies are widely perceived as significant obstacles to the effective implementation of economic diplomacy policies. This consensus highlights the need for administrative reforms and streamlined processes to enhance the efficacy of such policies.

Table 2: Respondents' opinions on the effectiveness of measures implemented to address the challenges of economic diplomacy initiatives in enhancing the outcomes of economic diplomacy efforts in Nigeria.

Responses	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
The creation of clear and measurable objectives for economic diplomacy initiatives has improved their success rate.	40 (19%)	30 (14.2%)	6 (2.8%)	88 (41.7%)	47 (22.3%)	211 (100%)
The increased collaboration between the public and private sectors has led to better economic diplomacy outcomes.	21 (10%)	6 (2.8%)	2 (0.9%)	105 (49.8%)	77 (36.5%)	211 (100%)
The adoption of digital tools and technologies has streamlined economic diplomacy processes in Nigeria.	43 (20.4%)	41 (19.4%)	4 (1.9%)	45 (21.3%)	78 (37%)	211 (100%)
The allocation of sufficient financial resources has significantly boosted the effectiveness of Nigeria's economic diplomacy.	33 (15.6%)	43 (20.4%)	2 (0.9%)	63 (29.9%)	70 (33.2%)	211 (100%)
The establishment of bilateral and multilateral trade agreements has positively impacted Nigeria's economic diplomacy.	20 (9.5%)	27 (12.8%)	3 (1.4%)	77 (36.5%)	84 (39.8%)	211 (100%)

Source: *Field Survey, 2024*

Table 1.2 represents the analysis of respondents' views on whether "The creation of clear and measurable objectives for economic diplomacy initiatives has improved their success rate" reveals mixed opinions. Out of 211 respondents, 40 (19%) strongly agree and 30 (14.2%) agree, indicating that 70 (33.2%) respondents believe that clear objectives have positively impacted the success of economic diplomacy initiatives. However, a significant portion, 88 (41.7%), disagree and 47 (22.3%) strongly disagree, totaling 135 (64%) who do not believe that these objectives have improved success rates. Only 6 (2.8%) respondents are undecided. This suggests a substantial skepticism among respondents regarding the efficacy of clear and measurable objectives in enhancing the success of economic diplomacy initiatives. The implication is that despite efforts to implement structured goals, a majority of respondents do not perceive these measures as successful, highlighting a potential disconnect between policy intentions and perceived outcomes.

Similarly, data on the table above indicates that a significant majority of respondents (86.3%) either disagree (49.8%) or strongly disagree (36.5%) that increased collaboration between the public and private sectors has led to better economic diplomacy outcomes.

Only a small fraction (12.8%) of respondents hold a positive view, with 10% strongly agreeing and 2.8% agreeing, while 0.9% remain undecided. This overwhelming negative sentiment suggests that the perceived benefits of public-private sector collaboration in the realm of economic diplomacy are not being realized or communicated effectively. The implications of this analysis are profound, indicating a potential disconnect or dissatisfaction with current strategies and their outcomes, which could necessitate a reevaluation of policies and practices to better align with stakeholder expectations and improve perceived effectiveness.

The analysis of respondents' views on whether "The adoption of digital tools and technologies has streamlined economic diplomacy processes in Nigeria" reveals a diverse range of opinions. Out of 211 respondents, 43 (20.4%) strongly agree and 41 (19.4%) agree, suggesting that 39.8% of the participants see a positive impact of digital tools and technologies on economic diplomacy processes. Conversely, a significant portion, 45 (21.3%), disagree, and 78 (37%) strongly disagree, totaling 58.3% who do not believe that digital tools have streamlined these processes. Only 4 respondents (1.9%) remain undecided. The high percentage of disagreement and strong disagreement indicates a prevailing skepticism or dissatisfaction with the effectiveness of digital tools in improving economic diplomacy in Nigeria. This suggests a potential gap between the implementation of these technologies and their perceived effectiveness, highlighting the need for further evaluation and possibly more tailored strategies to enhance their impact.

The analysis of respondents' views on whether the allocation of sufficient financial resources has significantly boosted the effectiveness of Nigeria's economic diplomacy reveals a diverse range of opinions. Of the 211 respondents, 33 (15.6%) strongly agree and 43 (20.4%) agree, indicating that 76 (36%) overall perceive a positive impact. Conversely, 63 (29.9%) disagree and 70 (33.2%) strongly disagree, totaling 133 (63.1%) who are skeptical about the impact. Only 2 respondents (0.9%) remain undecided. The implication of this analysis is that a majority of respondents do not believe that financial resource allocation has notably enhanced the effectiveness of Nigeria's economic diplomacy.

The analysis of respondents' views on the statement "The establishment of bilateral and multilateral trade agreements has positively impacted Nigeria's economic diplomacy" reveals a significant skepticism among participants. Out of 211 respondents, only 20 (9.5%) strongly agree and 27 (12.8%) agree, indicating a positive perception from a mere 22.3%. In contrast, a substantial portion disagrees, with 77 (36.5%) and 84 (39.8%) strongly disagreeing, totaling 76.3% expressing a negative view. A small fraction, 3 respondents (1.4%), remain undecided. This stark distribution suggests that the majority perceive these trade agreements as ineffective in enhancing Nigeria's economic diplomacy. The implication of this analysis is critical: it highlights a disconnect between policy intentions and public perception, potentially signaling a need for a reassessment of the strategies behind these agreements to better align them with the expected economic outcomes and to address the underlying issues causing dissatisfaction.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

First objective of this study seeks to identify the challenges hindering the successful implementation of economic diplomacy initiatives in Nigeria's foreign policy. From the investigation, several key issues emerged. These include bureaucratic inefficiencies, inconsistent policy frameworks, inadequate resource allocation and corruption. Bureaucratic inefficiencies often slow down decision-making processes and hinder timely responses to international economic opportunities. Inconsistent policy frameworks create uncertainty for foreign investors and trading partners, undermining trust and long-term commitments. Additionally, inadequate resource allocation limits the capacity to effectively promote Nigerian interests abroad and respond to diplomatic needs promptly.

Secondly, the study evaluate the effectiveness of existing measures aimed at mitigating these challenges and enhancing the impact of economic diplomacy on Nigeria's trade and diplomatic relations. The study highlights that despite Nigeria's efforts in economic diplomacy, there remains a significant gap between intended outcomes and actual results. Challenges such as bureaucratic inefficiencies, inconsistent policy frameworks, and limited coordination among government agencies have hindered the effectiveness of these initiatives. These issues have often led to missed opportunities in leveraging Nigeria's economic potential on the global stage.

CONCLUSION

The study highlights several critical challenges in implementing economic diplomacy initiatives within Nigeria's foreign policy framework. Despite concerted efforts to leverage economic diplomacy for enhancing trade relations, the practical outcomes have often fallen short of expectations. Firstly, bureaucratic inefficiencies and institutional fragmentation within Nigeria's governmental structure pose significant obstacles. These hinder timely decision-making, coordination between relevant ministries, and the efficient execution of economic diplomacy strategies. Such inefficiencies not only delay the implementation process but also diminish the effectiveness of diplomatic efforts in promoting Nigeria's economic interests abroad. Secondly, inadequate funding and resource allocation further undermine the successful implementation of economic diplomacy initiatives. Limited financial resources restrict the capacity to sustain long-term diplomatic engagements, invest in necessary infrastructure, and support trade promotion activities effectively. This financial constraint often results in missed opportunities and reduces Nigeria's competitiveness in the global economic landscape. Moreover, the study underscores the importance of strategic alignment and clarity in diplomatic objectives. Inconsistent policy priorities and shifts in political leadership contribute to mixed messaging and unpredictability in Nigeria's economic diplomacy efforts. This lack of coherence can confuse international partners, diminish trust, and weaken the impact of diplomatic engagements aimed at fostering economic ties.

Additionally, external factors such as global economic volatility, geopolitical tensions, and evolving international trade policies present external challenges beyond Nigeria's control. These factors can disrupt diplomatic initiatives, complicate negotiations, and impose additional barriers to achieving sustained economic benefits from diplomatic engagements. Ultimately, overcoming these challenges demands sustained political will, institutional reform, and strategic foresight to align economic diplomacy initiatives with Nigeria's broader development objectives. By addressing these issues comprehensively, Nigeria can better leverage its diplomatic engagements to foster sustainable economic growth, enhance global competitiveness, and secure beneficial trade relationships in an increasingly interconnected world.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To address the challenges facing the implementation of economic diplomacy in Nigeria's foreign policy, Nigeria could implement streamlined bureaucratic procedures, ensuring quicker decision-making and responsiveness. Establishing clear, stable policy frameworks supported by long-term strategic planning would enhance predictability and investor confidence. Adequate resource allocation should prioritize funding and staffing for economic diplomacy initiatives, enabling sustained efforts in promoting Nigerian trade interests globally.

To address the ineffectiveness of existing measures aimed at mitigating these challenges and enhancing the impact of economic diplomacy, there is a need for streamlined communication channels and enhanced inter-agency collaboration. Strengthening institutional frameworks and establishing clear, measurable objectives aligned with Nigeria's economic priorities could also enhance the impact of economic diplomacy efforts. Furthermore, fostering stronger partnerships with private sector entities and international organizations could provide additional leverage in negotiations and trade relations.

References

Acemoglu, D., & Robinson, J. (2019). *The Narrow Corridor: States, Societies, and the Fate of Liberty*. Penguin Press.

Adebayo, A. (2020). Challenges of Economic Diplomacy in Nigeria: A Critical Review. *Journal of African Studies*, 45(3), 210-225.

Adeniran, A., & Onanuga, O. (2022). "Policy Inconsistencies in Nigeria's Economic Diplomacy." *Journal of International Relations and Diplomacy*, 14(3), 112-128.

Adeyemi, O. (2022). Challenges and Prospects of Economic Diplomacy in Nigeria’s Foreign Policy. *Journal of International Relations and Diplomacy*, 10(2), 45-61.

African Development Bank. (2023). "Intra-African Trade Report."

Akindele, S. (2019). Political Instability and Economic Diplomacy in Nigeria. *African Political Science Review*, 28(4), 312-329.

Akinola, R. (2021). Infrastructure and Economic Development in Nigeria. *Journal of Development Studies*, 49(2), 134-148.

Bayne, N., & Woolcock, S. (2017). *The New Economic Diplomacy: Decision-Making and Negotiation in International Economic Relations*. Routledge.

Bayne, N., & Woolcock, S. (2020). *The New Economic Diplomacy: Decision Making and Negotiation in International Economic Relations*. Routledge.

Bloom, N., Draca, M., & Van Reenen, J. (2016). Trade Induced Technical Change? The Impact of Chinese Imports on Innovation, IT, and Productivity. *Review of Economic Studies*, 83(1), 87-117.

Bown, C. P. (2020). The 2018-2019 Trade War and Trade Uncertainty. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 34(4), 141-166.

Brown, C. (2022). *The Politics of Foreign Policy*. Oxford University Press.

Burfisher, M. E., Robinson, S., & Thierfelder, K. (2020). NAFTA to USMCA: What is Gained? *Journal of Policy Modeling*, 42(4), 805-819.

DiMaggio, P. J., & Powell, W. W. (1983). The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields. *American Sociological Review,* 48(2), 147-160.

Dinka, T., & Kennes, W. (2020). The African Continental Free Trade Area: Opportunities and Challenges. *Africa Economic Brief*, 11(1), 1-12.

Eke, P. (2021). Regulatory Frameworks and Foreign Investment in Nigeria. *Journal of Economic Policy Reform*, 24(1), 50-66.

Federal Ministry of Finance. (2023). "2023 Budget of Nigeria."

Institute for Economics and Peace. (2023). "Global Terrorism Index 2023."

Johnson, R. (2021). *Economic Diplomacy and the Global Economy*. Cambridge University Press.

Khandelwal, P., & Teachout, M. (2016). Special Economic Zones: Performance, Lessons Learned, and Implications for Zone Development. *International Monetary Fund*.

Krugman, P. (2021). *International Economics: Theory and Policy*. Pearson Education.

Lee, D., & Hocking, B. (2018). *Economic Diplomacy: Trade and Commercial Policy*. Oxford University Press.

Meyer, J. W., & Rowan, B. (1977). Institutionalized Organizations: Formal Structure as Myth and Ceremony. *American Journal of Sociology*, 83(2), 340-363.

Nye, J. S. (2021). *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. Public Affairs.

Ogbonnaya, U. (2019). Anti-Corruption Efforts in Nigeria: An Evaluation. *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 57(3), 349-365.

Ojo, M. O., & Ogunkola, E. O. (2012). Economic Diplomacy in the Context of Economic Integration in Africa. *African Economic Research Consortium*.

Okonkwo, C. (2023). Challenges and Prospects of Nigeria's Economic Diplomacy. African Journal of Political Science, 29(1), 112-130.

Oluwadare, A. (2020). Corruption and Economic Development in Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Economic Studies*, 41(2), 177-193.

Onyeji, F. (2020). "Comparative Analysis of Economic Diplomacy Practices in Sub-Saharan Africa." *International Journal of Economic Diplomacy*, 8(1), 112-129.

Rana, K. S., & Chatterjee, B. (2022). *21st Century Diplomacy: A Practitioner's Guide*. Routledge.

Rodrik, D. (2018). Populism and the Economics of Globalization. *Journal of International Business Policy*, 1(1-2), 12-33.

Scott, W. R. (2014). *Institutions and Organizations: Ideas, Interests, and Identities*. Sage Publications.

Smith, S. (2023). *Diplomacy: Theory and Practice*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Taylor, I. (2016). *Africa Rising? BRICS - Diversifying Dependency*. James Currey.

Thirlwall, A. P. (2017). *Economic Growth in an Open Developing Economy: The Role of Structure and Demand*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

Transparency International. (2023). "Corruption Perceptions Index 2022."

Udeala, S. O. (2020). Economic Diplomacy in Nigeria's Foreign Policy: Issues, Challenges and Prospects. *International Journal of Diplomacy and Economy*, 6(1), 15-29.

Wacziarg, R., & Welch, K. H. (2008). Trade Liberalization and Growth: New Evidence. *The World Bank Economic Review*, 22(2), 187-231.

Williams, P. (2020). *Security Studies: An Introduction*. Routledge.

World Bank. (2020). Doing Business 2020: Comparing Business Regulation in 190 Economies. World Bank Publications.

World Bank. (2023). "Doing Business Report 2023."