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**CITIZEN DIPLOMACY AND NIGERIA'S EXTERNAL IMAGE  
MANAGEMENT, 2010-2015**

Michael B. Aleyomi (a)\*, Mohamad Zaini B. Abu Bakar (b), Daisy Mui Hung Kee (c)

\*Corresponding author

(a) Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia and Lecturer, Landmark University, Omu-Aran, Nigeria,  
Email: aleyomimike@yahoo.com

(b) Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia

(c) Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia

***Abstract***

This paper underscores the government efforts in addressing the plights of Nigeria's citizens and image climate under the Jonathan's administration. The quest for a positive image among the international community, like every other country in the world, is one of the major concerns of Nigeria project in the Fourth Republic. Nigeria's diplomatic engagements, which are reflective on its citizens, have witness an incessant plummeting rate in the country's image environment resulting into several forms of maltreatment on Nigerians. Thus, the paper x-rays the impact of state's initiatives (between 2010 and 2015) to manage the country's external image towards ensuring better handling of both internal and external interests of Nigeria. Applying primary and secondary methods of data collection, which are qualitatively analysed, the paper discovers growth in the tree of the negative image. Despite the socioeconomic and politico-security efforts put in place by the government, the country's external image is not totally freed from negativities. Though, the paper notes that there are some external factors responsible for the country's bad image, but, posits that the chief ripple effect of bad external image is as a result of unresolved domestic incongruences and contradictions, which attracts poor treatments of Nigerians in most foreign countries. It, therefore, offers some domestic, socio-political, and diplomatic strategies for Nigeria's external image to be positively perceived.

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## 1. Introduction

The fundamental objectives and directive principles of State policy, be it domestic or foreign, include the security of life and welfare of the people based on the principles of democracy and social justice. Hence, these objectives cannot be achieved by any state domestically, without interacting with other nation-states which are indeed, about the citizens. Thus, inter-states relationships have people as the epicenter of such interactions and the perception of any country is essentially the paraphernalia in such diplomatic engagement (Akinterinwa, 2010; Ambe-Uva & Adegboyega, 2007; Buzan & Lawson, 2015). This underscores that the relationships of a nation-state within a much larger community of states exist from time immemorial (Mahoney, 2000). Foreign policy, which has assumed an increased importance in the extant international system, is the primary instrument for the conduct and management of that relationship, and its goal is to defend and uphold the national interest and the overall welfares of the citizenry.

As a platform for engagement in the global system, every independent nation, irrespective of its level of development, gives impetus to the significance of foreign policy. Thus, domestic issues can easily be affected by the external environment and vice versa. Therefore, nation-states often design and re-design their strategies for coping effectively with the external environment confronting them by resorting to bilateralism (individually) or multilateralism (collectively) in their engagement in the international system. Indeed, the ability of a nation to diplomatically interact with other nations reflects strongly on its acceptance. This comprises a couple of evaluations, which includes among other things; external image, national development, and level of civility in terms of behavioural conformity with legal principles as codified in both domestic and international laws (Akinterinwa, 2010).

Without scintilla of doubt, Nigeria has the highest concentration of black people on earth, a bellwether for Africa and a hub for West Africa region. Nigeria is a major player in Africa diplomatic relations and strategic to the global society as an oil-rich country. The policy of Africa as the centrepiece of Nigeria's foreign policy and the good neighbourliness of Afrocentric philosophy has been the continuing attitude of Nigeria's foreign policy thrust since independence in 1960. The Afrocentric policy has been ventilated by the crafting and execution of several laudable programs that have impacted on Africa's socio-political, economic and security landscapes (Adejumobi, 2016; Bach, 2007; Uduma & Nwosu, 2015).

Unfortunately, Nigeria who had hitherto been treated with some respect and dignity, as giant of Africa and perceived as a country that is destined to lead the entire continent and the black race, in major countries of the world (Bach, 2007; Effiong, 2012), was slammed with sanctions of various descriptions and its citizens were treated with contempt. Nigeria and its people became a subject of scorn and disdain even in the eyes of less endowed countries in the world. In fact, the image of the country was so battered that Nigeria was suspended from the Commonwealth of Nations in 1995 and served as subject of mockery in many International Organizations including the United Nations and Franco-Summit (Saliu, 2015). The doors of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank were firmly shut against the country (Amao & Okeke-Uzodike, 2015; Bach, 2007; Effiong, 2012; Saliu, 2015). This had been attributed to the mishandling of Nigeria's affairs under the long period of military regimes (Alli, 2010).

Consequently, the protection of Nigeria's citizens regardless of where they reside, and the country's image management became compelling components of Nigeria's policymaking in the Fourth Republic, which begun in 1999 after a protracted military interregnum. This necessitates the country to re-design its

strategies to cope effectively with the external environment. Hence, citizen diplomacy was introduced in 2007 by the then Foreign Affairs Minister, Chief Ojo Maduekwe, as one of the indispensable strategies and designed as an instrument of national development for good image making of Nigeria in an increasingly globalizing world (Adejumobi, 2016).

To clarify the purpose, dynamism, and direction of Nigeria's policy-making in several ways, the concept of citizen diplomacy under the presidency of Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan (2010-2015) has raised fundamental questions as to whether it has yielded any tangible and measurable benefits to Nigeria and protection of Nigerians both at home and abroad for maintaining positive image among the comity of nations. Flowing from this background, the paper examines the state initiatives towards the plights of Nigeria citizens and image management during the period under review. It is in the light of these considerations that we underscore the statement of the problem with a view of clarifying some concepts by reviewing related literature.

## **2. Problem Statement**

### **2.1. Historicizing Nigeria's Foreign Policy**

The foundations of Nigeria's contemporary diplomacy and foreign policy were laid in 1957 (Saliu, 2015). Today, the impact of Nigeria's leadership in Africa is plain. Nigeria's strategic position in Africa, its teeming population, and a rich endowment of mineral resources including oil have all contributed to the notion of the country's manifest destiny in Africa and beyond (Bach, 2007). Since independence on October 1 1960, Nigeria's foreign policy objectives in relations with the rest of the international community reflect its determinations to promote and defend Africa's interests while at the same time ensuring the defense of its national interest (Adejumobi, 2016). These foreign policy objectives as highlighted by Sir Tafawa Balewa, the only Prime Minister of Nigeria, are predicated on the national interest of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and its citizens (Akinterinwa, 2010).

To briefly situate its role in the international environment, Nigeria had championed, led, and participated in so many interventions of some countries that were majorly under the ravages of conflicts, colonialism, racial discrimination (apartheid) and in fact, internecine Wars that happened in various countries at West African sub-region, Africa, and other parts of the world by sending its troops to peacekeeping missions in various war-zones (Uduma & Nwosu, 2015). Nigeria led the challenge against apartheid in South Africa and helped many countries like Congo, Namibia, and Zimbabwe to achieve independence. Nigeria also engaged in the contributions of financial and material largesse to the wellbeing of fellow African as well as Caribbean countries. This impactful role and orientation earned Nigeria significant image of a responsible and well-respected member among the global comity of nations.

The predominant components of Nigeria's foreign policy have received ample attention in the literature and upon which actions and rhetoric have been deployed. Indeed, there is a general agreement among Nigerian scholars that the global perception of Nigeria, immediately after independence was that of a nation that had been destined to lead Africa and the entire black race, hence, necessitates Afrocentric posture (Bach, 2007; Saliu, 2015). However, while not discarding Nigeria's diplomatic gains with Africa countries and other nation-states, the quest of this policy thrust has oscillated between activism and docility.

However, the inauguration of the Fourth Republic in May 29, 1999 signaled a break with decades of military dictatorship and opened the hitherto constricted political space, which allows the welfare of Nigerian citizens and their rights to be guaranteed in line with the international instruments (Okeke & Aniche, 2014). However, it is contentious if Nigeria is yet to appreciate and begin to take advantage of it, and disconcerting to assert if there has been sensitive consideration and responsiveness to both domestic and external issues in the pursuit of the policy thrust as it affects Nigerians since 1999. Hence, this 'new' diplomacy when evaluating the Jonathan administration between 2010 and 2015 is analyzed regarding its contents, coverage, and impact.

## **2.2. Citizen Diplomacy and its Conception in Nigeria**

From time immemorial, the cardinal unit of a nation in its decision-making is the citizen's engagement and interest (Baum & Potter, 2008). Specifically, in the liberal democracy, the duties and rights of people coupled with non-infringement on the citizen interests and privileges constitute democratic principles (Chandler, 2011). Therefore, diplomacy is one of the means of implementing these principles. Considering diplomacy as a means to an end, suggests that it can be bad or good. Drawing from this position, a nation irrespective of its level of interaction with another nation is expected to put into consideration the interest of its citizenry.

Thus, Citizen Diplomacy is used to describe the interest and welfare of the citizen, which must be sacrosanct, and should constitute the essence of any country's domestic or foreign policymaking. This foreign policy thrust is traceable to the United States of America's foreign policymaking which was coined by David Hoffman in 1981 in an effort to alleviate the cold war and "rankism" between the US-led capitalist West and the Russian-led socialist East to promote peace (Nye, 2004; Odoh & Nwogbaga, 2014). Similarly, the conception of citizen diplomacy in Nigeria has form an integral part of power which has become a popular currency in political and ideological debates among scholars, politicians, and diplomats denoting the reorientation of the country's external policy pursuits for the purpose of benefitting the politico-security and socioeconomic engagement, in enhancing citizen welfare and image building.

The motivation for the conceptualization of citizen diplomacy in the Nigeria's Fourth Republic foreign policy lexicon, as noted above, is to regenerate 'a new hope' for Nigerians as a philosophical guide to the conduct and management of Nigeria's foreign relations and the government's determination for a conducive environment for citizens' involvement from whom the government derives its power. In order words, this principle, in consonance with the constitutional directive principles, places priority on the protection of the interest of Nigerian citizens, both at home and abroad (Akinterinwa, 2010; Ashaver, 2014). This means that the primary responsibility of Nigeria's diplomacy, like every other democratic and civilized state, is the protection of the rights, dignity and privileges of Nigerian citizens wherever they may be.

Citizen diplomacy was conceived and conceptualized by Ojo Maduekwe under the administration of Late President Umura Musa Yar'Adua, of which Dr. Jonathan was part as Yar'Adua's lieutenant, as the main thrust of Nigeria's foreign policy. However, due to its multi-dimensional aspects, holistic in the coverage of the targeted audience, issues covered, goals pursued, and expectations of the citizen, opinion on the concept was divided on what should be meant by citizen diplomacy, how it should be applied and how it should be conducted and managed. For instance, the Foreign Affairs Ministry is divided on the

concept. While some officers see no new inclination to citizen diplomacy because the whole essence of diplomacy is about the people, some hold the view that the adjectival qualification “citizen” is necessary in diplomacy for the purpose of emphasis.

Consequently, Ozoemenam Mbachu sees the aim of citizen diplomacy an effort aimed at economic recovery and increased democratization with the potential of ushering in export opportunities for Nigeria, increase in foreign direct investments in Nigeria, financial assistance as well as bringing about technological transfer to Nigeria, especially from Nigerians in Diaspora (Mbachu, 2009). While Osita Eze sees Citizen Diplomacy from two legal perspectives: State duty to the citizenry and sanctity of pacts or agreements, Bola Akinterinwa opines that it is a technique and strategic use of millions of Nigerians, irrespective of where they reside abroad, as Nigeria’s diplomats for the purpose of reclaiming the ‘lost glory’ of Nigeria and manage the country’s external image (Akinterinwa, 2010; Eze, 2009).

In all these cases, Citizen Diplomacy gives right, if not the responsibility, to people to be citizen diplomats of the highest order for their respective villages/communities they come from, states, country and the whole world. Unfortunately, the operationalization of Citizen Diplomacy in Nigeria, apart from insufficiently conceived by its proponents, did not outline a clear definition and comprehension of who are the citizen diplomats? What functions or responsibilities are these diplomats to perform? How and where are they to carry-out their duty to promote Nigeria’s image building? Nigerians are not seen as chief stakeholders in any diplomatic market that should be the primary beneficiaries of any external engagement that Nigeria embarks upon in its foreign policymaking.

### **2.3. Image Building**

A country’s image is a multidimensional picture, description, inferential and informational beliefs about that given country. The direction of a country image can be internal (self) and external (mirror). Several scholars have written extensively on the concept of nation’s image building/branding including Simon Anholt who theorized on the country of origin effect and the impact it could have on national politico-security and socioeconomics (Anholt, 2005). (Frost, 2004) makes a strong case for nation branding campaigns when he remarked that: "There's no arguing that the image we have of another country says a lot about how we view it as a tourist destination, a place to invest or a source of consumer goods" (p.9). The impression that has ingrained in the minds of Nigerians especially those living abroad was that the Nigerian state did not care about the plights of its citizen.

Therefore, an understanding of Anholt’s and Frost’s views suggests that a nation image/branding goes beyond fancy logo designs and slogans or insertion of the media jingoism. The actions or inactions of a country both at the domestic and international levels are the key elements of a country image which serves as reflections of perceptions. In this view, globalization means that countries are competing against each other in the same way as brands do. Therefore, powerful ‘country brands’ have a huge competitive advantage (Anholt, 2005; Cotirlea, 2015). Thus, Nigeria’s image, be itself or mirror, is the perception of the international community about Nigeria. An image can be perceived to be good or bad, negative or positive and is influenced by a variety of factors. This is the essence of image management as one the cruxes of the study.

### **3. Research Questions**

Against the background of the introduction and problem statement, the paper is anchored to answer this basic question: In what ways has a government initiative, under the President Jonathan's Administration, helps to improve the country's image and enhance national development?

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

Indeed, many scholars like Adejumobi (2016), Akinterinwa (2010), Buzan and Lawson (2015), Effiong (2012) among others, have written on Nigeria foreign policy in various ways but an important area which, however, seems neglected is the inadequacy in addressing the lack of policy direction and focus in Nigeria's foreign policy objectives as it affects national interest. It is based on this background that this study aims at investigating the government initiatives, between 2010 and 2015, in addressing the image crisis and inhumane maltreatments of Nigerians in Nigeria and in the diaspora. In addition, the purpose of the study is to offer some strategies for external image management and ways of improving the effort of citizen diplomacy.

### **5. Research Methods**

#### **5.1. Research Design**

The study is designed in a combination of historical 'descripto-explanatory' and inductive interpretation through the content survey method, which is qualitatively analyzed and based on the realist school as the tool of analysis to capture the normative dimensions of the study and to explore evidence-based enquiries (Creswell, 2014; Jonker & Pennink, 2010; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). The adoption of qualitative instead of quantitative method of analysis enables the researchers to embark on an in-depth study of the Nigeria's Citizen Diplomacy as well as appraising its impacts on national/citizens interests and image climates of the country (Gray, 2013; Newman, 2011).

#### **5.2. Research Sample**

Indeed, in every research, the most important thing that attracts the researcher is whom or what to study. Undeniably, Nigeria's external relation is concerned with interaction between the domestic and the external environment vis-à-vis some changes in the opinion of decision makers, which lend credence to the use of qualitative method. The Nigerian state actors and its agencies especially the presidency, national assembly members, carrier diplomats in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Institutes, among other non-state actors such as National Non-Governmental Organizations (NNGOs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), selected individuals like Civil Servants, Businessmen, and Academia in the field of Political Science, International Relations and Foreign Policy experts among others formed part of the population. Respondents were selected purposively due to their knowledge, insights and experienced in appraising Nigeria project as it concerns the country's diplomatic relations.

Furthermore, the study adopts purposive sampling with the application of triangulation technique. It is practically impossible on epistemological basis to use the entire samples that are as representative as possible of the population under study (Gray, 2013). Consequently, the methods of data collection include field studies (primary sources) through the utilization of 10 Key-Informant Interviews, 3 Focus Group

Discussions (FGDs), and document reviews (secondary sources) via edited books, journal articles, official gazettes, national dailies, published and unpublished materials from the internet (Gray, 2013; Johnson, 2015). The interviews and FGDs were conducted by the researcher with two research assistants in line with Marshall and Rossman's minimum requirement for qualitative research (Marshall & Rossman, 2014).

### **5.3. Analysis**

Data analysis involves the process of separating or deconstructing the whole data into its smaller component units to reveal the meaning, observable elements, nature and structure of the data (Creswell, 2014; Gray, 2013). Indeed, data analysis is the process of evaluating and treating data collected for answering the research question(s). Thus, the study applies thematic analysis to qualitatively scrutinize data collected. Also, thematic and direct quotations were applied as the techniques of analysis for the interviews transcription and FGDs. Data were gathered and repeatedly scrutinized via 'immersion' with the intention of finding emerging patterns, themes, and sub-themes (Gray, 2013). This allows the researcher to categorize the data under different sections.

On the units of analysis, the state behaviour and external perceptions of Nigeria at the domestic and international levels become indispensable. In other words, the level of analysis is focused on two indices. First, is the nexus between the domestic and external policies in the distribution of power and drafting of Citizen Diplomacy, and second, is the role of state in the implementation of Citizen Diplomacy. These two levels necessitate the theoretical framework of the study, which highlights the structural focus in explaining foreign policy decisions of individual states rather than predicting patterns of outcomes at the system level. This helps to assess the Nigeria's diplomatic thrust and its performance on the national interests and the country's image building over a period of time.

## **6. Findings**

It has been variously argued that the foreign policy actions of states are shaped in significant ways by the nature of the political unit or group involved in the decision-making process (Aleyomi & Bakar, 2015; Bach, 2007; Folarin, 2014; Okeke & Aniche, 2014). A country's position in the international system, which is also referred to as external image, can be viewed through the prism of its foreign policymakers' perception, elites' perception or national role conception in foreign policy analysis which is popular in American and European literature of foreign policy (Folarin, 2014; Ota & Ecoma, 2015). Consequent from the above methodology, the results of the study show that President Goodluck Jonathan between 2010 and 2015 identified some environmental conditionings as its initiatives on Nigeria's citizen diplomacy and image management.

### **6.1. The Nigeria's Political Environment**

The original purpose of any rational government is to consciously resort to the calculi of the basic needs, human rights, socioeconomic, and security wellbeing of its citizenry and place the citizens at the centre of its national programme in conducting bilateral and multilateral engagements with other nations. When this happens, there is a tendency for patriotism and trust of the general populace in national solidarity and nation building. Nigeria considers her foreign policy exertions as necessary extensions of the domestic

policy. This means that the distribution of power in the foreign policy space is co-terminus with the domestic imperatives. The emphasis on Citizen Diplomacy in Nigeria then meant that the domestic policy should also prioritise citizens' welfare and engagement at the domestic level, all within the context of making the most judicious and impactful usage of the available resources.

Indeed, domestic variables influence the foreign policy of any country. Therefore, Nigeria's political system has a significant influence on the viability of the Citizen Diplomacy and positivity of the external image. Democracy is at the heart of the relationship between the people and the government. One essential instrument for realizing this goal of positive image-building is undoubtedly effort at consolidating democracy at home, which has, become an imperative of Nigeria's Citizen Diplomacy (Saliu, 2015). Consequently, the inauguration of the Obasanjo civilian government in 1999 ushered in a new era in Nigeria's public policymaking different from the preceding military era. In fact, the subsequent civilian governments of Yar'Adua in 2007 and Jonathan in 2010 further buttress this view to make valuable impacts on the image of the country through domestic political sagacity.

Professor Bola Akinterinwa, in an organized special National Democracy Workshop on 'Strengthening Democratic Transition in Nigeria' held in Abuja between April 17 and 18, 2013, affirms that without any jolt of doubt, the democratization process in Nigeria since 1999 has furtherance the rising profile of Nigeria in global politics and sees Citizen Diplomacy as the basis for this rising profile. Commenting further on the future of Nigeria amidst the leading democracies in the world, he observes that "...much interest is placed on how to strengthen democracy and its institutions, how to evolve a democratic culture and how to make democracy an instrument of national development, national unity, and national security" (Akinterinwa, 2014).

Indeed, there was positive reform in the electoral system to enhance democratic consolidation. The introduction of Card Reader-CR (an electronic machine for voters' accreditation) and Permanent Voter's Card-PVC into Nigeria's political landscape is a monumental improvement (Omilusi, 2016). The reform allows for all citizens to assert their position as the real employers of those in powers, and on whose behalf and benefits power should only be exercised. For the first time in the history of Nigeria, an incumbent president was not only defeated but also accepted defeat even before the election results were officially announced. What a record of national and international ecstasy and democratic plus courtesy Jonathan electoral reforms initiative.

The democratization effort of President Jonathan was also seen on the continental stage. Nigeria's support for the promotion and consolidation of democracy, good governance and human rights in Africa is not in doubt. Nigeria, under the leadership of Jonathan made strenuous efforts to lead democratic electoral processes in Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Republic of Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and other African countries (Akinterinwa, 2010). Nigeria prevented a bloodbath as an aftermath of the election of Ivorian President, Alassane Quattara in 2011. In line with the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States' zero tolerance policy for unconstitutional change of government in Africa, Nigeria condemned the undemocratic change of government in Guinea Bissau, Libya and Mali, and ensures peaceful resolution of the crisis. All these interventions give further approval to Nigeria's leadership in Africa.

However, the profile of successes painted above should not suggest that all is well with the pursuit of Citizen Diplomacy by Nigerian state. The narratives of political environment of the twenty-first century in Nigeria remains a tragic reality and constant threat to democratization and political right of Nigerians because of bad leadership and weak capacities of the state, weak democratic institutions, and citizens' alienation from the government. The undervalued nature of Nigeria internationally relates to lack of pragmatic and dynamic political environment plaguing Nigeria and inability of state actors to reinvent Nigeria's policymaking institutions over the years for national development (Agbu, 2016; Fawole, 2016). This immoral political depravity has adversely impacted Nigeria's image management in the Fourth Republic.

## **6.2. Economic Factors and Jonathan's Initiatives**

The organic linkage between the domestic and foreign policies of nations and their economic development is not in doubt. Arguably, the backbone of any nation is the economy. However, the extent to which a country's external transactions can be used to advance its domestic economic goals depends on the nature and economic power of the state. On an underdeveloped country like Nigeria, the ability to apply foreign policy instruments for the precise purpose of achieving its domestic economic goal of self-reliance, is limited by its weakness in the international system.

On the assumption of office, President Jonathan inaugurated an Inter-Ministerial Committee on February 17, 2011 to produce what he termed "Transformation Agenda" in a bid to ensure all Nigerians walk shoulder-high among the comity of nations. The transformation project targeted the full participation of the citizens, particularly the youths who constituted a large proportion of the country's human capital. It focuses on three key areas which include strong, inclusive, and non-inflationary growth; employment generation and poverty alleviation; and value re-orientation of the citizenry. According to John Ayoade, the intention of Jonathan's transformation agenda is "similar to Lee Kuan Yew's Transformation Agenda for Singapore, which is to make Nigeria from poverty to plenty" (Ayoade, 2013).

However, this policy style was a combination of deliberate silence and peremptory action. Indeed, Bola Akinterinwa opines that Jonathan's foreign policy assertion on the economy was soul searching in focus, rich in events, controversial in direction but, so far, self-reassuring in outcome (Akinterinwa, 2010). Transformation cannot be imposed from above. It must be seen to have been actualized. It can only be generated by exemplary leadership which not only elicits emulation but inspires the conviction that the proposed path of change is the right road.

The recognition of the Nigerians in Diaspora as a foreign policy resource and as important stakeholders in the Nigerian project, constituting the human capital necessary for Nigeria's development, sets in review motion of the Jonathan's foreign policy to be foreign direct investment oriented (*Tell* Special Edition, June, 2012, p.9; *The Punch*, Tuesday July 26, 2011, p.33). Speaking at a dinner organized in his honour by the Corporate Council on Africa in September 2012, President Jonathan affirmed his administration's commitment to promoting the development of a knowledge-economy that will enhance the security of lives and property, thereby accelerating growth to provide more employment and reduce youth restiveness.

In a bid to encourage and promote the country's inflow of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), the Jonathan government in 2011 reviewed and renegotiated (brokered new) bilateral agreements with several countries in the areas of trade, technological cooperation, ICT, education, culture/tourism etcetera (Kia, Nwigbo, & Ojie, 2016; Nwankwo, 2013). Indeed, once there is a political will there will always be a political way to establish and actualize a recognized and an accepted idea. In 2012 alone according to the UN World Investment Report, Nigerians living abroad sent home over US\$8.9bn as a remittance. That was the largest FDI in the history of Africa. In fact, Nigeria becoming Africa's largest economy in 2014 is a pointer to the fact that Diaspora is indeed an integral part of the economy.

The economy improvement coupled with a leadership role in both regional and global arena won Nigeria recognition by the international community. The country was elected to the main position in world bodies. Suffice it to mention its election to hold the presidency of the group of eight developing countries (D8); the Executive Board of UNESCO in November 2011; the Governing Board of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) (Nwankwo, 2013). Some observers confirm that a few Nigerians were elected into key positions in international organizations. This facilitates the doggedness of Nigeria and its citizens to make an impact in global affairs.

However, as impactful as Jonathan's economic policies may be, they were not free from some deficiencies. Despite the growing influence of non-governmental organizations in Nigeria's economy (International Monetary Fund, 2012), the NGOs were not accorded any appreciable role in the conduct of Nigeria's foreign policy strategy. Besides, there was the low participation of Nigeria in World Trade Organization of which Nigeria is a signatory to, hence, hindered the country from influencing the process of international economic policymaking. More so, there was no genuine commitment on the part of the government to rapid infrastructural development and diversification of the economy towards industrialization, despite its importance to the enhancement of the country's domestic productive capacity.

According to a report released by Global Investment Trends Monitor of United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the FDI inflows to Nigeria declined to US\$3.4bn at the end of Jonathan administration in 2015, due to the fragility of the global economy and weak domestic commitment in strategic policy like in the field of science and technology which is the main source of innovations (Fawole, 2016). Besides, Jonathan administration was 'plagued' with the act of terrorism arising from the Boko Haram insurgents, which negatively reflects on the domestic economic growth, via its several attacks on religious houses, public buildings including the Police and the UN headquarters in Abuja, among other dastardly activities (MacLean, 2015; Onapajo & Uzodike, 2012).

Above all, the chronic rate of economic corruption and primitive accumulation of public wealth encumber the administration bid for citizen diplomacy, and hence, affect the efforts of image building. Though, corruption is a global phenomenon but the degree of severity in Nigeria during Jonathan administration attracted global concerns (Owen & Usman, 2015). The impact of Nigeria's image crisis and reputation for corruption was felt on Nigerians living or traveling abroad including African countries, as many of them were subjected to unnecessary harassment by such foreign agencies as immigration, customs, and the police. In fact, the former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, David Cameron described Nigeria as a fantastically corrupt nation in a conversation with the Queen (*Vanguard*, May 10, 2016). The perception of Nigeria as one of the corrupt countries in the world is documented by Transparency International.

**Table 01. Nigeria's Corruption Perception Index (CPI), 2010-2015**

Year	Corruption Index	Corruption Rank/No of Countries	Score %
2010	2.4	134/178	24
2011	2.4	143/183	24
2012	2.7	139/176	27
2013	2.5	144/177	25
2014	2.7	136/175	27
2015	2.6	136/168	26

**Source:** Compiled by the Authors with references from CPI, Transparency International

### 6.3. Security Factor

While there was a brief cessation of violence in the Niger-Delta region and increase in oil production and economic 'boom' because of the recorded success of Amnesty Programme (Onukwugha, Eke-Ogiugo, & Okhomina, 2014). Boko Haram however, disturbed the national peace with destruction of lives and property in the Northern region, only possible in warfare. The government inept and inertia to good governance and preparation for the scale and scope of national security as in the case of Boko Haram operations, was reflected in the uncoordinated approach to solving the problem. Although, some analysts have argued that Jonathan's election to office in 2011 against the wishes of some ethno-religious cabals further aggravated the hitherto non-violent religious sects, Boko Haram (Owen & Usman, 2015). However, faith-based conflict in Nigeria tends to have a life of its own, and it appears worse when it inclines towards ethno-political-religious mix.

However, due to the military tactics in prosecuting the insurgency of the Boko Haram sects, which was poorly managed, the Special Joint Military Task Force (SJMTF) was utterly criticized by the leaders and people of Borno State (who were the victims of Boko Haram attack) as the collateral damage from their operation was adjudged disproportionately (Sampson, 2016). Thus, in 2011, the Nigeria National Assembly enacted the twin anti-terrorism and money laundering bills known as 'Terrorism (Prevention) Act 2011' and 'Money Laundering (Prohibition) Bill 2011' to combat any act of domestic terrorism (not only Boko Haram) and to fight any form of criminal justice. The passage of the Acts helped in the arrest and trial of many high-profile members and foot soldiers of the Boko Haram sect (Sampson, 2016).

Indeed, until recently, the Nigeria's security challenge because of Boko Haram terrorist activities was presumed to be an internal affair of Nigerian State that required an internal solution. However, the abduction of 276 Chibok school girls on April 14, 2014, and the international condemnations that were associated with the dastardly act, externalized the country's security crisis beyond the shores of Nigeria (Chothia, 2014). Thus, Nigeria's relationship with the international community was faltered. The failure of countries like the US, France, UK and some African countries to genuinely assist Nigeria in fighting the scourge of Boko Haram terrorism, and some other international ridicule on the government officials and Nigerians who traveled abroad during Jonathan tenure are also testaments (Akujuru & Ruddock, 2016; Ayoade, 2013).

In all these initiatives by the Jonathan's presidency, the finding reveals that it is practically impossible to get clean water from a dirty glass cup. The inability or declining capacities of state institutions to effectively formulate and implement official policies to society's critical needs have played a crucial role in Nigeria's image crisis. The Nigerian state is very weak on political will and falls short in all dimensions of state capacity to articulate the environmental conditionings towards attaining the expected positive

external image management. Weak state's capacity suggests a lack of wherewithal of Nigerian government under the administration of President Jonathan between 2010 and 2015 evolve a common strategy on power distribution between internal and external factors that influence policymaking towards image management as well as advancing citizen diplomacy as an instrument of protection of national interest and development. Consequently, the study found out that Nigeria is set at variance with the concept of Citizen Diplomacy or citizen diplomats as it is practiced in the US. Nigerians are yet to be citizen diplomats at home let alone at the global community. Nigeria is a country that is exploding with information, completely interconnected and interdependent, trends that will only increase. However, the country is yet to fully understand that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the very nature of a country's responsibilities as a citizen needs to include being globally literate so as to strive and compete in an interconnected world. It is however, debatable if Nigeria has all the requisite paraphernalia and wherewithal to execute Citizen Diplomacy and meet its challenges, especially in terms of the application of the principle of reciprocity. Being ignorant of immediate and external environments with lacking the capacity of meeting the challenges of Citizen Diplomacy will threaten the political, socioeconomic competitiveness and national security.

Undeniably, from the above analyses, it is obvious that failure of leadership is an inescapable virus to Nigeria's positive image building. The manifestation of this national virus includes a combination of widespread corruption and indiscipline; leadership egoism and incompetence leading to policy somersault cum ailing and antigrowth economy; electoral malpractices and violence; high level of impunity and disrespect for the rule of law coupled with insecurity; intimidation and lack of accountability among other constitutive elements of the Nigerian oxygen undermined the fight against poor image perception of Nigeria. It can be argued that with the country's history of political evolution, the state should have matured significantly with time and domestic political elites should have come and grown into its own, seizing the machinery of governance and driving it in the direction that would essentially leave them in the control of the trappings or paraphernalia of governance. Unfortunately, this scenario is not so and the administration of President Jonathan was equally guilty of these narratives.

## **7. Conclusion**

The study shows that the policy of a sovereign state in its interaction with others reflects the domestic undercurrents which influence its external image perception. However, the impact of Nigeria's citizen diplomacy on the plight of its citizen has not only been felt on Nigerians at home and abroad, it has significantly influenced the Nigeria's external image perception and its position among the comity of nations. Nevertheless, Nigeria does not lack good and standardized initiatives that are compatible with the global trend towards image building, but it is evident that the country is weak to implement the initiatives. Thereby, it is arguably to state that the ripple effect of bad external image as a result of the country's internal exigencies is the highhandedness in the treatment meted to Nigerians by most foreign countries

Indeed, some of the policies introduced are skewed to favour some certain individuals who have the opportunity of holding government offices. The state favours the political elites and focusing more on external priorities instead of national interests that are reflective on all Nigerian citizens. This has created a serious gap between the state and its populace vis-à-vis domestic and foreign priorities of communicating respect to the common man. Citizen diplomacy during Jonathan administration was incapacitated to provide

values on the Nigerians both at home and abroad, hence failed to meet its envisaged purpose that is protective in objective, preventive in design and beneficial to all and sundry. Broadly speaking, Nigeria's image between 2010 and 2015 is less than satisfactory to say the least due to unprepared and unfocused *ad libitum* leadership and unpatriotic followership that are engrossed with the chronic scourge of corruption.

Thus, in discussing the strategies for external image management and improving the exertion of citizen diplomacy, there is a need for the following among other recommendations:

- i. The government should establish citizen training centre on citizen diplomacy in all the 774 local government areas to train every youth on sociocultural and politico-security values.
- ii. On the one hand, there should be fairer and just distributions of wealth to benefit every Nigerian. On the other hand, there is a need for stabilizing the domestic economy by providing an environment that is conducive to genuine investors and foreign direct investment.
- iii. There is dire need to reform the curriculum of the police and other security agencies to accommodate modern methods of law enforcement. The security sector should be sanitized of corruption and adequately fortified.
- iv. To achieve rapid and sustainable economic growth, there is a need for the government to work the talk on economy diversification and avoid the culture of white-elephant projects.
- v. Nigeria government must introduce hygiene in its polity by strengthening the institutional capacities of the legislature, executive and the judiciary in the fight against corruption.
- vi. Above all, the government must create an environment that upholds the principle of the rule of law. This will fight the high level of impunity and enhance good governance and political stability.

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