

How Far do International Organizations Shape the Foreign Policy Process of States?

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ABSTRACT

The increasing numbers, behaviours and influences of International organizations (IGOs) in recent times within the local and international system had drawn attention in the academic sphere. These behaviours and influences are identified through their activities as dominant actors in developmental grounds and in foreign policy of states. Their dominance indicated that they usually cross their boundaries in foreign policy process of states. It is against this foregoing that, the study examined how far International Organizations shape the foreign policy process of states. The study employed the mixed method approach. Data for analysis were collected through secondary sources like journals, books (published & unpublished), textbooks and online publications which are relevant to the study. The theory of Neoliberal institutionalism was applied. This theory is of the view of how international institutions can play significant role in international economic and political ties between states. Findings revealed that International Organizations have influenced the decision making and policies of states through their facilitating and advocacy activities in the international arena. It was concluded that International Organizations has effectively and actively influenced states foreign policies. Again, this influence of international organizations, its expansion and contributions in states foreign policy process has noticeably brought about debatable questions concerning their impacts and legitimacy on states foreign policies. The study recommended that International Organizations should be closely monitored; this will help to limit crossing their boundaries as they carry out their activities within the states.

KEY WORDS: International organizations, Foreign Policy, Foreign Policy Process, Influence, States

1. INTRODUCTION:

1.1 Background to The Study

International organizations (IOs) are institutions drawing membership from at least three states, having activities in several states, and whose members are held together by a formal agreement. These organizations are sometimes funded by states, private individuals, churches and other associations. Their aim is to promote good health care, poverty alleviation, education, human

rights, environmental protection and economic development (Aall et al, 2000). The scope of their operations range from local to international level which distinguish them as *operational* organizations that can mobilize funds for their various projects and provide goods and services to those in need. As *facilitating* organizations, they push for the social conversion among individuals and community's development through lobbying with governments and other supportive groups and also influence international politics (Willets, 2002; Lewis, 2010). IOs play crucial roles within the contemporary international system through their connected bodies by coordinating the actions of states and harmonizing the international community, through group action, humanitarian rights and laws, and also environmental protection. Their history can be dated back to 1807 when slavery was abolished in Britain. Many international organizations sprang up during this period namely, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Union of International Association (UIA), American Friends

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Service Committee, Save the Children, Oxfam and others (Potapkina, 2009). Overtime, the numbers of IOs keep increasing, bringing together individuals and associations of mutual interest to conduct activities across all social domains within the states. According to the UN department of Economic and Social Council on the Committee for IOs, the novels of application for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development drastically increased in 2020 including 360 newly applicants from 81 countries worldwide, making a total of 637 applications under consideration. On consultation status, the committee has over 3,000 registered IOs and also recorded 860 new applications, showing a 400% percent increase as against 2010 applications. The increasing proliferation of IOs shows their impacting roles and influences in the local and international political system as a result of global issues emanating from human right violation, national agitation, economic crisis, violent conflicts and human displacements. In addition, the rate at which technologies is synchronizing the world, making it easy for institutions to establish, expand their scope and activities are not unknown to these organizations (Edward, 2010; Willets, 2011). IOs participatory rights have increased and are now entitled to all UN documents. They have the right of circulating their statement to states delegates, organize and attend their own 'side meetings' at diplomatic gatherings, erring their view through verbal presentation of agendas and debates. The permanent legal right in participating in UN General Assembly, the Human Right Council and UN conferences have also been issued to them but with restriction on decision making entities like states that are very cautious about classified information, such as the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, UN Security Council and World Trade Organization.

Today, states collaborate with each other in varied IOs, with a nonambiguous outlined institutionalized of cooperation across different policy fields and at the same time, conjointly tackling mutual issues (Mathews 1997; Thomas et al, 1999). As Yagub (2014) opined, the North Darfur state government totally relied on the curative health service provided by International IOs as a result of violent conflict. The World Health Organization and UNICEF and 22 other international organizations were on ground in providing humanitarian support and services for the affected locals through collaboration of the government. Though IOs may not have provided a total developmental assistance for nations, a country like Vietnam can attest to the efforts of IOs in contribution to their accredited initiation of innovative approach in research and good policy strategies which has increased the quality of their manpower (Kim, 2011). It is this background that, the study investigates how far International Organizations have attempted to shape and influence the foreign policy process of states. The

study is divided into two parts; the first part will focus on the impact of IOs in states foreign policy while the second part will look at the impact of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Nigeria and Cote d'Ivoire.

1.2 Statement of The Problem

The increasing numbers, behaviours and influences of International organizations in recent times within the local and international system has drawn attention in the academic sphere. These behaviours could be seen through their activities as dominant actors on developmental grounds and as influencers in the significant role they play on global issues such as the human right violation, humanitarian support, environmental protection, economic crisis and violent conflicts. Also, the effect of climate change which has increased the frequent rate of natural disasters around globe, conflict and post-conflicts, religious agitations, civil wars and ethnic conflict have affected the economic status quo of nations, making governments to rely on relief funds and aids from various IOs. Furthermore, due to the economic development of nations, the gap between the wealthy and poorer nations cannot be measured; therefore, getting aids from IOs has become a welcome initiative in reducing poverty and an easy method in the alleviation of socio-economic development in poor countries worldwide. This has given IOs the ability to operate and expand their scope in different humanitarian agenda and influence governmental projects both in national and international systems. This behaviour and collaboration between international organizations and states on global issues is becoming a major concern that questions their impacts and legitimacy on states' foreign policies.

1.3 Methodology

The study employed qualitative methodology. Data were collected through journals, books (published and unpublished) from the library, use of the internet and documentaries on foreign policy of states, international organizations and their various activities, within the states and international systems. Data were analyzed using content analysis.

2. FOREIGN POLICIES OF STATES

Foreign policy is a specific objective that directs a state's behaviour and relationship with other states. The formulation of foreign policy is affected by domestic interests, other states' policies or actions, and strategies that advance particular strategic designs. States also have to deal with non-state actors in recent years as the level of globalization and transnational activities increases in order to assess, control and optimize the

advantages of multilateral international cooperation and the aforementioned relationship (Padelford et al, 1997).

The current state's structure has been in existence since the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648. It introduced the interaction between and among states at the international level, and as such, it has a major influence on the shaping of the states' foreign policies as they interact (Bojang, 2018). The world is constantly evolving; new events and personalities present new foreign policy challenges for all parties involved. The effect of the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, the rise of Communist Power in China in 1949, the rise of De Gaulle to power in France and Hitler in Germany, and the advent of new states in Asia and Africa, to name a few at random, have all resulted in major shifts in the power system, which have influenced many countries' foreign policies. The international system was bipolar in the 1980s, as seen during the Cold War, and is now unipolar, with the United States as the sole hegemonic force. These events have restructured the power structure and have a significant impact on state foreign policies processes. The fall of the Soviet Union and the emergence of a unipolar world (US hegemony) have its own set of regime dynamics, such as Bush's "either with us or against us." This declaration has prompted many countries on the periphery of the framework to step forward and play important roles, especially in the so-called Global War on Terror. As a result, and, at this stage, every form of power structure at the international level has its own unique dynamics and influences state foreign policies (Foreign policy & diplomacy).

Indeed, international climate has made a significant impact on each country's foreign policy. Foreign policy, in general, is about a state's relationship with other states; however, this interaction occurs at the international level, and as such, cannot be overlooked when evaluating a state's foreign policy. Although, it is important to recognise that both international and domestic demands are key factors in deciding a country's foreign policy. The international system or power structure, international law, international institutions, alliances, and military strength or arm race are the key external factors that decide a state's foreign policy ((Foreign policy & diplomacy).

2.1 International Organizations and Foreign Policy of States

Before outlining the impact of IOs on states' foreign policy process, it is a pre-requisite to briefly examine the IOs from the perspectives of scholars and organizations. According to World Bank, IOs are defined as "The diversity of IOs strains any simple definition. They include many groups and institutions that are entirely or largely independent of government and that have primarily humanitarian or cooperative rather than

commercial objectives. They are private agencies in industrial countries that support international development; indigenous groups organized regionally or nationally; and member-groups in villages. IOs may include charitable and religious associations that mobilize private funds for development, distribute food and family planning services and promote community organization. They also include independent cooperatives, community associations, water-user societies, women's groups and pastoral associations. Citizen Groups that raise awareness and influence policy are also IOs".

This can be interpreted that IOs are not necessarily government agencies or affiliated to government organization nor are they meant to generate profit or be involved in political activities but can have some influence in policy-making of the states. Scholars on the other hand, could not come up with a generalized acceptable definition due to the various roles IOs play in different societies and the large amount of funds they receive from states with a knowing fact that IOs are not necessarily government organizations (Lewis, 2010). These roles as earlier explained, range from being an operational and facilitating IOs in national and international states'; systems.

2.2 Theory of Neoliberal Institutionalism

Neoliberal institutionalism is of the view of how international institutions can play significant role in international economic and political ties between states. Its key function, as suggested by Joseph M. Grieco and G. John Ikenberry in *State Power and World Markets*, is to act as a mediator in resolving interstate disputes. International institutions play a key role on how states collaborate and interact in the international system. The rate of conflicts and interdependence can be minimized with the right structural institutions. Unlike the realist who believes that international organization is an arena for states exhibition of power, neoliberalism is on the submission that through international diplomacy, states have the opportunity to actively interact and support each other and at the same time maximize prosperity. The development of technological infrastructure and globalization has increased the rate of inter-connectivity, enabling international institutions to cooperate with one another in achieving their common goals. IOs play a crucial role within the current international system through its connected bodies by coordinating the actions of states and harmonizing the international community, through group action, humanitarian rights and laws, environmental protection. IOs are recognized to be key non state actors in influencing the development, human rights, humanitarian actions, environment, and other areas of public opinions (Dang, 2009; Kim 2011; Yogev, 2017; Lewis, 2010).

3. INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS ON STATES' FOREIGN POLICY PROCESS

Literature's on the impact of IOs in the governmental system can mostly be seen through their operations as *facilitating* IOs by involving in a wide range of activities like political advocacy on problems concerning elections, economic development, feminism, education and healthcare surrounding the global societies with scholastic facts that, these impacts can only be very effective in states with a democratic system (Kim, 2011; Dang, 2009). A democratic system that gives leverage of equal protection of human right, free enterprise system, plural party system, the rule of law and political freedom for all. Scholars are of the opinion that for IOs to effectively operate and influence the policy of any government, the country must have an open and pluralized society (Risse-Kapan, 1995, Dar, 2015). In the United State for instance, IOs influence political and public systems because they run the most open plural society in the world (Risse-Kapan, 1995).

Subsequently, IOs influence the process of policies through public norms like emerging advocacy for feminism and women empowerment; mounting pressures on states by showcasing threatened effect of these new beliefs on the world's perspectives. The advocacy for new beliefs in societies creates an environment where the public can now formulate their opinions, thereby making it internationalized; this mostly puts pressure on governments into making adjustments and amendments on existing policies. Examples of public norms is the campaigns by IOs which brought about the ban on Landmines in various states in 1998 (Deitelhoff, 2006; Wellitte 2011). Martens, (2003) also reprise that IOs are the persuaders in breaking the barricade surrounding the prosecution of those who committed crime against humanity or genocide at the International Criminal Court (ICC).

The influence of IOs campaigns and protests are strong norms and strong networks which when put together produce the most significant changes in targeted states" as stated by Hakins (2004) when analyzing the human rights and women's right in Chile in the 1970's.

It was observed that non- state actors used their influence on proposals, statements, and reports in the establishment of laws and compliances (Panke, et al, 2018). The use of these proposals, statements, and reports as influence in the international scene is a form of enforcement ability of principles, standards and regulations. The influence of IOs on international laws have been questioned because international laws are rules that are established by only through the governmental powers of the states. IOs have been seen to exert tremendous impact on the international laws

and national resources to ascertain stronger international laws through lobbying. Charnovitz (2006) attributed this lobbying leads to the contribution of IOs in the developments, legal applications, interpretations and enforcement of international laws. IOs have been part of the various milestones on which human rights and the rights of women as early as the 19th century; the creation of Inter-American Commission for women, the Universal Declaration of Human Right, International Protection for Indigenous People and the clarification of the International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) that rape is a crime under the international humanitarian law at the fourth Geneva conference are few impacting measures of the IOs. On negotiations issues, Martens (2003) asserted that IOs are part of the structuring and procedures of the global regulation. Stating that the protest for anti-globalization within the north and south of the Americas and Europe are part of the IOs influence on international negotiation proceedings. These procedures are visible in their advisory services on legal documents, supervision on the implement of projects on global impact by the United Nations, multi-national and other private establishment on labour laws, human rights, and environmental protection.

3.1 Another influential way IOs impact states'

policies that need more research expansion is through sanctions. IOs have their ways of inciting or opposing sanctions by campaigning for or against sanctions which have a strong motivational effect on sanction decisions. Sometimes the protest against sanctions may stir up disruption in the economy or destitution in some states which disputes the interest of the IOs in resolving the problem. The quest to oppose and impose sanctions is to secure human lives from tyrant or authoritarian governments. For instance, the resolution on human rights in Myanmar was a reaction to the military faction and the correlated human rights violations awareness that was created by IOs and the public, prevented the problem in Myanmar from escalating. The Iraq sanction in 2003 which was referred as an embargo on finance and trade by the United Nations Security Council is a scenario of IOs opposing states on the sanction. The protests and campaign against this sanction was of the interest to protect human lives and the concern on standard of living. IOs often have strong influence on state policies when it comes to matters of human rights and environmental issues (Kim, et al, 2017).

As the international organizations are increasing in numbers over the years, so are their impacts on states internal operation structures. The quest for states to effectively communicate and collaborate to optimize their need from IOs may shape and have impact on policy structure especially the states that are in crisis. As explained by Yagub (2014), the case of North Darfur, the

state government relied totally on the curative health services, equipments, communication devices and financial resources provided by international organizations with a health budget of 52.9%, 1,390 health employee, 44 health centres and 83 health facilities in North Darfur State. Subsequently, Jelinek (2006) described Afghanistan scenario to relate with insecurity and antagonistic governance, with increasing violence and kidnapping. As a result of this crisis, IOs are actively involved in the Afghanistan national development policies and in important national programs like the National Emergency Employment Programme (NEEP) to support the Afghanistan government in planning, training and improving government services thereby influencing, reshaping and impacting the state's foreign policies process.

4. THE IMPACT OF INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF RED CROSS IN NIGERIA AND COTE D'IVOIRE

The Nigeria Red Cross Society (NRCS) under the British rule in Nigeria in 1917 had divisional branches in the Eastern, Western and Northern regions. The Red Cross Society Act was established in 1960 after Nigeria gained her independence; they now have branches across the 36 states in the country. In 1986 the ICRC set up a delegation in Nigeria as a way of promoting cooperation and operation in the NRCS. This initiation was to increase the humanitarian support and services in different locations within Nigeria.

The humanitarian relief operations of the NRCS were highly noticeable during the Nigeria - Biafra civil war of 1967 - 1970, especially on the side of the Biafrans. In the Bakkassi Peninsula boundary dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon, the ICRC and NRCS delivered aid to the displaced victims in Bakkassi, Cross River and Akwa Ibom (Nwobodo, 1998).

The violent conflicts in the Northern part of Nigeria which is still on the upsurge (Boko haram in north-east and farmers-herders crisis in the north-central) which has displaced over 640,000 people into neighbouring communities and over crowded camps. The ICRC has provided

Humanitarian supports and services to ensure that the living conditions of the displaced people are conducive and extended this support to the host communities by providing coping mechanisms to over 290,000 persons with the support of agricultural activities and also in conjunction with the Maduguri state ministry of water resource, the ICRC developed the Alhamduri water plant project that provided water to 80, 000 people in that locality. The ICRC also provided healthcare services in the affected areas and ensured that the supplies of drugs, medical equipments and rehabilitation/psycho-social services were delivered.

The reuniting of separated family members was not left out. Detainee issues were regularly visited by the ICRC staffs who engaged and maintained confidential and bilateral negotiations with the detaining authorities on issues of the living conditions of the detainees. Creating awareness and knowledge on the international humanitarian laws is a very important activity for the ICRC in Nigeria (ICRC, 2019). They worked with military institutions like the National War College, the Command and Staff College, the Nigerian Academy Defense and the School of Strategic Studies in organising programmes and forums on peace-keeping and armed conflicts conditions in Nigeria. The push for the need to implement the provisions of the fourth Geneva convention in Nigeria which states that *"the High Contracting Parties [have an obligation] to disseminate the text of the present Convention as widely as possible in their respective countries, and, in particular, to include the study thereof in their programmes of military and, if possible, civil instruction, so that the principles thereof may become known to the entire population, in particular to the armed forces, the medical personnel and the chaplains"* also, the implementation of the international humanitarian laws and the goal of incorporating it into the Nigerian universities curriculum (Nwobodo, 1998).

The ICRC operations in Cote d'Ivoire started in 1982 with office locations in Gagnoa, Man and Guoglo. The operations of the ICRC in Cote d'Ivoire covered both that of Ghana, Benin, Burkina Faso and Togo. Their delegations in Burkina Faso identified a total population of 60,000 Malian refugees, making the conditions of those areas to be subjected to degradation and in Cote d'Ivoire after the post-election crisis in 2010. These conflicts may have ended but has left the need for humanitarian supports. The ICRC provided food and household items to victims and made provisions for the communities to effectively grow their own food. They also assisted and helped the Ivorian government to provide water and mobile healthcare in the affected areas (ICRC, 2011).

They promoted international humanitarian laws, national authorities and have been involved in several dialogues with armed groups. The ICRC have made their voice heard, emphasizing on the civil rights of detainee and the same time, ensuring the safety of the ICRC officials rendering humanitarian aids to the affected victims of the conflicts in these countries

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The international organizations have tremendously increased over the years due to decolonialization, technologies and globalization and have effectively and actively played key roles in the local, national and international systems. They are involved in rendering

humanitarian support and services to victims of conflict and post-conflicts, especially in human right, education, environmental protection and economic developments. Foreign policy involves all of a country's interactions with the outside world, which includes the interactions and activities of the international organizations. The international system, power structure, international law, international institutions, alliances, and military strength and arm race are the key external factors that decide a state's foreign policy. This has given the IOs the power to directly and indirectly influence the decision making and policies of states through their facilitating and advocacy activities in the international arena to promote and ensure compliance of international humanitarian laws. The influence of international organizations, its expansion and contributions in states foreign policy process is noticeably. This has brought about debatable questions about their impacts and legitimacy on states foreign policies. Based on the findings and conclusion, it is therefore recommended that:

1. States and the international authorities should ensure that international organizations are closely monitored while rendering their services. This will limit their powers in greatly influencing the process of foreign policy.
2. States should take up responsibilities towards their citizens during and after internal crises. This will prevent international organizations from taking advantage, either directly or indirectly, as they engage in humanitarian aids and supports.

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