NIGERIA –SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS: 1994 – 2015

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.64633/wissj.v9i7.26

Keywords

Political, Economic, Neoliberalism, Rivalry, Diplomatic relations

Abstract

Background
The study critically examined the nature and dimensions of political and economic relations between Nigeria and the Republic of South Africa, with a specific focus on the period between 1994 and 2015. The literature revealed a chequered history of bilateral relations, shifting from hostility to warm diplomatic engagements, especially after South Africa's transition to majority rule in 1994.

Objective
The main objective of the study was to explore the key factors that define and influence Nigeria–South Africa relations and to assess the challenges and prospects of this relationship within the African and global context.

Methods
The study employed both primary and secondary sources of data. A descriptive survey design was used, and the data were analyzed using tables and simple percentages. Theoretical insight was drawn from neoliberalism due to its relevance in explaining political and economic engagements among states.

Results
Findings revealed that Nigeria and South Africa have struggled to maintain harmonious political and diplomatic relations, largely due to rivalry for regional leadership. The study also found that mistrust, diplomatic tensions, and competition for continental dominance have characterized their interactions. Economically, South Africa enjoys a stronger productive base, leading to an unbalanced trade relationship that favours it over Nigeria.

Conclusion
The relationship between Nigeria and South Africa has been marked by both cooperation and competition, with mistrust undermining deeper integration. Despite shared interests, their rivalry continues to affect the potential for mutual benefits in bilateral relations.

Key Contribution to Knowledge
This study contributes to existing literature by highlighting the structural imbalance and ideological competition affecting Nigeria–South Africa relations. It contextualizes the political and economic tensions through the lens of neoliberalism and reveals the pressing need for a more pragmatic and cooperative approach in regional diplomacy.

Recommendations
The study recommends that both countries must view each other as strategic partners rather than competitors. Nigeria should take deliberate steps to strengthen its private sector to enhance competitiveness, balance trade, and boost regional influence. Mutual respect and a shared vision for Africa's development should underpin future diplomatic engagements.

Introduction

Nigeria and South Africa, two of Africa's most prominent nation-states, possess intricate historical paths and strategic linkages influenced by colonial legacies, liberation movements, and continental leadership responsibilities. Prior to colonisation, present-day Nigeria comprised numerous autonomous ethnic and political organisations, including the Sokoto Caliphate, Oyo Empire, Benin Kingdom, and the kingdoms of Igala and Idoma, among others. The British colonial intervention commenced with the assault of Lagos in 1851, followed by its annexation in 1861. The incremental British conquest culminated in the unification of the Northern and Southern Protectorates in 1914, resulting in the formation of modern Nigeria (Kums, 2016).

Pre-colonial South Africa was populated by various ethnic groups, including the San, Khoikhoi, Xhosa, Zulu, and Basuto. European engagement commenced with Portuguese navigators in 1488 and was amplified by Dutch colonists led by Jan Riebeeck in 1652, who founded a trading post that subsequently developed into enduring colonies. British colonial expansion commenced in 1795, resulting in extended Anglo-Boer warfare. Notwithstanding economic advancement, South Africa persisted as a disjointed colonial entity until the Berlin Conference of 1884–1885, which solidified British dominion. The establishment of apartheid in 1948 signified a pivotal moment in South Africa's domestic administration and foreign affairs (Ayandele et al., 1971).

Nigeria significantly contributed to South Africa's anti-apartheid movement. The Nigerian government, led by General Olusegun Obasanjo, established a South Africa Relief Fund in 1976 and implemented both symbolic and strategic measures, including the cessation of sporting links with pro-apartheid nations and the boycott of international competitions. Nigeria's initiatives encompassed both official and grassroots levels, demonstrating its commitment to an Afrocentric foreign policy and pan-African solidarity (The Nigeria Standard, June 4, 1976).

Following the conclusion of apartheid in 1994 and Nelson Mandela's rise to office, diplomatic relations between Nigeria and South Africa were officially reinstated. South Africa recognised Nigeria's crucial assistance in its independence movement. Since that time, both nations have taken on leadership positions in their respective sub-regions: Nigeria in West Africa through ECOWAS, and South Africa within the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Both have made substantial contributions to African peace and security frameworks and have cooperated on continental initiatives such as the New African Initiative and the Millennium Partnership for the African Recovery Programme (MAP), jointly advocated by Presidents Olusegun Obasanjo and Thabo Mbeki.

Nonetheless, underneath the amicable diplomatic interactions exists an ongoing competition for continental supremacy. The pursuit of African Union leadership, rivalry for

a permanent UN Security Council membership, and difficulties in sports and investment have sometimes strained relations. Mutual deportations, trade imbalances, and the impression of South African economic dominance in Nigeria, coupled with minimal reciprocal investment, continue to be causes of tension. More than sixty South African enterprises operate in Nigeria, including MTN, DSTV, and South African Airways, while only a few Nigerian businesses are active in South Africa (Weekly Trust, 2003).

The establishment of the Nigeria–South Africa Bi-national Commission in 1999 sought to formalise and enhance bilateral collaboration in areas including trade, energy, security, agriculture, and telecommunications. The collaboration has subsequently broadened to encompass military cooperation, training, and joint exercises. In 2001, editorials like that of The Guardian acknowledged the strategic significance of this bilateralism for Africa's overarching regional integration objectives.

Nevertheless, tensions persist due to perceptions of economic disparity, xenophobic occurrences, and diplomatic errors. These difficulties undermine the authenticity and viability of the partnership and pose essential enquiries: Is the relationship founded on true collaboration or diplomatic expediency? Which has greater impact on moulding Africa's future: the economic power of post-apartheid South Africa or the geopolitical legacy and regional engagement of Nigeria? Despite tense relations, the cooperation between both states is crucial for Africa's peace, unity, and prosperity within regional and continental frameworks. Nigeria's historical significance in South Africa's independence and the developing bilateral frameworks indicate the possibility of a strategic alliance. This research aims to critically analyse the enduring issues of rivalry, particularly concerning foreign policy, economic diplomacy, and continental leadership.

Statement of the Problem

The major concern is that South African enterprises have leveraged bilateral economic opportunities excessively, resulting in capital flight and economic disparity. The Nigeria–South Africa Bi-National Commission, intended to promote cooperation, has unclear and ineffectual measures, consequently obstructing Africa's overarching development strategy. This study aims to assess the political and economic interactions between Nigeria and South Africa, with the objective of identifying methods to enhance their bilateral ties. Despite a protracted relationship, the alliance is characterised by disparity, mostly attributable to South Africa's economic preeminence and Nigeria's inadequacy in executing its continental leadership responsibilities. Antagonism and rivalry have defined their encounters, frequently leading to disparate outcomes. Although both countries possess robust economies, Nigeria's substantial population and abundant natural resources establish it as a pivotal force in Africa.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective is to critically examine the political and economic relations between Nigeria and South Africa during the period 1994-2015. To meet this objective, this research work will specifically focus on the following;

i. To interrogate the nature of the political and economic relations between Nigeria and South Africa.

ii. To investigate the extent to which Nigeria-South Africa relations has affected the political and economic environment in Nigeria.

Literature Review

Foreign policy is an essential topic for comprehending the actions of governments within the international system. It signifies a nation's organised reaction to its external environment and illustrates how a country engages beyond its borders. Although a globally agreed definition of foreign policy is absent due to differing ideological viewpoints, numerous experts concur that it includes a nation's formal acts and decisions about its interactions with other governments. Chibundu (2003) and Northedge (1968) assert that foreign policy fundamentally represents a nation's reaction to external events or conditions, influenced by environmental and internal factors including diplomacy, military matters, economic issues, culture, and education.

Vernon McKay (1966) delineated essential variables of African foreign policy, encompassing national interest, ideology, military influence, political conditions, cultural-psychological factors, and internal/external political pressures. These determinants interact dynamically to influence foreign policy decisions. The interaction of internal politics and external pressures renders foreign policy a mirror of domestic conditions and a tool for international engagement. Modelski (1962) asserted that foreign policy constitutes a systematic array of actions through which nations seek to influence other states and adjust to global conditions. He differentiated between the "inputs" (domestic motivations, objectives, and pressures) and the "outputs" (foreign policy acts and responses). Gibson (1994) characterised foreign policy as a holistic governmental strategy aimed at protecting national interests internationally, whereas Joseph (1968) described it as encompassing substantial official choices and activities among states.

Northedge (1968) and Beared (2021) contended that foreign policy arises from both local and international factors, serving as a strategic reaction to global circumstances. Frankel (1969) observed that foreign policy is influenced by changing domestic expectations and fluctuating external circumstances. In this context, Plano and Olton (1988) provided a more exact viewpoint, asserting that foreign policy delineates a state's actions aimed at achieving specified objectives, necessitating strategy, capability assessment, and particular decision-making.

Notwithstanding definitional discrepancies, a common theme in the literature is that foreign policy is intrinsically connected to national interest. Gambari (1984) characterised foreign policy as the manifestation of a nation's interests in the global sphere, encompassing negotiations and confrontations as required. Morgenthau (1965) emphasised that national interest is influenced by a state's cultural and political heritage and primarily focusses on preserving its sovereignty and identity. Babangida Ibrahim highlighted that, within the Nigerian context, the national interest has dimensions of military, economic, political, and social security.

The national interest fulfils a dual function: analytically, it delineates foreign policy objectives, and politically, it legitimises state activities in international relations. Consequently, every foreign policy move must correspond with and promote national interests. Padelford and Lincoln (1997) affirmed this perspective by asserting that foreign policy is the pragmatic manifestation of a state's overarching objectives into targeted measures aimed at safeguarding its interests. Assessing a nation's interests necessitates the identification of fundamental ideals and their prioritisation. These may encompass survival, security, economic growth, and regional stability. Nigeria's active foreign policy in West Africa is motivated by the conviction that regional instability may jeopardise its security

and development. This concept underscores the relationship between a state's internal welfare and its exterior interactions.

Rosenau (1972) contended that national interest eludes precise rational description because of its intricacy. Nonetheless, it continues to serve as the cornerstone of any logical foreign strategy. Foreign policy is the approach employed by a state to safeguard its geographical integrity, uphold political sovereignty, and enhance economic prosperity. Deutsch (1998) asserted that as a state grows larger and more powerful, its foreign policy ambitions increase, as demonstrated by Nigeria's leadership role in Africa since gaining independence.

Nigeria's overseas activities, particularly in peacekeeping operations, diplomatic endeavours, and regional integration attempts, illustrate the influence of its national interest on foreign policy. These measures are motivated not only by external demands but also by internal issues, including national security and economic development. The focus on peace in adjacent countries arises from the recognition that regional crises might extend and impact Nigeria's internal stability. The formulation and execution of foreign policy are shaped not just by elite decision-makers but also by internal factors, including public opinion, political institutions, economic situations, and cultural values. Ogwu (2010) asserts that a state's foreign policy priorities are influenced by both external trends and home pressures. Consequently, any thorough examination of foreign policy must take into account the internal context in which it is developed.

In summary, although foreign policy does not have a definitive definition, it is most accurately perceived as a nation's strategic, state-directed measures to regulate its interactions with the global community, primarily motivated by the pursuit of national interest. Consequently, foreign policy and national interest are inextricably linked in both theory and practice, with domestic circumstances and global dynamics collectively influencing a state's actions on the international stage.

Nigeria–South Africa Relations: A Historical and Contemporary Overview

Since achieving independence in 1960, Nigeria has prioritised Africa in its foreign policy, emphasising anti-colonialism and racial fairness. A crucial event transpired during the Sharpeville Massacre in March 1960, when Nigerian authorities, facing local and international pressure, commenced the adoption of diplomatic measures against South Africa's apartheid administration. This encompassed economic sanctions, political ostracism, and advocacy within the Commonwealth and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) for South Africa's exclusion and isolation. Leaders like Chief Obafemi Awolowo and General Murtala Muhammed vehemently denounced apartheid, perceiving it as a crime against humanity and advocating for its complete eradication. Nigeria's dedication encompassed both material and diplomatic assistance for liberation forces throughout Southern Africa, particularly the MPLA in Angola. The dissolution of apartheid in 1991, partially facilitated by persistent pressure from Nigeria and other global entities, inaugurated a new phase in Nigeria–South Africa relations. The establishment of democracy in South Africa in 1994 created new prospects. Both nations aimed to re-establish their positions within the African continent. President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria and Thabo Mbeki of South Africa led continental initiatives including the African Union (AU) and the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), aiming to counteract Africa’s marginalisation and promote socio-economic advancement.

Notwithstanding this revitalised collaboration, rivalry and strain between the two countries have continued. Researchers such Chris Alden, Wills Soko, and KhalesakheMbhenseemphasise South Africa's swift economic revival following apartheid, driven by liberalisation, sophisticated infrastructure, and international investment, which positioned it as a leader in African markets. This ascent is sometimes juxtaposed with Nigeria's difficulties, such as corruption, underdevelopment, and inadequate infrastructure, exacerbating competition, particularly about continental leadership and the pursuit of a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council.

Tensions emerged in public diplomacy, most evident through xenophobic assaults on Nigerians and other African migrants in South Africa. Research conducted by Oluyomi, Felix, and Ayo (2021) elucidates how local grievances—stemming from poverty, unemployment, and social inequities—manifest as animosity against immigrant nationals, particularly Nigerians, who are occasionally characterised as criminals. Retaliatory diplomatic measures, including reciprocal deportations, have exacerbated bilateral relations, prompting enquiries on the authenticity and viability of the Nigeria–South Africa partnership.

Nevertheless, researchers like Landsberg (2015) and Aluko (1981) emphasise the capacity of the Nigeria–South Africa partnership to revolutionise Africa. By fostering a mutual dedication to peacekeeping, regional integration, and diaspora involvement, both nations can serve as stabilising entities. The extensive Nigerian diaspora, abundant natural resources, and demographic strength, coupled with South Africa's economic and technological superiority, create a potential for synergy. The literature indicates a longstanding yet intricate relationship between Nigeria and South Africa, marked by historical solidarity, strategic collaboration, and strong competition. Although the AU and NEPAD embody collective ambitions for a unified Africa, ongoing disputes, especially regarding economic supremacy and social cohesion, persistently challenge the durability of their alliance. Resolving these difficulties through mutual respect, equitable partnerships, and interpersonal diplomacy is essential for realising a really collaborative and unified African vision.

Understanding Neoliberalism and Its Relevance to Nigeria–South Africa Relations

David Harvey's A Brief History of Neoliberalism provides one of the most thorough descriptions of neoliberalism in contemporary critical literature. He defines neoliberalism not just as an economic framework but also as a political-economic practice and philosophy founded on the tenets of free markets, private property, free trade, and limited state involvement. Harvey asserts that the state's function under neoliberalism is chiefly to facilitate the proper operation of market mechanisms, which includes establishing markets in areas where they are absent (such as education, healthcare, or environmental services), safeguarding property rights, and ensuring monetary integrity.

Harvey contends that neoliberalism is differentiated from classical liberalism. Although both advocate for individual liberty and market mechanisms, neoliberalism has emerged as the prevailing paradigm, displacing Keynesian "embedded liberalism" post-1970s. It is not bound to democratic governance or liberal principles; instead, it may flourish under both authoritarian regimes and liberal democracies, as demonstrated by people such as Pinochet and Deng Xiaoping, whom Harvey classifies as neoliberals despite

their autocratic tendencies. Notable Western economists such as Hayek and Friedman, together with political figures like Reagan and Thatcher, are recognised as ideological trailblazers in the neoliberal movement.

Neoliberalism is founded on the conviction of market supremacy, advocating that all society activities should be regulated through competitive, contract-based transactions. This has resulted in the proliferation of market principles into various domains of life, including labour, education, environmental policy, and technology. Prominent neoliberal characteristics encompass a diminished governmental presence, deregulation, adaptable labour markets, and ongoing performance evaluations, particularly facilitated by information technology. Markets have expanded beyond actual items to encompass services, time, and personal data. Emerging "transaction-intensive markets," such as power trading and spectrum auctions, exemplify this transition, prioritising exchange over tangible production.

This ideology generates moral implications: individuals are entirely accountable for their decisions, and societal inequities arising from market competition are perceived as justified consequences of personal agency. Neoliberals perceive calls for redistribution or market regulation as indicators of moral frailty or authoritarian inclinations. In this regard, neoliberalism influences not just economics and politics but also notions of virtue and individual value. Neoliberalism fundamentally prioritises contract maximisation and transaction formalisation, especially evident in international relations. This is crucial while examining Nigeria–South Africa relations, particularly their economic collaborations and institutional structures. Since the establishment of democratic governance in South Africa and the launch of collaborative continental initiatives such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), both countries have demonstrated behaviours aligned with neoliberal principles. This include the formalisation of transactions via bilateral agreements, the promotion of private sector-driven development, and the facilitation of free trade and investment flows.

The increasing economic interconnectedness between the two nations reflects neoliberal globalisation. More than 120 prominent South African corporations, including MTN, function in Nigeria, capitalising on its extensive consumer market. Nigerian enterprises such as Dangote Group and Oando has substantial investments in South Africa. Their joint investments encompass telecommunications, finance, retail, energy, and manufacturing. These transnational activities correspond with neoliberal principles of profit maximisation, global market integration, and entrepreneurial liberty.

Furthermore, institutional frameworks like the Nigerian–South African Chamber of Commerce (NSACC) and the South Africa–Nigeria Bi-national Commission, founded in 1999 and 2001 respectively, aim to formalise and enhance bilateral commercial links. From a neoliberal viewpoint, these institutions diminish transaction costs, guarantee contract enforcement, and offer the stability essential for prolonged market interaction between the two countries. In conclusion, neoliberalism offers a valuable framework for analysing the developing political and economic relationships between Nigeria and South Africa. Their connection has transitioned from politically motivated solidarity during apartheid to economically driven collaboration in the post-apartheid period. This change illustrates the neoliberal focus on markets, formalisation, and transnational industry, highlighting the impact of global economic ideology on bilateral interactions in Africa.

Research Methodology

This study utilised a descriptive survey research design, which is optimal for gathering opinions from a representative sample to generalise about a community. Owens (2002) asserts that this approach enables researchers to obtain information that may be inaccessible from alternative sources, while ensuring objectivity, standardisation, and data completeness. The target population includes the total populations of Nigeria and South Africa, which are 182 million and 51.77 million, respectively. A total sample size of 500 respondents was selected using Research Advisor (2006) sampling guidelines, with a 99% confidence level and a 0.05 margin of error. A total of 450 surveys were successfully collected. A multi-stage sampling strategy utilising proportional, random, and purposive strategies was employed. Proportional sampling was employed to choose states or provinces in a 7:2 ratio that corresponds to national population sizes. Respondents were additionally categorised by gender, religion, education, and occupation, encompassing government officials and immigrants.

The utilised instrument was a researcher-developed questionnaire named the Nigeria–South Africa Relation Questionnaire (NSRQ), organised into four sections: demographics (Section A), relational patterns (Section B), factors influencing relations (Section C), and obstacles faced by immigrants (Section D). A four-point Likert scale was utilised to assess replies.

The instrument's validity was evaluated via content validation conducted by the researcher's supervisor and three Political Science scholars. The test-retest approach was employed on 20 respondents over a three-week interval to ascertain reliability. A pilot study was undertaken to enhance the questionnaire by detecting and rectifying ambiguous or unclear items.

The researcher and three trained assistants conducted in-person data collection by administering the questionnaire, offering advice and explanations, and collecting completed forms on the same day to maintain high response rates. Descriptive statistics (frequency counts and percentages) and inferential statistics (t-test and ANOVA) were utilised for data analysis. The t-test was employed to compare the means of two groups (hypotheses 1 and 2), whereas ANOVA assessed differences among more than two groups (hypotheses 3–6).

Data Presentation

Valuable data were obtained from questionnaires issued to respondents, who provided diverse answers to the enquiries. A total of 500 questionnaires were distributed, of which 450 were returned, indicating a retrieval rate of 83.3%. The responses were aggregated and examined utilising basic percentages. This augmented the information acquired from secondary sources, including books and periodicals. It consistently enhanced the overall value of the data collected from additional sources.

Age Distribution of Respondents

Table 1 Age Distribution

Age Respondents	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Youths between 20 – 25 years	200	44.4
Adults between 26 and 45 years	70	15.55
Middle age between 46 to 55 years (mature adults)	60	13.33
The age of 56 years and above	50	11.11
Total	**450**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, November, 2018.

Table 5.1 above shows that 44.4% of Nigerian youths, 15.55% of adults between 26 and 55 years, 13.33% of the middle age, and 11.11% of the aged were aware there has indeed been a certain degree of bilateral relations between Nigeria and the Republic of South Africa.

Sex Distribution of Respondents

Table2: Sex Distribution

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	250	55.56
Female	200	44.44
Total	**450**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, November, 2018.

In Table 5.2 above, 55.56% of male respondents and 44.44% of female respondents expressed their understanding of the multifaceted interactions between Nigeria and the Republic of South Africa. The results indicate no substantial disparity in the level of understanding on the political and economic relationship between Nigeria and the Republic of South Africa among men and women.

Table3: Occupation Distribution

Occupation of Respondent	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Politicians	90	20.00

Diplomats	100	22.86
Academics	70	15.56
Students	70	15.56
Policy makers of government	120	26..67
Total	**450**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, November, 2018

Table 5.3 indicates differing levels of awareness among the 450 responders to the questionnaire. Participants comprised Politicians (20.00%), Diplomats (22.22%), Academics (15.56%), Students (15.56%), and Government Policy Makers (26.67%), all of whom exhibited understanding of the political, diplomatic, and economic connections between Nigeria and the Republic of South Africa.

Table 5.4: Educational Qualification

Level of Education of Respondents	Frequency	Percentage (%)
No formal education	36	8.00
First School Leaving Certificate	46	10.22
SSCE	76	16.89
OND/NCE	76	16.89
HND/B.Sc.	96	21.33
Master and above	120	26.67
Total	**450**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, November, 2018

Table 5.4 indicates that 8.00% of individuals lacking formal education were aware of the bilateral connections between Nigeria and the Republic of South Africa, whereas 10.22% of those with a first school leaving certificate expressed interest in these links. Among holders of senior secondary certificates and OND/NCE qualifications, 16.89% were aware of the bilateral relations between the two countries. Among HND/B.Sc. holders, 21.33% demonstrated awareness of the bilateral relations. Among individuals with a master's degree or higher, 26.67% demonstrated knowledge of the bilateral relations between Nigeria and the Republic of South Africa.

Table5: Position or Rank

Position/Rank	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Junior Officers	200	44.44
Senior Officers	250	55.56
Total	**450**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, November, 2018

Table 5.5 indicates that 44.44% of junior staff in private and governmental institutions in Nigeria were cognisant of the bilateral connections between the two nations. Likewise, 55.56% of senior personnel in private and public institutions in Nigeria demonstrated awareness of the nature of bilateral relations between the two nations. The Nigerian public demonstrated a pronounced interest in the relations between the two countries, as seen by the comments received.

Table 5.7 Opinion Survey on awareness about diplomatic and economic relations between Nigeria and the Republic of South Africa

Respondent Awareness	Responses	Percentage (%)
Yes	400	88.89
No	50	11.11
Total	**450**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, November, 2018.

The findings from Table 5.7 indicate that 88.89% of the 450 respondents were cognisant of the economic and bilateral links between Nigeria and the Republic of South Africa. Only 11.11% showed unawareness of the diplomatic and economic links between the countries.

Table.8 Opinion Survey on balance of trade between Nigeria and South Africa since 1994 favourable to Nigeria

Respondent's Opinion	Responses	Percentage (%)
Yes	200	44.44
No	250	55.56

Total	450	100%

Source: Field Survey, November, 2018

The table indicates that 44.44% of respondents believe the balance of trade between the two countries has been advantageous to Nigeria since 1994, when South Africa attained majority rule, whereas 55.56% contend that the balance of trade has been detrimental to Nigeria and beneficial to the Republic of South Africa.

Table 9. Opinion Survey on the effect of xenophobia on diplomatic and economic relations between Nigeria and South Africa in recent years.

Respondent's Opinion	Responses	Percentage (%)
Yes	230	51.11
No	220	48,89
Total	**450**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, November, 2018

Table 5.9 indicates that 51.11% of respondents believe that xenophobia has recently negatively impacted diplomatic and economic relations between the two countries. This stands in contrast to 48.89% who believe that xenophobia has not substantially impacted diplomatic and economic relations between the two nations.
Question: Does the issue generated by the apartheid system in South Africa continue to impact the nation's progress in the post-apartheid era?

Table10. Opinion Survey on the effect of Apartheid system on the development of the Republic of South Africa in the post-apartheid era?

Respondent's Opinion	Responses	Percentage (%)
Yes	100	22.22
No	350	77.78
Total	**450**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, November, 2018

Table 5.10 reveals that 22.22% of respondents believe that the apartheid system in South Africa has negatively impacted the economic, industrial, and infrastructural growth of the Republic, even in the post-apartheid period. The chart indicates that 77.78% of respondents believe the apartheid regime did not impact the overall growth of the Republic of South Africa.

Table 12: Opinion Survey on whether or not Nigeria should clamp down on South Africa's investments in the country as a retaliation for xenophobia attacks on Nigerians in that country

Respondent's Opinion	Responses	Percentage (%)
Yes	200	44.44
No	250	55.56
Total	**450**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, November, 2018

Table 5.16 indicates that 44.44% of respondents believe that South Africa's lucrative investments in Nigeria, particularly MTN and DSTV, should be terminated and prohibited from operating in the country as a form of retribution for the fatalities of Nigerian nationals in South Africa resulting from xenophobic assaults on the Nigerian community. Nevertheless, 55.56% of the respondents opposed ceasing the operations of South Africa's MTN and DSTV in Nigeria as a reprisal for xenophobic attacks on Nigerians in South Africa.

Discussion of Findings

The research indicated a significant awareness among participants (88.89%) of Nigeria–South Africa bilateral ties, consistent with the findings of Obi (2015) and Ashiru (2011). Nevertheless, 11.11%predominantly with limited educational attainment—lacked this understanding. Regarding trade relations, 55.56% of respondents perceived Nigeria as having an adverse balance of trade with South Africa, a viewpoint aligned with the critiques of Nigeria's passive foreign economic policy by Maduekwe (2007) and Jonathan (2011). South Africa's prominent investments, like MTN and DSTV, were referenced as evidence of its supremacy in bilateral trade. Concerning xenophobic assaults, 51.11% claimed that these had damaged diplomatic and economic relations, inciting fear and punitive measures in Nigeria. Nevertheless, trade relations have persisted, supported by revitalised diplomatic interactions.

Regarding apartheid's influence on South Africa's growth, 77.78% perceived its legacy as having a little effect, whilst a minority (22.22%) regarded it as a developmental impediment, corroborating Dauda (2010).A notable 71.11% acknowledged the contest for African leadership between Nigeria and South Africa, citing events such as Nigeria's expulsion from the Commonwealth. Conversely, 28.89% minimised this rivalry. Concerning leadership advantage, 55.56% preferred Nigeria, highlighting its demographic size, peacekeeping contributions, and economic strength. Nevertheless, 44.44% supported South Africa, acknowledging its advancements since apartheid and its global impact, particularly under Nelson Mandela's leadership.

In response to the question of who ought to represent Africa at the UN Security Council, 66.67% favoured Nigeria, highlighting its regional dedication and sacrifices, but 33.33% endorsed South Africa, pointing to Nigeria's internal difficulties. Regarding the sources of trade imbalance, 66.67% attributed it to South Africa's superior productive capability, reflecting Pat Utomi's (2015) apprehensions about Nigeria's infrastructural deficiencies. Future cooperation prospects were cautiously optimistic: 33.33% anticipated a very promising future, 44.44% expressed moderate hope, while 22.22% were sceptical about development, noting persistent xenophobia. Ultimately, 55.56% opposed retribution, whereas 44.44% endorsed restricting South African enterprises in Nigeria, indicating increasing exasperation with assaults on Nigerians in South Africa.

Conclusion

The study indicated that 88.89% of respondents were cognisant of Nigeria–South Africa ties, whilst 11.11%, predominantly with lower educational attainment, were not. Fifty-five point fifty-six percent saw that trade relations benefited South Africa, whilst forty-four point forty-four percent disagreed, potentially attributable to restricted economic awareness. A majority of respondents (51.11%) recognised that xenophobia had adversely affected diplomatic relations, yet trade continued to thrive. A significant majority (71.11%) acknowledged a leadership competition between the two states, with 55.56% contending that Nigeria possesses a relative leadership advantage owing to its population, military capabilities, and regional importance. Moreover, 66.67% endorsed Nigeria's pursuit of a permanent seat on the UN Security Council in preference to South Africa. Nonetheless, 66.67% concurred that South Africa's advanced infrastructure and productive capability conferred a trade advantage. While 77.78% minimised apartheid's ongoing influence on South Africa's progress, apprehensions over xenophobia and inequitable commerce persist in shaping popular sentiment. Ultimately, 44.44% of participants endorsed the limitation of South African enterprises in Nigeria as a countermeasure to anti-Nigerian sentiments internationally.

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