International Organizations and State Sovereignty: Implications for Public Policy Making and Implementation in Nigeria

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Abstract

Globalization and information technology have gradually eroded the Westphalia nation-state system and transformed the state-centric approach to politics and policy across the world. State actors in public policy making and implementation are being over-shadowed by multiple non-state actors. States are no more at liberty to decide their internal and domestic policies as it interests them due to the impact of international surveillance as well as actors. The implications these portend for domestic policy process begs for attention. From a complex dependency theory perspective, this paper x-rays the contributions of international organizations to domestic policy processes in Nigeria and argues that this situation brings with it a dualism in which good and bad abound. Thus, this work posits that, developing economies like Nigeria being wary of this, must position themselves to reap the benefits as well as guard against the negative implications embedded in this current situation.

Keywords: International Organizations, sovereignty policy, globalization

Introduction

Prior to the Westphalia treaty, existed entities, kingdoms, empires and other systems of societal groups and organizations. With the Westphalia (1648) emerged the state system which centered politics around the state with absolute sovereignty. In other words, sovereignty expressed the independence or autonomy of the state to make and implement decisions within its territory without interference from other states (Nnoli, 1986).

However, inter-state relations and the unbalanced nature of relations in the international system has, over years, reduced greatly the sovereignty of nations as less economically strong ones depend on rich ones for financial assistance. This has also led to other forms of dependence including political dependence.

Again, with the emergence of globalization, strengthened by the information technology which has weakened states borders, protectionist policies are no more fashionable leading to more free market economies and less restricted relationships among nations and further spread by the democratic wind. This has led to MNCs, IGOs and NGOs having freer access to territories of states.

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Furthermore, as states interact in the international system, with the need for coming together to solve common problems which may be difficult to solve individually, international organizations emerge (UN, AU, EU, NATO etc). Membership of states to these organizations entails the surrendering of some part of their sovereignties to these organizations giving the organizations some sort of supranational status. States also have the obligation of working towards the achievement of the goals of these organizations which include among others, human rights protection, non-proliferation of arms, environmental protection. Thus, politics and policies are continuously affected and shaped by the demands of these organizations.

The above scenario poses a lot of challenges to the state system and states' sovereignty. The situation seems more critical when looked at from the less developed countries' position as they grapple with the internal dynamics of their national questions and continued existence, while at the same time engaging in international relations from a disadvantaged point orchestrated by colonialism and the present day bizarre realities of these societies.

Based on the above circumstances, this work intends to look at the implications of the activities of international organizations on the sovereignty of the Nigerian state with particular attention on the policy process. The work starts with looking at the roles which international organizations play. Further, it discusses how the activities of these organizations affect the state system and policy process. This is achieved using the literature. From here, the work goes on to look at the challenges these pose for policy process in Nigeria. Finally, the work suggests ways through which policy actors in Nigeria will better position the Nigerian state at a vantage position in an unequal relationship of the present day international system. The work adopts the complex inter-dependency theory of globalization as its theoretical framework.

Theoretical Framework
The work bases its postulations on the complex inter-dependency theory of globalization. The complex inter-dependency theory, by Robert Koehane, is an offshoot of reaction to the realist ideas of international relations as "struggle" among nations. The complex inter-dependency theory rather sees the relations among nations as being complex in nature and involves several issues that go beyond military or forceful relations and conflict, but most times involves peaceful co-operations and collaborations especially in the post-world war II periods. According to Koehane (1977), complex interdependence has three main characteristics:

1. **Multiple channels connect societies, including**: informal ties between governmental elites as well as formal foreign office arrangements; informal ties among nongovernmental elites (face-to-face and through telecommunications); and transnational organizations (such as multinational banks or corporations). These channels can be summarized as interstate, trans-governmental, and transnational relations.
2. The agenda of interstate relationships consists of multiple issues that are not arranged in a clear or consistent hierarchy. This absence of hierarchy among issues means, among other things, that military security does not consistently dominate the agenda. Many issues arise from what used to be considered domestic policy, and the distinction between domestic and foreign issues becomes blurred. These issues are considered in several government departments (not just foreign offices), and at several levels. Inadequate policy coordination on these issues involves significant costs. Different issues generate different coalitions, both within governments and across them,

3. Military force is not used by governments toward other governments within the region, or on the issues, when complex interdependence prevails. It may, however, be important in these governments' relations with governments outside that region, or on other issues. Military force could, for instance, be irrelevant to resolving disagreements on economic issues among members of an alliance, yet at the same time be very important for that alliance's political and military relations with a rival bloc. For the former relationships this condition of complex interdependence would be met; for the latter, it would not.

In his seminal analysis of comprehensive theory of interdependence, Richard Cooper identified two effects of this. First, interdependent countries have to adjust their domestic economies to the political fact of openness and interdependence. Second, to cope with their mutual interdependence and increasing vulnerability, nation-states have seen a need for the creation of international institutions or regimes that provide a rule-based framework to manage the relations among them while providing macroeconomic steering capacity. Thus, this framework becomes adequate for our analysis of the subject matter here.

International Organizations and Sovereignty
Definition
International organizations, originally refers to the organization of states. In other words, it is a body which comprises of sovereign states and excludes non-state actors. According to Russett, Starr and Kinsella (2006:295), "international organization refers to the ways states arrange themselves for purposes of promoting co-operative and collaborative practices in world politics, and the result of this process of arrangement is the creation of international organizations." However, as the world continued to transform and emerge, international non-governmental organizations usually formed by individuals and groups of non-state status also emerged to be players in the international system having a lot of influence in the activities of states. Thus, NGOs became part of international organizations.

According to Goldstein (2003), international organizations include: Intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) such as UN and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as the International Committee of the Red Cross. For Kegley (2007), there are two types of non-state actors: intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) whose members are states, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) whose members are private individuals and groups. Kegley continues, stating that in 1909, there were 37 IGOs and 176 NGOs. By 1960, there were 154 IGOs and 1255 NGOs and at the start of 2006, these numbers has risen to 245 and 29,807 respectively.

Origin
Several reasons have been postulated as explanations for the emergence of international organizations. Some of the explanations were hinged on the need for coming together of men and societies extending to the state level in order to address issues that concern them collectively rather than individually. Another reason was the need for the 'big powers' to protect the less powerful and prevent world wars. This has however failed to achieve its aim in the 18th century following the outbreak of the first and second World Wars in 1914 and 1945. This also accounts for the permanent member seats of the present day Security Council of the United Nations which includes China, France, Great Britain, Russia and the US (Rourke, 2007).

Furthermore, two major theories have been used by scholars to explain the growth and spread of international organizations. These theories include functionalism and neo-functionalism. While functionalists argue for a bottom-up approach to international organizations, neo-functionalists opt for top-down approach. For the functionalists, the best way to global cooperation is through limited

cooperation in minute and non-political issues which will eventually metamorphose into bigger political cooperation. This has been the path threaded by most of the Inter-governmental organizations (IGOs) and Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) today. On the other hand, the neo-functionalists, out of doubt over the validity of the functionalist argument, argue that the functionalist approach is likely to be slow in addressing global challenges. They therefore, argued for the establishment of IGOs and giving them independence and adequate resources to enable them address political issues and foster greater cooperation.

Another form of international organization is the non-governmental organizations (NGOs). They are charitable and community organizations, separate from the state. With the extension of citizenship rights in Europe and the Americas in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, people founded increasing numbers of NGOs organizations, as instruments to meet community needs, defend interests or promote new policies (Paul, 2000). As time passed and globalization set in, these organizations began to spread across borders and today have become international in operation. One of such organizations is the International Committee of the Red Cross founded in 1863. Scholars working in this area (NGOs) have noted that NGOs can command great legitimacy, sometimes more than national authorities. NGOs create "public goods," needed by citizens that are not ordinarily created in the for-profit marketplace. Economists sometimes refer to NGOs and the broader, non-profit part of the economy as the "Third Sector," to distinguish it from government and private business. In some large countries, this sector accounts for millions of jobs and billions of dollars of economic activity.

Roles of International Organizations and the State System
The roles of international organizations have often been very controversial as regards their importance and relevance. The realists, among which is John Mearsheimer, argue that international organizations are of little importance because they are mere reflections and shadows of pursuit of national interests. In the words of Mearsheimer as cited by Russett et al. (2006), international organizations "are basically a reflection of distribution of power in the world. They are based on the self-interested calculations of the great powers, and they have no independent effect on state behavior." The positivists, on the other side argue that international organizations are very important in the international system. These notwithstanding, the present day realities show that international organizations play various roles which range from intra state, intra regional to international roles. The role(s) which each plays is determined by the purpose for which it is formed. However, the general roles of international organizations include: acting as a forum for interaction among states and aiding cooperation, assistance in solving problems that are beyond state capacity, acting as instruments for furthering foreign policy interests for states etc.
For Russett et al (2006:295), "IGOs have been useful in applying international law, helping to coordinate states' compliance in organizing states around their common interests, and in pointing out benefits of cooperation. Large regional organizations such as EU, have worked extensively to promote economic cooperation. Others such as the Organization of American States and the Organization of African Unity (presently African Union), have worked to control and manage conflict in their own regions"

Rourke (2007) identifies three roles of inter-governmental organizations. The first is that they act as interactive arena for member-states to further pursue their individual national interests. It is expected that countries should always bear in mind their national interests before joining any international organization. Being conscious of this, they should be ready to withdraw their membership from organizations that seize to serve their national interests. Secondly, Rourke sees IGOs as center of cooperation among states and

other international actors. Countries use international organizations as an avenue to solve their problems through cooperation with other countries. Such problems include security, economy, environmental issues etc. Thirdly, Rourke identifies IGOs as independent international actors. By this he means that, though the actions of IGOs are determined actually by the wishes and votes of member nations, IGOs develop strong and permanent administrative staff and most times turn around to make member states its subjects. The result is usually that the whole (IGO) becomes more powerful than the sum of its member-state parts. This has also made IGOs to tend towards supra-nationality. Writing on the roles of international non¬governmental organizations in relation to states, Christensen (2006) conceptualized the influences of INGOs on international/global society into four categories of impact factors: input strategies, pursuits, output forums, and constitutional/ national competition. The input strategies he listed as: isolation, advocacy, and cooperation. By employing these strategies, INGOs can engage in a myriad of pursuits including policy creation and modification, monitoring, and enforcement, which form the second set of impact factors. Continuing, he stated that by employing strategies such as isolation, advocacy, and coordination, INGOs can pursue activities divisible into the following conceptual categories: policy creation and modification, monitoring, enforcement and implementation, service provision, and capacity-building.

Sovereignty

According to Gabriel Almond (1996:53), "the theory of sovereignty, so important a theme in the Middle Ages, Renaissance, and the Enlightenment, received its first full formulation in the work of Jean Bodin (1529-1596). His doctrine of absolutism as a solution to the problem of instability and disorder is formulated in the concept of state sovereignty, associated with the ideology of absolutist monarchy." Almond continues, stating that it was challenged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries by "pluralists" of both the right and the left. Otto Gierke (1868) in Germany and Leon Duguit (1917) in France question the complete authority of the central state.

Exclusive notions of sovereignty as control over population within a well-defined territory have been challenged by concern over the implications on state action or inaction on issues ranging from human rights to environmental protection (Keohane, 1996:395). Thus, John Hoffman (1997:54), states that "nation-states live a "double life": externally as sovereign independent actors in the anarchic international system and internally as the highest and unchallenged authority governing political, economic and social life in the state." The import of the above is that sovereignty is of two types: internal and external sovereignty. Internal sovereignty is the absolute authority of the state to make and implement laws within its territory without external interference while external sovereignty stands for the relative independence of the nation-state as an actor in the international system.

International Organizations, Sovereignty and Policy Process In Nigeria

The sovereignty of the nation-state has been under attack from several sides, attacks sometimes erroneously summarized as globalization, as observed by Vries. According to Hirst and Thompson (1996), globalization has diminished the possibilities of nation-states to make public policies independently. It is claimed that globalization does not pose a threat so much to the external sovereignty of states, but rather to their internal sovereignty (Krasner, 1983; Reinicke, 1998). The internal sovereignty of states is said to be at stake, because what happens within their territory and among their population seems much less a consequence of the policies of the nation-states, but is rather becoming increasingly dependent upon international developments (Frieden and Rogowski, 1996). It has led to different aspects of inter-dependence of nation-states as well as collaborations with non-state actors in political, economic,

socio-cultural, religious and other areas. Greater economic and social interdependence seems to affect national decision-making processes in two fundamental ways. It calls for a transfer of decisions to the international level and, due to an increase in the demand for participation, it also requires many decisions to be transferred to local levels of government. This implies that "public policies are undertaken at different levels" (Sulbrandt, 2000). Thereby, globalization entails complex decision-making processes, which take place at different levels, namely sub-national, national and global, paving the way to a growing multilayered system of governance. Matthews (1997) has further argued that globalization results in a power shift away from the national state to non-state actors, such as NGOs.

Again, recent research points to the increasing capacity of non-profit NGOs as well as international organizations to affect both the agenda-setting process and the implementation stage of national and international policies (Reinalda and Verbeek, 1998). We have set out to look at these issues and their implications for nation-states and their policy actors.

Firstly, we look at the impact of inter-governmental organizations (IGOs) on domestic policy process of nation-states. IGOs are organizations whose members are sovereign states. States willingly join these organizations while some others are mandatory for them to belong to based on their status as sovereign states, their regional location, religious or economic status. Some of such organizations include the UN, IMF, World Bank, EU, AU, OPEC, IOC, EGA, IAEA etc. By the virtue of their membership of these bodies, states automatically surrender some degree of their external sovereignty to the organization which goes further, in the long run, to affect their internal sovereignty. Looking at the United Nations for example, nations are bound by the agreements reached in their meetings and conferences whether it is in the interest of such nations or not. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruled in favour of Cameroon against Nigeria on the two countries' dispute over Bakassi Peninsula. This decision never went down well with Nigeria, but she has to accept virtue of her membership of the UN which has instituted the ICJ. In the contemporary periods, being a member of the ICJ or not does not determine a nations acceptance of the ICJ ruling. It is either you accept and obey or you face what follows.

Again, in the economic aspect, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank have spearheaded the spread of liberal and capitalist ideas all over the world. Member-states have often been given economic solutions to their internal economic problems. However, these solutions have been criticized for not being able to address perculiar problems of the states that sought for them as they are the same pills that cure all sicknesses. On the other hand, loans and aids administered by these bodies to member-states are often followed by stringent conditions that end up being inimical to the progress and internal economic policies of such member-states and raise more problems instead of addressing the already existing ones. Some of them have also been seen as instruments in the hands of more powerful states for furthering their national interests and pursuit of their foreign policies.

Furthermore, some of the IGOs which are regional have continued to transform while at the same time growing in strength tilting towards supranationality, a situation where the organization makes laws that are implemented by member-states in their different territories. One of such regional IGO is the European Union (EU) which has established regional markets, anthem, flag and other forms of identity. The existence of a body of like nature impedes on the sovereignty of member-states.

Another form of international organization is the International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs). From our definition of XGOs above, these are organizations that start as local community

groups thai helped in providing certain services in areas where government seemed to be lagging. However, with the growth of inter-dependency strengthened by globalization, these organizations began to spread across states' borders. In the contemporary times, they have spread to the extent that their number and activities are becoming difficult to ascertain, forming global networks and exerting a lot of influence globally. Some of such IXGOs include the International Society of Red Cross and the Transparency International. Though the impact of INGOs on the sovereignty of states may not be as glaring as :ha: of the IGOs, they still exert significant influence on nation-states. In their operations. Christesen (2006) has stated that INGOs adopt the methods of isolation, advocacy, and cooperation while they pursue such goals as policy creation and modification, monitoring, and enforcement. Besides the enlightenment of the civil society on policy issues, they also collaborate with the government in the making and implementation of policies. However, sometimes, their activities become inimical to the policy process especially when they adopt the isolation method whereby they go all out to instigate the civil society against the state or even act as spies to foreign bodies or governments against the host state.

On another ground, a third type of international organization which influences domestic public policies is the Multinational Corporations (MNCs), which are economic and financial institutions and industries that are moved by economic goals in their operations. The MNCs are given operational licences by states to establish their business and operate in the territories of states concerned. As a result of the strength of their businesses and their economic contributions to the states where they exist, states are often handicapped in the control of the activities of these multinational organizations through policy formulation and implementation. Again, the ownerships of these organizations are often located in their originating states and the branches located in different states. These branches usually, are controlled from the originating state thereby making it difficult to be influenced by their (branch) host states. Most times too, the governments of the originating states of the MNCs also use them as instruments for furthering their foreign policies. Some of the MNCs include Shell Petroleum, ELF, AGIP, Nestle, Coca-Cola, Guiness, Cadbury, and General Motors. A typical example of the states inability to control the activities of MNCs through policy can be found in the Niger Delta area in Nigeria where oil spillage has rendered the lands and waters of the area useless while the oil companies there remain unsanctioned by the government and are still in business comfortably. Again, the issue of gas flaring and climate change in the Niger Delta has been an issue which seems to be beyond the government of Nigeria to take a strong policy position on as gas flaring has continued to flourish in that region of the country with little or no control.

Fourthly, Manwaring, 2007 identified a modern form of international organization which he termed Transnational Criminal Organizations (TCOs). According to him, TCOs include Mafia families, illegal drug traffickers, warlords, terrorists, insurgents, and so on. These gangs, and their various possible TCO allies, are not sending conventional military units across national borders or building an industrial capability in an attempt to "filch some province" from some country. These illicit non-state actors are more interested in commercial profit and controlling territory (turf) to allow maximum freedom of movement and action to achieve their longer-range objectives. The resultant freedom of action within countries and across national frontiers ensures commercial market share and revenues, as well as secure bases for controlling people, territory, and governments. Their activities also affect security policies in states. In Nigeria, the activities of Boko Haram could be liked to this as the group has been traced to the popular Al Qaeda network of Osama Bin Laden which has become serious threat to the security of nation-states over the years.

Policy Implications of lOs and State Sovereignty

The activities of international organizations and the implications for state sovereignty and public policy present a dualism in which there are positive and negative implications. We first look at the positive angle and then, the negative angle. First, the existence and operations of lOs brings about some form of policy convergence in the international system. This results in some degree of miformity and conformity of nation-states to global guidelines and standards of policies, hat govern them. Municipal policies must conform to international standards which are usually set by these international organizations. This also provides opportunity for policy exchange between and among nation-states.

Second, it sets before sovereign states blue prints of public policies and goals which they can look up to in formulating their municipal policies. This reduces the burden and time of articulating new policies by states.

Third, the multiplicity of NGOs across borders helps to spread world best practices across the world. NGOs help in the spread of democratic and human rights principles by transferring knowledge and empowering the civil society of nations to be able to make demands on their governments concerning different policy issues that need attention. Tendon (1991) while making case for NGOs and civil society in a state, posits that, "NGOs need to be seen as public institutions of civil society, engaged in the process of strengthening civil society in its relationship vis-a-vis the state and the ruling elites. Fourth, in their collaborative and partnership activities, lOs help governments of nation-states in the making and better implementation of public policies. They not only provide technical assistance but also go further to transfer capacity to citizens of their host countries thereby ensuring sustainability of their good works.

Negatively, lOs sometimes act as spies and instruments for the more powerful nations against the less powerful ones both in economic, political, security and socio-cultural aspects. This has made nation-states sometimes to be hostile to them especially when such motives are suspected by such states.

Again, in the process of policy convergence, policy diffusion often occur where policy initiatives flow from the more developed or strong nations to the less developed or weak ones. Most times these policy formats when copied by the less developed countries, fail to achieve their objectives as a result of the difference in societies and environments.

Furthermore, as states are members to different lOs, often conflict of choice of policy initiatives arise especially when such policy initiatives conflict with the goals of two or more lOs to which such a state is member. This presents a situation of dilemma as adopting or not adopting such policy is a problem to such state.

More so, inter-governmental organizations, being an arena of interaction among states and being a platform for states to further pursue their foreign policies, creates a forum for unequal relationship among nation-states since all states are not equal based on economic and military differences. Thus, some nations become bench warmers in these organizations while others benefit from them.

What Nigerian Policy Actors Must Know

Globalization is a phenomenon that has come to stay and carries along with it several other issues which cannot be avoided by people and nations. The question thus is not whether to go global, but rather how to globalize. On this note, policy actors in the policy process must take note of certain issues for better policy making and implementation in Nigeria.

First, policy actors in Nigeria must be aware of the inevitability of the current trend in global policy process. Thus, awareness and acceptance of the trend should be the first approach. With this awareness, policy actors must begin to position themselves to be better players in this changing method of doing things as a result of the convergence of policy and policy process.

Second, there is need for deeper and wider cooperation and coordination between and among governments and institutions of policy making and implementation in Nigeria and lOs in order to tap from the wealth of resources that flow from these organizations. Policy actors in nation-states should be open-minded in dealing with these organizations as suspicion kills trust and is inimical to goal achievement.

Third, capacity building should be a watch word for policy actors in Nigeria in order to always keep abreast with the best practices globally and for better partnership with international organizations. For example, Nigerian policy actors must have to organize trainings and capacity building workshops to learn the modern systems of accountability and project management in order to better partner with international donors like the World Bank, IMF etc.

Fourth, according to Bertucci and Balbeti (n.d), it is now clear that one of the major causes of the malaise which affects a number of states - mostly developing countries and countries with economies in transition - is institutional weakness and ineffective public administration systems. Governments without adequate capacity to recognize and respond to change are destined to be forever behind the 'waves of change'. Thus, generally speaking countries that do not have a strong institutional framework, as well as solid social policies and networks to cope with negative externalities are most apt to suffer the negative effects of globalization. The Nigerian state must, therefore, position its civil service and policy institutions in the right direction to reap the fruit of globalization and the activities of international organizations.

Finally, the positive aspects of globalization and international organizations notwithstanding, the Nigerian state must be wary of their negative activities. Thus caution, not suspicion, must be exercised while dealing with lOs in order to curtail their excesses. The Nigerian state must be able to define her objectives both domestically and in her foreign policy and develop the strong will to pursue it vigorously. The state should be able to shun any international organization which does not serve her foreign and domestic policy goal(s).

Conclusion

Change, it is said, is one variable that remains constant. The changing nature of governance has come to be as a result of globalization trend and must be accepted by nation-states. These changes are also spread by the activities of international organizations: IGOs, INGOs, MNCs, TCOs etc and they cut across several aspects of governance including public policy. International organizations play several roles globally which are beneficial and sometimes inimical to the goals of individual sovereign states. The Nigerian state must be able to recognize this new trend in the global system and position herself in a better position to take advantage of this change to improve her policy process in order to be a better player in the international stage.

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