

RELEVANCE OF NEW GEOPOLITICS IN PAKISTAN AND NIGERIA RELATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Pakistan and Nigeria are two important nations of the Asian and African region and are connected in the OBOR initiative that has created new geopolitics in the Asian and African regions. China has signed mega transportation projects in Nigeria along with the development of puja seaport same as china has developed Gwadar port and is developing transportation projects in Pakistan. This study examines that both nations can take the opportunity to cooperate in the areas of mutual interests in the future. Pakistan can become a gateway for Nigeria to export its goods in the south and central Asian region and Nigeria can become a gateway for Pakistani goods in Nigeria and African countries. As both nations wanted to achieve speedy technological and economic development this study suggests enhancing mutual cooperation as such opportunities are available through the OBOR initiative of chinses government. Africa is a war-affected continent as there is a large number of disputes among the nations. This study explains that Pakistan can help the governments of the continent by extending hands to share expertise to counter the insurgencies and maintain peace and offer better choices of security gadgets.

KEY WORDS: China, Cooperation, Nigeria, OBORI, Pakistan, Relations

1. INTRODUCTION

Nigeria has a vital influence in the African region as the continent's largest economy. The volume of bilateral commerce between Pakistan and Nigeria was 307 million dollars in 2019, but it fell to 146 million dollars in 2020. Bilateral trade capacity can reach \$1 billion by strengthening partnerships in pharmaceuticals, surgical instruments, light engineering items, sports equipment, and high-value textiles and automotive parts. Aside from this, both countries have a lot of room for cooperation planning in the industries of oil, gas, agricultural technologies, and renewable energy. Nigeria and Pakistan have similar, security issues at the domestic level, foreign policy choices, and economic models and projects, and to some extent internal political experiences. Both nations are partners of China in the OBOR initiative.

1.1. Study Area

Pakistan covers 796,096 square kilometers and has a population of 220 million people and Nigeria is a country having a population of 923,768 square Kilometers area and 206 million people and both are developing economies (World Bank, 2020). Pakistan's per capita income stood at 263\$

whereas the Nigerian oil earnings have propelled her per capita income to a greater level of 432\$ billion. Despite the fact that Pakistan and Nigeria are mostly agricultural countries, they have made significant progress in the industrial sector in the 21st century. Wheat, rice, cotton, sugarcane, and maize are all grown in Pakistan whereas principal exports of Nigeria are groundnuts, cotton, cocoa, and rubber. Pakistan is a net crude petroleum importer whereas Nigeria is the world's eleventh largest oil producer. In terms of trade, both countries' imports and exports are primarily geared towards China and Western countries. Nigerian external debt is at 33\$ billion whereas Pakistan's external debt currently stands at 116\$ billion ("Pakistan External Debt", 2021). These fact has increased the importance of this study.

Hypothesis; the close working relationship between Pakistan and Nigeria, being a member of the Chinese designed OBOR initiative can open the new horizons of politico-economic cooperation between Nigeria and Pakistan.

2. MARTIAL AND METHOD

(Ahmad, 1987) examined the relations of Pakistan and Nigeria. He examined the areas of common interest between Pakistan and Nigeria including the discussion on the areas of mutual interests. This article provided the background of Pakistan and Nigeria relations by discussing Pakistan's support for the newly independent state of Nigeria in 1960. He told that Pakistan provided assistance to Nigeria after its independence from the British by sending experts and aid to Nigeria. Nigerian president Alhaj Shahu Shugri visited Pakistan that boosted the relations between the two nations. He provided that the political chemistry of Pakistan and Nigeria is the same as both nations experienced the army interventions. This study is based on qualitative research and secondary means of data collection are used in this research to collect data from Journals, newspapers, websites, and other sources of online data. A descriptive method of research is used in this work to describe the facts of new geopolitics in Asia and Africa and explain it in a new dimension. The historical method of research is used in this work to provide insight into the events in the past to seek help from the past to introduce the opportunities in the future. The objectives of this study made it very important because Pakistan and Nigeria need new partners to boost their economies being partners of China in the OBOR initiative, the objectives of this study are

1. To highlight the areas of mutual interests to cooperate and work together between Pakistan and Nigeria.
2. To examine the opportunities in foreign and defense relations according to the needs of the newly developed geopolitics of the world.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Nigeria is in the West African region and is a Muslim majority federal republic with 36 provinces. Similar to Pakistan's bicameral legislature that has 104 in the senate and 342 in the lower house National Assembly, it has a bicameral legislature, consisting of a Senate of 109 members and a 360-member House of Representatives (DeLong et, al, 2011: 33–38.). Pakistan became a democracy after the end of the fourth military rule in 2008 and in the 2018 general elections it has experienced a third smooth transfer of power. Looking at Nigeria, after four decades of military dictatorship punctuated by coups and periodic attempts to create civilian governance, it became a multiparty democracy in 1999. Recent elections in Pakistan are held in 2018 and in Nigeria in 2019. Pakistani government under current Prime Minister Imran Khan has launched a special drive to counter corruption in Pakistan. Meanwhile, Nigeria's slow-moving court system has experienced several high-profile corruption trials, and the country's top anti-corruption official has been probed for impending corruption ("Nigeria - United States Department of State, 2020) Nigeria is neighboring Benin, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger. Looking at Pakistan that has 990 km of coastline, Nigeria has 800km of coastline deliberates on the country the capacities of maritime power. Pakistan is also Nigeria and Pakistan have a close working relationship in international affairs, as members of the Commonwealth, the D8, the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), and the United Nations (UN). Pakistan was one of the leading countries that recognized Nigeria in 1960 as an independent state. Pakistan also sends aid to support the initial years of the Nigerian people after its independence (Philip, 1964). Nigeria opened its embassy in Pakistan in 1962 and in 1961 the prime minister of Nigeria visited Pakistan before that Nigeria had invited Muslim jurist from Pakistan Justice Muhammad Sharif of the Pakistani Supreme Court to be part of the constitutional commission (Akinyemi, 1974; 153). Traditional values derived from history, as well as common religious practices and beliefs, can be drawn as analogies between the two countries, despite the fact that Nigeria is a secular country and Pakistan has declared itself the Islamic Republic. Security reasons, national aspirations, and ideological convictions all influence the two nations' foreign policies. Pakistan and Nigeria remained colonies of Britain, so both nations have had similar internal political experiences. Pakistan and Nigeria in the initial phase of independence adopted the parliamentary system but later on switched to presidential form. Due to the adverse demographical and geographical composition of two nations have suffered from severe political instability, such as passed through the phase of civil wars. Fortunately, Nigeria survived during the civil war and emerged as a more strong federation but unfortunately, Pakistan could not survive and was divided into two separate nations; Pakistan and Bangladesh. Coups are appreciated by the common

people in both nations. Despite the fact that the military has held power in both of them on several occasions. Looking at the military role in politics, Pakistan and Nigeria had a similar history. Nigeria has experienced seven military coups of 1966, 1975, 1976, 1983, 1985, 1990 and 1993 Pakistan has faced four successful military coups of 1958, 1969, 1977 and 1999, (Hyman, et, al, 1989: 30, Musharaf, 2006: 12) and three unsuccessful attempts of military coups of 1951, 1980 and 1995. (Abbas, 2005:16–40., Malik, 1991:220–280, Ziring, 2003) For Nigeria and Pakistan, the domestic crisis has hampered the conduct of foreign policy. Following their independence, both nations were members of the commonwealth; yet, Pakistan withdrew from this forum after the 1971 war. Both have been founding members of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and members of the Non-Aligned Movement. Nigeria joined the OIC after Pakistan, although Pakistan has been an active member since its inception in 1969. Nigeria and Pakistan support the D-8 Organization as members for Economic Cooperation's goals to improve member states' positions in the global economy, develop and generate new trade possibilities, increase involvement in international decision-making, and improve the quality of life. After years of military dictatorship, Nigeria has been a multiparty democracy since 1999. Although governance has improved significantly in the last two decades, mismanagement, ethnoreligious tensions, state security abuses, gender discrimination, and racial minorities, and governmental persecution of political opponents and media continue to be major issues. Former military ruler Muhammadu Buhari won office in 2015 on a groundswell of discontent over corruption, economic stagnation, and rising insecurity, marking Nigeria's first democratic transfer of power between political parties. Buhari was re-elected in 2019, despite record low voter turnout, extensive vote-buying, and mass violence, raising concerns about Nigeria's democratic future.

3.1. Discussion

Nigeria's Imports from Asia are 25 billion dollars and the share of Pakistan is only 37 million dollars. Pakistan's bill on imports of fuel is about 10 billion dollars and if Pakistan can enhance its trade and defense cooperation with Nigeria it can pay its fuel bill by increasing its share of export up to 50 percent in imports of Nigeria from Asia. Pakistan joined OBORI in 2015 when it signed CPEC with China (Nigeria keen to bolster trade ties with Pakistan", 2021). CPEC was introduced by the Chinese leadership as a flagship project under OBORI that attracted the international community including Nigeria. Nigeria joined the OBORI project in 2018 and key projects in the agreements are about the development of infrastructure (Nantulya, 2019). China had constructed two key railway lines one became operational in 2016 that led towards the joining of Nigeria in OBORI in 2018 and in December 2020

railway line Of 156 kilometers was made operational. China has constructed a railway line that is connecting northern Nigeria to Southern Nigeria. Just like the rail project of Pakistan in which Chin is going to upgrade and construct a railway line connecting northern Pakistan with Southern (Jamal, 2021). According to the reports Nigeria was hosting 30 trading, 40 investment, and 70 construction companies of China in 2019. In 2018 Chinese construction companies had secured 175 construction contracts. Some cases are the railway line project having the cost of \$1.1 billion connecting Kano-Kaduna cities and the \$874 million, a project of Railway line of 187km that is connecting Abuja-Kaduna cities; expressway project having the cost of \$1.2 billion, with the length of 312km connecting the cities of Lagos-Ibadan and the \$600 million project of airport terminals construction in Abuja, and Lagos cities and Ports of Harcourt and Kano cities (Chen, 2018). It is very interesting that China had brought 17 billion dollars to Nigeria. China has given loans of 3.11 billion dollars to Nigeria. Nigeria like Pakistan remained a victim of sanctions of the west and it was China that came to rescue both Nigeria and Pakistan. Pakistan and Nigeria are members of the D8 group of nations. Being a big nation both have to cooperate for mutual benefits. The Turkish president suggested that the D8 group, comprising Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Turkey, trade-in local currency and said that if that happened, our economy would not fail (Pakistan's foreign policy, 2013:1-4).

The Nigerian Army has expressed interest in establishing good relations with the Pakistani Army in the areas of intelligence gathering, training, communications, weapons assistance, and more. Nigeria and Pakistan had good relations and mutual understanding in the field of military matters, especially the training of senior and junior Nigerian soldiers in Pakistan. The leadership of the two countries looks ready to continue their relationship, and respect this good relationship to benefit from the Pakistani military's expertise in the fight against terrorism. Pakistan has provided assistance to Nigeria in the development of military radio communication, and that it had greatly assisted the Nigerian Army in its success in the fight against Boko Haram. Nigeria is a terrorist-affected nation and Pakistan and Nigeria have a lot of common in this context. Both nations have been facing the menace of terrorism and extremism (Zahid, 2017:1-4). Chief of the Nigerian Air Force Chief Air Marshal Adesola Nunayon Amosu visited Pakistan in October 2014, during which he also visited the Pakistan Aeronautical Complex Kamra where the aircraft is manufactured. Nigerian Air Force chief finalized the purchase of 10 JF 17 Thunder from Pakistan and in 2015 signed a deal to purchase them from Pakistan. Nigerian Army Chief Tukur Buratai wished to enhance military cooperation between Pakistan and Nigeria to counter-terrorism in Nigeria seeking help from the expertise of Pakistan. Pakistan Air Force has enhanced the capabilities of the Nigerian Air Force, and it has

enhanced bilateral cooperation and partnership in meeting the security challenges. The addition of state-of-the-art fighter jets such as the JF-17 has given the Nigerian Air Force a military advantage when in May 2021 Pakistan delivered 3 JF 17 Thunder air crafts to Nigeria under the agreement. Pakistan and Nigeria confront similar security problems, and they need similar initiatives to counter them so they can increase military cooperation that will go a long way toward addressing the issues of security. Pakistan is facing threats from organizations like TTP and insurgents in Baluchistan and Nigeria is facing security challenges from Boko Haram and insurgents in the country. Boko Haram is a terrorist group operating in Nigeria moving into new territory and exploiting Nigeria's poverty and other security issues to further its radical ideas. According to the United Nations, warfare with the group has killed about 350,000 people and displaced millions by the year 2020. Boko Haram conducts murderous raids, displaying its flag and establishing extreme authority on the local population in some circumstances. Farms and the sale of agricultural products are subject to taxes. The organization now has complete control of the once-thriving international fish market in the Chad Basin. The magnitude of the instability undermines Nigeria's social fabric: "With each assault, people's lives are lost or permanently injured, and faith in democracy and the state is eroding." Sharing expertise and covert operations against TTP and Alqeda in Pakistan are two basic things Nigeria could learn from Pakistan. Pakistan had inherited terrorist groups as a consequence of the Soviet invasion, but then it was able to contain them and reduce their influence in the country by confining them to the border regions. The Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), is a separatist group in Nigeria that, has been fighting Nigerian security forces since 1967. IPOB seeks a union of provinces in the southeast of Nigeria primarily made up of Igbo ethnic people, to secede and form the independent nation of Biafra. Biafra as an independent state is not a new concept in Nigeria as the Regional leaders declared independence in 1967, sparking a horrific civil war that killed up to a million people. The sympathizers of IPOB have been suspected of carrying out assassinations on government buildings, jails, and the residences of politicians and community leaders (Igboin, 2014: 94–121). IPOB movement can be compared with the Baluch nationalist movement in Pakistan has been working on the same idea since 1971. Pakistan has a good experience to counter such kind of separatist and Nigeria can take help from Pakistan in this field.

Pakistani trade mission visited Nigeria, and during the visit, they went to see seven states of Nigeria. After it is the very next year Pakistan hosted the first joint ministerial commission between Nigeria and Pakistan that resulted in enhancing trade cooperation in different areas of business. The agricultural sector was picked by the trade commission of Nigeria after studying the huge change and revolution, as well as numerous areas of comparative

advantage for Nigeria in Pakistan. Pakistan has domesticated the manufacturing of tractors, farm implements, fertilizers, rice processing mills, and seedlings, among other things, and has become the world's fourth-largest rice producer. There are approximately 40,000 Small and Medium Size Enterprises and cottage businesses in Pakistan, and Nigeria is forming industrial pacts, therefore Pakistan and Nigeria need to work together. The Nigerian Defense Corporation is struggling to meet basic manufacturing demands whereas Pakistan has also been able to domesticate the manufacture of military hardware and equipment. So Pakistan has huge chances to attract Nigeria for the military industry. Pakistan and Nigeria need to enhance people-to-people contact to promote culture, and tourism links. Since many Nigerians rush to Europe, America, and other countries to enjoy their vacations, Pakistan can offer some of the most magnificent tourist attractions to them. A group of 64 businessmen visited Nigeria with President of Pakistan Mamnoon Hussain in 2014. Nigeria and Pakistan have agreed to increase collaboration, specifically in the realm of military and counter-terrorism tactics to battle the terrorism that has plagued both countries. President Goodluck Jonathan of Nigeria and Pakistani President Mamnoon Hussain agreed that such collaboration was important to confront the terrorist threat. Both nations have a legal framework in place, and Pakistan wants to urge the Nigerians to take advantage of the automobile industry strategy of Pakistan, the creation of chemical and fertilizer industries in Nigeria, the advancement of small and medium enterprises, family businesses, the rehabilitation of its textile industries, and involvement in the refining of its solid minerals to mitigate the effects of the drop in oil prices (Agende, 2014).

The export of textiles, medicines, surgical and sports from Pakistan could be increased. There is a need for direct flights between the two countries and there was a huge potential for the promotion of tourism in both the countries. Pakistan seeks to deepen diplomatic, economic, and trade cooperation with the African region. The business communities of the two countries can benefit from each other's experiences in the field of investment. Nigeria, with a population of over 200 million and rich in mineral resources, is a very important country in the African region. There must be an exchange of delegations of industrialists and high-level government officials of Pakistan and Nigeria to work out trade strategies and trade between the two countries to promote trade activities in each other's markets. Special opportunities are recommended to be provided. Most of the rice in Nigeria comes from China and there are vast opportunities for Pakistan to export rice in Nigeria, as well as huge opportunities in the agricultural sector and Nigeria could be a good market for Pakistan. There are vast opportunities for the export of Pakistani products including agricultural products, textiles, pharmaceuticals, cement,

rice, and sugar. Pakistani traders and industrialists will have to introduce their products in Nigeria as it can expand their trade to other African countries. Pakistan and Nigeria have friendly and strong relations but there is room for further increase in bilateral trade volume. The economies of both the countries are facing similar problems, so apart from the governments, the business and industrial communities of these countries also have a huge responsibility to play their key role in benefiting from them. The tariff rate in Nigeria is 11.3 percent while equal facilities are being provided to local and foreign investors (“Pakistan Exports to Nigeria 2021 Data 2022 Forecast 2009-2020 Historical”, 2021). The role of industries in Pakistan's economy is increasing rapidly. Pakistan is the thirteenth largest producer of rice while wheat, cotton, sugarcane, mango, and date palm. Nigeria is rich in oil and gas, but Nigeria is still exporting large quantities of crude oil, while it needs the help of other countries, including Pakistan, to set up refineries in this regard. Nigeria is also one of the major producers of palm oil while Pakistan needs to invest in this sector as well. Pakistani investors could invest in Nigeria to meet their country's edible oil needs. Similarly, Pakistan has considerable experience in the field of gas distribution and can also help Nigeria in supplying gas to the people of Nigeria for domestic use. Nigeria is also one of the cotton-producing countries so Pakistan's value-added sector should start joint ventures in Nigeria so that the people of both countries can benefit from them. There is only a 20 percent duty on textile imports which is very low so Pakistani exporters can also export textile products to Nigeria. The Nigerian agriculture sector has a five-year tax holiday, while petrol and chemical companies have been given a complete tax exemption in Nigeria. The two countries should work to develop other infrastructure, including railways, roads, and power plants, and in this regard, the two countries should benefit from each other's experience and resources. Food processing also has great potential for cooperation between the two countries, but to take advantage of it, direct contacts between traders of the two countries are needed. Pakistan is producing 24 million tons of wheat and Nigeria only a 1.3 million tons. Pakistan is the second-largest exporter of rice and Nigeria's second-largest importer in the world (“Nigeria and Pakistan to up bilateral trade by \$1 billion”, 2021). Pakistan is the producer of surgical, textiles, and garments and the cottage industry flourished there to cut poverty levels. Nigeria may ask Pakistani for help to develop the agricultural and agro-based industry. The lack of reliable banking channels is stifling trade growth, and both nations must address this issue. On the web and other sources, the material on duty systems and laws in African countries is not available for the common people's understandings. Both countries' commercial companies can play a significant role in exchanging knowledge that will help the business sector. Pakistan has imported commodities worth \$116.27 million from Nigeria in 2020, which was 58.4%

lower than \$279.74 million in 2019. On the other hand, Pakistani exports to Nigeria stood at \$29.97 million in 2020 which was 9.1% higher than \$27.47 million in 2019 (Masooma, 2021).

4. CONCLUSION

Chinas initiative of the OBOR has created new geopolitics in the Asian and African regions in which Pakistan Nigeria can help each other to exploit the potential. Nigeria can learn from Pakistani experience in addressing poverty alleviation through agricultural development. Both countries are fighting corruption, and devising an effective and long-term strategy to combat this socio-economic evil is critical. He went on to say that the two countries have various prospects for defense, trade, and economic cooperation, all of which should be pursued. When it comes to people-to-people relationships, he points out that Pakistan and Nigeria are both English-speaking countries, and that because of this linguistic closeness, bilateral public relations may be easily formed, for which the construction of a two-way direct air link is critical. This will improve public contact and trade as well as inter-governmental ties. Pakistan and Nigeria are two of the main African and Asian countries. Furthermore, bilateral connections between the countries involved are for the greater benefit of not only the two nations but the entire region.

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