THEORY AND PRACTICE OF DECISION-MAKING IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: LESSON FOR THE THIRD WORLD

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Introduction
Many 'theories' have evolved over the years for the understanding of the nature and dynamics of international relations. Though these theories can be variously taxonomized, we may broadly categorise them into: the Traditional or Classicist theories; the Behavioural or Scientific theories; and the Marxist theories of international relations. In many international relations literature, the said "theories" are sometimes semantically and/or interchangeably referred to as "schools" and in some cases as "approaches", "methods", etc.

A major theory within the traditional theories is the theory of "Political Realism" commonly referred to as the "Power Model", whose chief advocate is Hans J. Morgenthau. Within the Behavioural/Scientific theories spear-headed by Rousenau, Deutsch, Kaplan and others, we have such variants as Systems Analysis; Structural Functional theory, the Games theory, the Transnational theory, the Decision-making theory, etc. The major version of the Marxist theories of international relations is the 'Dependency' or 'Centre-Periphery' theory of Gunder Frank (and others like Paul Baran, Dos Santos, Collin Lays, Samuel Kodjo, Geoffrey Kay, Walter Rodney, Chinweizu, etc.)

For our present purpose, we are concerned with the "decision-making" as an off-shoot of Behaviouralism. Consequently, this paper sets out to diagnose the theory and practice of decision-making in international relations with regards to the developed nations vis-à-vis the Third-world countries, like Nigeria. Thus, the paper hopes to broaden our study and understanding of international relations. By going through the paper, believers in Morgenthau's notion that "with power, the rest will be added unto you" will come to appreciate that the calibre of a country's decision-makers as well as the degree of their correct world perception; their idiosyncrasies, values and motivations, etc. also account to great extent, why some nations make certain types of decisions in relation to one another. Going through this paper, the students of international relations; general public and those pre-occupied with the process of foreign policy
formulation, will also become aware of the domestic concomitants of foreign policy and how internally engendered priorities interlock with external ones.

Finally, with a critical appraisal of Decision-making in international relations, the necessary ‘facts and fables’ are highlighted, especially as it concerns the developed countries vis-à-vis the ‘Penetrated or Transnationalised societies’ of the Third-world countries whose decision-making capabilities were hopelessly jeopardized by their power-vacuum situation and an externally battered and neutralized internal setting characterized by adverse neo-colonial condition. The way out was also preferred.

Decision-Making Theory and the Study of International Relations

In the words of James N. Rosenau, “no sooner had we successfully come through several decades of enormous theoretical progress than the world which we began to comprehend manifested, unmistakable signs of profound change rendering our hard-won theoretical sophistication increasingly obsolete”. Prior to the emergence of the decision-making approach to the study of international relations and foreign policy, there existed what was referred to as the classical or the traditional approach. This approach took each national society as different and made clear distinction between the domestic and external environments and emphasized case studies or institutional analysis. International politics, hence, revolved around ‘state-sovereignty’. The Hobbesian interpretation of the world environment, saw foreign policy decision-making primarily in terms of ‘security policy’, rendering Hans J. Morgenthau’s contextual imperatives of ‘national power, national purpose and interest’ the focal point of analysis.

Given the above condition, “power” became the major variable of an analytical tool referred to as ‘Security Policy Paradigm’, ‘Political Realism’, etc. Tunde Adeniran, for instance, notes that Morgenthau’s traditionalist conceptions of international relations is that national interest requires constant accumulation of power for survival and security. For Morgenthau and his followers, he adds “power is man’s control over the minds and actions of others and can be determined by examining the relationships between actors. Who makes A do and by what means?”

However, in the early 1950s, the pervasive influence of traditionalism with its state-centrism and single-factor-power analysis, began to wane, giving way to behaviourism from which the decision-making paradigm arose. Ra Ofoegbu notes that the behavioural framework of analysis is microanalytical, that is to say that man and his behaviour rather than states and organisations are identified as crucial variables in analysis. Related to Ofoegbu’s remark: Adeniran also has argued that the Behavioural approach is indebted to Soci