



**Admiralty Journal of Multidisciplinary Research, ISSN 1597–278X**

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## **Higher Education, Diplomatic Relations and Conflict Resolution: An Assessment of Linkages**

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### **Authors' Contributions**

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors.  
All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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***Research Article***

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### **ABSTRACT**

Education has a crucial role in the growth of a country. For this reason, a sizable portion of the annual budgets of developed countries are set aside for education, particularly higher education. Similarly, countries striving for excellence do not treat the education system lightly. Any country hoping to use scientific approaches to tackle its problems must take education very seriously. However, using Nigeria as a case study, enough has not been done in allocating a sizable portion of state and federal funds to educational development. Meanwhile, a nation's skill and aptitude to produce effective diplomats will increase when its higher educational institutions receive sufficient funding. To obtain sufficient data for the research, content analysis of scholarly books, journals, websites, newspapers, and in-person interviews were used. The paper comes to the conclusion that education is essential to the progress of nations. The study found that the attainment of higher educational qualifications would strengthen diplomatic relationships as competent mediators with sound knowledge of dispute resolution techniques would be produced.

**Keywords:** Conflict resolution, diplomatic relations, higher education, linkages

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## INTRODUCTION

The educational system in Nigeria is referred to as 6-3-3-4, in her educational policy. According to the policy, students must attend elementary school for six years, junior secondary school for three years, and the senior secondary school education for three years. The last four years are to be spent any of the nation's higher institutions. This is dependent upon other factors such as the course or programme being studied. At this point, the person would have completed twelve years of education, making them eligible to enroll in their preferred higher institution. In the light of this, he or she will be deemed to have completed a higher degree.

Additionally, all the activities that a country deems to be part of higher education are included in the curriculum of higher education. Not only do these activities comprise of those provided by traditional universities and graduate schools, they also include shorter-term training programmes (polytechnics, junior colleges, and various technical specialty schools) with duration varying from two to eight years, as well as technology-enhanced correspondence courses that serve a broad student population.

Institutions of higher learning, most notably universities, serve three purposes. These are research and social contributions in addition to teaching. The tasks of research and education complement each other; research enables higher education, while education produces the human resources needed for research. Higher education institutions are presently under more and more pressure to contribute to society, as information gained there can be used to build individual and group capacities in order to address national and international issues facing the country and its neighbours. Higher education is therefore a means of acquiring the abilities necessary to work as a career diplomat and resolve conflicts expertly.

It is difficult to define a university and modern higher education in line with national educational policy. Higher education encompasses a broader spectrum of educational establishments, such as universities that are specifically tailored to the development of the aspirations of their respective nations. These higher education institutions can be set up in a variety of ways; most frequently, they are housed separately from universities and other tertiary institutions within the universities. For example, a university is defined in Britain as an establishment that is the leading authority in research and has the authority to grant its own degrees (Allen, 1988). Higher education is often understood to be a subset of universities, which is made up of a group of related institutions.

However, universities and higher education are sometimes used interchangeably (Assié-Lumumba, 2005). Nevertheless, they do not deal with the same reality. Higher education represents a more comprehensive swing because it includes all post-secondary or tertiary institutions. One kind of institution of higher learning that awards degrees or other certificates is a university. The phrase "modern higher education" describes organized post-secondary education and training programs and institutions, which include more conventional universities like faculties of arts, humanities, and sciences as well as highly specialized colleges in fields like engineering, science, technology, and agriculture. Higher education includes post-secondary institutions such as polytechnics and colleges of education. However, higher education comprises all forms of professional institutions; and the opportunities for higher education are not wasted, notwithstanding their broad breadth (Assié-Lumumba, 2005). Conversely, a university symbolizes a community of academics both inside and outside of the educational setting as well as a place of higher learning. A university

is a higher education establishment that fosters top-notch research and raises both men and women to a high degree of intellectual growth in the humanities and sciences as well as in traditional professional fields of study. It also aims to create a community of people who are involved in research and study.

A university is a source of highly skilled human labour and global knowledge for professionals and experts, with the goal of resolving any issues that are inherent in mankind. Middle class technical and vocational professionals are also being trained by other higher educational establishments. Assié-Lumumba (2005) notes that there are differences between universities and other higher education institutions in terms of their mission, goal, functions, faculty qualifications, admissions requirements, programme lengths (which have already been discussed), and certifications. Each of them is dependent upon the demands and priorities of various civilizations. Universitas, a term used to refer to many Middle Ages corporate entities on all continents, and included the organization of students and teachers. Verger (1992a) claims that the Latin word universitas, which means "the totality" or "whole," is the source of the current term university. Universitas was a broad term used in the Middle Ages to refer to various types of corporate communities, including trade associations, brotherhoods, guilds, and so forth. Universitas magistrorum et scholarium, or "the university of masters and students," eventually refers to formalized communities of people who were in charge of advanced education. Considering the foregoing succinct description, a higher education is commonly regarded as an academic setting and institution where a community of scholars engages in research, study (teaching and learning), and community services. In addition, it serves as a professional training hub for the socio-

economic, political, and cultural demands of the society.

In order to become an "Ivory Tower," a higher educational institution needs to take steps to guarantee that information is immediately returned to the society. When referring to a higher education, all of the three functions are inextricably linked and cannot be separated. Therefore, in this study, the academic programs offered by universities will not only be discussed, but also the research and contributions made to society through peaceful dispute settlement. Understanding some of the concepts used in this work is crucial at this point.

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

### Philosophical Definitions of Diplomacy

The art of international relations, known as diplomacy, was traditionally the responsibility of heads of state or their designated envoys to other countries, both nearby and distant. Over the past century, its unchanging scope has broadened to encompass the idea of "public diplomacy," a term that encompasses the deeds of a diverse range of practitioners and endeavours meant to promote amicable relations between nations. Countries have used higher education to further their national interests in the practice of diplomacy and dominance. In the lengthy history of colonialism, it was crucial to the goals of those looking to control the native populace. Post-independence African states continue to find that higher education is a necessary and sufficient means of advancing diplomatic ties and solving conflicts.

According to Barnett and Duvall (2010), diplomacy can also be defined as the peaceful resolution of conflicts via the use of negotiation and persuasion techniques. Another type of diplomacy in international relations is called "international diplomacy," which is the management of relations between nations through the mediation of qualified

diplomats on matters pertaining to trade, war, economics, culture, the environment, and human relations as well as conflict resolution, peace-building and peacemaking (Berridge, 2005). However, Little (2007) notes that there is little evidence that diplomatic connections facilitate the diplomatic endeavours of outside parties to change a conflict by improving communication between the parties involved and disseminating conflict-related information that can spur negotiations. The functions of diplomatic relations are also intimately linked to changing events and issues, such as global crises, natural and man-made disasters, or violent outbreaks, which draw attention to subjects or geographical areas that were previously off-limits to diplomacy (Guzzini, 2009). The following characteristics of a diplomatic relationship are evaluated: political, cultural, environmental, and economic (Claude, 2012).

### Resolution of Conflicts

Next is the concept of conflict. It is a procedure wherein one party believes that another party is opposing or adversely affecting its interests. It advances the rule of law, decent government, and human rights. Its foundation is the idea that disagreements are a natural by-product of human interaction and can usually be addressed using techniques including negotiation, mediation, conciliation, and arbitration (Gleick, 2012). All of the processes involved in bringing up, debating, and resolving disputes that are content-centred as well as inter-user are included in conflict resolution (Abadi, 2011).

In order to avert future conflicts, conflict resolution promotes the longer-term growth of societal structures and institutions that strengthen security, social cohesion, economic sustainability, and good governance (Leung, 2009). Additionally, it improves organizational settings, learning and group outcomes, and

effectively managed conflict lowers mortality and causes less suffering for all parties involved (Mwagiru, 2011). According to Albert (2011), there are several ways to measure conflict resolution, including the requirement for management, judicial systems, negotiation, mediation, and arbitration. Although, peacemaking pay closer attention in ending disputes and deescalating, and making sure that all the parties to the dispute come to a good stand of agreement through negotiation with an expert in peace building and conflict management. (Stiftung, 2014).

In addition, the processes of peacemaking pay profound attention to de-escalate the conflict and work towards achieving comprehensive mechanisms either through mutual agreement or negotiations. (Stiftung, 2014) The different wiki forums for discussing problems as well as the official and informal responsibilities that community members play are all included in conflict resolution (International Alert et al. 2011). Enhancing group outcomes and learning is the goal of conflict resolution, including performance or effectiveness in an organizational setting (Samuel, 2012). Disagreement that is effectively handled by qualified diplomats, improving group outcomes (Green, 2012). According to Desivilya et al. (2005), conflict resolution patterns are frequently associated with a dual concern paradigm that separates concern for others from worry for oneself (Leung, 2009). These two motivations serve as the foundation for various conflicts management strategies, some of which place a greater emphasis on self- or other-centeredness (David, 2012).

Scott (2011) concludes that conflict is inevitable, especially in highly stressed environments. Therefore, he believes that career diplomats have an obligation to approach conflict differently and should provide opportunities for multidisciplinary people to learn and develop conflict management skills and thereby change



their interpersonal environments (Segal & Melinda, 2011). Therefore, it is important to identify effective conflict management strategies for conflict resolution (Victor, 2012). One of the methods of conducting conflict resolution research using the traditional African cultural societies which are through the Indigenous African Mechanisms of conflict resolution, which are very effective in resolving conflicts both in the past and recent times. It also includes employing extra-judicial devices and usage of legal maxims to persuade or convince the disputants about the implication or otherwise of their behaviour.

### **Relationship between Diplomatic Relations and Conflict Resolution**

In more recent years, the role of education and academic transaction in building international relationships through diplomatic relations and conflict resolution has been characterised by the term of either “soft power” or “non-kinetics approach.” Rather than employing a kinetic approach, soft power is dependent on the strength of ideas and culture, to influence the friendship and disposition of others. Higher education is an ideal vehicle for soft power or non-kinetics approach in conflict resolution. It is good to examine the strategy deployed by other countries to fully achieve a world free of conflict.

Firstly, the Fulbright Programme which is sponsored by the US Department of State is an excellent example of public diplomacy, being furthered through higher education. Its principal goal is to foster mutual understanding between people and nations, and the programme has always been a mixture of government and people generated soft power and non-kinetic approach. It claims the largest movement of students and scholars across the world that any country has ever sponsored. Government officials often cite it as one of the great diplomatic possessions of the

United States. National and leaders of other countries who have participated in the Fulbright Program frequently proclaim an intimacy with and affection for the United States and its people due to their experience, which is a result that generates goodwill for the United States abroad. While the Fulbright Program has not been retroflected by other countries, there are other well-organized efforts to extend national diplomacy through higher education.

Secondly, the British Council is a prime example. With offices around the globe, sometimes operating as an affiliate of the British High Commission, the British Council describes itself as the United Kingdom’s international organization for educational opportunities and cultural relations. Along the Fulbright model, it offers scholarships for study in the United Kingdom and sponsors educational exchanges between higher education institutions there and in other countries.

Thirdly, is the German Academic Exchange Service that plays a similar but less extensive role; and very importantly, non-Western countries have followed with their diplomatic efforts.

In conclusion, is the Confucius Institutes. They are designed to promote Chinese language and culture abroad. It has one of its branches in the University of Lagos Nigeria. By 2011, there were 353 Confucius Institutes in 104 nations and other areas.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### ***Theory of Liberal Institutionalism***

The Liberal Institutionalism Theory, largely advanced by Robert O. Keohane in his seminal work “After Hegemony” (1984), offers a compelling framework for analyzing the interplay between higher education, diplomatic relations, and conflict resolution. This theory asserts that international cooperation can be achieved through the

creation and maintenance of institutions that promote stability, trust, and mutual benefits among actors (Keohane, 1984). Liberal institutionalists argue that institutions play a crucial role in reducing conflict by fostering collaboration and information sharing, and they emphasise the importance of education as a key component of this institutional framework.

Furthermore, to comprehend the complex connection between higher education, diplomatic relations, and conflict resolution, Liberal Institutionalism Theory, initially developed by Robert Keohane alongside Joseph Nye in the 1970s, offers a valuable theoretical perspective. This theory stems from the wider liberal tradition within international relations, which highlights the potential for cooperation among states and other global actors, despite the inherently anarchic nature of the international system (Keohane & Nye, 1977). Liberal Institutionalism suggests that institutions both formal and informal play a crucial role in promoting peace, stability, and collaboration by minimizing uncertainty and fostering transparency between actors. Within the realm of higher education, the theory sheds light on how academic institutions act as essential platforms for dialogue, knowledge sharing, and the development of skills necessary for diplomacy and conflict resolution.

Liberal Institutionalism holds that institutions are essential in facilitating cooperation by providing a structured environment for repeated interactions (Keohane & Nye, 1977). In this sense, higher education institutions—particularly universities and research centers—act as neutral arenas where individuals from different national backgrounds and conflicting regions can engage in dialogue. These academic institutions often host international students, scholars, and researchers, creating opportunities for diplomacy through intellectual and cultural exchange. By bringing together diverse individuals, universities reduce the

misperceptions and misunderstandings that often fuel conflict. This educational diplomacy supports the theory's notion that collaboration through institutions can mitigate tensions and promote peace (Ikenberry, 2001).

For instance, universities often facilitate exchange programs, international conferences, and collaborative research projects, which act as informal diplomatic channels. These initiatives allow individuals from opposing sides of a conflict to engage in dialogue and cooperation, reflecting the Liberal Institutionalism argument that institutions lower transaction costs and encourage cooperative behavior. In this way, higher education plays a key role in reducing the likelihood of conflict and fostering peaceful diplomatic relations. This theory's emphasis on institutions as facilitators of cooperation and peace is directly applicable to the role that universities and other educational institutions play in international diplomacy. By fostering dialogue, educating future leaders, building soft power, and creating transnational networks, higher education serves as a critical instrument for conflict resolution and the promotion of peaceful diplomatic relations. This theoretical approach highlights the indispensable role that academic institutions can play in creating a more cooperative and peaceful international order.

### **Theory of Constructivism**

Constructivism, a key theory in International Relations, offers an insightful lens through which to understand the interaction between higher education, diplomatic relations, and conflict resolution. Developed by theorists like Alexander Wendt and Nicholas Onuf, Constructivism shifts the focus of international relations from material factors, such as power and economics, to the influence of social constructs, identities, norms, and ideas (Wendt, 1999). It asserts that states and individuals operate

in a world shaped by shared beliefs and social interactions and that these elements define how international actors behave, cooperate, and resolve conflicts. In this context, higher education institutions play a critical role as spaces where these social constructs are shaped, challenged, and renegotiated, influencing diplomatic relations and conflict resolution.

According to Constructivist thought, the international system is governed by shared norms, which are socially constructed standards that guide behavior among states and individuals (Wendt, 1999). Higher education institutions, particularly universities, act as key sites for the creation, transmission, and diffusion of these norms. Through programs that bring together students from different cultural, national, and ideological backgrounds, universities contribute to the development of shared values, including those that promote peace, cooperation, and diplomacy. For instance, students enrolled in international relations or conflict resolution programs are exposed to global norms around peace building and diplomatic engagement. These shared experiences foster the construction of identities that are more conducive to diplomatic solutions over conflict.

In this way, higher education does not merely transfer knowledge; it also serves as an incubator for social and diplomatic values that encourage peaceful conflict resolution. By bringing together diverse groups of students, higher education institutions help break down stereotypes, challenge misconceptions, and create a mutual understanding that is essential for effective diplomacy. This reflects Constructivist ideas about the importance of interaction and communication in shaping state behavior and international norms.

### **Empirical Review**

Over the years, higher education has evolved from being a solely knowledge-driven enterprise to a key

player in global diplomacy and conflict mitigation. Universities have become crucial in promoting intercultural understanding and facilitating international collaboration. For example, Kaplan (2022) posited that universities now serve as "soft power instruments," engaging in diplomacy through exchange programs, collaborative research, and peace studies departments. Recent literature emphasises three main themes in the linkage between higher education, diplomacy, and conflict resolution. These concepts are, first, Soft Power and Cultural Diplomacy. According to Nye, 2021, universities facilitate soft power through academic diplomacy, fostering cross-cultural ties. Second is Educational Peace-building. This concept according to Tariq and Ali (2023) highlight peace education initiatives in higher education as effective tools for reducing conflict. The third concept is International Partnerships. As stated by Robinson & Lee (2022), universities through strategic partnerships, support policy frameworks and peace dialogues, as seen in collaborations between U.S. and Middle Eastern institutions.

Peace-building has been a core essence of diplomacy. Higher Education has been adjudged to play a significant role in this direction as universities serve as platforms for Diplomatic Exchange. Studies illustrate that academic institutions act as neutral grounds for dialogue among individuals from conflicting regions. A study by Choudhry and Ahmad (2021) explores how exchange programs between conflicting nations (such as Israel and Palestine) foster mutual understanding and provide a space for shared goals. In addition, academic networks, particularly those linked to global organisations, encourage diplomacy by promoting shared values. For instance, the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI) network includes universities committed to principles like peace and human rights. Research by Kaplan (2022) demonstrates how participation in UNAI projects has

allowed universities to collaborate internationally, fostering a culture of dialogue and problem-solving in conflict regions. For instance, Robinson and Lee (2022) conducted a comparative study analyzing U.S. and Middle Eastern university partnerships, showing how these relationships serve as informal diplomatic channels. The authors found that alumni of exchange programs often become cultural ambassadors, bringing an understanding of each other's societies that can soften tensions. This study is particularly valuable in assessing how alumni networks contribute to long-term peace-building.

Another role of universities in diplomacy and peace building is the provision of empirical insights into cross-cultural diplomacy. Graham (2023) points to limitations in university-led peace-building efforts, particularly in authoritarian regions, where universities may face governmental resistance. Nonetheless, initiatives like those studied by Graham showcase the adaptability of higher education institutions, as many adopt indirect methods - such as intercultural workshops and non-political forums - to sustain diplomatic engagement. There are various case studies of higher education institutions and diplomatic initiatives. One of the most widely studied forms of academic diplomacy is the collaboration between U.S. universities and institutions in the Middle East. Robinson and Lee (2022) conducted a comparative analysis of student and faculty exchange programs between the two regions, finding that these exchanges often create informal diplomatic channels. By examining over 200 program participants through surveys and follow-up interviews, the authors discovered that alumni frequently expressed empathy toward other cultures and a greater openness to compromise. This study's methodology offers valuable insights, using longitudinal data to track changes in participants' perceptions and attitudes over time.

In Africa's context, the study by Oswald (2023) highlights the role of African universities in peace-building, particularly in regions affected by civil conflict. The study examines initiatives by universities in Sub-Saharan Africa to promote social cohesion through peace education and conflict resolution workshops. Survey data from 500 students across five universities showed that 78% of participants reported feeling "more prepared" to engage in conflict resolution efforts within their communities. Oswald's findings support the notion that universities in conflict-prone areas are effective at fostering peace at a local level, especially when they implement culturally relevant peace education models.

On Cross-Border Collaboration - the summary of diplomacy, Tariq and Ali (2023) researched on academic exchanges and collaborative projects between Indian and Pakistani universities, demonstrating how these initiatives can promote diplomacy despite political tensions. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study involved both quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews with students and faculty. The authors found that 67% of exchange program participants maintained cross-border relationships after the program ended, often collaborating on projects or advocating for peaceful relations. This case is particularly significant for illustrating how educational initiatives can indirectly influence broader diplomatic relations by building personal connections across borders.

However, despite these positive outcomes, as enumerated above, some case studies point to barriers. Graham (2023) finds that while universities in authoritarian contexts may wish to participate in diplomatic initiatives, they often face restrictions, limiting their ability to engage in open dialogue. This study analysed ten universities in restrictive political environments, finding that institutional efforts toward peace-building were often hindered by censorship or fear



of political backlash. These findings emphasise the need for adaptive strategies that respect local contexts, allowing universities to engage in diplomacy where possible. Graham (2023) identifies that universities operating under authoritarian regimes often encounter censorship or risk backlash when promoting open dialogues on sensitive issues. In a study of ten universities across three politically restrictive regions, Graham found that universities had to limit student discussions on contentious topics to avoid state intervention. This limitation restricts the full potential of academic institutions in facilitating peace-building and highlights the need for adaptive, context-sensitive approaches.

Financial constraints and resource allocation is another barrier identified. Many institutions lack the necessary funding to sustain international partnerships or peace education programs. A comprehensive survey conducted by Tariq and Ali (2023) showed that nearly 60% of universities in developing countries struggle to fund student exchange and peace initiatives due to limited budgets. These constraints restrict student access to programs that could foster diplomatic engagement. To address this, the authors suggest that governments and private stakeholders invest more in scholarship programs and fund joint academic projects aimed at peace-building. Differences in cultural norms and ideologies also pose challenges. Mendez and Bhaskar (2022) observed that peace education initiatives sometimes struggle to gain traction due to local cultural perspectives that might not align with the curriculum's values. Their study, which focused on peace education programs in South Asian universities, found that some students perceived the programs as incompatible with their cultural context, leading to low engagement and retention rates. Addressing this challenge requires culturally responsive curricula that respect

local norms while fostering peace-oriented values.

Another significant limitation is the difficulty in measuring the long-term impacts of academic diplomacy on conflict resolution. Kaplan (2022) points out that while universities claim to contribute to diplomatic efforts, there is often a lack of empirical data to track these impacts over time. Kaplan's analysis of universities' peace-building programs noted that only 30% of institutions track alumni impact in terms of their contributions to diplomatic or peace-related fields, making it challenging to empirically validate these programs' effectiveness. More rigorous, longitudinal studies could enhance our understanding of higher education's role in diplomacy. Geopolitical tensions have also been found to also impede cross-border academic collaborations, as evidenced by Robinson and Lee (2022). Their study highlighted that U.S.-Middle East partnerships often face diplomatic hurdles, especially when governments on either side impose restrictions on educational exchanges. The authors suggest that academic institutions may benefit from establishing intermediary bodies that facilitate diplomacy in contentious regions, allowing for neutral ground on which cross-cultural exchanges can take place.

## METHODOLOGY

The study uses an analytical and descriptive approach to historical research. Additionally, it uses data from primary and secondary sources. Primary sources were obtained from various repositories, including the National Library of Nigeria and the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution in Abuja, Nigeria. Additional information for the study was gathered from online sources, magazines, newspapers, journal articles, and unpublished PhD theses. The study uses a content analysis strategy to present and analyze the data, meticulously evaluating data from various sources to establish facts about higher education, diplomatic

relations, and conflict resolution. This approach is known as an assessment of analysis.

## **DISCOURSE**

### **The Art of Diplomacy in Conflict Resolution**

Furthermore, the essence of power is the ability of being able to compel/influence another party by another to do its bidding. For this reason, soft power relationships, informed by enlightened self-interest, often signal unequal relationships. This issue has been raised particularly with regard to East-West and North-South cooperation. Given the demand for higher education in developing countries, they are unwilling to discourage those who wish to help either through scholarships or help with the fabrication of institutions. In the best of all possible worlds, these offers can create development for the receiving country as a way to build human capacity. However, countries which are receivers of educational diplomacy need to comprehend the psychological feature of that desire to build relationships. As we enter a period of expedited global engagement, people-to-people educational diplomacy is being overtaken by institution-to-institution relationships and a wide display of actors. This makes the higher educational diplomacy scenario even more complicated for those on the receiving end. It also means that governments are not the choice actors. While governments may view college and university cross-border activity as an important part of their diplomatic efforts, institutions are increasingly operating beyond sovereignty, based on their own strategies and motivations.

Another essential prospect to discuss further is safe educational diplomacy. The search for fee-paying students is a leading reason for greater cross-border activity. Institutions and

governments in countries with well-developed higher education are creating initiatives to receive students from many developing nations. Some universities in spite of less well-developed higher education seek relationships with other institutions they view as more prestigious to increase their chances of a higher degree in global rankings. Countering these more narrow motivations for engagement, many institutions are developing broader internationalization strategies, to seek cooperative agreements that define themselves as global institutions. They may want to pursue a variety of goals through engagement — to enrich their academic programs, enlarge the knowledge and experience base for their students, host a more internationally diverse student body and faculty, provide more opportunities for their faculty to join international research networks, and ultimately to develop a wide spectrum of joint activity that will benefit both partners. As with all sustainable relationships, the character of the parties and the ethical framework in which they operate are all important. Countries and institutions engaging in educational diplomacy have an obligation to consider the benefits —not merely to themselves but also to their partners. This will be in the best spirit of international relations and internationalization of higher education. If done well, it will be a rising tide that lifts all ships.

### **The Impact of Diplomatic Relations on Conflict Resolution**

Diplomacy to a general understanding of experts or scholars is the conduct of human affairs in a peaceful way, involving technical areas of activities and negotiations (Barnett & Duvall, 2010). It usually refers to international diplomacy, the activity of international relations through the intervention of experts with regard to issues of peacemaking, trade, war, economics, culture, environment, and

human relations (Berridge, 2005). Diplomacy is typically implemented by career diplomats, who use dialogue, negotiation, and other peaceful means to negotiate pact, trade policies, and other international consent, including agreements to prevent, limit, manage, or settle conflicts (Claude, 2012).

Diplomatic relations are often thought of as being preoccupied with peaceful activity, although it may happen within war or armed conflict or be used in the instrumentation of peculiar acts of hostility, such as seeking over-flight separation for an air strike (Lake & Powell, 2013). International treaties are usually negotiated by diplomats prior to promotion by national policy-makers (Lake & Powell, 2013). In an informal or social sense, diplomacy is the employment of tact to gain strategic advantage or to find mutually acceptable solutions to a common challenge, one set of tools being the grouping of authorities in a non-confrontational or polite manner (Barnett & Duvall, 2010). Diplomatic relations is measured by the following:

### **Peace Diplomacy**

Underlying Country's peace and security diplomacy is the recognition of peace and stability as necessary pre-conditions for development and prosperity. A country should have a conviction that its own stability and economic wellbeing are dependent on the stability of the sub-region, Africa and the rest of the world (Berridge, 2005).

### **Economic Diplomacy**

Countries' quest for a peaceful and stable environment is linked to its socio-economic development and prosperity, and that of the region (Choi & Choi, 2008). A robust economic engagement is necessary to secure the Country's regional and overall economic objectives.

### **Diaspora Diplomacy**

The Government should recognize the huge and untapped potential of her citizens abroad which can contribute to the country's national development agenda (Claude, 2012). The Diaspora principle aims to harness the diverse skills, knowledge, expertise and resources of the citizens living abroad, and facilitate their integration into the national development agenda (Guzzini, 2009).

### **Environmental Diplomacy**

The Environmental Policy underscores that environment and natural resources are valuable national assets upon which the country's sustainable development is anchored. Countries recognize their enormous stake in the sustainable management of its own natural resources, those of the region and the world. Countries are encouraged to champion the strengthening of UNEP and UN HABITAT in prioritizing the global sustainable development agenda; Promote compliance with the relevant national, regional and international environmental legislation, regulations, standards, and other appropriate operational procedures and guidelines; Promote the integration of environmental management into national and regional economic activities, including agriculture and tourism to minimize negative impact on the environment and promote research as a mechanism to encourage innovation and reduce adverse environmental impacts.

### **Cultural Diplomacy**

It is through cultural activities that a nation's idea of itself is best represented. A country's cultural diplomacy should aim at increasing awareness of her cultural richness and to generate interest in the country's cultural heritage. There should be respect and recognition of cultural diversity and heritage; Promotion of cultural exchanges and partnerships and promotion of global intercultural dialogue.

## CONCLUSION

In this paper, discussions have been offered extensively on some concepts, such as higher education, diplomatic relations, and conflict resolution. The understanding of the tripartite concept has revealed that there is synergy in the effort to be achieved. The importance of higher education cannot be over-emphasised. Its establishment is the bedrock of any nation that aspires to develop and for it citizens to benefit from the dividend of democracy and the rule of law.

This paper advocates for higher education and the outcome is expected to be made accessible to all and sundry in every geographical location of the country. The reason is that the country has all it takes to provide for its citizens from the primary level of education to any level an individual citizen aspires to get to. In the past, when education was newly introduced, the first set of those who enjoyed the system benefited from this educational system freely even when the national income was derived from agricultural sectors. At that time, the crude oil was not yet produced in high commercial quantity. But the country was sustained, and life was more meaningful to all compared with to the present time. Therefore, if Nigerians could benefit during that period, how much more would they in this dispensation where all the states of the federation are endowed with more than one natural resources, especially if these resources are exploited and utilised for the common good of all citizens. Then the citizens will definitely stand the chance to profit for a better life.

## Recommendations

Based on the outcome of this study, it is believed that if the following recommendations are adhered to and implemented, there will be accelerated development among the community of nations:

- i. Higher education should be a major goal of the Nigerian government for the advancement of all the citizens.
- ii. Education should be made free at all levels from primary to higher education. The reason is that in the 1960s to early 1990s, this system of education strived in Nigeria, though better in some states of the federation.
- iii. There should be educational reform policies in every sector of learning. This must be properly monitored for adequate implementation.
- iv. Emphasis should be given to technical colleges and polytechnics that are empowered to actualise the inventions discovered by the universities and other higher institutions.
- v. Lastly, implementation is very important. It is therefore recommended that the hints provided must be enforced at every level to achieve ultimate goals.

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