



**NEAR EAST UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

**FACTORS INFLUENCING
FOREIGN POLICY MAKING OF SMALL STATES:
THE GAMBIA 1994 – 2016**

M.A. THESIS

Sering Modou NJIE

**Nicosia
February, 2022**

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MASTER THESIS

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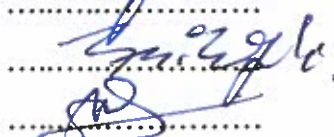

Sering Modou NJIE

**Supervisor
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sait AKŞİT**

**Nicosia
February, 2022**

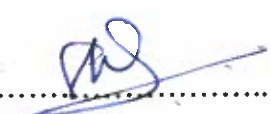
Approval

We certify that we have read the thesis submitted by Sering Modou Njie titled **“Factors Influencing Foreign Policy Making of Small States: The Gambia 1994 – 2016”** and that in our combined opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of International Relations.

Examining Committee	Name-Surname	Signature
Head of the Committee:	Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ali Dayıođlu 
Committee Member:	Dr. Zehra Azizbeyli 
Supervisor:	Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sait Akřit 


Approved by the Head of the Department

16/03/2022

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Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sait Akřit
Head of Department

Approved by the Institute of Graduate Studies

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Prof. Dr. Kemal Hüsnü Can Başer
Head of the Institute

Declaration

I hereby declare that all information, documents, analysis and results in this thesis have been collected and presented according to the academic rules and ethical guidelines of Institute of Graduate Studies, Near East University. I also declare that as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced information and data that are not original to this study.

Sering Modou Njie

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Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I am immensely appreciative of my course advisor Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bilge AZGIN and thesis supervisor Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sait AKŞİT for their continuous assistance, encouragement, guidance, suggestion and availability throughout the course of this research. Many concepts and ideas in my thesis have been inspired by and occasionally were the direct consequence of discussions with my thesis supervisors and other genuinely interested people in my work. I sincerely thank every one of them, even though words are insufficient to do so.

I would also like to thank all of the ambassadors, diplomats, government officials, journalists, analysts, and academicians who graciously gave their time to be interviewed. I admired their willingness to share their views with me. Their opinions have been invaluable to the enrichment of my thesis and working with them has been great. There are few people worthy of mention: Hon. Dr. Mamadou Tangara, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sulayman Omar Njie, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Gambians Abroad and Head of the Diplomatic Service; Dr. Aboubacar Senghore, Former Minister of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology and Former Minister of Foreign Affairs; H.E Dembo M. Badjie, a retired Gambian civil servant and diplomat and former Dean of Gambian diplomatic Corps; Mr. Ebrima Chongan, Former Assistant Inspector General of the Gambia Police Force and European Criminal Justice Policy Adviser Home Office, United Kingdom; and Dr. Amat Jeng, Gambia Foreign Policy Analyst and Lecturer at Uppsala University. I'd also like to express my profound gratitude for the support I received from my office, Gambia Embassy, Ankara during my studies. The support is really appreciated. I'd also like to thank the staff of Near East University for their scholarly contributions to my life. I am indebted to this institution for providing me with the requisite skills and knowledge in the field of international affairs.

SERING MODOU NJIE

Abstract

Factors Influencing Foreign Policy Making of Small States: The Gambia 1994 – 2016

Njie, Sering Modou

MA, Department of International Relations

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sait Aksit

February, 2022, 84 pages

The aim of this thesis is to examine the factors that influence foreign policy making in small states through the case study of The Gambia between 1994-2016. Both internal and external factors play significant roles in determining foreign policy making of small states. Despite their generally insignificant size and lack of hard power, small states tend to be very active in international relations. Indeed, small states tend to play an important role in multilateral diplomacy. Using the stream of international relations theories as theoretical tools in trying to explain both the internal and external factors that affect the foreign policy of small states, the researcher used both primary and secondary sources and content analysis to investigate the topic of research. The findings of this research show that domestic factors are more compelling in influencing the foreign policy of small states, and there is a marked relationship between the two variables under study. It was concluded that The Gambia's foreign policy is conceived, designed, formulated and articulated to safeguard and advance its national interests in its bilateral and multilateral relations with other countries. It reflects a country's traditional values and national objectives, as well as its aspirations and self-perception. The very smallness and lack of hard power of small states serve to remind the international community of its obligations and commitments to the rules-based order which has been created during the past decades.

Keywords: The Gambia, Foreign Policy, Small States, Internal Factors, External Factors.

Özet

Küçük Devletlerde Dış Politika Yapımını Etkileyen Faktörler:

Gambiya Örneği 1994 – 2016

Njie, Sering Modou

Yüksek Lisans, Uluslararası İlişkiler Bölümü

Danışman: Doç. Dr. Sait Aksit

Şubat, 2022, 84 Sayfa

Bu çalışmanın amacı küçük devletlerde dış politika yapımını etkileyen iç ve dış faktörleri Gambiya (1994-2016) örneğini kullanarak irdelemektir. Küçük devletlerin dış politika yapım süreçlerini hem iç hem de dış faktörler etkilemektedir. Küçük devletler boyutları ve sınırlı güçleri nedeniyle uluslararası ilişkiler literatüründe çoğunlukla göz ardı edilen aktörler olsa da çok aktif dış politika süreçleri bulunmaktadır. Gerçekte küçük devletler, çok taraflı diplomasi süreçlerinde önemli roller üstlenebilmektedirler. Çalışmada uluslararası ilişkiler kuramlarından faydalanılarak küçük devletlerin dış politika yapımında iç ve dış faktörlerin etkisi incelenmiştir. Bu amaçla, konunun irdelenmesinde birincil ve ikincil kaynaklar kullanılmış, mülakatlar ve resmi metinlerin kullanımıyla konu detaylandırılmıştır. Gambiya'nın 1994-2016 arası dış politika yapım süreci incelemesinde bulgular iç faktörlerin dış politika yapımında daha etken görülmesine rağmen çalışmada kullanılan iki değişkenin birbiriyle belirgin bir ilişkisi olduğunu ortaya konulmaktadır. Sonuçta, Gambiya dış politikasının ikili ve çok taraflı ilişkiler ulusal çıkarı koruma ve ileriye taşıma amacıyla düşünülmüş, tasarlanmış ve uygulanmış olduğu vurgulanmaktadır. Dış politika yapımının ülke gelenekleri ve ulusal hedefler, amaçlar ve ülkenin uluslararası algısını yansıttığı görülmektedir. Küçük devletlerin varlığı ve güç yetersizlikleri uluslararası toplumun kurallar ve prensipler temelinde oluşturduğu düzeni sürdürme yükümlülüğü ve taahhüdünü hatırlatması açısından önem arz etmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Gambiya, dış politika, küçük devletler, iç faktörler, dış faktörler

Dedication

This thesis is wholeheartedly dedicated to my beloved parents, who have always been my source of inspiration, who continually provide their moral, spiritual, and emotional support to me at all times. This work is also dedicated to my beloved spouse, for providing me with inspiration, love, and understanding, not to mention my beautiful children, who are my greatest source of joy and strength. My family has always been quite supportive of me. I'll be eternally grateful for everything they've done for me.

I also dedicate this thesis to my late brother and best friend Mr. Baboucarr Cham who have been a constant source of support and encouragement throughout the process. He passed away on September 28, 2021. May his soul rest in Peace.

To my late guidance and dear Uncle Jali Musa Badjie, (RIP) and his spouse Mama Saidy, they did not only raise and nurture me during my high school education, but they have been a source of motivation and strength during moments of despair and discouragement. Incidentally, he met his demise on July 11th, 2021. I cannot thank them enough, and they will always have my respect and love.

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List of Abbreviations

AFPRC:	Armed Forces Provisional Ruling Council
APRC:	Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation and Construction
ECOWAS:	Economic Community of West African States
AU:	African Union
UN:	United Nations
ICC:	International Criminal Court
OIC:	Organization of Islamic Cooperation
WTO:	World Trade Organization
EU:	European Union
UK:	United Kingdom
BBC:	British Broadcasting Corporation
CoN:	Commonwealth of Nations
DAC:	Development Assistance Committee
FPA:	Foreign Policy Analysis
IR:	International Relations
ODA:	Official Development Assistance
USA:	United States of America
IGP:	Inspector General of Police
NA:	National Assembly
MoFA:	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
FP:	Foreign Policy
UNSC:	United Nations Security Council
UN:	United Nations

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Given the proliferation of small states in our contemporary world, it can easily be observed that little or no attention has been paid to its placement in international relations' scholarship when compared with the more emphasis on great powers. Many of which emerged after post-war decolonization; small states make up a significant part of the global system. Even though small states have limited powers and capabilities, their effects on the international system are not much impactful as the major actors. Each small state has the same voting power in international organizations as the big power or big states, making them an influential significant force in foreign affairs. Several small states have strategic qualities, such as favorable geopolitical location as in the case of The Gambia, proximity to other larger markets, abundance in specific resources, or regional 'hub' positioning, which endow them with international significance disproportionate to their size. Hence, understanding the factors that influence their foreign policy, an area that hasn't gotten nearly as much coverage as it deserves, will help shed more light on the full scope of microstate foreign policy. The Gambia, a country mentioned in the literature as a small state, has not gained increasing prominence in the international relations literature, so it is used as a case study in this study. Such states are commonly known as 'price-takers'. Price takers is used in international relations to refer to small states with inadequate capacity to shape and reshape rules, processes, norms, and results defined by great powers and or major actors commonly known as 'price-makers'.

The Gambia is the smallest country in mainland Africa with about 1.9 million inhabitants. It occupies 11,360 square kilometers and shares a border with Senegal in all areas except the Atlantic Ocean (Touray, 2000). The country's boundary with Senegal is about 600 kilometers long and largely permeable. There is no natural division between the two countries and no physical landmark to distinguish the two countries from each other (Jeng, 2018). In fact, the two sister countries i.e. The Gambia and Senegal share virtually everything in common, except colonial history and official language. Until 2016, The Gambia has two Republics (the First Republic 1970 - 1994 and the Second Republic 1996 – to date). It is important to note that from July 1994 to September 1996, The Gambia was under a transitional period under a military rule headed by Lieutenant Yahya A.J.J. Jammeh of the Armed

Forces Provisional Ruling Council (AFPRC) party, which was dissolved in September 1996 (Elman, 1995).

As a British colony, a period of internal self-governance came into effect in 1963 as a prior process of granting The Gambia independence. Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara later became the country's first Prime Minister. The Gambia gained her independence on February 18, 1965. On April 24, 1970, Gambians approved a proposal for a Republican status in a second referendum, and Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara emerged as the first elected President of the Republic of The Gambia under a new constitution (Saine, 2009). During President Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara's term in office 1965-1994, The Gambia maintained a foreign policy of non-alignment thus retaining distinctive relations with Britain and the Western bloc and some African nations such as Senegal, Nigeria, Ghana etc. However, in July 1994, there was a military Coup d'état by a group of dissatisfied military officers led by Lt. Yahya Jammeh. The military junta toppled the government of Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara. As a result, The Gambia was sanctioned by the international community (Wiseman, 1996). Thus, this action prompted Jammeh to shift his foreign policy towards Asian countries such as Iran, Taiwan, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia. Jammeh also established diplomatic ties with Libya (which was perceived to be an enemy of the West) in November 1994, which further resulted in additional economic sanctions by major Western donors and foreign aid agencies (Hughes & Perfect, 2008).

In international relations, no country can ever become self-reliable and self-sufficient. That being the case, The Gambia needed the support of other countries to accomplish some of its foreign policy objectives. In doing so, The Gambia changed its foreign policy approach to acquire and maintain its partners with a more decisive influence. Knowing its poor economic position, it formed economic relations with the developed countries and development partners to access financial assistance, such as grants and loans, and technical assistance in the form of capacity-building training to build its human resource base (Janneh, 2014). The country's foreign policy under Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara from 1970 to 1994 focused on two main objectives: the desire to preserve territorial sovereignty and the other to attract external economic resources that have allowed his government to extract substantial financial assistance from the West (Saine, 2000). From 1965 – 1994, The Gambia was a member of numerous Organizations both at Sub-regional (ECOWAS), Regional (AU), and International

(UN, Commonwealth, ICC, OIC, and WTO) levels, to name but a few of which Jawara was a central player.

Under Jammeh's rule, The Gambia foreign policy was fundamentally inconsistent. He promoted his own agendas and guided his foreign policies based on his terms of reference over national foreign policy interests. He ruled The Gambia with an iron fist until December 1st, 2016 Presidential election when he was voted out in favor of Adama Barrow. The atmosphere under Jammeh was not conducive for specialists, technocrats, or policymakers to advise to perform their advisory role. For example, he unilaterally removed the country from the International Criminal Court (ICC) on 25 October 2016, accusing the Hague-based tribunal of "persecution and humiliation of people of color, especially Africans (The Point Newspaper, 2016). Likewise, he unilaterally removed The Gambia from the Commonwealth and made a pronouncement declaring the country as an Islamic State (BBC, 2016). Another example was the breakup of diplomatic relations with mainland China in 1995 and as he established diplomatic relations with Taiwan (Republic of China). President Jammeh's foreign policy approach also witnessed relations with countries like Cuba, Iran, and Venezuela. He even gave directives which declared many foreign diplomats of critical allies from the UK, EU, and UN as *persona non-grata*. Thus, there was a foreign policy re-orientation under Jammeh. He shifted from the Western bloc to the Eastern bloc.

In International Relations, each nation has the right and power to protect the objectives of its national interest. It is her sole responsibility to meet the needs of her people. Every country aspires to be self-sufficient in all aspects of life. Nonetheless, no country can achieve complete self-sufficiency and self-reliance. A nation's foreign policy is often made and enforced while keeping an eye on the situation in various parts of the world. As a result of this situation, every country is compelled to become actively involved in developing and maintaining international relations. Most nations establish diplomatic, economic, trade, educational, cultural, and political ties with other friendly countries and give foreign policy directives which determines its relationship with other nations. It seeks to protect its national interest in international affairs through its foreign policy. Thus, foreign policy often influences each country's behavior in International Relations and diplomacy, and The Gambia is not an exception.

Research Questions

This research seeks to answer the following research questions:

- What are the internal and external factors that influence foreign policy making in The Gambia?
- What is the nature of The Gambia Foreign Policy formulation and implementation in the period 1994-2016?
- How did the leadership and personality of former President Yahya Jammeh lead to a paradigm shift in the Gambia Foreign Policy?

Purpose and Significance of The Research

This study aims to understand what and examine the factors that generated the gradual re-orientation of The Gambia's foreign policy for the period 1994 - 2016. During this period, former President Yahya Jammeh made some of the most contentious foreign policy decisions, and this was also the time he served as head of state. The thesis further examines the internal and external factors that influenced the foreign policymaking of small states. By looking at the relationship between domestic politics and international politics in the formulation of the foreign policy of microstates, it tries to understand whether domestic factors or external factors are more compelling in influencing the foreign policy of small states. This study would contribute to the theoretical understanding of how domestic intervening variables might influence governments' foreign policy behaviors as a single explanatory case study of the foreign policy shift. So, in addition to assisting us better in understanding actors, events, and phenomena, this case study will aid in the generation of knowledge that will contribute to the arguments over the application of neoclassical realism as a theory for analyzing and explaining foreign policy decisions. In addition, the study further helps to generate knowledge that would contribute consolidating the core arguments of neoclassical realism. This study is also expected to draw the attention of International Relations theorists to cast their nets wide, especially at a time when the globalization of world politics and economy has become more ubiquitous or universal. In other words, the lack of much focus by major IR theorists on the behaviors of non-aligned, small, and developing countries is a great concern for many students of IR. This has greatly constrained research into the foreign policies of small and poor states.

Thesis Statement

As a thesis statement, this study argues that although the shift in foreign aid has made aid recipients states increasingly selective in terms of accepting politically conditioned aid, the gradual shift in The Gambia's foreign policy can best be understood by looking at former President Yahya Jammeh's perceptions and misconceptions of the West.

Background Statement of The Problem

The Cold War ended in the early 1990s after protracted subtle animosity between world powers. Such an end marked a profound change in the international power equation and dynamics; from bipolar to unipolar and equally recorded a significant shift in the issues and factors influencing states' foreign policy. Accordingly, the notion of power changed from physical forms to non-physical exactions, and consequently small states' foreign policies were impacted. These small states, in particular, lack the essentials of coercive physical power necessary to fulfill such an external role (Galal, 2019). Thus, to play far reaching roles and exact their influence on the global stage, these small states, must maximize the benefits of factors of internal determinants and non-physical dimensions of influence.

In International Relations, particularly the realist school of thought notes that countries that have influence and capabilities deserve attention and find relevance in the international politics. This practical general theory as it relates to the international system forced the classification of the small states as "observer states," because these small states gain little or no recognition in the international community.

Most of the reasons for this are the "bias" connected to great powers. Given the importance of small states around the globe, it is surprising that this important area of research has received so little systematic attention in international relations studies compared to the attention given to great power states (Gvalia et. al., 2013). The Gambia, a small country, is a strong example and an indicator of small-state studies. Apart from its history, it has not acquired much work, especially in foreign policy, just like many other micro-states. The history of The Gambia's foreign policy decision-making has yet to be chronicled and investigated empirically. Therefore, there is insufficient scholarly work for the period under consideration. There are still gaps in foreign policy studies of The Gambia as most of the works that focused on The Gambia has not explicitly explained most things that needed to be known yet.

The Gambia's foreign policy posture and capacity for foreign policy choice, actors, and interests in evolution of the nation's foreign policy and implementation in The Gambia and some of the implications of the reformation and diversification of the foreign aid landscape for the relationship between traditional donors and dictators. Prominent works on The Gambia such as *Omar Touray's The Gambia and the World; A History of the Foreign Policy of Africa's Smallest State, 1965 – 1995; Ebrima Jogomai Ceesay's The Military and "Democratization" Under The Military in The Gambia: 1994–2003; Abdoulaye Saine's The Paradox of Third-Wave Democratization in Africa: The Gambia under AFPRC-APRC Rule, 1994–2008; Jaw's Restoring Democracy in the Gambia? An Analysis of Diaspora Engagement in Gambian Politics; Minteh's Rethinking the Military and Democratization: The Gambia 1994- 2010: A hanging Foreign Policy, Sanctioned Aid and Insecurity*, among other works have failed to capture many of the areas this thesis intends to look at. These are some gaps such as the periodic gap, sectoral gap and variable gap which this research intends to fill. In order to obtain solutions, the thesis has used a neoclassical conceptual framework to determine which factor(s) are most determinant in shaping The Gambia's foreign policy directions. The research into domestic and international system and their intricate interplay yielded neoclassical realism as a result of foreign policy evolution and targeted reform. The core essence of neoclassical realism is to discover how the balance of power in the world and nations' objectives and subjective frameworks toward the international system influence their foreign policy.

The valuable lessons gleaned from the practice of international relations, is that by examining the structural instead of domestic factors, we can best account for the domestic policies of small states. The reason for this could be those small states poses internal threats to national security and hence deserve detailed research attempt. However, this work attempts to challenge this scholarly consensus by arguing that domestic factors equally matter when it comes to the foreign policy of small states. As some scholars argue, these states are more concerned about their survival, and therefore are more focused on the international fora. Some scholars also argue that domestic politics equally matters in explaining small states' international and foreign policy outcomes. Given this scholarly consensus, small state foreign policy provides a unique opportunity for those scholars who insist that domestic politics matters most in explaining international and foreign policy outcomes. Microstates foreign policy is

an exciting area of research due to its small size and limited resources. Former British diplomat Ronald Barston referred to micro-states as "ceremonial states" and question whether they pursue a foreign policy in any meaningful sense (Bojang, 2018). According to him, external relations of these states were 'administrative', and that they interact with the outside world via their embassies. There is little information on how micro-state policy decisions are made. Therefore, this is one of the problems this thesis intends to Interrogate.

Research Structure

The thesis is made of four chapters. The first chapter discusses research questions, purpose, significance of the research, thesis statement, background of the problem, and structure. The second chapter looks at the literature, research methodology and theoretical framework. Chapter three explores The Gambia as a case study for the study of small state foreign policy, while the final chapter presents a conclusion for the thesis.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review, Research Methodology and Theoretical Framework

Conceptualizing Power and Small States

The concept of power is at the heart of international relations, and most definitions of politics include it. International relationships are either political or power based. Thus, it is not surprising that power has taken center stage in discussions on international relations. Scholars argue not only about the role of power, but also about what it means to be powerful. While Morgenthau (1964) claims that the concept of political power is one of the most difficult and contentious issues in political science, Kenneth Waltz (1979) claims that power is a central concept in realist theories of international politics, and that its proper definition is still up for debate. The concept of power, according to Robert Gilpin (1981), is one of the most “troublesome” in the realm of international affairs. Gilpin (1981) argues that political scientists should be embarrassed by the number and variety of definitions. In a nutshell, when actor A influences actor B, it is said that actor A exercises power. Going by the insight of Gilpin, power is defined by actor A's having the ability to cause actor B to do something that B otherwise would not do.

Political scientists contend that there are three forms of power: Great Powers, Middle or Medium Powers, and Small Powers, with The Gambia falling under the last category. A great power is one that can confidently consider war against any other single power now in existence. A great power, according to the traditional definition, is a state that plays a significant role in international affairs concerning security-related issues. The military power, interests, general behavior, and interactions with other powers, as well as other powers' perceptions of them, distinguish the great powers from other states (Dickson, 2019).

The term "middle power" was first used in the European state system of the 15th century. The Mayor of Milan was the first person to use the concept in a similar way to how it might be used today. He classified the world into three categories. Grandissime (empires), sometimes known as great powers or superpowers, mezano (Middle Powers), and piccioli (small powers). His definition of Middle Power was simple. Middle powers, according to his definition, are states that “have sufficient

strength and authority to stand on their own without the need of help from others (Yalçın, 2012).

There is no agreed-upon definition of small power in the literature. However, three strands of research have looked at small powers: being small, small power capabilities, and the third strand suggests that a state's size is a contextual construction rather than an objective fact (Baba & Önsoy, 2016).

The Concept of Small States

The 1648 Westphalia Agreement led to the establishment and formal recognition of nation state, and consequently the small states with a consensus definition. At the initial stage, it came to light that there was no generally acceptable agreement in clearly specifying what constitutes a small country in view of the unfolding scenario of the global system that transitioned from multilateral to dual world order and then unified world order. The notion of a country being considered small can be followed through the triple graduations below. The first graduation actually started beginning with the agreement of Westphalia in 1648 to the formal agreement of Versailles in 1919, where aforementioned notion and definition of the small country was based on grading or ranking (small, medium, great, super) (Gvalia et. al., 2013). At that time, a small state was simply defined as the one that was comparatively small when compared to many other countries of the world (Abo Lila, 2017). The second graduation included the years following the agreement of Versailles and until the 1990s. Consequent upon the dissolution of former colonial vestiges across the world and the United Nations' adoption of "the principle of the prohibition of the use of force in international relations," a group of small nation states emerged on the European, American, Asian, and African continents. It was the period when several European mini-states had an active part in global affairs and worked to sustain it. Later, when the League of Nations was formed, the body also played a crucial part in international diplomatic negotiations (Clavin et. al. 2017). It was not long thereafter that the role of the League of Nations in international affairs quickly faded out, due to some factors such as the global recession, its inability to restrict the use of might in international relations, and mitigated defense competency of these small countries.

Then, notwithstanding global legal equality between eminent and obscure countries, a new trend that concentrated on ranking countries in the international order grounded on characteristics of their hard power, particularly defensive hard power that came to the fore after the second world war.

Small states at that point were referred to as satellite states. In turn, despite the realization that the stoppage of British and French imperialism led to a rapid growth in the number of small countries, the Cold War (1946-1991) failed to bring forth a unique chance for small countries to play an efficacious and impactful outward role (Shlapentokh, 2012). There was no consensus on the notion and exact characterization of what a small country should formally be at her third stage of evolution. Most small states or countries have been given several names, such as the microscopic state, the developing state, the weak state, the impoverished state, or the least developed state etc., concepts that are sometimes used interchangeably and sometimes, separately for easier clarification and for emphasis. This group of countries is the most endangered and penurious in the global community (Katzenstein, 2013).

Scholarly interest in the research and study of small states has risen tremendously in recent years, and one of the first obstacles encountered in the subject is the non-consensual definition of small states amongst stakeholders. Defining small state based on population: Vital (1971), defined a small state as one which has a population that ranges from 10 to 30 million inhabitants. Kuznets (2019) however defined the small state as “state including population from 5 to 15 million people”. In other dimension, Ayhan Kose and Eswar S. Prasad (2002), defined the small state as “a state including population from 1 to 1.5 million”. Aside definition in terms of population size, small states can also be defined in terms of area: Consequently, the United Nations described the small state as “a state of not more than 100,000 km²” (Shalaby, 2018). In the revelation from Rothstein's book *"Alliance and small Powers,"* a small state is one that "cannot gain security through its own capabilities and relies on others principally to protect its security in the event of any external threats” (Rothstein, 1968). Using the demographic approach of cluster analysis, (Charles Taylor, 1969) developed more widely acceptable definition of small states by identifying a group of 74 micro-states (including states and non-independent territories), in which the upper limit was a human inhabitant density of less than 2,928,000 people, an acreage of less than 142,888 square kilometers, and a GNP of

less than US\$1,583 million using the statistical technique of cluster analysis (Sutton, 2011). In his study of 190 countries, Croward (2002) describes small states by population clusters and uses cluster analysis to classify 79 countries as "small" based on triple benchmarks: population, acreage, and remuneration. If a country has a human inhabitant density of 2.7 million people and an acreage of 40,000 km² to 70,000 km² or less, he deems it small. Various ideas are utilized to understand the true notion of small states. According to Jeanne A.K Hey's (2003) Perception Approach, the notion of a small state is premised on the knowledge or perceptions by the people in and around it. For instance, if people in a state and other institutions therein generally perceive themselves to be small, or if other people in the states and institutions perceive that state to be small, it will be viewed as small. For some scholars, critical at arriving at an unquestionable consensus of a description of a small state, the issues of self-image and the level of state leaders' ambitions are the determining factors in aggregating all factors that help sum up this definition. Volker Krause and J. David Singer (2001) looked at and defined minor powers in relation to the size of the states; their study states that they are states in which consular and material assets are so finite that they must focus their attempts on safeguarding the territorial integrity rather than pursuing more far-reaching goals. The position and actions of Israel and North Korea are an illustration of this behavioral technique (Lenn, 2017).

The Gambia, for example, has a human resident density of 1.9 million people and a total acreage of 11,360 km². It widely considers itself as a small country and is referred to as such, by outsiders. Several earlier studies referred to it as a microstate or a mini state because the population of The Gambia was less than a million at the time of the study (Touray, 2000). Some researchers attempted to link diverse definitions to theories of International Relations by using different approaches to the study of small states' policies. Rickli (2008), for instance, he has identified four generations of small states, and some scholars were concerned with defining the term, noting that: the first creation, based on the 'realist' tradition, adopted a definition predicated on the country's demographic size or its Gross Domestic Product; the second creation linked it with the 'neoliberals,' who emphasized the role and impacts of small countries, whereas the third creation, known as the 'constructivists,' strictly stuck to an entirely different psychological definition, which held that smallness was a matter of self-perception. The fourth-generation scholars have embraced a dynamic

definition by considering smallness through its relation with power. What Jean-Marc Rickli (2008) refers to as the "fourth generation" of study on the concept of small states is more compelling, though less concrete. Small states, he claims, are as a result of "the lack of power that can be asserted," rather than geographic size or population. "Small states lack the ability to set agendas due to their lack of power" (Rickli, 2008). As a result, defining small states in relative terms has grown more prevalent. The state's ability to affect or influence outcomes in terms of policy formulation or project implementation is the clear definition of power. The neorealists use it as the measure of smallness of a country. According to realist theories, power units are materially measurable, such as the number of arms and ammunitions, planes, or soldiers, or the size of the GDP (Browning, 2006). The liberal approaches to Small States Studies is devoted to serving as a theoretical counterpoint to realism, with an emphasis on economic issues and how international institutions might help small states gain influence (Galal, 2019). The constructivist approach aims to expand our horizon of appreciation of foreign policy decision-making beyond recognizable material features of states, such as magnitude, defense capability, and economic robustness (Hopf, 1998). Social constructivism has contested the neorealist claim that small countries are reasonable and unitary players solely acting in obedience to the requirements of the global system. It is imperative to note that some scholars classify small states in terms of population, others in terms of acreage, GDP, power, etc. Thus, classifying, defining, and conceptualizing small states is a significant challenge in international relations scholarship as there is no consensus yet.

Internal and External Determinants of the Foreign Policy of Small Countries

Either internal or external variables can influence a country's foreign policy. While framing foreign policy, the foreign policy specialists pay proper recognition to these factors or determinants. Foreign policy is a set of guidelines or rules that direct, affect, and steer the relationship between two sovereign countries. Internal and external elements are considered by states while formulating foreign policy. The realist theory, however, contends that small states cannot independently formulate foreign policy philosophy and documents beyond their borders because they lack material power, particularly military might. Great nations in the world along with the commensurate powers can map out a robust, far-reaching and highly impacting

foreign policy by wielding their military might, whereas small states cannot do so because they are non-committed stakeholders in the topline of global political and diplomatic order. As a result, according to realist theory, the ideal conduct of small countries is to serve as a dependent state to eminent and powerful nations (Galal, 2019). Accordingly, there have been scanty research in the field of diplomacy on the foreign policies of small and third world states, as cognate scholars concentrated their research efforts solely on the effects of changes in the international environment on small states' external behavior, ignoring studies of small states' internal behavior. Contrary to the realist assumption, this thesis argues that small states can evolve a robust foreign policy beyond their borders and concludes that internal variables also impact small state foreign policy. This is consistent with neoclassical realism's view that both state-level and system-level variables are clearly important in understanding foreign policy of micro-state (Rose, 1998). Thus, this thesis's theoretical approach or methodological choice is neoclassical realism since it carries with it a unique organized proclivity as a tool in foreign policy analysis (Chong & Maass, 2010). Scholars such as Michael Handel (1990) have widely recognized that international variables shape small states' foreign policy. In his work *"Weak State in International System,"* Handel (1990) argues that the global benchmarks are the most significant determinant factors in small states' central bearing. It is also critical to acknowledge that domestic factors also shape the foreign policy of micro-states. Giorgi Gvalia et al.'s (2013) article on *"Thinking Outside the Bloc: Explaining the Foreign Policies of Small Governments,"* for instance, argues that ideas influence how small states make foreign policy. Elman's (1995) research on, *"The Foreign Policies of Small States: Challenging Neorealism in Its Own Backyard,"* concluded that small states' foreign policies are rooted in domestic policies. Baehr's (1975) book, titled *"Small States: A Tool for Analyses,"* likewise posited that the state's ideal size equates amount of power, not spatial occupation. The study on *"The Foreign Policy of Small States: Sweden and the Mosul Crisis, 1924-1925"* by John Rogers (2007) claimed that in small states the makers of foreign policy of a nation are influenced not only by the global order but also by domestic determinants. Hill's viewpoints are that domestic and international politics are intertwined through foreign policy (Bojang, 2018). All of these studies have demonstrated the importance of internal factors in shaping foreign policy documents. small states' foreign engagements and policy is ostensibly designed by domestic determinants such as their political system, political parties and

interest groups, in addition to their economic and natural resources. In the same vein, external factors such as the global order or power structure, international law, global institutions, and synergies are key external elements that shape a country's foreign policy. The foreign doctrine of every country is essentially regulated by two forces: global order or external drivers and internal or domestic forces. These are frequently referred to as variables that shapes foreign policy engagements and documents. Nonetheless, links between external and domestic forces has been a subject of disputed theme in diplomacy, particularly in the field of Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA). While a school of thought claimed internal politics of a nation and her overall diplomacy are two "distinct" issues, other schools of thought contend a contrary opinion and that the two are "mutually dependent" and may intertwine. This research work posits that connections actually exist between the internal politics of a nation and her overall diplomacy, since the extent of influence of both foreign policy determinants differs from state to state depending on the political environment in which these states are situated.

This study assumes that a small country is the primary actor in the formation of preferences, with a fact that it is the country that finally decides on the national choice that will be supported in international fora. These preferences are created during the preference-formation process by weighing the effects (costs and benefits) of policy alternatives on various state interests. The following section will concentrate on the internal and structural elements that influence the creation of national preferences. The impact of domestic variables comes first, followed by structural variables.

The Internal Environment

Foreign policy is articulated in the internal environment of a state, despite the obvious fact that it is concerned with the external environment. These articulations always have the inputs of many stakeholders such as political systems, interest and pressure groups, and public opinions, and other elements of the internal environment. The external environment, on the other hand, is far more essential because it is the setting that shapes the decision-making unit.

Political System of Small States

An articulation of a certified legal establishments that make up a government or nation-state is referred to as political system. The administrative environment in a country encompasses all laws, government institutions, and lobbying groups. The political context in which the head of government operates and his actions, is essential in affecting and influencing the public oriented system of a state (Hussain, 2011) . The degree of extent and potency of power in foreign policy articulation and subsequent engagements will be dictated by the political system which is operational. In the case of The Gambia, where political institutions were weak under an authoritarian or dictatorial form of government; easier and speedier foreign resolutions were possible because the decision-making power rested with an individual, who was the Head of State in this instance. This is peculiar to many non-democratic countries. In an autocratic regime, the leader serves as the sole decision maker, without any due consultations most of the time (Jeng, 2018). Decision-making in such isolated institutions frequently, if not always, results in a country's isolation in global politics. However, in a democratic state, decision making is complex and slow. Democratic leaders are always restrained by bureaucratic structures. Every state's decision-makers operate inside a bureaucratic framework and are significantly influenced by it. Bureaucracy in foreign policy reflects the requirement for proficiency and is structured to facilitate information collation, interpretation, and transmission to appropriate individuals at the right moment (Wendzel, 1981). Furthermore, citizens in a democratic order can plainly express and voice their opinions on their country's domestic and foreign policies without fear of intimidation or assaults, thus dictating the policies that their government pursues, to their own benefits. Democratic or elected leaders are easily disposed to public demands and responsive in collaboration to construct foreign policy in response to them (Bojang, 2018). This clearly demonstrates the facts that the government's institutional structure is a determinant factor in the decision-making process. Regardless of the political order operating in a country, its foreign policy, however, remains the core duties of the executive branch of government. As a result, governmental body in which executive power is vested will be the decision unit. In this way, a reference can be made to the presidential, semi-presidential, and parliamentary systems as they operate to articulate their diplomatic aspirations or blueprint.

In presidential systems like The Gambia, the executive authority is vested in the president, while in semi-presidential systems, the decision-making power is split between the president and the prime minister, and in parliamentary systems, the prime minister has the main executive power. The executive, whether it is the president, prime minister, or both, is the principal decision-making unit in terms of foreign policy. The legislature has some influence on foreign policy decision-making, primarily in the form of oversight, although it is limited in comparison to its influence on domestic politics. While parliaments have the authority to refuse, governments prefer to engage with them before making decisions (Frankel, 1963). The parliament is saddled with the responsibilities of serving as check and balances to the executives. However, the parliament as a whole is not the only one that monitors the actions and policies of executives; rather, it is more customary for the opposition to commit itself to scrutinizing the government's operations and they do so from time to time. In nondemocratic states or most micro-states where the ruling party loyalties dominate the parliament or where the opposition is weak, foreign policy decisions can be swift. However, of note is the fact that discussion on nation's foreign policy in general is constrained at this time since the "national interest" phenomena is cutting the opposition's wings (Soysal, 1964). Foreign policy enactment and execution is mainly in the hands of the executive branch, or the government's chief executive. The Minister of Foreign affairs together with the Head of State are the core determinants of the foreign policy of a small state as The Gambia. Foreign Ministers are normally chosen by the head of government from amongst citizens with whom he can collaborate with. However, in the present age, the role of foreign ministers in formulating foreign policy has been watered down, losing their role as decision makers. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, rather than decision-makers and the ministries under his or her command now implements the foreign policy.

National leaders, as the president, have to implement a two-tiered game of global and domestic politics, to meet the aspirations of their country. On the authority of Neack (2008), purposes of the head of government in whatever public system are the same: retain political power, build and maintain policy coalitions. Internal politics of a small state can however influence him, either because he may want to achieve domestic aims through foreign policy or because he doesn't want his foreign policy decisions to conflict with domestic agendas. In today's world, most political systems

need the government to agree on suggested policies rather than relying solely on the leader's whim. This can slow down foreign policy decisions, but when decisions are made solely by the leaders, they can be made quickly. Regardless, domestic politics interferes with foreign policy decisions in any democratic system.

Political Parties and Interest Groups

Political parties and interest groups working in a small state do not fall under any specific social category, such as ethnicity or economy. Rather, they enlist the help of others who have the same policy purpose (Rourke, 2007). Interest groups do not have statutory policy-making powers and must lobby those in the government who do have the authority to translate their policy preferences into tangible beneficial outcomes. The implication of this reality is that it helps the interest groups to effectively determine where and when decisions will be taken, and then maximize the best strategy for communicating effectively and lobbying with policymakers. In order to influence policy decisions, interest groups employ strategies that can be divided into two categories: "direct" and "indirect" initiatives (Thrice 1978). Indirect plan of action are attempts by an interest group to influence policy decisions through the employment of nongovernmental actors or elements in the political environment, such as public opinion. Interest groups can employ other third sector groups, the media, and public opinion to exercise indirect influence. Policymakers are the target of direct influence methods. Matter of fact, a vast number of empirical research engagements indicate the that the potentials of interest groups' to effectively dictate and direct policy decisions through direct influence techniques is weak and non-impacting (Thrice, 1978).

Political parties are a policy platform that is essential in today's political engagements. They play a vital role in helping to influence and enhance a country's representative democracy. Political parties, in a multi-party system, (especially the opposition party), along with other interest groups, may have different viewpoints and a stronger say in their countries' foreign affairs, which can eventually alter the formulation of their foreign policy. Keohane, a proponent of the neoliberal approach to international politics, emphasizes the impacting effects that some organized pressure groups could exact upon the overall diplomatic initiative of their country (Bojang, 2018). In line with this school of thought, government officials with powerful influence on the nation's foreign policy can bargain with domestic interest

groups, who will in turn use their tools to influence, such as members voting power, campaign contributions, labor strikes, to promote the election of credible official and ensure the needed electoral benefits for the people. Labor unions and business class, through their local or international level interactions also exact significant influence over policymakers and their policy outputs. Pressure groups can be regarded as a supplementary player that goes between the government and the citizen, attached to the governments' decision-making apparatus by lines of communication, according to Robert H. Thrice (1978). The presence of these interest groups cannot be ignored, as they are impactful in their mobilization of the public opinion and the government on a spectrum of issues, including business, labor, ethnicity, health, the environment, and human rights, to make a positive change and to get desired report.

Economic Development and Natural Resources

The quality and speed of economic growth of a country no doubt has a great influence and impact on its foreign policy. Many industrialized world economies, such as the United States, Russia, Germany, and France, play critical roles in world policy decisions, consequently their foreign policies are articulated to maintain and protect that stance and interest. These nations have vast assets at their disposal with which they use to develop defense capabilities and to distribute monetary benefits to other less endowed or poorer states in the form of aid and loans, with the subtle purpose of 'seeking allies' and promoting soft diplomatic powers with these states. A small country like The Gambia, has a foreign policy articulation that is relatively less impacting due to its lack of economic might, arising from its low resources and manpower (Ahmed, 2020). The Gambia's economic position, arising from her relative low resource endowment, thus explains The Gambia's diplomatic maneuver between China and Taiwan, so it can maximize the derivable benefits from its relationship with the two countries (Drammeh,2021). Therefore, it can be seen a Third World nation depends on industrialized economies to a greater extent for sundry need from development funding to technology transfers, health care supports, higher education, and even food grains to meet their request. These economic realities of The Gambia informed and influenced it to modify its foreign policy to reflect survival and dependence on foreign supports. Germany, in spite of not being a permanent member of the UN Security Council and being a non-nuclear state, played and continue to play a leadership role in European politics in lately. Germany's

prominence and its continuous strategic relevance is exclusively due to its robust economic progress. Similarly, China's and India's influence on the international arena is predicated on their economic rebound and vast assets at their disposal (Bojang, 2018). The activeness of foreign policy of a country is dictated by the natural assets accessible and being able to use it to gain strategic diplomatic mileage. Such natural asset includes solid minerals, gas, petroleum or crude oil, and water-based assets, most of which are bountiful in Africa and the Middle East. As observed, such countries, despite their modest size and enormous natural resources at their disposal, played and continue to play an important role in world affairs.

Military Capabilities

The military capability of a country plays key roles in influencing the foreign policy articulation and strategy of such country. Ability of a state to protect its territorial boundaries against military antagonism, no doubt has a long-lasting impact on the articulation of both its domestic and foreign policies. Thus, in foreign policy formulating, government with strong military strength have a larger extent of independence from foreign factors and influences. Similarly, an increase in a state's military capability may dictate a shift in its foreign policy, from peaceful to aggressive. For example, after 'nuclearization,' India took on a new dimension in its quest to achieve prestige comparable to the P-5 countries (Gupta, 1969). North Korea on the other hand is pursuing an assertive foreign strategy as a result of its possession of new weapons of mass destruction. This means that countries with strong military strength, such as the United States, China, and Russia, are very active and aggressive in seeking and enforcing their foreign policy goals in the global system, ostensibly to promote and protect their national interest. However, states with weak or limited defense capability are more inactive in the quest of their national foreign policy aspirations, and they habitually rely on ally-seeking with stronger powers and global institutions for security.

The External Environment

External elements also help analysts in deciphering foreign policy of states.

International System and Power Structure

The current state structure (the modern state system) which holds vast, medium and small powers has existed since the Treaty of Westphalia. Since the collaboration between these countries takes place on a global scale, it has a significant impact on how state actors formulate their foreign policies. A sound foreign policy remains the deepest aspirations of many nations as it prioritizes the development of amicable and cooperative relations between states, leading to desirable growth. The constantly evolving world, with its accompanying challenges thus creates the need for fresh and periodically reviewed foreign policy issues to meet up with the emerging realities. In the nineteenth centuries, several significant events that transformed the world's power structure and influenced the foreign policies of many countries across the world. Such significant events include but not limited to the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, Hitler's rise to power in Germany, the rise of Communist power in China in 1949, and the emergence of new states in Asia and Africa.

The global power bipolarization system during the 1980s and the evolving globalization package, ensured and assured those new foreign policies were appropriately formed. And eventually finetuned to meet the emerging realities (Bojang, 2018).

International Organizations

Some global organizations had a significant role in determining or influencing the foreign policy of a nation. Such global organizations include the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank. Among proponents of international relations, who focused on the role of global organizations in the formulation of states' foreign policies, they found a point of disagreement in such roles. In global politics, the realist point of view has typically less faith in the efficiency of global organizations (Grieco, 1988). Global institutions, for example, according to Mearsheimer (1994), are simply a reflection of the distribution of power in the world. Although they are based on the major powers' self-interested projections, and they have minor influence or no independent impact on state action or its foreign policy. This is known as a "bottom-up" perspective, which focuses on how states' foreign policy affect international organizations. Constructivist and liberal institutionalists, in contrast, took a 'top-down' approach, emphasizing how global

organizations influence states' foreign affairs (Katzstein, 1998). The global organizations, as an active participant, help in state modification and interaction on a global scale.

Some countries of the world yield mileage of their jurisdiction to the global organizations, hence state's foreign policies are frequently inspired by its membership at all levels. The organization's constitution will guide the states' operations, the nature of the institution will undoubtedly influence member states' policies. The impact of global organizations in the evolution of a robust foreign policy is substantial on account of the growing power of global society and international law.

International Law and Treaties

International law, made up of interstate treaties and agreements, refers to a collection of norms and set of rules that govern or at times restrict state-to-state relations. Cali (2010) described it this way: "a system of rules created deliberately and explicitly by states...where states have expressly willed to be bound by the rules. In this approach, international law dictates the foreign policies of a nation and set out to integrate all aspirations in foreign policy by providing a legal structure within which states can relate with each other.

The consequences or effects of international law on each nation and its external relations, had always been the source of disagreement by International Relations theorists (Sotong, 2014). International law, according to adherents of realism, has little or no independent impact on foreign policy. In these aspects, Henkin (1979) posits that maintaining international order so that nations can pursue national aspirations is one of the chief goals of foreign policy. As a result, the realist view asserts that small country has a tendency to prioritize their national interests over legal norms when fundamental interests are threatened. International law, as a tool to support states' national interests, is "policy oriented," according to realist scholars (Henkin, 1979). Some states deliberately violate International Law to defend their national security, knowing that they will have to justify and legitimize their actions afterwards, they have been doing so in the present as done in the past. Liberal institutionalists, on the other hand, believe that international law can be quite essential. They underscore the fact that when states sign treaties or accords, it becomes classier to do things that the law prohibits and less costly to do things that the statute allows. International law, according to the positivist viewpoint, is a set of

laws that controls and guide state behavior. According to Armstrong (2012), states comply with international law because they feel they have a moral authority to do so. Due to the fact that states are legally bound by customary law and decide to have legally binding responsibilities through treaties, the constructivist approach to international law in foreign policy can illustrate the fact that international law regulates states behavior, gives them a direction for their behavior, and allows them to enter into dealings with each other (thus limiting their freedom of action). States recognize that they must function within a define legal and ethical framework and that, as Brown and Ainley (2009) put it, they must act within a system that limits their interactions. The existence of international law and norms restricts the ability of states in the system to maneuver events to their own advantages. However, it is important to note that international law lacks the much-needed bites due to the basic decentralization of legislative, judicial, and executive functions in the concerned states. To begin with, each nation is its own lawgiver in global matters. Second, a nation can act as its own judge and interpret the law to suit its own needs. Lastly, in international relations, a country is its own sheriff, responsible for enforcing its own laws or organizing a sympathetic posse (Hussain, 2011). Nonetheless, liberal institutionalist approach contends that treaties “tie the hands of present and upcoming leaders by increasing the cost of renegeing.” States are obligated to follow international norms if they do not want to be sanctioned or be subjected to international activists' "naming and shaming" (i.e., human rights activists) (Yasuaki, 2003). It can thus be agreed upon that international law constrains states' foreign policies, since sanctions, are used to subdue state to comply with its international responsibilities (Egede & Sutch, 2013). However, not in all situations states are willing to obey international law to the letter without resistance. In summary, international law establishes the standing, rights, responsibilities, of nations in international relations. Consequently, it is the obligation of each state to adhere to the rules, with dire repercussions if they are violated.

Strategic Relevance

The foreign policy articulation of small states is dictated by strategic relevance, a function of its vulnerability. Strategic relevance here, refers to a state's achievement of a manifest presence in the global system among bigger states, above its predetermined position. Its actions or inactions would have little effects on the

global political order. Small states, with their distinct goal in terms of strategic importance have a predetermined position of living below the global attention way in, which imposes a structural limitation on their foreign policy choices (Egede & Sutch, 2013) . Lacking a vital international footprint confers a structural vulnerability in terms of the effects that small state foreign policy can have on other states – it thus puts small states at a disadvantage in their capability to use diplomatic initiative to seek or attain foreign policy goals, because small states are less able to occasion behavioral change from other states. They have risen in significance in international relations literature, particularly from the conclusion of the Cold War, as a consequent of their proliferation. They are, however, frequently thought to be 'price-takers,' i.e., they are forced to accept the international diplomatic and public structure as it is, and they are subject to system-wide dictates since they lack the power to change the system on their own. Keohane's (1969) work on 'system-ineffectual' summarizes this condition. The bulk of small states continue to function below the sphere of influence of international attention, with little effect on the international system (Payne, 2004). As a result, the literature on institutional choice in international relations has generally paid little notice to the strategic impact and diplomatic choices of small states, given the fact that they are thought to have minimal influence in world politics. However, heritage outline in international institutions such as the United Nations (UN) has shown that small states can play a bigger and more influential role than it was previously thought. Small states, with their collaboration with and leadership of pressure groups like the Global Governance Group (3G) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), have affected the agenda and behavior of major governments through series of negotiation (Súilleabháin, 2013). Increasing their worldwide footprint can thus be a vital strategy for it to protect their national agenda or interest in international affairs. Despite the fact that small states are typically stereotyped as "price takers" in the international political and diplomatic system, the multifaceted order provides them with diplomatic advantages to engage techniques like specialized diplomacy and partnership building to frontally address their weaknesses for better. These techniques may confer strategic relevance on the state, allowing it to alter its structural environment to strengthen multilateral standard. The Gambia, for instance, despite its smallness, took part in many international negotiations and conflict resolution negotiations. For example, Jammeh mediated in the conflict of Bissau during the civil war between former President Nino Viera and

Army General Ansumana Manneh. Singer (1972) discovered that some small states have "attractive power" in terms of their relevance to other countries, which can be engaged to achieve desired foreign policy objectives. The bipolar world order arising from the Cold War era clearly revealed how tiny states' strategic relevance, a result of the race for alliances, might provide them with additional foreign policy alternatives and security (Rothstein, 1968). Likewise, under the current multilateral order, where power hierarchies still exist, the relevance of selected small states to the interests of great world powers in several subject areas could impact the success of diplomatic master plan used by those powers. In these aspects, a small state's relevance entails a robust presence in international politics, where its foreign policy activities can have far-reaching and more impacting consequences in the structural environment or through the reactions of other states. Remarkably, a small state's strategic importance in the multidimensional order essentially appeals to acknowledgement by major world powers. This acknowledges the structural condition that a small state cannot seek to impact system-wide dynamics on its own authority, and instead must rely on its stability to influence key "veto" actors in each issue area. Other actors regard the state as a valuable contribution in a specific field or as an important intersection in the global governance dynamism on a particular issue, indicating interaction with the international community beyond its structurally given position. The parlance of a small state "punching above its weight" is commonly used to describe this type of peer acknowledgement of a small state's importance to the global community (Tommy, 2015). The strategic importance and relevance of a small country to an eminent world power may build their resilience to resist any forms of coercion and this realization affects its diplomatic behavior during negotiations. During the 1971 stalemate between Malta and the United Kingdom, Maltese Prime Minister Dom Mintoff had threatened to evict British troops and hand over air and naval facilities to the Soviet Union— he was successful in securing a 300 percent increase in development assistance from the United Kingdom, an extension of his initial demand to share in Marshall Plan funds (Baldacchino, 2009). Several of them have also achieved distinction as sources of specialized proficiency from big governments, such as Singapore's qualitative governance practices and Norway and Finland's conflict mediation expertise. Small states' growing influence has been recognized by international institutions, as UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan remarked in a 1998 speech in Uruguay, citing those small states play "central and innovative" duties in a

variety of areas of interests (Annan, 1998). As a result, some small states were able to exercise minimal impact on their immediate structural environment, particularly inside multilateral organizations, according to the international relations literature. Small state power was first conceptualized as unconventional and constrained by institutionalized multilateral arrangements in early studies (Chong & Maass, 2010). Small states can use niche diplomacy and partnership building to reinforce their diplomatic resilience and position in the global system because of the characteristics of the multilateral world order. Small states can use deliberate game plans to gain strategic relevance in the eyes of major world powers. For instance, Malta deliberately worked out its entry into the EU with this same strategic relevance in mind, particularly in light of its status in the Mediterranean as a reassuring links between Europe and North Africa, while maintaining its jurisdiction through neutrality (Chong & Maass, 2010). This instance demonstrates how small states can have planned value of themselves, owing to their geographical location or historical ties to major powers. Small states do, in fact, play a significant role in multilateral diplomacy. They are more likely to advocate for and support international law, the United Nations, and the importance of collaboration in all areas. Recognizing the fact that no single nation, regardless of its size or power, and affiliations to world power, can ever address all of the world's issues, and strengthens international cooperation.

Research Methodology

This section explains the methodological choice made while researching on this thesis. This part covers case selection, research design and justification, as well as data collection methods, data analysis, validity and reliability, ethical considerations in the research, and limitations and challenges. It thus clarifies the approach and methodology to be used in the research.

Case Selection and the Place of the case study within the Literature – The Gambia

Studying The Gambia was primarily inspired by a scarcity of research on its foreign policy, particularly between 1994 and 2016. The use of The Gambia as a case study is thus motivated by a lack of sufficient research. The Gambia's foreign policy has gotten little attention in the literature since it is a Third World country, and analysts are uninterested in it. The aim of this study is to add to the work of earlier

scholars on the topic and to help fill in information gaps in Gambia's foreign policy. The Gambia as a micro-state faces daunting numerous social, economic, and political challenges, and it is worthwhile to address the country's developmental setbacks. As a consequence, the value of this study cannot be overstated. Second, despite being a small and underdeveloped country, it made a lot of controversial and assertive foreign policy decisions. Jammeh reigned with an iron fist in the West African state, gaining four executive mandates (1996, 2001, 2006, and 2011) and enjoying a free pass on the country's foreign policy terrain.

The Gambia's primary aid donor is the European Union (EU); nonetheless, Jammeh has grown increasingly belligerent over time. His authoritarian personality made him a target for critics, who have chastised him for his human rights abuse. Senegal's relations with The Gambia deteriorated further as Dakar continued to house Gambian dissidents. The EU reform arrived when the foreign aid field was flooded with new participants with varying perspectives. This opened up a slew of possibilities for aid recipients. This occurred at a time when China's material power is on the rise. Therefore, The Gambia became an interesting case study. Moreover, because small states have been analyzed through realist and liberalist perspectives, they have primarily been considered spectators or taken action upon by great world powers in the international system. Although there have been recent studies on small states, most of them have concentrated on small, wealthy Scandinavian or Gulf states. Consequently, those analyses do not include the foreign policies of small, developing countries. This is evident in The Gambia's foreign policy, which receives little attention, particularly when viewed through the lens of neoclassical realism. Thus, there is a significant knowledge gap in the literature on The Gambia's foreign policy, especially the role of leadership perception, the country's foreign posture and capability for foreign policy choice, interests and actors, and the country's foreign policy terrain. The sole aim of this study is to fill the knowledge gap in the literature on The Gambia's foreign policy by investigating it from various neoclassical realism perspectives.

Given the historical and political context, Gambia's foreign policy throughout the period under consideration is unique. No one could have predicted former President Yahya Jammeh's foreign policy decisions since he was so controversial. Furthermore, in contrast to Gambia's early pro-Western foreign policy, The Gambia eventually moved its focus to the Gulf and the Eastern bloc. As a result, there was a

shift in foreign policy, and it is always vital to investigate the circumstances that led to that shift. The Gambia is an important case study in how personality can greatly influence the evolution of a foreign policy formulation and decision-making. I have been able to use the supreme intervening variable Rose (1998) presented, the perception of decision-makers through which systemic pressure is filtered. My extensive understanding of the country was also a driving factor: I have spent 21 years in the military service and retired as a Brigadier and then into the diplomatic service. This opportunity allows me to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the issues under study. It thus gave me the much-needed tools to know where and how to get my data, allowing me to play the role of what Yin (2014) refers to as a "good detective". Nonetheless, I am aware of my role as a researcher. Furthermore, when conducting research to observe a phenomenon, it is done in light of the major questions that the researcher is attempting to answer. Therefore, data that is responsive to the questions is required to answer the research questions. It is based on this background that The Gambia is chosen as the case study.

In terms of the literature, a few scholars with expertise in Gambian politics have endeavored to explain Jammeh's politicking. Recent studies, such as Lenn's (2017), have looked at constructivist standpoints on The Gambia's foreign policy by probing how non-material forces such as beliefs, norms, identity, and culture influence people's behavior. It further aims to examine "whether states challenge norms and seek to bring new ones to organizations they deal with" (Lenn, 2017). Drammeh (2021) has looked at the domestic elements that influenced Jammeh's foreign policy by looking at the crucial home variables. Jeng (2018) has investigated what state- and system-level factors may have influenced Gambia's gradual shift in foreign policy between 2006 and 2016, as well as the implications of the foreign aid landscape's reformation and diversification for the relationship between traditional donors and authoritarian states. Touray, (2000) provides both historical and theoretical grounds for a microstate like Gambia's foreign policy. Some have also looked at how Jammeh's rule was hampered by pockets of rebellion. Jaw (2017) focuses on the Gambian Diaspora - a loosely organized political group formed largely primarily of exiled Gambians – and their involvement in restoring democracy in the country. Saine, (2009) also looked at how Jammeh's security doctrine let him to participate in international affairs with only modest bilateral ties. Saine's (2009) research focuses on domestic political variables that contribute to the country's

poverty and economic problems, with a particular focus on understanding the absence of political liberalization and its consequences on poverty alleviation. As Jeng (2018) argues, while Saine has successfully argued that the success of foreign financial assistance is determined by recipient-states' ability to distribute democracy, he has fallen short of describing the effects of China's ascent and Qatar's financial clout on Gambia's foreign policy. Minteh (2010) has become another influential academic figure in Gambian politics, in addition to his work on the worldwide shift in the balance of power, in which he contends that the movement resulted in multilateralism rather than multipolarity. His research has concentrated on the effects of economic sanctions on West Africa, arguing that sanctions led to the emergence of new state actors in the region. He went on to describe how the existence of such individuals is influencing the foreign policy of West African states, including The Gambia, but he did not focus on The Gambia specifically. B.S Bojang (2018) emphasizes the domestic factors that shaped The Gambia's foreign policy during the First and Second republics. He has, however, failed to capture the structural determinants of Jammeh's foreign policy, such as the influx of financial aid as a foreign policy instrument. Bojang (2018) has also not explored Jammeh's policy reorientation toward China and the Gulf State of Qatar. While Janneh (2017) examines the domestic factors that influenced The Gambia's foreign policy by examining all the elements of change and continuity in The Gambia's foreign policy between 1975 and 2005, Lere Amusan (2018) analyzes The Gambia's defensive foreign policy towards the CoN.

Minteh and Saine, like other scholars, have not looked at Gambia's foreign policy posture and capacity, regional threats, and other important driving factors that shaped the country's foreign policy. This study examines both the internal and external factors that determines the foreign policymaking of small states, the relationship between domestic politics and international politics in the formulation of the foreign policy of small states. It examines whether local home factors were more compelling in influencing the foreign policy of microstates or external factors, Jammeh's aggressive and uncooperative foreign policy towards the West, and the implications of the reformation and diversification of the foreign aid landscape relationship between traditional donors and dictators.

Research Design and Justification

This is an isolated case study of a microstate foreign policy and its components. Since the primary aim is to explain rather than just describe the events under investigation, an explanatory case study is appropriate. Therefore, an empirical approach has been employed to answer the research questions posed in this work. Two basic questions, as argued by Christopher Lamont (2015), were considered when selecting case studies: To begin, one must ask what one hopes to learn from the case, as well as why this case rather than others. In place of other methods of inquiry in the social sciences, the thesis aims to use an explanatory single-case analysis to explain both the internal and external factors that influence the making of the foreign policy of small-state like The Gambia. In order to reasonably answer the research questions well and convincingly, the thesis has taken a qualitative and empirical single case approach to obtain a deeper understanding of the issues under study. Scholars have argued that the use of case studies in executing a project of this sort, can lead to reassuring explanations and that, despite their contested meaning, they can help us complete and comprehend larger cases if enough evidence is presented (Lamont, 2015).

This method appeals to this study since it allows possibility to learn more about The Gambia's foreign policy. The 'how' and 'why' questions raised in this study justified the method employed. Explanatory case study becomes the appropriate approach when the questions of 'how' and 'why' are posed in a study, according to Yin (2014), "since such questions deal with operational links needing to be tracked over time, rather than basic frequencies or incidence. "The essence of a Case Study, the central tendency among all forms of case studies," argues Scram Kakachia & Minesashvili (2015), is that it aims to give clearer understanding to a decision or group of decisions: why they were taken, how they were implemented, and with what result. Case study is defined by Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett (2005) as "a well-defined aspect of a historical episode that the investigator selects for analysis, rather than the historical event itself. This is similar to Robert K. Yin's (2014) definition: "A Case Study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident". While case studies and histories sometimes overlap, Yin (2014) argues that, "the case study's distinctive strength is its ability to deal with a whole range of evidence-

documents, artifacts, interviews, and observations-beyond what could be accessible in a traditional historical study. Despite Orttung & Overland's (2011) argument that case studies leave little possibility for generalization, researchers have noticed that case studies are better at answering specific questions in order to assist us get a comprehensive and detailed understanding of how certain processes work. When a case study is carefully constructed, according to Lamont (2015), it can give insights that assist in comprehending and explaining IR more broadly, as well as the world around us in general. Since the aim of this research was to employ neoclassical realism to explain our variables, the study has conducted two levels of analysis: system-level and state-level or unit-level. States remain the most politically relevant actors in international politics; thus, the system as a level of study is essentially state-centric (Kropatcheva, 2012). As Singer (1961) points out, the systemic level of analysis allows us to describe a spectacle whereas the state-level analysis helps us to explain it. Unlike classical realism, which ignores the state-level, neoclassical realism employs both levels of analysis, allowing us to connect our chosen theory to our levels of analysis in this study.

Methods of Data Collection

This research has employed qualitative system Secondary data is the primary data source for this study because it depends primarily on a theoretical approach. From 1994 to 2016, data was gathered from publications, policy documents, speeches, and remarks on The Gambia's foreign policy. Documentations, online media publications such as newspaper articles and other related websites, scholarly articles and books have also been used. This study conducted semi-structured interviews via Skype and email with staff members of the Foreign Affairs Ministry in The Gambia as participants with a view to gauge how domestic and international factors have impacted The Gambia's foreign policymaking from 1994 to 2016. Interviews were also conducted with prominent political scientists, researchers, diplomats, and experts. First, we sent a separate email to each of my interviewees, with no questions about the phenomenon, introducing my subject and explaining the intent of the interview and how the data will be used. Participants were briefed on the research objectives and how the data will be engaged to explain the internal and external factors towards foreign policymaking in The Gambia. Participants' confidentiality was guaranteed, and their personal details were protected. Participants were subjected to different

questions as the need arose. In addition to the interviews, the researcher also consulted and reviewed journals, academic literature, and books relevant to the study.

Official statements and speeches from Jammeh's government, development partners, and the international community were reviewed for this study. National and international mainstream news outlets were surveyed. However, few national news outlets have been selected because the researcher is aware of their political leanings. Since the press has been a target of Jammeh's wrath, depending too much on them would have jeopardized the validity of the study due to the reductive assumption that any action Jammeh made was driven by his own self-aggrandizement.

Direct observations are one of the methods that has shown to be highly useful in my data collection. These were not official observations in the sense that no instruments were created as part of the case study process; rather, they were observations made during my time in the diplomatic services and government. The researcher worked under Jammeh in numerous positions and hence had a deep understanding of the subject under study.

Data Analysis

This work has been periodized between 1994 to 2016. Using qualitative analysis, both domestic and systemic elements in The Gambia's foreign policy were analyzed throughout this time period. It is noteworthy to mention that, because the study spans a specified time period, periodizing has aided in both data gathering and analysis. The first qualitative analysis examined small-state foreign policy via a theoretical perspective. The second section of the analysis looks at the key domestic factors that affected The Gambia's foreign policy during Jammeh's presidency, including domestic political institutions and Jammeh's perceptions, misconceptions, and image. The third part examines the shift in foreign aid paradigm. By closely studying The Gambia's relations with Beijing and Taipei, as well as its progressive shift towards the Gulf States, this paper looks at economics as a statecraft of foreign policy and the role of foreign aid in shaping The Gambia's foreign policy behavior. In this regard, it's worth noting that the analysis has helped to understand how these new aid donors influenced The Gambia's foreign policy, which is the dependent variable of the study.

Validity and Reliability

It is crucial to emphasize that determining the credibility and applicability of qualitative research is not an easy task. It entails determining the validity and reliability of data. Validity refers to “measuring” what is being examined or studied, whereas “reliability” refers to the strength of the methods used (Berg, 2001). Earl Babbie (2011) noted that the two are extremely positivist, as argued in Lenn's (2017) work, and that social scientists sometimes exchange validity with the word credibility, while reliability is substituted with applicability. Since social research methods or approaches cannot be measured or controlled in the same way as it would in the physical or natural sciences, social scientists prefer to concentrate on the study's credibility and applicability rather than discussing scientific constructs (Babbie, 2011). Because this is a case study of a specific phenomenon, including the state's foreign policy and actors' objectives and preferences, the researcher triangulated the interview data by searching different sources and comparing what interviewees said to what they said or wrote in earlier interviews or news stories. Furthermore, after the interviews were completed successfully, the respondents were provided with follow-up questions to clear up any lingering doubts or ambiguities. This provided them the opportunity to include whatever they wanted. Through, a process known as cross-referencing, this was done to confirm the accuracy and authenticity of the data acquired. The reiteration tests were passed on all of the data utilized in this study. This has helped to avoid some of the most common problems in case studies.

The appropriateness of the research topic and strategy, as well as the data collection and analysis, can all be used to assess the research's credibility. Because the papers under consideration are public, the possibility of purposeful misquoting is eliminated. In addition, a detailed explanation of the research design has been provided so that it can be scrutinized by anyone who is interested. To determine the transferability of this study, a detailed historical record of The Gambia, enough information about the study setting/context, and sufficient information about the research design was provided. Thus, there is enough information for anyone to examine the study's transferability. The question of fairness has also been addressed, as the researcher was aware of his function and there is no reason to portray the facts in an unjust manner. In addition, for the sake of fairness, direct quotations were used in reference to the interviews. The research's ontological integrity is likewise

preserved. There is a theoretical guide to analyzing the data and reporting the outcomes along the procedure. In terms of catalytic and tactical validity, it should be highlighted that the chief goal of this study is to offer an improved information of The Gambia's foreign policy.

Ethical Considerations in the Research

This research has considered ethical behavior to avoid causing harm to anyone who agreed to be named and quoted during the interviews. The researcher ensured that all materials created from these interviews were archived because the interviews were conducted via an email exchange and Skype. These materials serve as proof that the interviews were done and that the respondents were not misquoted or paraphrased incorrectly. The respondents were told what the study was about and what it meant to them. They were also asked if they saw any risks in partaking and if they favored anonymity. All of the interviewees gave their informed approval to be cited and quoted. All information acquired from respondents is kept anonymous by the researcher, which offers respondents some confidence in responding questions honestly. Since interviews were done online, there was no direct contact between the researcher and the interviewees. Furthermore, the data treated were all public papers, so there was no breach of confidentiality. According to the researcher, the research has so far been conducted in accordance with general academic research ethics. In addition, the analysis first sought ethical approval to use the existing procedures. This is done to make sure that the analysis tools meet the academic criteria. Furthermore, the findings of this study are treated with strict confidentiality in order to maintain professional standards.

Limitation and Challenges

Even though this study was unable to address other Gulf countries such as Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates in terms of the paradigm change in foreign aid, it recognizes their importance in The Gambia's foreign policymaking and expects that future research will address this. The lack of a deeper study of Jammeh's impacts on systemic actors limits this paper's ability to grasp why he has been isolated by the West. Furthermore, the impacts of Jammeh's hostility and provocative decisions could not be felt or evaluated due to the system's huge size. Jammeh's fiery comments towards the West and his attitude on the topic of homosexuality, for

example, are difficult to measure. Furthermore, because it is not a top recipient of financial aid compared to other developing nations, The Gambia cannot be used as a standard for assessing the effects of foreign aid diversification on aid-receiving countries. As a result, this study acknowledges its limitations and advocates for a multiple case study or a comparative interstate case study in which different countries are considered. The usage of e-mail interviews is another limitation in this research. Despite the fact that email interviews are one of the most practical means of removing the limits connected with a lack of time and the nature of geographical closeness, some scholars have warned about the risks of doing so. One such issue is the inability to detect and interpret tone, hesitancy, and silence, among other things (Hawkins, 2018). The researcher was able to conduct Skype interviews with some of the interviewees to mitigate this risk. This allowed the interviewees to not only clear certain ambiguities, but also to pose questions that they may not have been prepared to answer. Furthermore, the absence of sufficient data on the topic under investigation is a constraint.

Theoretical Framework

This thesis uses neoclassical realism as an analytical framework in the study of The Gambia's foreign policy. This is done with a consideration of the assumptions of other international relations theories such as realism, liberalism and constructivism on the foreign policy of micro-states. The assumptions of these theories are unable to explain the foreign policy of small states, particularly weak powers. These small states lack the element of physical power required to play an effective role in world politics.

Neo-Classical Realism in studying The Gambia's Foreign Policy

Gideon Rose (1998) had coined the term "neoclassical realism" in a 1998 article titled; *Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy*. This theory proposes a new way of explaining foreign policy behaviour by incorporating domestic and individual levels with systemic factors for foreign policy analysis. Thus, it intends to update classical and neorealist approaches. Neoclassical realism, unlike classical realism, recognizes the importance of both state-level and system-level variables in understanding foreign policy. Gideon Rose (1998) argues that

the scope and ambition of a country's foreign policy is driven first and foremost by its place in the international system and specifically by its relative material power capabilities. However, that the impact of such power capabilities on foreign policy is indirect and complex, because systemic pressures must be translated through intervening variables at the unit level.

According to neoclassical realism, a state's foreign policy behaviour is the dependent variable, and the relative distribution of capabilities is the independent variable (systemic factors). However, since systemic pressures must be translated at the unit level through intervening variables, states' domestic politics is the intervening variable (Lobell et. al., 2009). Neoclassical realists argue that state's relative capacity does not automatically translate into an exact foreign policy behavior. It is mediated by political leaders and elites, whose impression and appreciation of power may be more important than the state's actual power. Therefore, domestic institutional structure, in addition to external threats and opportunities, constraint foreign policymakers (Rose, 1998). For this study, neoclassical realism is the most relevant theoretical approach, which could probably bring the most meaningful contribution to The Gambia foreign policy behavior from 1994-2016. This is due to the fact that neoclassical realism tries to explain the behavior of individual states by introducing certain domestic intervening variables (Rose, 1998). "A good account of a nation's foreign policy should encompass systemic, domestic and other variables," Zakaria (1992) argues. It is worth noting that an in-depth analysis is required to comprehend the relationship between relative power and the foreign policy of a state, which must take both individual and domestic variables into account. When analyzing The Gambia foreign policy, it's critical to capture those individual and domestic factors because they are the most compelling factors. One can do this with the use of neoclassical realism since it highlights the importance of both independent and intervening variables, therefore providing a distinct methodology for analyzing foreign policy behavior, as Rose (1998) asserts.

Rose (1998) maintains that as states' material capacity grows, they will be more likely to set more ambitious foreign policy goals. All states want to have more influence in world affairs, and they can do so based on their material resources (Rose, 1998). Thus, China's rising imprint in The Gambia may be seen in relation to its growing material power resource, which is assisting Beijing in shaping its foreign policy aspirations and magnitude. This theory further evaluates perceptions and threat assessments as the first intervening variable in foreign policy behaviour (Taliaferro et.

al., 2009). The ability of states to take out and direct national power into foreign policy initiative is the second intervening variable (Rose, 1998). Furthermore, according to Rose and Schweller (1998), neoclassical realism brings the statesman back in, which structural realism ignores. Zakaria (1998) also believes that statesmen (politicians), not nations, are the determinants of foreign policy action. Since neoclassical realism incorporates political leaders and domestic factors into foreign policy analysis, this type of micro level analysis makes a valuable contribution and provides a useful model for studying The Gambia foreign policy, where personality or political leadership has become a critical factor in decision-making. This theory includes basic assumptions of realism, and as a state-centric theory, it improves realism's explanatory power by establishing auxiliary hypotheses without sacrificing realism's insights (Yilmaz, 2015). Second, instead of being a partial foreign policy theory, neoclassical realism has ideational roots in international politics, making foreign policy analysis more meaningful and comprehensible, resulting in more substantive explanations.

Neoclassical realism is fitting to study The Gambia foreign policy because any analysis of foreign policymaking in The Gambia that failed to capture domestic variables such as perceptions, ideas and beliefs will lead to an error. This theory emphasizes the vitality of domestic political structures and its leaders' views in the formulation and implementation of foreign policy (Fiammenghi et. al., 2018). In the case of The Gambia, the application of neoclassical realism is due to its ability to integrate both levels of analysis. Rose (1998) claims that “a theory of foreign policy limited to systemic factors alone is bound to be inaccurate much of the time”. Due to their reductionism, classical realism and neo-realism have difficulty studying foreign policy. Classical realism recognizes unit level analysis while ignoring structural factors. Neo-realism examines the structural system while ignoring the unit-level. According to neo-classical realists, those theories are insufficient (Baylis, 2001). “Foreign policy is best understood as the product of a country's internal dynamics,” Rose (1998) contends. Neoclassical realists do not ignore the systemic level; they have favored the analysis of foreign policy to begin, but not end, at the systemic level. Zakaria (1992), a proponent of *Innenpolitik*, claims that “a good explanation of foreign policy should not ignore domestic politics or national culture or individual decision-makers”. Ripsman, Taliaferro and Lobell (2016) further maintain that a leader's image is vital since it impacts all other intervening variables. So, it is not by

chance that Jammeh's image, perceptions, and misconceptions about the West are one of the key concepts explored in this study. Ripsman et. al. (2016) has divided neoclassical realism into three strands in their combined work, going farther than Rose and Zakaria. Type I, Type II, and Type III are the three strands: Third strand encompasses not only the dependent variable as the first and second strands do, but also "international outcomes that the interface of these policy choices produces and the systemic structure itself" (Ripsman et. al., 2016). The ability of the third strand to include poor, small, and weaker states in neoclassical realism's theoretical debates makes it unique.

Few elements distinguish neoclassical realism from other types of realism theories. One difference is its ability to explain non-great power foreign policy behavior. Ripsman et. al. (2016) contends that the third strand of neoclassical realism, which differs from the first and second strands because of its ability to cast a wider net, provides more than merely explanations of great powers' grand strategic adjustments. This could be one of the reasons why neoclassical realism has resurfaced as a descriptive theory in the field of Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA). However, despite its strength, it has been criticized for lacking theoretical structure (Legro & Moravcsik, 1999). Rose (1998), the theory's architect, wrote in 1998 that proponents should accept criticism that the theory has too many qualifications, making it difficult to falsify. It is important to state that both independent variables (the systemic level) and domestic intervening variables (image and perception, strategic culture, institutions, and politics) played a vital function in the reorientation of the country's foreign policy (the dependent variable) in this study. So, neoclassical realism's ability to use both levels of analysis to grasp how systemic pressure is "translated through unit-level intervening variables like decision-makers' perception(s) and domestic state structures," as Rose (1998) puts it. Rose, (1998), makes it a very important theory. Considering everything that has been said so far, The Gambia's foreign policy could be meaningfully assessed from a neoclassical realist perspective.

Main Approaches to the Study of Small States Foreign Policy

It becomes imperative to begin with the theory itself before examining the fundamental assumptions of these theories. Theoretical explanations (theory) simplify complex real-world phenomena. Theories, according to King et al. (1994),

are reasoned and exact assumption about the answer to a research question. “A theory of foreign policy generates definitive predictions for dependent variable(s) that assess the behavior of specific nations”, says Elman (1996). Essentially, without theories, a researcher would have no idea where to begin a study into what causes particular foreign policy phenomena. The researcher would face enormous practical difficulties if s/he dare ventures to explain reasons why The Gambian decision-makers decided to jettison the Western bloc or align with certain countries and believe that one could develop an explanation by letting "the facts" speak for themselves due to the amount of information that one would need to collect and process. Even if this information could be collected, it would have to be processed by the analyst – a process in which working hypotheses (theories) would have to be created anyway. This is because facts do not speak for themselves. To make sense of the facts, the analyst would need to come up with working hypotheses on what motivated The Gambian decision-makers, which could then be tested against the empirical standard. Therefore, theory is critical in this situation. Theories are analytical tools that help us focus our attention on the most relevant explanatory components (variables) of a given social issues (e.g., a foreign policy action) (Beach & Pedersen, 2012). International relations theories are useful for analyzing various areas of foreign policy. The three schools of IR, realism, liberalism, and social constructivism, are discussed in this chapter.

Realist Approaches

The origin of the realist view can be linked to the Peloponnesian war. Thucydides, a classical realist, postulated that the war was a result of Athens' military capacity and desire to conquer and Sparta's fear of conquest. Hobbes' stance lies at the heart of classical realism because of his emphasis on human nature. Machiavelli and Thomas Hobbes, who claimed that international politics is the survival of the fittest, also contributed greatly to the advancement of this theory (Morgenthau, 1972). Following WWII, classical realism emerged as a theoretical tool to explain global events that idealism's theory could not explain. Neoclassical and structural realism (also referred to as neo-realism) are two recent category of realist theory. International politics, according to realist theory, is “a recurring struggle for wealth and power among independent actors in a state of anarchy” (Gilpin, 1981). According to classical realists, the desire for power is inherent in human nature, and as a result, nations are continuously attempting to increase their power potential

(Waltz, 1990). Structural realists, on the other hand, focus on recurring patterns in international politics rather than making generalizations about human nature and characteristics of statesmen (Elman, 2007). It sheds more light on to the patterns of international politics in which anarchy is the permissive condition, using the relative distribution of power as the most important variable (Taliaferro et. al., 2009). Structural realism emphasizes anarchy as a result of a lack of "hierarchical political rule," but classical realism emphasizes human nature as the basis of interactions and the source of anarchy (Taliaferro et. al., 2009).

Kenneth Waltz (1979) coined the term "structural realism" in his book titled 'The Theory of International Politics'. Rose, on the other hand, is considered to be the pioneer of neoclassical realism, which emerged in the 1990s (Rittberger, 2004). Most structural realist approaches to studying of the foreign policy of small-state behaviour involve two key assumptions. The first is that the international system is the most important level of analysis, and that leaders and their ideas are mostly inconsequential (Waltz, 1959). Second, small states are more likely to bandwagon with threatening great powers than to balance against them (Elman, 1995). The central argument of structural realism is that if one wants to understand the essential factors that deeply influence a state's foreign policy, s/he can restrict her/his attention to the system level, but to look at a state's relative place in the global system (Waltz, 1979). Structural realism, instead of interpreting human nature as classical realism did, relied on the element of anarchy in the international system to explain international politics. Thus, neorealist scholars view the international system as the primary analytical unit. Both classical realism and structural theory were not able to explain trending issues in world politics in the 1990s. The realist theory neglected the role of small powers in world politics based on the assumption that they lacked the military capacity to advance an effective foreign policy. It further contends that small states cannot implement any meaningful foreign policy on their own and thus are toothless bulldogs in world politics (Efrat & Bercovitch, 1991). Realism, it could be argued, overlooked the role that micro-states can play in global diplomacy, even if they lack hard power. All wealthy nations are not automatically powerful, and all impoverished nations are not always vulnerable. Thus, small states should be studied extensively because they have the sources of power.

Liberal Approaches

Emeric Crosah first developed liberalism in his book, “The Speech of State,” (Galal, 2019). Liberalism, according to Sutch and Elias (2007), is based on assertion about the influence of interconnectedness, the benefits of free trade, collective security, and the existence of genuine interstate harmony of interests. Liberalism believes that peace and security may be attained via the development of democratic values, interdependence, and international institutions. Liberalism discards the realist emphasis on power politics by emphasizing the part and value of international law, human rights and collaboration, fairness, and morality (Sutch & Elias, 2007). The centering of attentions on social actors such as voters, interest groups, and firms engaging in a competitive struggle to influence state foreign policy, according to Moravcsik (1997), is at the center of the liberal approach. Liberals believe that three explanatory elements are the most essential, although they argued on which one is the most important. Modern liberal thinkers' main focus is how these three distinct explanatory elements might influence rational, self-interested actors in ways that lead to more cooperative foreign policy than realism would forecast. The three factors include the importance of patterns of interdependence, international institutions, and democracy, which are inspired by Immanuel Kant's ideas in *Towards Perpetual Peace*. These three factors combine to form a ‘Kantian triangle,’ which is at the heart of the liberal research agenda (Russett et. al., 2001). Many liberals, for example, consider state foreign policy preferences as the result of rational, self-interested preferences of societal actors as aggregated through the domestic political system (Moravcsik, 1997).

In his essay, Jeremy Bentham (1789) underlined that the individual is a calculative "rational being" who can make decisions in the absence of government control. Divergent viewpoints emerge as firms compete to produce the "greatest goods" and services. Therefore, public opinion gives the finest ideas for both domestic and foreign policies for state actors (Moravcsik, 1997). This means that foreign policy is the result of the work of several individuals and groups, whose ideas create the policy's defining rules. Accordingly, foreign policy is neither solely the product of political actors' ideas, nor is it a mechanical state directed by nature or systemic factors (Moravcsik, 1997). Liberalism did not regard the state as the sole actor in global politics; individuals, lobbies, and multinational corporations all played

a role. In the liberal view, a state's foreign policy is not only determined by the state but also by other social actors (Galal, 2019).

Joseph Nye (2004) coined other concepts that are distinct from realism, such as "soft power," "smart power," and "virtual power". These terms arose from the emergence of new phenomena that realism and its theoretical developments, as well as classical liberalism, were unable to interpret due to the emergence of cultural dimensions in international relations (Nye, 2004). As a result, liberals began to debate new concepts that had become popular in the twentieth century's last decade. Soft power and smart power, for instance, are examples of "non-martial aspects of power," which could help small states become more effective in foreign policy and expand their roles in the international system. In his 1990 book *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature Of American Power*, Nye described soft power as "getting what you want by attraction, persuasion, and impact, rather than force and threat". Smart power, according to Nye (2004), "is the ability of an international actor to blend the elements of hard and soft powers to achieve foreign policy goals". Maurice East also suggested that mini-states rely on multilateral diplomacy to pursue their foreign policies due to a lack of resources and power (Stringer, 2013). Realists criticized liberalism for being too optimistic about the attainment of world peace through trade and interdependence. Political and economic stability can be attained in western countries due to a strong democratic culture. However, authoritarian governments exist in third-world countries, which are commonly small states and marred by weak democratic institutions and ethnic disputes.

Constructivist Approaches

One of the most important figures in the study of social constructivism is Alexander Wendt. Wendt (1999) contributed greatly to explaining how perception and identity can shape political decisions and foreign policy. The hypothesis supporting constructivism is that meaning is "socially constructed," and that individuals act toward objects, including other actors, based on the meanings that the objects have for them; constructivists maintain that states interests are socially driven and constructed (Hurd, 2008). Constructivism is a distinct approach in international relations that emphasizes the social, or intersubjective, dimension of world politics. It acknowledges that international relations cannot be explained solely in terms of material constraints and opportunities, nor can they be reduced to institutional

constraints and opportunities. As a result, constructivism emphasizes examining state-to-state relationships from a social dimension (Griffiths, 2007). The premise that humans are innately social creatures, and that action is motivated by both material and immaterial variables such as ideas and norms that define what is and is not acceptable behavior, is at the heart of constructivism (Beach & Pedersen, 2012). Social constructivism enriched the study of foreign policy through non-material power dimensions by bringing in new concepts such as "perceptions," "ideas," "values," "identities" etc. These concepts make us understand how political leaders make decisions and the factors that motivate those decisions, especially in small states (Gidens, 2011). Constructivists focus on how ideas and identities shape interest. Identity and interest are inextricably intertwined (Kubalkova et. al., 1998). As a result, constructivism is a social context theory that seeks to understand how actors interact internationally. Construction and actors are the two pillars of this paradigm. While construction refers to the leader's preferences, actors are the units that interact with each other. This theory argues that the "reality out there" is constructed socially through the interactions of identities and values. It tended to interpret states' foreign policies through the lens of their social context. It contends that the international system is a social system. "Shared ideas and identities" would create the structure of international blocs (Kubalkova, 2001). Ideas, according to constructivists, are individual beliefs that influence the outcomes of states' foreign policies. As a result, political leadership's beliefs and perceptions are essential factors that determine foreign policy of states (Mingst, 2011). Constructivism is the closest theory to the treatment, analysis, and interpretation of the behavior of small states' foreign policies, particularly in developing countries, according to constructivist hypotheses and arguments.

CHAPTER 3

Case Study: The Gambia as a Small State

Being a small state, The Gambia's foreign policy formulation and implementation are examined in this chapter. The idea that leaders engage in what Putnam (1988) refers to as "*two-level games*" or what Tsebelis (1990) called "*nested games*" is at the center of domestic political explanations of foreign policy. Thus, when it comes to elucidation of government foreign policy decisions, leaders are seen replicating to the demands and restrictions from both their own domestic political system and the international environment. On the one hand, because foreign policy decision-making in The Gambia as a micro-state reflects its leaders, one of the essential variables explored in this chapter is leaders' perceptions, misconceptions, and image. On the other hand, Jammeh had to deal with an external environment that he distrusted. Moreover, the paradigm shift in foreign aid, which is an important structural variable also affected the country's foreign policy. This structural variable is linked to the economic status of the Gambia. The chapter investigates the most compelling domestic factor(s) that influenced The Gambia's foreign policy decision-making during the period under review. This thesis's most important domestic intervening variables are Jammeh's image and perceptions, institutions, regime type, domestic political institutions, The Gambia's economic status, and political system. Domestic factors are more important and persuasive in The Gambia's foreign policy, according to this study.

This thesis looks at foreign aid as the most compelling systemic force or pressure to explain The Gambia's foreign policy shift on a systemic level. While there may be additional structural factors at the structural level, this is the most noticeable. It contributed to The Gambia's foreign policy reorientation by helping to understand the phenomenon under investigation. This systemic pressure (the paradigm shift in foreign aid) impacts all participants since it affects both aid-recipient countries with poor human rights records and traditional donors' ability to influence the political orientation of aid-recipient countries. The foreign aid environment is a critical external force for The Gambia. The development of independent foreign aid donors has altered the landscape of international aid in The Gambia. The Gambia's foreign policy posture, capacity for foreign policy choice, actors, and interest in foreign policy decision and implementation are also examined in this chapter.

The Gambia's Foreign Policy Posture and Capacity for Foreign Policy Choice

Arguably, there was no actual foreign policy posture for the Gambia for the period under study but more of a “*transactional*” foreign policy for immediate pecuniary gains. The Gambia under Jammeh would seek friends from the Gulf States and played Taiwan and China recognition for personal gains. Ebrima Chongan, Ex-Assistant Inspector General of The Gambia Police Force and European Criminal Justice Policy Adviser at The Home Office, United Kingdom gave credence to the above argument during our interview. He argued that “there is no real foreign policy posture but more of a transactional foreign policy” (Interview with Chongan, 2021). Drammeh (2021) further argues in his dissertation while quoting Sidi Moro Sanneh, former Gambian Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Gambian Ambassador to Senegal, that the Gambia's foreign policy under Jammeh was “transactional” because he viewed the country's foreign policy as a vehicle to be utilized to enhance his image abroad while profiting from the proceeds of doing the bidding for some countries at the United Nations. Therefore, The Gambia's foreign policy could be seen as “transactional myopia,” just as the way Joseph Nye described Trump's foreign policy. Dr. Aboubacar Senghore, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology had this to argue during our conversation:

The Gambia's foreign policy posture under Jammeh was very erratic in nature and it lacked a sense of direction. It was very difficult to ascertain what constituted ‘national and personal interests’ because of Jammeh's self-aggrandizing approach to foreign policy and his personalization of national resources. Coming from a military background coupled with his unprintable approach to diplomacy and foreign policy related matters in an economically weak and poor country, such as The Gambia Jammeh, could not have been a major actor in foreign policy and diplomacy, as he pursued what satisfied his personal interests. Thus, he was in sharp contrast to his predecessor former President, Sir Dawda Jawara (Interview with Senghore, 2021) .

Thus, it could also be posited that the Gambia's foreign policy posture chose both bilateralism and multilateralism as we had seen a surge of international aid from bilateral and multilateral partners. Bilateralism occurs when political, economic, or cultural ties between two sovereign states are conducted, whereas multilateralism occurs when relations between groups of three or more governments are organized. As one of the instruments of accomplishing the country's fundamental foreign policy objectives, The Gambia pursued multilateralism and engaged in coalition building.

Despite its little international representation, the country took a significant role in international affairs, particularly in West African and Islamic issues. As a member of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), The Gambia played a crucial role in the organization's attempts to end the Liberian Civil War and contributed troops to the community's cease-fire monitoring mission (ECOMOG). It has also attempted to resolve issues in nearby Guinea-Bissau and Senegal's Casamance region, (Interview with Njie, 2021). The Gambia also participated in international activities, as evidenced by its involvement in the United Nations and other international organizations. The Gambia has long considered multilateral structures a vital safeguard for its sovereignty and has strengthened the rules-based multilateral world order. This has included participation and leadership in global institutions, including its election to the UNSC seat in 1998-1999. The Gambia has also engaged in functional forms of niche diplomacy, such as mediation expertise as highlighted above. It is worth noting, therefore, despite its smallness in power and resources, as argued by Amat Jeng (2020), “the reputation the country earned during the First Republic went on to help it at all international scenes. Even though Jammeh was what he was, traditional partners were still beholden to the old Gambia. Therefore, when one looks at its weak capacity, the country achieved a lot of success in terms of foreign policy”.

Small states are believed in international relations scholarship, especially within the realist tradition, to lack the capacity to make successful foreign policy choices. On account of its lack of power resources, the Gambia has been deemed a weak state. Small states with limited economic or political viability are unable to sustain the necessary diplomatic resources to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the multilateral structure (Menon, 2009). The Gambia drove multilateral engagements in its early years of independence in order to strengthen its formal sovereignty through UN recognition and participation. The Gambia's capacity for foreign policy choice is likewise constrained by its position in the international system. Our case study showed that state viability, as measured by the control of resources to carry out primary state duties, can be crucial for a small state's capacity to make effective foreign policy choices. Traditional power resources matter in providing capacity for foreign policy activities, not only in terms of the material costs of international participation, but also in terms of allowing a state actor to exercise full sovereignty over its foreign policy decisions. Externally, a small state's capacity

to make independent foreign policy decisions might be limited by its dependence on a larger state for hard power resources required for survival. Furthermore, it is commonly understood that foreign policy is largely motivated by domestic political essentials that give rise to a state's national interest (Putnam, 1988). Therefore, elite accord on the state's international identity and purpose restricts the foreign policy options available to the leadership. However, in The Gambia political authority belonged to Jammeh, and he had not been restricted by bureaucracy giving him greater foreign policy capacity domestically. Small states must have enough policy capacity to choose and support foreign policy options.

Actors and Interest in Foreign Policy Making and Implementation in The Gambia

Foreign policy articulation revolves around actors and interests. Accordingly, it is critical to investigate the actors and interests that gave verve and cogency to The Gambia's foreign policy between 1994- 2016 in order to pick out the main element that contributed to the country's foreign policy reorientation. Who were the key actors or players in shaping, influencing, and implementing and deepening The Gambia foreign policy? What were the many roles these actors played, and how did they interact with one another? In political science, an actor is any person or political entity with sufficient authority and power and the desire to use such powers to influence political processes (Gvalia et. al., 2013). Generally, making a foreign policy is delegated to the head of government and in some instances, the foreign minister. In some countries, the legislature has considerable oversight, while in others it has lesser oversight roles. In the Gambia, foreign policy is made and executed out by the executive branch, particularly the Head of State (the President). When it comes to actors in The Gambias foreign policy, former President Yahya Jammeh takes center stage for the period under consideration of this study. It is common knowledge that the president determined the state's foreign policy under a republic. Contrary to other findings and claims that former President Yahya Jammeh was the “only” actor in the Gambia foreign policymaking, this thesis has discovered new actors that played a role in the country's decision-making processes even though it was minimal.

The study argues that The Gambian domestic actors like the individual (the president), the Minister of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), the National Assembly, the Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation and Construction (APRC), some top military

generals within the corridors of power, some businessmen and religious leaders had a role in shaping the country's preference and national interests. It is important to note that this thesis did not rule out the argument that Jammeh was the only or principal player since he exerted so much authority and influence over the state's direction and national interests that all other actors or political entities were reduced to spectators. According to Jeng (2018), former President Yahya Jammeh directed the formulation and implementation of the country's foreign policy by replacing ministers regularly. The Foreign Affairs ministry was reduced to a subordinate foreign ministry, with the minister himself reduced to a 'functionary,' and the National Assembly as an oversight institution was reduced to a rubber-stamp assembly dominated by Jammeh's loyalists. This topic covered in greater depth in the section on political institutions.

Why does this paper consider the individuals and organizations, or institutions mentioned above as players in The Gambia's foreign policy? The APRC's power dominated state politics since former President Yahya Jammeh was a key figure occupying the Gambia government's office; some military generals, businessmen, and religious leaders had access to Jammeh and sometimes affected his decisions. For this thesis, former President Yahya Jammeh is the most appealing figure because of his political behavior, influencing The Gambia's domestic politics and foreign policy. Shortly after taking the Gambia national leadership in 1994, he would push the limits and try to overcome the limitations on his role to adopt a proactive orientation. In terms of foreign policy, The Gambia under former President Yahya Jammeh deviated sharply from long-standing presidential diplomacy and liberal foreign policy behavior because his perceptions of operational environment became translated into policy choices. Another key player in the formation of the Gambia's preferences and national interests was the APRC. The APRC, which had ruled the country since 1996, was widely regarded as the most powerful political party in Gambian politics, had influenced the country's foreign policy through legal, political institutions in both the executive and legislative branches of government. As one of the party's founding fathers and a prominent figure, former President Yahya Jammeh's views on The Gambian national interest appeared to be very similar to those of the APRC. Moreover, former and present Gambian diplomats agreed that the MOFA was also a main actor in The Gambia foreign policymaking since its roles included inter alia, to implement the state's diplomatic principles and policies and related laws and

regulations; safeguarding national sovereignty, security, and interests on behalf of the state; run diplomatic affairs on behalf of the state and the government, and handle diplomatic activities (Interview with Senghore, 2021). However, the former Foreign Affairs Minister Dr. Senghore was quick to add that “The Gambia’s foreign policy under former President Yahya Jammeh clipped the hands of the citizenry as it did to the country’s Chief diplomat and team” (Interview with Senghor, 2021). The National Assembly could also be considered an actor since, under the constitution of the Gambia, it has oversight functions. However, as stated above, the principal actor was former President Yahya Jammeh as the Gambia was without a doubt under an authoritarian regime and all other institutions were feeble under his administration.

This thesis posits that the foreign policy of The Gambia was increasingly influenced by economic considerations, such as attracting national development funds. The Gambia has consistently had an inconsistent foreign policy under former President Yahya Jammeh to tap financial gains from the Gulf and solidify its power base. It was heavily indebted, characterized by institutional inertia and an authoritarian landscape with no immediate challenges to its frontiers. The Gambia's erratic foreign policy under former President Yahya Jammeh and his controversial foreign policy decisions make determining the country's national interests extremely difficult. In addition, The Gambia faces domestic threats due to mounting opposition to former President Yahya Jammeh's style of rule. As a result, the Gambia's national interests became increasingly politicized. To locate The Gambia's foreign policy interests, we must first examine the driving factors that shaped The Gambia’s foreign policy.

The foreign policy Terrain: The Determinants of The Gambian Foreign Policy Formulation: 1994-2016

The foreign policy of a country's is conceived, designed, formulated, and articulated to safeguard and advance its national interests in its bilateral and multilateral relations with other countries. It reflects a country's traditional values and national objectives, as well as its aspirations and self-perception. In The Gambian context, the aims and objectives of the country foreign policy are reflected in Section 219 of the 1997 Constitution of the Republic of The Gambia. It states:

promotes and protects the interest of The Gambia; seeks the establishment of a just and equitable economic and social order; fosters respect for international law, treaty obligation and settlement of international disputes by peaceful means; and guided by

the principle and goals of international and regional organizations of which The Gambia is a signatory (The Gambian Constitution, 1997).

The Gambia, in its pursuit to achieve these national objectives it conducts relations with other countries. The foreign policy of the country emanates from the presidency who makes foreign policy decisions with the aim of attaining complex domestic and international agendas. In the twenty-first century, decisions made by one state impact more than simply the countries involved. Scholars, policy experts, and even the general public are more interested in understanding how the president makes foreign policy decisions and what inspires him to do so. Thus, the chapter aimed to assess the factors that influence the Gambia's foreign policy, with a particular emphasis on the domestic political environment, which is paramount in the decision-making process, even in an international context. Even though it is tough to locate The Gambian national interest under former President Yahya Jammeh, looking at how The Gambia made decisions on domestic and foreign affairs could provide signs to the country's national interests. It could also explain some of the reasoning that steered The Gambian foreign policy then and even now. This will be critical in analyzing those principles and determining their applicability and relevance in the current international system. The research find it is prudent to study The Gambia's political system. When it comes to the formulation and implementation of our foreign policy, one needs to think carefully about the role of each institution in relation to the country's foreign policy. What, for instance, are the President's, Foreign Ministry's, and National Assembly's roles in this regard? To better understand The Gambia's formulation process, it's a good idea to look into institutions like these. To comprehend the parameters of geopolitics and worldwide political dynamics, it is also necessary to examine leaders' perceptions and the paradigm shift of foreign aid. The fact that new aid donors influenced The Gambia's foreign policy necessitates evaluating how these new actors affect the country's desire to pursue national interests.

Foreign policy is largely concerned with the boundaries between the external environment outside of the nation state and the internal environment, which includes a wide range of subnational sources of influence. The foreign policies of states are based on a number of domestic and external situations, circumstances, and developments, which are referred to as variables. States' foreign policies are shaped by them. Like the popular dictum of the Prussian theorist Clausewitz, 'war is the

continuation of politics by other means', David Cadier and Margot Light argue that foreign policy is simply "the continuation of domestic politics by other means" (Webber & Smith, 2000). This study maintains that there is no dividing line between domestic politics and foreign policy as foreign policy does not stop at the water's edge. All international engagements are carried out in the background of domestic political considerations. Foreign policy can be compared to a wedding ring, with which a nation's domestic context solemnizes its union with the international community. The ambitions and objectives of states underpin such political "marriage," therefore foreign policy is a means to an end for states. A country without a foreign policy can be compared to a football team that is playing without a master plan to score goals, leaving all of the players in the squad unsure of their roles and responsibilities on the field (Cadier, 2015). Therefore, foreign policy will continue to exist as long as sovereign countries exist and function in the international system. Amer Rizwan claims that foreign policy is influenced by a number of internal and external factors (Khara, 2018). This section examines the driving factors of the Gambia foreign policy by using neoclassical realism as an analytical framework to find answers to the research questions.

Domestic Political Institutions

This section analyzes the activities and inputs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) and the National Assembly (NA) within the context of domestic political institutions engagements. Former President Yahya Jammeh had a significant influence on The Gambia's foreign policy. He had accumulated enormous power and crept into every institution in the country, rendering them ineffective to be able to make meaningful inputs to the process of the formulation of the foreign policy of the country. He was virtually free of bureaucratic constraints as his autocratic disposition brooks no opposition that would have hampered his predetermined goals. Experts, such as technocrats and lawmakers had little room for wide-ranging dialogue and interaction. It became evident that former President Yahya Jammeh ran the country as if it were his own. For instance, the decisions to withdraw The Gambia from the Commonwealth and the International Criminal Court (ICC), were unilaterally taken and were not tabled at the Parliament to accommodate inputs. Therefore, weak institutions were one of the domestic variables that contributed to the country's erratic foreign policy behaviour. Leaders have the freedom to make swift policy decisions in

an authoritarian society. In The Gambia, the National Assembly was demeaned to a mere rubber-stamp legislature, while the Ministry of Foreign Affairs “became what Hill, one of proponents of neoclassical realism calls a subordinate foreign ministry, reducing the Minister himself to a functionary” (Rizwan 2009). In Amat Jeng’s words: “the Foreign Ministry was turned into a functionary institution, or “whim-serving institution”, instead of an expert institution that serve the long-term interest of the country” (Interview with Jeng, 2021) According to neoclassical realists like Ripsman et. al. (2016), domestic institutions regulate the leadership's breadth of authority and the extent to which it must consult. Policymakers carefully evaluate foreign policy decisions in a democratic context characterized by robust institutions. However, if the institutional framework is weak and disorganized, leaders like former President Yahya Jammeh can make snap decisions without facing any bureaucratic restrictions (Ripsman et. al., 2016). According to the interview respondents and foreign experts in Banjul, the Foreign Ministry was a whim-serving institution. All the people interviewed buttressed this point; the Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Corporations and Gambians Abroad, as well as the Head of the Diplomatic Service, Sulayman Omar Njie, who as a foreign policy expert and seasoned diplomat submits that:

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs had little leverage in the conduct of diplomacy and development cooperation. For the most part, it was a whim-serving institution. The Head of State continued to conduct international relations as if it was under the transition period with him directing foreign policy as he deemed fit. There was no clear-cut foreign policy direction and engagements with the international community was based on what the Head of State considered to be of primary importance to his person and what engagements could deliver funding for the array of projects he wanted to implement at the shortest possible time frame. Consequently, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs simply rubber-stamped initiatives put across by the Head of State leading to the Executive directly controlling the foreign policy agenda setting of Government (Interview with Sulayman Omar Njie, 2021).

The PS went to argue that the

Foreign Policy articulation and implementation were directly taken out of the hands of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In actual fact, the Ministry became a tool to implement Executive Directives as to which bilateral engagements were desired by the Head of State, and which multilateral arrangements to go for (Interview with Sulayman Omar Njie, 2021).

The Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Senghore also reinforced this argument by claiming that “former President Yahya Jammeh’s foreign policies were sometimes whim-seeking ones; basically, for handouts from major actors in

international diplomacy; which served The Gambia and Gambians in a very minute way” (Interview with Senghore, 2021). Permanent Secretary Sulayman Omar Njie summed it all when he argued that

Whatever engagement was envisaged was controlled and influenced by the Head of State and took cognizance of the latter’s personal benefit or particular stances on issues which were to his favour. Advice from the Ministry was in most cases not adhered to where provided and technical input was absent in most of the foreign policy decisions emanating from the Office of the President. Unilateral decision making in foreign policy matters was the typical trend which characterized the Jammeh administration (Interview with Sulayman Omar Njie, 2021).

Therefore, respondents of the study are of the opinion that the country’s foreign policy for the period under review made the core and career diplomats on - lookers and spectators. The presidency hijacked foreign policy formulation and implementation and effectively took control of the Foreign Ministry. Major decisions were often taken directly by the president without consulting or even informing the Minister and team; this singular action led to harsh foreign policies that were interest-serving (Interview with Senghore, 2021).

Prof. Abdoulaye Saine (2009) further points out that the rapid turnover of foreign ministers signifies the fact that former President Yahya Jammeh unceremoniously fired his Ministers when they were no longer serving his political objectives, which in most cases is personal. Lenn (2017) observes that The Gambia has had 25 foreign ministers from 1996 to 2016, 19 of whom served between 1990 and 2016. Former President Yahya Jammeh controlled the formulation and implementation of the country's foreign policy by firing ministers on a regular basis. As argued above, under an authoritarian setting, institutions become unproductive and serve the leader's interest. Ebrima Chongan argued during our interview that “everyone knows that former President Yahya Jammeh was an authoritarian bothering on an absolute ruler. Everything was to satisfy his whims and caprices”, adding that “former President Yahya Jammeh was simply interested on who could bankrolled his insatiable appetite for money and luxury lifestyle” (Interview with Chongan, 2021). According to him, this led the former President Yahya Jammeh to appoint family, friends, and cronies to diplomatic post rather than career diplomats who understood diplomacy (Interview with Chongan, 2021). H.E Dembo M. Badjie, a retired Gambian civil servant and career diplomat and former Dean of Gambian diplomatic Corps who had served in different capacities under all the three Presidents of The Gambia, argued during his interview with QTV that unlike the former

President Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara Administration, “now every Tom, Dick, and Harry is thrown into the diplomatic service and so they become clueless and cannot make useful impact for the country” (Badjie 2021). In his short, he described the Foreign Service as a “dumping ground”. His argument has found line with Mr. Chongan’s claim. H. E Badjie further claims that The Gambia’s foreign policy depended on the intentions of the president and the foreign ministry responded to those intentions and such foreign policy is not in black and white (Badjie, 2021).

Under the APRC administration, the National Assembly was also one of the most significant enablers of Jammeh's unpredictable foreign policy behavior. Jeng (2018) claims that the National Assembly, which is supposed to deliberate and debate issues of national and international importance, has been overwhelmingly dominated by Jammeh's loyalists, who have rubber-stamped everything that comes from Jammeh (Jeng, 2018). Jammeh's pronouncement of The Gambia as an Islamic state in 2015 was neither brought before the nation’s Parliament nor was the decision to withdraw The Gambia from the ICC and the Commonwealth factored the wealth of experience and value additions. Jammeh had full control over these institutions, was at the core of the country's politics, and wielded undisputed power.

Leadership Personality: Jammeh’s Image, Perceptions and Misconceptions

Jammeh's full grasp of the international system and his misperceptions of it are undoubtedly the most important internal intervening variables that affected the country's foreign policy. Small states foreign policy, according to Dr. Omar Touray (2000), is mostly personalized in terms of decision-making. Jammeh's personality was reflected in the foreign policy of The Gambia.

Rose (1998), a leading scholar of neoclassical realism argues that as foreign policy analysts, one should also look at state-level intervening variables, which can "influence and dictate how countries behave towards the world beyond their borders”. This demonstrates that psychological elements influence foreign policy decisions in addition to external variables. According to Aaron Rapport (2017), foreign policy decision-makers rely on their psychological settings as guides rather than objective assessments when making decisions. Agreed on this context, therefore studying Jammeh's personality can help this study predict and better understand The Gambia's foreign policy decisions and outcomes. This is because “The Gambia's foreign policy had been primarily influenced by its leaders' characteristics, both in terms of process

and outcome” (Drammeh, 2021). Because the President is constitutionally mandated to develop and conduct the country's foreign policy, Lenn (2017) argues that former President Yahya Jammeh's beliefs, ideas, and identity had an important role to play in the country's foreign policy. Former President Yahya Jammeh's psychological makeup had an impact on the foreign policy style he finally adopted. His foreign policy decisions mirrored his African, Pan-African, and Islamist values and beliefs (Drammeh, 2021). Marijke Breuning (2007) argues that individuals and their decisions are a fundamental driver of foreign policy. Ripsman et al. (2016) also contends that for one to fully grasp a country's foreign policy actions, it is vital and instructive to examine its political leaders' character and psychological makeup, as these are crucial intervening elements that might influence how they react to structural constraints. Many political experts and scholars maintain that Jammeh was jaded towards the West and Senegal, his immediate neighbor. He struggled with trust, believing that his supposed opponents were determined to bring him down. Jammeh formed an image of them and their motives. This image however, turned out to be an inaccurate one. He misperceived Western impact in his leadership style as an attempt to topple his administration and so established a very hostile foreign policy towards them. The former assistant IGP of The Gambia Police Force argued that:

Yahya Jammeh saw the West and in particular Senegal as a serious threat to his rule. He also felt that most of his perceived enemies were given asylum in the West and in Senegal. Those people would be exercising their freedom of speech and Yahya Jammeh saw it as a threat and thus emasculated all non-governmental press. Furthermore, due to his bad human right record the EU and other Western donors stopped giving him budget support. This made Jammeh very paranoid and made him moved towards other countries that would not question his human right abuses ((Interview with Chongan, 2021).

Jeng (2018) puts forward that Jammeh considered himself a pan-Africanist and mistook the West's interfering in Africa for neocolonialism has aided in justifying his anti-Western rhetoric, giving him even another reason to take the country away from Western influence. His perception and misconception affected the country, economically as it led to the crumbling of the economy and stalling of the country's development agenda. Pressures to decriminalize homosexuality were also perceived by Jammeh as an attempt to promote Western culture and ideals, which he firmly believed contradicted Islamic and African traditions. His governance style was incompatible with Western ideas. In order for the general population to regard him as anti-colonialist, anti-imperialist, or a good leader who stood up to the West's double

standards, he had to show himself as a strong leader (Drammeh, 2021). Analysts of The Gambian politics came to the consensus that his foreign policy was driven by his perceptions and misconceptions of the West and his ideas of Islam and traditional African culture. Jammeh's perceptions of Western powers, for example, influenced his interactions with them. This contributed to the justification of his anti-Western rhetoric and provided him with another reason to pull the country from the Western bloc. By promoting an Islamic way of life for the country, Jammeh attempted to ensure that he survived the political forces threatening his hold on power. Based on this background, The Gambia's foreign policy during the Jammeh government reflected Jammeh's ideology and personality. Since foreign policies are national issues and agendas, they are always led by a personal force, which takes different forms depending on the country's leadership. Jammeh's aggressive foreign policy behavior was thus a direct mirror of his leadership style. This thesis contends that the foreign policy of The Gambia was directed towards the West by those beliefs, identities, and ideologies. Jammeh's image, perceptions, and misperceptions of the West are among the most critical variables explaining his foreign policy reorientation and erratic foreign policy behavior.

The Gambia Economic Position and the Paradigm Shift in Foreign Aid

Hans Morgenthau (1962), one of the twentieth-century leading American realists in the study of international relations, observes that foreign aid is one of the developments brought by the contemporary age into the practice of foreign policy. For many states, foreign aid, a form of economic inducement, is employed as a persuasive or coercive tool of foreign policy and it is thus an expedient tool which has a symbolic dimension, as neo-classical realists would contend. Donor aid can be bilateral (given directly by a government to the government of another country) or multilateral (given by governments to international institutions such as the UN, World Bank, and IMF) (Thapa, 2020). Foreign aid, according to the Development Assistance Committee (DAC), is the movement of resources (tangible and intangible), provided by government agencies with the objective of fostering economic development in the recipient states (Apodaca, 2017). Foreign policy began to undergo a paradigm shift with the fall of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. The deployment of economic inducements - the carrot - has become even more apparent in recent years, especially in many developing countries. New aid donors

known as non-DACs have emerged in the foreign aid landscape (Hill, 2016). The provision of foreign aid is the carrot that seeks to influence the recipient's policy choices or other actions. The termination of aid, the stick, can also be used to alter a recipient country's behavior". This concept can be applied to The Gambia-EU relations. The EU applied the stick to The Gambia by terminating aid (Drammeh, 2021). Therefore, the emergence of these 'new' aid donors either provides alternate sources of aid or allows dictatorial regimes like The Gambia to seek alternative sources of aid. The aid from the West is usually attached to some specific conditions, especially in having access and influence in the domestic and foreign affairs of other states, just as Apodaca claims (Drammeh, 2021). It's safe to say that Jammeh was not pleased with the new policy. He was often at odds with the EU and human rights organizations, which prompted him to shift his foreign policy. Jammeh turned his attention to non-DAC donors, particularly those from the Arab Gulf. These "new" donors, often known as non-DAC donors, do not intervene in recipient nations' internal affairs. Unlike the EU and the West, non-DAC donors did not lecture Jammeh on human rights and good governance, which was one of the reasons for The Gambia's foreign policy reorientation. The former Gambian Minister of foreign Affairs, Dr. Senghore observes that:

It was not surprising that Jammeh shifted his foreign policy direction to the Gulf and Arab States, when he had strained relationship with the West. This move was ostensibly made for financial handouts and political rewards and as an affront to the West. It was informed by the need to attract foreign direct investment in the Gambia, (Interview with Senghore, 2021).

After the West had cut-the-tap in terms of financial support to his government, Jammeh moved away from the traditional diplomatic partners of The Gambia since independence. The Gambia former police chief observed that this was "principally because he was not a democrat and never followed the rule of law. He often rules by executive orders that are sometimes against the constitution" (Interview with Chongan, 2021). He went on to add that "from a diplomatic standpoint, he couldn't deal with the EU who were providing budget support and other western donors. Jammeh had no choice but to move and seek help from those countries that were not concerned with human right abuses" (Interview with Chongan, 2021). Arab countries, particularly Qatar, had continued to back his government spending agendas. Jammeh grew increasingly choosy in accepting aid with political conditions as new aid donors

entered the foreign aid landscape. Jammeh had a bargaining power over the EU, with China and the Gulf ready to offer the carrot. As Jeng points out:

Having a lot of donors gave the country wider opportunities. This era is called the “era of choice”, meaning there are many donors to choose from. Since Jammeh was conditioned to do reforms that would probably lead to his downfall, he decided to look for better options of financing his government without needing to do those reforms. Thus, the shift to China and the Gulf- countries that did or do not condition aid recipients (Interview with Jeng, 2021).

Therefore, one of the most noticeable and convincing structural force that gave birth to the reorientation of The Gambia’s foreign policy was economic factor or the paradigm shift in foreign aid.

The Political System of The Gambia and Jammeh’s Leadership Style

The collection of all formal legal entities that make up a government or country is referred to as a political system. This is different from the political environment of a country, that encompasses all laws, government institutions, and proactive lobbying groups that works to restrict individuals or organizations towards an ideal society. Regarding the office of president, the political framework in which he functions is critical (Hussain, 2011) . The political system will decide the scope and influence of the president in foreign policy decision-making. The Gambia's political system is based on a unitary and presidential system, as stipulated in the country's 1997 Constitution (Constitution, 1997). The President of The Gambia is the country's Head of State as well as the Head of Government. This political system of government gave any sitting President overwhelming power in the polity. As far as the foreign policy making of the country is concerned, Section 79 of The Gambia's 1997 Constitution entrusts the President with the following responsibilities:

- (a) the conduct of relations with other states and international organizations
- (b) the reception of envoys accredited to The Gambia and the appointment of the principal representatives of The Gambia abroad
- (c) The negotiation and, subject to ratification by the National Assembly, the conclusion of treaties and other international agreements
- (d) subject to the prior approval of the National assembly, the declaration of war and the making of peace (Constitution, 1997).

Accordingly, the President is in charge of developing and implementing the country's foreign policy. According to Subsection (2) of the Constitution, the

President's role in foreign policy could only be limited if it would endanger The Gambia's sovereignty, which would necessitate a plebiscite in the case of bilateral relations and convincing the National Assembly that joining an international organization is in the nation's national interest. The President is in charge of designating the minister of foreign affairs to assist him in carrying out his executive roles. The President being the chief executor of foreign policy made Jammeh become increasingly involved in the formulation and implementation of the FP of the country. The influence this had on the country's foreign policy was that the country was not constrained by bureaucratic politics. Moreover, Jammeh's leadership style could also be defined as non-democratic. It could be argued that there were no explicit constitutional constraints on executive authority in conducting foreign policy. Even though there were existing constitutional requirements or checks that were legally formed and binding at the time, the Jammeh government did not adhere to them. Due to Jammeh's authoritarian tendencies and the lack of bureaucratic constraints to limit his options, he had a free ride on The Gambia's foreign policy. Owing to the executive's far more substantial influence at the cost to the legislative and judiciary, the country's foreign policy became more personalized. Similarly, the presidency is the administrative authority through which the state's legislative power is exercised, including the laws governing the accreditation of ambassadors abroad and the reception of ambassadors from other nations (Drammeh, 2021). As a result, the President is in charge of all diplomatic matters, and nothing formal takes place in that field without his assent. It's worth noting that the President is in control of foreign policy in a presidential political system. This gave Jammeh unrivaled dominance over the foreign ministry and the ability to command it to promote his own interests. Thus, The Gambia foreign policy fluctuated from one direction to another. Since institutions did not constrain Jammeh, this facilitated a very easy navigation, but also turned the foreign policy into something erratic, Jeng argues (Interview with Jeng, 2021). The erratic nature of the country's foreign policy created ripples and discontent in many quarters.

CHAPTER 4

Finding, Discussion and Conclusion

From 1994 to 2016, the Republic of The Gambia has in between transitioned from military governance to civilian democratic governance through a transformation of a military-led administration to a full civilian government with the core members of the a priori Armed Forces Provisional Ruling Council (AFPRC) retiring from the military to occupy civilian positions in a post-election's government accompanied by civilians recruited from various walks of life. Hence, from 1996 to 2016, The Gambia was governed by the Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation and Reconstruction (APRC) which formed the government following the 1996 elections and led by former President Yahya Jammeh as Head of State and Commander in Chief of the Gambia Armed Forces. The foreign policy stance of The Gambia following the post 1996 elections and the consequent establishment of a new civilian government in March 1997 was principally driven by non-alignment anchored on opening up to new partnerships and also geared towards securing development funding for the various flagship projects promulgated by the new government. Given that the traditional development partners laid various conditions *sine qua non* to development support, the new government made a reversal on the country's development engagements by establishing relations with the Republic of China on Taiwan and reinforcing relations with the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and the Federal Republic of Nigeria (which was under a military dictatorship at this period). The objective of the demarche was to secure substantial funding for projects and programmes with little or no conditionalities attached. This study found that former President Yahya Jammeh fell out with his traditional partners due to his human right abuses and thus lost budget support from the European Union (EU) and other Western donors and was compelled to look for new aid donors from the Gulf to support his development projects. The EU was The Gambia's main traditional donor of aid and technical expertise. However, over time, former President Yahya Jammeh grew increasingly antagonistic; and his authoritarian character made him a target for critics, as he was rebuked for his poor human rights records. The EU grew increasingly uncompromising of former President Yahya Jammeh's high handedness in power. Therefore, Brussels withheld millions of Euros to The Gambia. Jammeh retaliated by getting rid of EU's top diplomat in the country after he had accused the bloc of conniving to tarnish the

image of his government for its position on homosexuality. Former President Yahya Jammeh gradually shifted the Gambia's foreign policy towards the East. Therefore, it is safe to conclude that there was a reorientation of The Gambia's foreign policy from the West to the East during the Jammeh administration. When he had strained relations with the West, it wasn't surprising that former President Yahya Jammeh moved his foreign policy focus to the Gulf and Arab States. The paradigm shift in foreign aid and the emergence of new aid donors who did not tie conditions to their aids gave dictators like Jammeh choices to cast their nets wider. This move was ostensibly made for financial handouts and political rewards and as an affront to the West. It was informed by the need to attract foreign direct investment in The Gambia. Additionally, The Gambia cannot develop technologically and by extension, rise to an industrial status, therefore there was a need to seek for help from other states like former President Yahya Jammeh did by playing his game between ROC and PRC for financial and direct foreign investment. The EU's reform came at a time when the foreign aid landscape has been inundated with new players of different approaches. This includes but not limited to China, Qatar, Kuwait, to name but few. This puts many options on the table for aid recipient-countries. This also came at a time when China's material power was relatively growing, consequently, expanding the Communist state's foreign policy ambitions. Furthermore, former President Yahya Jammeh broke ties with Iran amid Gambia's deteriorating relations with Senegal, Saudi Arabia's major partner in Muslim Africa. Former President Yahya Jammeh's attempt to establish an Islamic identity was an attempt to extract financial resources from the Gulf and also to win local Muslim's support for his re-election bid in 2016. He copied what other dictators like Idi Amin and Sekou Toure did. Once, they reached out to the Gulf States, they start to portray themselves as Islamist. This was more about seeking financial help from the Gulf States. He focused on financial gains, which he converted into a foreign policy of maintaining cordial relations with countries where he might reap financial benefits. Former President Yahya Jammeh was primarily concerned with keeping tight ties with countries from whom he could profit economically without regard for good governance or human rights. China and the Gulf states were the driving forces behind such a move. While the EU and other Western nations-imposed conditions on their aid, he was forced to seek new allies, resulting in a shift in his foreign policy. When his leadership style worsens relations

with the EU and, in particular, the Commonwealth, when help was not flowing, some new patron states stepped in to support his increasingly isolated government.

This thesis also established the fact that there is a causal link between domestic and international politics in the formulation of foreign policy of small states. In the case of The Gambia, domestic factors are more compelling and noticeable in its foreign policy decision-making given that much of its foreign policy is influenced by the President, who serves as commander-in-chief and negotiates treaties, receives foreign ambassadors, nominates The Gambia's ambassadors to other nations, and signs executive agreements. Political institutions such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, like the presidency and the ruling party's Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation and Construction (APRC) and the National Assembly were under strict control and firm grip of the President and therefore rendered to be rubber stamps who tried to do the bidding of former President Yahya Jammeh. The principal actor in the formulation of the country's foreign policy was the Head of State himself. The Minister of Foreign Affairs was just the executor of the wishes of the Head of State and had little or no input in the manner vis-a-vis decisions regarding the nation's international relations and how the latter was conducted. These institutions aligned themselves to the new trends of former President Yahya Jammeh's foreign policy directions. They functioned as mere implementers rather than formulators. Therefore, those institutions became unproductive and had no say over the manner the his administration conducted its diplomacy. It has come to light those domestic political institutions contributed greatly to the erratic and spontaneous nature of The Gambia's foreign policy. The political system, as we know it, was built on personality, rather than policies. Therefore, self-aggrandizement played an important role in such an environment. Former President Yahya Jammeh knew this and used it wisely. The unitary and presidential system of government The Gambia adopted gave him overwhelming power in the polity. This enabled him to have his way in all spheres of politicking. There is considerable evidence that The Gambia's foreign policy grew increasingly individualized and concentrated on the presidency during the period under study. Given that The Gambia's legal and institutional context mandates the head of state's substantial presence on the diplomatic scene - to the point where other powers' role in foreign policy is severely curtailed, former President Yahya Jammeh, like former President Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara, became the foreign policy's principal driving force. Most important, The Gambia's aggressive foreign policy

toward the West, as well as its move toward China and the Gulf, found expression in former President Yahya Jammeh's perception of the West and leadership style, according to this study. He believed that the West was attempting to destabilize his regime, which prompted him to alter his foreign policy dramatically. His grip on power eroded without the help new donors in the foreign aid sector. He devised a new foreign policy technique known as checkbook diplomacy, which explains why he continued to navigate between the Republic of China (ROC) and the People's Republic of China (PRC). According to the neoclassical realism theory, former President Yahya Jammeh reading of the international system was correct as he was a very calculative leader. It can be concluded that his perception and misconceptions towards the international community significantly affected The Gambia's relationship with them, especially the Western powers. He saw the West as 'locusts' and 'caterpillars' who have come to devour African resources to develop their home countries. To him, international power structure was not even; as it was lopsided aimed at siphoning off natural resources. He also saw Senegal as an unreliable neighboring country who harbored Gambian political dissidents. To Senegal also, former President Yahya Jammeh was a promoter of the secessionist movement led by MFDC fighting for an independent homeland in the Southern Senegal's region of Casamance. This strained relationship led to constant border closure between The Gambia and Senegal. This study presented how personality was embedded in the country's foreign policy. Former President Yahya Jammeh's ideologies and personality was reflected in The Gambia's foreign policy. Since foreign policies are national issues and agendas, they are always led by a personal force, which takes different forms depending on the country's leadership. Therefore, his aggressive foreign policy behavior was a direct mirror of his leadership style. He had a long history of chastising the West and insulting human rights activists for advocating for the observance of human rights and democracy. Former President Yahya Jammeh's image, perceptions, and misperceptions of the West are among the most important variables that can explain his foreign policy reorientation and erratic foreign policy behavior, as this thesis argues. Jeng's dissertation on The Gambia's foreign policy likewise echoes this finding. Former President Yahya Jammeh believed the West was keen to see him quit government because of his anti-imperialist stance and Islamic identity. Similarly, despite the country's secularism, Islam was strongly politicized, allowing it to be utilized to obtain support from the people and wealthy Arab

countries. In The Gambia, His authoritarian inclinations or regime type was reflected in The Gambia's foreign policy. The Gambia's decision to leave the Commonwealth and the International Criminal Court was done without parliamentary scrutiny. Due to the ubiquitous nature of bureaucratic politics or weak institutional foundations, foreign policy in a non-democratic administration is most frequently headed by one or a few individuals who pursue their agenda, or self-aggrandizing foreign policy.

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Appendices
Appendix A
Turnitin Similarity Report

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Seriny Modou Njie-FACTORS INFLUENCING FOREIGN POLICY
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Appendix B**Ethics Committee Approval****YAKIN DOĐU ÜNİVERSİTESİ****BİLİMSEL ARAŞTIRMALAR ETİK KURULU**

19.10.2021

Dear Sering Modou Njie,

Your application titled **“Factors Influencing Foreign Policy Making of Small States: The Gambia 1994 – 2016”** with the application number NEU/SS/2021/988 has been evaluated by the Scientific Research Ethics Committee and granted approval. You can start your research on the condition that you will abide by the information provided in your application form.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Direnç Kanol

Rapporteur of the Scientific Research Ethics Committee

Note: If you need to provide an official letter to an institution with the signature of the Head of NEU Scientific Research Ethics Committee, please apply to the secretariat of the ethics committee by showing this document.