
**THE INTERFACE BETWEEN NATIONAL INTEREST AND
FOREIGN POLICY BEHAVIOR: ANALYTICAL CONTEXT OF
KENYA'S MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN SOMALIA, 2011**

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Publication Date: January 2025

ABSTRACT

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of the study was to examine the complex interplay between Kenya's national interests and its decision to intervene militarily in Somalia in 2011, analyzing the factors that shaped this foreign policy choice and its implications for regional security and stability.

Problem Statement: Kenya's military intervention in Somalia in 2011, codenamed 'Operation Linda Nchi' (Operation Protect the Country), marked a significant shift in the country's foreign policy and security strategy, primarily driven by the threat of Al-Shabaab, a Somalia-based terrorist group conducting attacks on Kenyan soil resulting in significant loss of life and economic damage.

Methodology: The study employed a comprehensive analysis of existing literature, synthesizing and critically evaluating various perspectives and empirical data from scholarly works, government reports, and relevant sources to construct a robust analytical framework for understanding Kenya's foreign policy behavior and motivations.

Results of the Study: The study found that Kenya's military involvement in Somalia was motivated by multiple factors beyond the primary Al-Shabaab threat, including broader concerns about regional instability and the need to protect Kenya's economic interests, particularly in the tourism sector. Despite initial successes in pushing Al-Shabaab back from the Kenyan border, the intervention has had unintended consequences, including a resurgence of Al-Shabaab attacks in Kenya and allegations of human rights abuses by Kenyan security forces.

Conclusion: The study concludes that Kenya's military involvement in Somalia represents a complex foreign policy decision driven by national security interests, economic considerations, and regional partnerships. The threat posed by Al-Shabaab and Somalia's instability emerge as

primary factors behind Kenya's intervention, underscoring national security's central role in shaping foreign policy behavior.

Recommendations: The study recommends that policymakers and scholars adopt a holistic approach to analyzing foreign policy behavior, considering national interests, regional dynamics, international partnerships, and domestic politics. It emphasizes the need for caution with military interventions, prioritizing diplomatic and non-military solutions while carefully considering potential risks and unintended consequences. Additional recommendations include strengthening regional and international partnerships, effectively integrating military diplomacy into broader foreign policy strategies, and analyzing the influence of domestic political factors on foreign policy decision-making.

Keywords: *National Interest, Foreign Policy, Analytical Context, Military Involvement, Kenya, Somalia*

INTRODUCTION

The Somalia based terrorist group Al-Shabaab has carried out a number of attacks against Kenya. The A/S (Somali word for *Youth*), was formed around 2006, as part of Somalia's Islamic Courts Union, the militant wing. After the Ethiopia intervention in Somalia between 2007 and 2008, the group transformed into an independent militant group, pledging allegiance to Al- Qaeda in 2012. The primary purpose of Al-Shabaab is to create a fundamentalist Islamic State in Somalia in accordance with Sharia law. Regional ambitions of the group involve spreading its influence in the East African countries with large Muslim populations. While Al-Shabaab has sophisticated operational capabilities; conventional warfare tactics combined with asymmetrical warfare including suicide bombings, assassinations and complex attacks on military and civilian targets; the group largely finances its operations through extortion, illicit trade and taxation in areas where it exercises control.

Kenya has suffered several attacks from the Al-Shabaab with Garissa University College attack in 2015, ranked as the most devastating attack in the country that resulted in the tragic deaths of 148 people, mostly students (Kushkush, 2015). During the incidence, the militants stormed Garissa University College, in Garissa County, about 370 Kilometers Northeast of Nairobi, near the Somalia border. This incident, along with the Westgate Mall attack in Nairobi in 2013 that claimed 67 lives (Gettleman & Schmitt, 2013), underscored the grave danger posed by the group's cross-

border operations. Al-Shabaab has also been responsible for numerous other attacks on Kenyan soil, including strikes on security forces, civilian targets, and infrastructure (Lind et al., 2017).

Beyond the immediate loss of life and damage, these attacks have had far-reaching consequences for Kenya's economy and social fabric. The threat of terrorism has impacted tourism, a crucial sector for the country's economy, and has strained inter-communal relations, particularly in areas with significant Muslim populations (Lind et al., 2017). In response, Kenya took a proactive stance, launching military operations in Somalia, such as 'Operation Linda Nchi' in 2011, with the stated goal of dismantling Al-Shabaab's operational capabilities and securing its porous borders (Mogire & Agade, 2011).

DRIVERS TO KENYA'S MILITARY INTERVENTION IN SOMALIA

A complex interplay of factors, including the threat of terrorism, regional stability, and economic considerations (Adar & Kaburu, 2020; Kibor, 2018; Oluoch, 2017) immensely drove Kenya's military involvement in Somalia. A constellation of factors among them; Al-Shabaab cross border attack, dramatic surge in Somali refugees, regional instability, and economic considerations shaped Kenya's foreign policy transformation away from its traditional diplomatic approach to military intervention in Somalia in 2011. Primarily, the impact of Al-Shabab's kidnapping of Western tourists on the Kenyan coast and aid workers from the refugee camp in Dadaab refugee camp on the Kenya-Somalia border influenced the Kenyan government's decision to deploy its military to Somalia in 2011 to neutralize the Al-Shabaab's incursions in the country.

Critically, the kidnappings of the Western tourists between September and October 2011 in Lamu, on the coastal region of the country hugely undermined the tourism sector. This had a negative repercussion to the economy with the low bookings in major hotels leading to laying off of majority of the hotel workers. Moreover, some of the hotels ceased operating completely exacerbated by travel advisories issued by countries like United States and the United Kingdom owing to the prevailing insecurity in the country. Furthermore, the presence of Somali refugees in Kenya and the instability in Somalia were seen as contributing factors to the spread of terrorism and other security challenges (Tipis, 2012). Table 1 presents the summary of total Somali Refugee Population in Kenya between 2006 and 2012.

Table 1: Refugee Population

Year	Total Refugee Population
2006	185,550
2007	203,500
2008	259,121
2009	310,459
2010	353,208
2011	519,411
2012	535,318

Source: UNHCR Statistical Data

The data shows a huge increase in the number of Somali refugees who fled to Kenya, from 185,550 in 2006 to 535,318 in 2012. Although the refugees are mainly in refugee camps at Dadaab near Kenya-Somali border, it is estimated that hundreds of Somalis illegally relocated to Kenya’s main city Nairobi Eastleigh Area thereby placing social -economic strain on the country. Kenya's military intervention in Somalia was also influenced by its desire to protect its economic interests, particularly in the tourism and transportation sectors (Mwangi, 2016). The instability in Somalia had a negative impact on Kenya's economy, and the intervention was viewed as a means to create a more stable environment for trade and investment (Porcuna, 2020).

Furthermore, Kenya's regional and international partnerships played a crucial role in shaping its foreign policy behavior in Somalia. Kenya collaborated closely with the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and received support from countries like the United States and Ethiopia (Gurhan, 2020). The United Nations Security Council played a crucial role through Resolution 2036 (2012), which not only legitimized Kenya's military presence in Somalia but also integrated Kenyan forces into African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM), providing essential financial and logistical support (Gurhan, 2020). Just as significant, was the involvement of the African Union, who enlisted in AMISOM as their main multilateral framework for bringing in region security efforts.

Nonetheless, Kenya's military involvement in Somalia has faced criticism for its lack of transparency and accountability. A report by the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (2015) documented human rights abuses and violations committed by Kenyan security forces during the intervention, including extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, and torture. These abuses have eroded public trust in the security forces and undermined Kenya's efforts to

counter violent extremism. Hesse (2016) notes that while Kenya's parliamentary oversight played a role in the government's decision, the timing of parliamentary approval relative to military deployment drew criticism.

The hasty decision-making process lacked proper deliberations on expected outcomes, and the military's rushed planning created diplomatic tensions with Somalia. Although Kenya's motives were multifaceted, the intervention was ultimately driven by national interests and shifting geopolitical dynamics (Mabera, 2016; Oweke, 2019). Since then, Kenya-Somalia relations have been characterized by mutual suspicion (Mabera, 2016). The decision-making process behind Kenya's intervention in Somalia remains largely opaque, with limited public information available about the factors influencing this foreign policy choice. While Kenya has experienced significant evolution in its national security strategy and geopolitical engagement, the lack of transparency has raised concerns about the democratic legitimacy of its foreign policy decisions and their alignment with national interests.

IMPACT OF KENYA'S MILITARY INTERVENTION

The impact and effectiveness of Kenya's military intervention presents a complex picture of both achievements and challenges. According to Mwangi (2016) and Hansen et al. (2019), significant successes include the liberation of key ports and cities from Al-Shabaab's control, disruption of the group's revenue streams, and improved regional security cooperation. The intervention successfully created a buffer zone along the Kenya-Somalia border that protected Kenya from cross-border infiltration. However, scholars like Okwany (2016) raise valid concerns about increased retaliatory attacks within Kenya and the emergence of new security risks. Thus, the intervention's effectiveness must be evaluated within the broader context of regional stabilization efforts and counterterrorism strategies.

Empirical evidence from security analysts and academic researchers suggests that while the military intervention achieved several tactical objectives, the strategic goal of neutralizing Al-Shabaab remains elusive. This nuanced assessment demonstrates that Kenya's military involvement, despite its controversial nature, has produced both positive and negative outcomes in regional security dynamics. This article begins by examining how foreign policy behavior develops in response to regional security challenges across various contexts.

ANALYSIS OF KENYA'S INTEREST AND ITS FOREIGN POLICY BEHAVIOR

A noteworthy analysis of Kenya's military intervention into Somalia in the line of Al-Shabaab terror attacks has been carried out by Oluoch (2017) by bringing it in this broad historical ground of global terrorism and its bearing on foreign policy. The study outlines that the intervention, which drew on Article 51 of the United Nation's Charter, for the first time in Kenya's foreign policy demonstrated a proactive attitude towards the protection of national sovereignty and regional stability. The Kenya Defense Forces for the first time moved its personnel to fight foreign combats and which marked Kenya's determination on the war on terrorism leading to the intervention. This intervention, the paper contends, reaffirmed Kenya's well-established policy of foreign intervention to preserve its territorial integrity, although it is also an exception to the country's prior shirking of major foreign forays.

In exploring the realist conceptions of Kenya's foreign policy and behavior, Adar and Kaburu (2020) stress the efforts of the country to protect its economic and political interests and to contribute to regional stability within the East African Community. Since its independence in 1963, Kenya has sought to navigate its international obligations while prioritizing territorial integrity and responding to external threats such as the al-Shabaab incursions. The study highlights the significance of President Siad Barre's recognition of Kenya's long-term interest in preserving its boundaries and how military involvement in Somalia reflects these priorities. The authors suggest that Kenya's foreign policy is fundamentally driven by realist principles aimed at ensuring national security and stability. These findings imply that Kenya's foreign policy strategies are primarily influenced by pragmatic considerations of power and security in a volatile regional context.

Tipis (2012) critically assessed how the Somali conflict influenced Kenya's foreign policy in the period 1991 to 2010. The study aims to understand how Kenya's foreign policy has adapted to the ongoing Somali conflict, using Graham Allison's models of foreign policy decision-making: the Rational Actor, Bureaucratic Politics, and Organizational Process Models. The research methodology relies upon interviews with key government individuals and agencies on the conflict in Somalia. The findings indicate that the Somali conflict, characterized by cross border incursions, terrorism and piracy, has profoundly shaped Kenya's foreign policy leading to a reactive rather than proactive stance. The conflict has resulted in an influx of Somali refugees and the spread of small arms, which has resulted in increased insecurity in Kenya. Finally, the study concludes that

Kenya's decision to engage militarily in Somalia, particularly through the Kenya Defence Forces' (KDF) intervention against Al-Shabaab, demonstrates a shift from diplomatic to military solutions as threats escalate, consistent with the Rational Actor Model. These findings imply that Kenya's foreign policy decisions are largely driven by immediate security concerns and the need to protect national interests in the face of an unpredictable and evolving conflict. Based on the Rational actor model, Kenya's immediate security concerns in the midst of a volatile security environment largely influenced Kenya's foreign policy decision of a military intervention in Somalia.

To find out if this step qualifies as an instance of military diplomacy and the bearing on national interests, Migue (2014) analyzed the Kenya Defence Forces October 2011 entry into Somalia, which was Kenya's first wartime engagement in 48 years. The study employs primary and secondary data sources, interviews and focus group discussions with Ministry of Affairs Defense and Foreign Affairs personnel to determine if military diplomacy makes a contribution towards realizing national interest. The analysis of the finding shows that the deployment of Kenya Defence Forces to Somalia was a 'strategic' response to security threats to the existence and survival of Kenya. The study highlights the role of military diplomacy as an important instrument in the attainment of the Kenyan national interests, affirming the role that military diplomacy in advancing a country's national interests. The study reveals that regional and multilateral military diplomacy is a rational instrument of the risk mitigating security threats to protect national interests.

In a comprehensive review of Kenya's foreign policy from 1963 to 2015, Mabera (2016), documented how Kenya went from a benign regional leader to a more assertive member of the region in response to regional and global pressure. The study attempts to ascertain the economic and diplomatic position of the country as an economic powerhouse within the Eastern African region as well as a multilateral diplomacy hub whose weight in sum has the capacity to assist in the powering of the country as an anchor state to African peace and security. Through interrogation of Kenya's foreign policy from Kenya's past presidents Jomo Kenyatta to Uhuru Kenyatta, the study evaluates the fundamental principles, objectives and pillars of Kenya's current foreign policy. The findings suggest that Kenya's assertive stance in foreign policy reflects its need to address pressing regional and international developments, reinforcing its strategic importance in maintaining regional stability. These insights imply that Kenya's foreign policy adaptations are crucial for sustaining its influence and addressing evolving security and economic challenges in the region.

Soy (2019) investigated defense diplomacy as applied within foreign policy and as a case study of the Kenya Defence Forces mission in Somalia. The research highlights that defense diplomacy, while still in its infancy in Kenya, is a crucial instrument for furthering national interests and addressing security concerns. The study uses primary and secondary sources of data to argue that the deployment of Kenya Defence Forces in Somalia was hinged on Kenya's defense policies to protect Kenya's national interests which had been threatened largely by Somali's internal conflicts. However, Kenyan policymakers have not fully embraced defense diplomacy as it should. The research concludes that defense diplomacy is vital in the global arena for maintaining state sovereignty and recommends that Kenya's policymakers fully adopt it as a strategy for implementing foreign policy. This is because, as indicated, a more reliable practice of defense diplomacy can help Kenya to more effectively respond to security issues and position its national interest.

Hesse (2016) examined two significant military interventions in Somalia by the United States in 1992 and by Kenya and Ethiopia in 2011, exploring the motivations and outcomes of these operations. The study demonstrates that American troops were initially deployed to Somalia in the post-Cold War era as part of a foreign policy 'experiment' to address threats from "small" states. Almost two decades later, Kenyan and Ethiopian forces entered Somalia to tackle similar issues identified earlier by American policymakers, such as refugees and terrorism. While utilizing the public goods theory, the article presents that peacekeeping intervention is often below par because self-interests of the peacekeepers and the collective needs. The analysis concludes that the American intervention did not resolve the underlying problems in Somalia, leading to subsequent involvement by regional powers. The findings imply that without addressing the root causes of instability, military interventions are likely to yield limited success, as evidenced by the continued challenges faced by Kenyan and Ethiopian forces.

Okwany (2016), examined Kenya's foreign policy towards Somalia and its contribution to increased insecurity within Kenya. This study considers how Kenyan government reactions and miscalculations in response to Al-Shabaab attacks have further led to increased radicalization and resultant attacks. The research uses qualitative approach delved into various incidents and operations including 'operation Linda Nchi,' cases of extrajudicial killings, 'nyumba kumi' and 'operation usalama watch' and their impact on security and the tourism industry in Kenya. The study opens the 'black box' of Kenya's foreign policy decisions from 2011 to 2016, illustrating

how these policies have inadvertently contributed to the insecurity and instability within Kenya, particularly through actions that have exacerbated Al-Shabaab's influence and activities. The findings imply that a re-evaluation of Kenya's foreign policy towards Somalia is necessary to address the root causes of insecurity and reduce the impact of terror related activities in the country.

Midiwo (2020) examined the effect of the territorial border dispute between Kenya and Somalia on foreign policy behaviour, with an emphasis on the maritime border dispute between 2009 and 2019. Theoretical framework adopted in the study is based on realism, which underlines the relevance of state centrality, state's national interests and power dynamics. The study findings reveal that the dispute over the maritime border, driven by the need to protect economic resources and territorial integrity, has strained diplomatic relations and created uncertainties in regional security efforts. Kenya prefers a political resolution to restore relations, while Somalia seeks a legal approach. The findings suggest that adopting foreign policy options that safeguard Kenya's territorial integrity and national interests, while exploring political solutions in the spirit of good neighborliness, would benefit both nations by enabling the exploitation of valuable seabed resources. The findings indicate that both nations would benefit by exploiting the valuable seabed resources if it combined foreign policy options that protect Kenya's territorial integrity and national interests, while finding a way to politically solve the dispute, in the spirit of good neighborliness. The findings provide an insight into why pragmatic foreign policy should be preferred over the traditional approach in resolving territorial disputes to enhance regional stability and cooperation.

Kenyanya (2022), examined Kenya's foreign policy towards the fight against terrorism between 1998 and 2018. The study highlights that Kenya's foreign policy, traditionally based on diplomatic coexistence, state security, and non-interference, has adapted to address the increasing threat of terrorism. Using both qualitative and quantitative methods, the research involved personnel from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, diplomats, and security agencies. The findings reveal that Kenya has effectively evolved its foreign policy to combat terrorism through policies and legislation, including the adoption of the United Nations Global Strategy and the Plan of Action on Preventing Violent Extremism. Military deterrence emerged as the most effective instrument in Kenya's foreign policy arsenal. The study concludes that Kenya's foreign policy has successfully adapted to counter terrorism, recommending further alignment and restructuring to enhance security and

regional cooperation. These insights assist policymakers in developing strategies that strengthen international relationships and effectively combat terrorism.

Yigzaw and Mengisteab (2024) analyzed the effectiveness of Ethiopia's and Kenya's military interventions in Somalia as instruments of their foreign policy post-1991. Utilizing a comparative case study methodology and the 'good enough' theoretical approach, the study examines whether these military actions achieved their intended foreign policy outcomes. The findings indicate that both Ethiopia's and Kenya's military deployments in Somalia largely failed to meet their foreign policy goals. The study concludes that relying solely on hard power without integrating soft power strategies is generally ineffective. This suggests that for military interventions to succeed in achieving foreign policy objectives, they need to be complemented with diplomatic and developmental efforts. These insights highlight the limitations of military force alone in foreign policy and emphasize the importance of a balanced approach combining both hard and soft power.

Gurhan (2020) investigated the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and its peacekeeping efforts from 2011 to 2016, focusing on their impact on Somalia's state-building process and public perception of peacebuilding. The study addresses the conflict typologies during this period, AMISOM's involvement in peacekeeping, and the measures implemented by the Somali government. Using both primary data (through questionnaires and interviews) and secondary data, the research finds that while AMISOM has helped restore law and order, insecurity persists at lower levels. The slow progress in state-building is attributed to internal conflicts, the commoditization of security, external interference, and a thriving war economy. The study recommends disarmament of militias and an inclusive negotiation process to achieve lasting peace and stability. These findings highlight the complex challenges of peacekeeping and state-building in conflict zones and the need for comprehensive strategies that address both security and political reconciliation.

Imbiakha, Okoth and Were (2020) assessed the role of military diplomacy and military intervention in managing intrastate conflicts in the Horn of Africa, focusing on the Somalia and Sudan crises. Employing the just war theory, the study involved peace groups and individuals engaged in peace processes, with key informants from various organizations such as the AU, IGAD, EASF, UNMISS, UNAMID, and AMISOM. Using purposive sampling and snowballing, data were collected through interviews and questionnaires, analyzed with a Concurrent Nested (Embedded)

Design. The findings reveal an interface between military diplomatic tools and military intervention, highlighting that arms transfers, though common, often prolong conflicts and increase hostility. Complementary efforts from peacekeeping forces, humanitarian agencies, and NGOs were essential in disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs, enhancing local capacities. The study recommends the 'carpenter's toolbox' model, emphasizing the need for complementary roles of military, police, civilian components, and society in conflict management. This approach underscores the importance of integrating soft power and hard power in diplomatic efforts to achieve effective conflict resolution in the region.

Kibor (2018) provided a contextual analysis of how terrorism has influenced Kenya's foreign policy from 1998 to 2015. The study examines the dimensions and factors driving terrorism and its impact on Kenya, assessing the effectiveness of Kenya's foreign policy in combating this threat. This research adopts the instrumental approach which uses secondary data resources from scholarly journals, academic literatures and media reports. The findings indicate that Kenya's foreign policy has struggled to address terrorism effectively, particularly in terms of border control and institutional weaknesses. Despite financial constraints, terrorism has fostered enhanced cooperation between Kenya and other nations, notably the United States, Israel, and Britain, positioning Kenya as a strategic partner in the global war on terrorism. Through this cooperation, Kenya has strengthened external relations with the Western countries and like as a result of this has benefited in security and diplomatic support. The study underscores the need for improved institutional frameworks and sustained international collaboration to effectively combat terrorism and secure national interests.

COMPLEX STABILIZATION EFFORTS

The International Crisis Group (2024) provided a critical analysis of Kenya's military intervention in Somalia, known as Operation Linda Nchi, initiated in October 2011. The intervention aimed to combat Al-Shabaab and stabilize Somalia's Juba Valley but faced significant challenges due to inadequate preparation and the complexities of guerrilla warfare. The operation was driven by cross-border security concerns, including kidnappings, refugee influx, and Al-Shabaab's radical influence. Despite initial hopes for a swift campaign, the Kenyan Defence Forces (KDF) encountered difficulties with unfamiliar terrain, unreliable Somali allies, and the guerrilla tactics of Al-Shabaab. The intervention has had unintended consequences, such as potential

destabilization of Kenya's North Eastern Province, inter-clan discord, and radicalization of Kenyan Somalis. To achieve a positive outcome, the report suggests that Kenya needs a well-defined exit strategy and effective collaboration with international partners to support reconciliation and local governance in Somalia. The intervention highlights the complexities and risks associated with military engagements in intrastate conflicts and the importance of comprehensive planning and international cooperation.

Porcuna (2020) examined Kenya's evolving foreign policy, highlighting its transition from dependency to dynamism within the broader context of the "Africa Rising" narrative. The study examined how Kenya, once a colony, has emerged as a key power in East Africa and sub-Saharan Africa, adapting its foreign policy to align with changing global dynamics at the end of the 20th century. Kenya's strategy now includes diversified partnerships, particularly with Russia and China, emphasizing South-South cooperation over traditional donor-recipient relationships with powers like the United Kingdom and the United States. The study also analyzes Kenya's influence in East Africa, positioning itself as the region's leading economy. This shift underscores Kenya's strategic efforts to strengthen bilateral and multilateral relations, promoting economic and political goals through diversified and dynamic foreign policy approaches. These findings imply that Kenya's foreign policy evolution reflects its growing assertiveness and adaptability in the international arena, fostering more balanced and mutually beneficial global partnerships.

Hansen, Lid, and Okwany (2019) examined efforts and actors involved in countering violent extremism (CVE) in Somalia and Kenya, in line with Norwegian policies. The study identifies security challenges, assesses partners and actors, and proposes measures and organizations for the Norwegian Embassy to support in preventing radicalization and combating organized crime. Utilizing primary data from extensive interviews and secondary data, the study highlights that effective CVE strategies require context-specific approaches considering different levels of extremist control: full, semi-peripheral, and clandestine networks. The study emphasizes the importance of state capacity building, especially in areas with semi-peripheral control by extremists, and the critical role of police integrity and local ownership. For Somalia, clan reconciliation and decentralized CVE efforts beyond Mogadishu are recommended. In Kenya, the focus should be on vulnerable regions like the North East and Lamu, enhancing police-community trust, and supporting NGOs working with at-risk individuals. The study underscores the need for

a comprehensive and coordinated CVE strategy, integrating both soft and hard power, to effectively address the root causes of violent extremism in the Horn of Africa.

Xavier and Hamud (2021) analyzed the trends in military diplomacy between Kenya and Britain from 1963 to 2017, focusing on cooperation, trade in military equipment, and the factors influencing these relations across four regimes. Using interdependence liberalism and realism theories, the study employs a historical research design and purposive sampling, gathering data through interviews and focus group discussions, complemented by secondary sources. The findings reveal that military diplomacy between Kenya and Britain has been long-standing, with Britain playing a crucial role in establishing Kenya's military and security structures post-independence. Over time, several agreements facilitated joint training and military assistance. However, geopolitical changes and globalization have led Kenya to diversify its military partnerships, reducing its reliance on British military imports due to economic and political sanctions in the 1990s and Kenya's subsequent look-east policy. New military trade partners include China, Oman, and Jordan, although Britain remains a key player. The study recommends that Kenya strengthen its military diplomacy with Britain to enhance national security and military capacity, with further research suggested on emerging military capabilities, particularly in intelligence gathering and sharing.

Oweke (2019) employed analyzed the foreign policy of Kenya during the Kenyatta and Moi administrations, spanning three decades. The study establishes a strong link between National Role Conceptions (NRCs) and foreign policy performance, with 72% of NRCs translating into foreign policy behavior, and 88% for dominant NRCs. Under Kenyatta, foreign policy reflected six out of eight NRCs, focusing on non-alignment and regional solidarity. In Moi's first decade, three out of four NRCs were evident, supporting liberation movements, while the 1990s saw a shift to military alliances with fewer NRCs reflected. The research underscores the significance of the East African region in Kenya's foreign policy, as reflected by the consistent NRC of Regional Security and Cooperation (RSC) across both administrations. While the study acknowledges limitations, such as a small sample of speeches and the use of Cold War-era typologies, it highlights the utility of role theory in explaining Kenyan foreign policy, offering a novel analytical perspective on the subject.

Njuguna (2016) examined the evolution of Kenya's foreign policy in response to persistent terrorist attacks from 1998 to 2015. Guided by three objectives, the study critically analyzes the interplay between terrorism and foreign policy, traces the evolution of Kenya's foreign policy post-1998 bombing, and evaluates the relationship between security threats and foreign policy. Utilizing secondary data from newspapers due to the public nature of policy announcements and media reports on terrorism, the study tests three hypotheses: Kenya's foreign policy remains reactive rather than proactive, systematic terror attacks have a marginal role in shaping foreign policy, and Kenya's geostrategic position influences its foreign policy. The findings reveal that Kenya's foreign policy is state-centric and largely reactive, evolving significantly in response to recurring terrorist attacks, making it dynamic. Additionally, the study highlights a nexus between foreign policy, terror attacks, refugee hosting, and porous borders. Recommendations include measures to reduce terrorist attacks and enhance the effectiveness of Kenya's foreign policy in addressing these security challenges.

KENYA'S FOREIGN POLICY BEHAVIOR ANALYZED

Through a comprehensive analysis of scholarly works, government reports, and relevant sources, this article synthesizes and critically evaluates various perspectives and empirical data to construct a robust analytical framework for understanding Kenya's foreign policy behavior and its military involvement in Somalia in 2011. The analysis reveals that Kenya's military action in Somalia represented a significant deviation, responding both to direct threats and broader planning needs within the East African security architecture. The threat posed by Al-Shabaab, a terrorist group operating from Somalia, had become a significant concern for Kenya due to cross-border attacks and recruitment of Kenyan youth. The presence of Somali refugees and overall instability in Somalia were also contributing factors to the spread of terrorism and other security challenges. These findings highlight the central role of national security in shaping foreign policy behavior. The study also found that Kenya's military intervention was motivated by economic interests beyond security concerns.

Somalia's instability had negatively impacted Kenya's economy, particularly the tourism and transportation sectors which were crucial sources of foreign exchange, leading the government to take bold action to protect the country's economic and business interests. The intervention aimed to create a more stable environment for trade and investment, demonstrating the multifaceted

nature of foreign policy decision-making and the interplay between different national interests. Regional and international partnerships proved crucial in shaping Kenya's military intervention in Somalia. Kenya collaborated closely with the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and received support from countries like the United States and Ethiopia. These findings underscore the importance of multilateral cooperation and external actors' influence on military intervention decisions. This also demonstrated how Kenya's military cooperation, alongside bilateral talks, remained critical for regional security arrangements.

However, Kenya's military intervention in Somalia faced controversy and criticism. Some argued that the intervention contributed to further regional insecurity and instability, while others questioned its effectiveness in achieving stated objectives like defeating Al-Shabaab and stabilizing Somalia. These findings highlight the complex nature of foreign policy decision-making and potential unintended consequences of military interventions. Nevertheless, the article emphasizes military diplomacy's role as a foreign policy instrument. The case study of Kenya Defence Forces in Somalia demonstrates how military assets and personnel can advance foreign policy objectives, including building partnerships, enhancing security, and promoting stability. This suggests that military diplomacy can effectively advance national interests while contributing to regional security and stability, provided it considers the political, social, and economic context.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that Kenya's military involvement in Somalia in 2011 was a complex foreign policy decision driven by a combination of national security interests, economic considerations, and regional partnerships. The threat posed by Al-Shabaab and the instability in Somalia were the primary factors behind Kenya's intervention, underscoring the central role of national security in shaping foreign policy behavior. However, Kenya's military intervention in Somalia was not solely motivated by security concerns but also by a desire to protect and promote its economic interests in the region. This conclusion highlights the multidimensional nature of foreign policy decision-making and the importance of considering the interplay between different national interests when analyzing foreign policy behavior.

Kenya's regional and international partnerships played a significant role in its decision to intervene militarily in Somalia. The support from AMISOM and countries like the United States and Ethiopia emphasizes the importance of multilateral cooperation in addressing regional security challenges.

The countries supported the fight against the threats that Al-Shabaab posed not only in Somalia but the region through the multilateral platform. However, Kenya's intervention also demonstrates the challenges when operating in complex security environments which draws in the risks and the differing narratives in such complex deployments.

Military diplomacy, as exemplified by the case study of Kenya Defence Forces in Somalia, can be an effective instrument of foreign policy in achieving national interests while contributing to regional security and stability. However, the success of military diplomacy depends on a careful consideration of the political, social, and economic context in which it is deployed. Thus, the article emphasizes that understanding the interface between national interests and foreign policy behavior requires a nuanced and contextual analysis that takes into account the complex interplay of security, economic, and political factors. Kenya's military involvement in Somalia in 2011 serves as a compelling case study of how these factors shape foreign policy decision-making in the context of regional security challenges.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that policymakers and scholars adopt a more holistic and multidimensional approach to analyzing foreign policy behavior. This approach should consider the complex interplay of national interests, regional dynamics, and international partnerships, providing a more nuanced understanding of the factors that shape foreign policy decision-making. By doing so, policymakers can develop more effective and sustainable policy responses to regional security challenges. The study also recommends that countries engaging in military interventions carefully consider the potential risks and unintended consequences of their actions. While military engagement can be an effective tool for advancing national interests and contributing to regional security, it can also exacerbate existing conflicts and create new sources of instability. Therefore, policymakers should adopt a more cautious and measured approach to military interventions, prioritizing diplomatic and non-military solutions wherever possible.

Moreover, the study recommends that countries invest in building strong regional and international partnerships to address shared security challenges. The case of Kenya's military involvement in Somalia highlights the importance of multilateral cooperation in addressing regional security threats such as terrorism and instability. By working closely with regional and international partners, countries can pool resources, share intelligence, and develop more effective and

coordinated responses to security challenges. The study further recommends that military diplomacy be more effectively integrated into broader foreign policy strategies. While military engagement can be an effective tool for achieving foreign policy objectives, it should not be seen as a panacea for all security challenges.

Policymakers should adopt a more comprehensive approach to foreign policy that combines military and non-military instruments, such as diplomacy, development assistance, and economic cooperation. Besides, the study recommends that scholars and policymakers pay greater attention to the role of domestic politics in shaping foreign policy behavior. The case of Kenya's military involvement in Somalia underscores the importance of considering the domestic political context in which foreign policy decisions are made. Factors such as public opinion, electoral considerations, and the influence of key interest groups can all shape foreign policy decision-making and should be carefully analyzed in future research on the interface between national interests and foreign policy behavior.

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