



SELINUS UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCES AND LITERATURE

**THE IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT DIPLOMACY ON
GHANA'S FOREIGN POLICY; THE CASE OF AFRICAN
CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA**

By Muta-Wakilu Mahama

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Department of
International Relations
program at Selinus University

Faculty of Arts & Humanities
in fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in International Relations

2024

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved wife, Esther Nketia and my children; Muharibatu

Blessing Mahama, Hamdulai Courage Mahama and Imani-Diata Faith Mahama

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to express my sincere appreciation to my supervisor, Professor Salvatore Fava for His consistent guidance, support, and mentorship throughout my research journey. His expertise and encouragement have played a crucial role in shaping the direction of my study.

I am also deeply grateful to my family and friends for their understanding, encouragement, and patience during the challenging process of conducting this research. Their unwavering support and belief in my abilities have been a constant source of motivation.

I would like to extend a special thank you to all the participants who generously shared their time, knowledge, and experiences for this study. Their valuable insights have significantly enriched my understanding and contributed to the findings of this research.

Once again, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has contributed in any way to the completion of this study. Your support and contributions are deeply appreciated.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION	2
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	3
TABLE OF CONTENTS	4
LIST OF TABLES	8
ABSTRACT	9
CHAPTER ONE	10
INTRODUCTION	10
1.1 Background to the Study	10
1.2 Statement of the Problem	13
1.3 Objectives of the Study	14
1.4 Research Questions	14
1.5 Significance of the Study	14
1.6 Scope of the Study	16
1.7 Organization of the Study	16
CHAPTER TWO	17
LITERATURE REVIEW	17
2.0 Introduction	17
2.1 Conceptual Review	17

2.1.1 Development diplomacy	17
2.1.2 Foreign policy	20
2.1.3 African continental free trade area	23
2.2 Theoretical Review	25
2.2.1 Soft power theory	25
2.3 Empirical Review	27
2.3.1 Cultural assets in development diplomacy and foreign policy	27
2.3.2 Diplomatic strategies for foreign policy goals and agreement success	29
2.3.3 Public diplomacy for foreign policy awareness, understanding, and support	30
2.4 Chapter Summary	33
CHAPTER THREE	35
METHODOLOGY	35
3.0 Introduction	35
3.1 Research design	35
3.2 Population	36
3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Technique	36
3.4 Data and Data Collection	37
3.4.1 Source of data	37
3.4.2 Data collection instrument	38
<i>Validation of the instrument</i>	39

3.4.3 Data collection procedures	40
3.5 Data Analysis	40
3.6 Ethical Considerations	42
3.7 Limitations	42
CHAPTER FOUR	43
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	43
4.1 Introduction	43
4.2 Demographic Details of Participants	43
4.3 To examine Ghana's cultural assets in development diplomacy for AfCFTA and foreign policy	45
4.4 To assess Ghana's diplomatic strategies for AfCFTA goals and agreement success.	55
4.5 To evaluate Ghana's public diplomacy for AfCFTA awareness, understanding, and support	63
4.6 Discussion of Findings	70
4.6.1 Cultural assets in development diplomacy and foreign policy	70
4.6.2 Diplomatic strategies for foreign policy goals and agreement success	71
4.6.3 Public diplomacy for foreign policy awareness, understanding, and support	72
CHAPTER FIVE	74
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	74

5.1 Introduction	74
5.2 Summary of Findings	74
5.3 Policy Implications	76
5.4 Conclusion	77
5.5 Recommendations	77
5.5.1 Use of cultural resources in diplomacy and trade promotion	77
5.5.2 Promotion of cultural exchange programs and partnerships	78
5.5.3 Broaden diplomatic strategies	78
5.5.4 Tackle challenges through training and dialogue	79
5.6 Suggestions for Further Studies	79
REFERENCE	81
APPENDIX 1	87

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1 Sample size determination 32

Table 4.1 Demographic details of participants 39

ABSTRACT

The concept of development diplomacy, integral to a nation's foreign policy, aims to utilise diplomatic channels to foster economic growth, social advancement, and poverty alleviation. The general objective of the study is to investigate how development diplomacy affects Ghana's foreign policy, particularly in relation to the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The study adopted an interpretivist philosophy and employed an inductive approach to delve deeply into how development diplomacy shapes Ghana's foreign policy, particularly regarding the AfCFTA. Qualitative methods, including a case study, were utilized to capture the subjective perspectives of key stakeholders, such as carefully selected policymakers and experts. Data were gathered from interviews with 14 participants, complemented by existing literature and policies, and analyzed thematically to identify patterns and themes. Ethical guidelines were strictly followed throughout the process to safeguard participants and maintain research integrity, despite acknowledging potential limitations such as interview bias and the limited scope of the sample. The findings revealed that Ghana leverages its cultural heritage and adopts a versatile diplomatic approach within the AfCFTA framework, emphasizing cultural diplomacy to strengthen economic and diplomatic ties. By employing various tactics like negotiations, alliances, and public awareness initiatives, Ghana overcomes challenges and advances its objectives under the trade agreement. The study underscores the importance of a comprehensive diplomatic strategy, integrating cultural diplomacy with other approaches, to effectively navigate the complexities of the AfCFTA while safeguarding Ghana's interests and promoting its economic development.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The concept of development diplomacy, integral to a nation's foreign policy, aims to utilise diplomatic channels to foster economic growth, social advancement, and poverty alleviation (Ghana Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, 2021). This study investigates the changing role of development diplomacy within Ghana's foreign policy, with a specific focus on its recent involvement in the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) (Ghana Investment Promotion Centre, 2022).

Ghana's approach to development diplomacy has evolved over time in response to global changes and internal economic challenges. In the initial post-independence period, Ghana's diplomatic stance was characterized by Pan-Africanism and non-alignment, emphasizing solidarity with African nations and cautious distance from established geopolitical blocs (Ghana Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, 2021). However, as the global economic landscape shifted, Ghana adjusted its priorities, placing greater emphasis on economic considerations (Trade Unions in AfCFTA, 2023). The 1980s marked a crucial turning point, with the adoption of market-oriented reforms and a heightened focus on international economic cooperation, influenced by both internal economic challenges and the rise of neoliberal ideologies globally (Ghana Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, 2021).

The democratic transition in 1992 significantly influenced Ghana's diplomatic approach, with political stability and a commitment to democratic governance becoming key factors in attracting foreign investment and promoting economic development (United Nations Development Programme, 2023). Ghana actively sought to strengthen diplomatic ties, creating an environment conducive to foreign investment and facilitating trade relations (Tayo, 2023).

In the post-1992 period, Ghana's development diplomacy took on a multifaceted character, involving both attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) through targeted diplomatic efforts and active participation in regional and global economic forums (Ghana Investment Promotion Centre, 2022). Ghana aims to showcase its economic potential while upholding its commitment to international cooperation for sustainable development (United Nations Development Programme, 2023). Ghana's engagement in regional economic blocs like ECOWAS exemplifies its focus on economic considerations through sub-regional development diplomacy (Trade Unions in AfCFTA, n.d.). Furthermore, active participation in international forums such as the UN and WTO underscores Ghana's commitment to broader global economic cooperation (U.S. Department of State, 2021).

This shift towards development diplomacy is particularly evident in Ghana's proactive involvement in the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) (U.S. Department of Commerce, n.d.). The AfCFTA, designed to create a unified market of over a billion people, represents a critical step towards African economic integration by eliminating trade barriers, enhancing competitiveness, and promoting sustainable development across the continent (World Bank, 2022).

Ghana's decision to host the AfCFTA Secretariat not only reflects its commitment to regional economic cooperation but also acknowledges the potential benefits for national development (African Union, 2023). This active involvement demonstrates a purposeful and strategic application of development diplomacy principles, offering numerous advantages for the nation (Owusu, 2023).

At the heart of Ghana's participation lies the objective of driving economic growth. The AfCFTA is expected to serve as a catalyst for increased intra-African trade, creating expanded market opportunities for Ghanaian businesses (U.S. Department of Commerce, n.d.). By eliminating trade barriers and establishing a unified market, Ghana aims to boost its economic prosperity by tapping into the immense potential of the African market, aligning with development diplomacy principles that emphasise using diplomatic channels for economic development goals (Trade Unions in AfCFTA, n.d.).

Recognizing the AfCFTA's potential to attract foreign investment, Ghana strategically positions itself as an appealing destination for external investors seeking access to a broader consumer base (Owusu, 2023). This aligns with development diplomacy strategies, where diplomatic efforts are directed toward attracting external investment to drive domestic economic development (Trade Unions in AfCFTA, n.d.).

However, Ghana's involvement in the AfCFTA extends beyond economic motives; it is also a diplomatic move to advance regional integration (U.S. Department of State, 2021). Through active engagement, Ghana demonstrates its commitment to promoting common prosperity and enhances its diplomatic standing by contributing to the shaping of Africa's economic destiny (U.S. Department of State, 2021).

The AfCFTA itself aims to establish a single market for goods and services, facilitating easy movement and boosting trade across the continent (African Union, 2023). The World Bank estimates that this agreement could increase Africa's income by \$450 billion by 2035 and intra-African exports by over 81% (World Bank, 2022). According to the UN Economic Commission for Africa, this single-market trade agreement could propel the African economy to reach a staggering \$29 trillion mark by 2050 (African Union, 2023).

Examining Ghana's involvement in development diplomacy and the AfCFTA provides valuable insights into the complex interplay between foreign policy and economic development. This paper seeks to demonstrate how Ghana is utilizing development diplomacy to achieve its national development goals within the framework of the AfCFTA. Ghana's strong participation in the AfCFTA serves as a model for other African nations wishing to employ development diplomacy to advance their own economy.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In an ideal situation, Ghana's foreign policy would perfectly align with the goals of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), using development diplomacy to boost its economic growth and influence in the region (Kabibo, 2022). However, despite Ghana being part of the AfCFTA, it struggles to fully benefit from the agreement because it has not integrated development diplomacy well into its foreign policy framework. This gap has serious consequences, including missed chances for economic advancement, limited leadership opportunities in the region, and reduced effectiveness in advocating for Ghana's interests at the continental level (Gichuhi, 2018).

To tackle these challenges, a proactive approach is needed to better integrate development diplomacy into Ghana's foreign policy towards the AfCFTA. Although existing research offers valuable insights into development diplomacy, cultural assets, and diplomatic strategies, there are still significant gaps, especially in understanding how these concepts apply in African contexts like Ghana (Zhou, 2022; Mariano & Vårheim, 2022). Moreover, there is a notable lack of empirical studies on how development diplomacy directly impacts Ghana's foreign policy, leaving a crucial gap in understanding how diplomatic efforts affect economic integration and regional cooperation within the AfCFTA (Prantl & Goh, 2022).

Therefore, further academic investigation is crucial to fill these gaps and guide policymakers in maximizing the positive effects of development diplomacy on Ghana's involvement with the AfCFTA and other regional initiatives. By addressing these research gaps, policymakers can gain better insights into how to effectively use development diplomacy to further Ghana's interests within the AfCFTA, ultimately boosting the country's overall engagement in regional economic integration efforts.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to investigate how development diplomacy affects Ghana's foreign policy, particularly in relation to the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The study seeks to achieve the following specific objectives.

1. To examine Ghana's cultural assets in development diplomacy for AfCFTA and foreign policy.
2. To assess Ghana's diplomatic strategies for AfCFTA goals and agreement success.
3. To evaluate Ghana's public diplomacy for AfCFTA awareness, understanding, and support.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What are Ghana's cultural assets in development diplomacy for AfCFTA and foreign policy.
2. What are Ghana's diplomatic strategies for AfCFTA goals and agreement success?
3. What is Ghana's public diplomacy for AfCFTA awareness, understanding, and support?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study's findings are a valuable resource for Ghana's government and policymakers. It highlights the crucial role of cultural assets in development diplomacy and suggests strategic approaches to leverage them for enhancing the country's foreign policy goals within the AfCFTA framework. Additionally, the analysis of diplomatic strategies and their impact on AfCFTA goals

provides practical guidance, helping policymakers refine and optimize their approach to international trade agreements and negotiations.

For international organizations and trade partners engaging with Ghana in the context of AfCFTA, the study provides significant insights. It offers a nuanced understanding of Ghana's cultural, diplomatic, and economic aspects, providing a comprehensive view of the negotiation process. This knowledge is vital for fostering effective collaboration and facilitating a more informed engagement with Ghana in the AfCFTA domain.

Within the academic community, the study enhances understanding by exploring the intricate interplay between development diplomacy, cultural assets, and economic strengths in the context of foreign policy, with a specific focus on AfCFTA. Furthermore, the research contributes to academic literature, laying the groundwork for future studies investigating the role of cultural diplomacy and economic strengths in shaping a country's foreign policy.

Diplomatic and cultural institutions can use the study as a guide to refine their strategies and activities. By aligning their efforts with the broader goals of AfCFTA, these institutions can significantly contribute to the success of foreign policy objectives. The findings offer practical insights that can inform the development and implementation of initiatives aimed at fostering diplomatic and cultural relations.

The assessment of public diplomacy in the study is particularly relevant for the general public and civil society. It serves as a valuable tool for creating awareness and understanding of AfCFTA, encouraging increased support and engagement from citizens in the national discourse on foreign policy and economic integration. This aspect contributes to building a more informed and participatory society.

1.6 Scope of the Study

Geographically, Ghana was the primary focus, with an investigation into how development diplomacy influenced its foreign policy. The secondary focus shifted to the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), analyzing Ghana's unique participation in the AfCFTA. The research explored how Ghana's cultural assets contributed to development diplomacy, particularly in the context of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and foreign policy. It assessed Ghana's diplomatic approaches to achieving AfCFTA goals, examined public diplomacy initiatives to increase awareness and support for AfCFTA, and analyzed Ghana's economic strengths and contributions to the agreement. Importantly, the study took a time-focused approach, defining a specific timeframe to thoroughly examine Ghana's involvement in development diplomacy within the AfCFTA framework. The study drew inspiration from the soft power theory, which served as the underlying theoretical framework supporting the study.

1.7 Organization of the Study

In this study, Chapter one presents the introduction with the background to the study, the problem statement, outlines the objectives of the research, poses research questions, and discusses the significance, scope, and limitations of the study. A comprehensive evaluation of the literature is conducted in Chapter two, which includes topics such as the development of development diplomacy in Ghana, the theoretical framework supporting the study, the notion of economic diplomacy, and the applicability of earlier research. The research design, data gathering strategies, key stakeholder interviews, data analysis methodologies, ethical issues, and study constraints are all covered in detail in Chapter three. The study's data presentation, analysis and interpretations are covered in chapter four. Chapter five concludes with a summary of the study's main findings, conclusions, and implications for Ghana's foreign policy. It also offers recommendations for future research and highlights the importance of bolstering development diplomacy initiatives and enhancing collaboration within the framework of the AfCFTA for policymakers.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The general objective of the study is to investigate how development diplomacy affects Ghana's foreign policy, particularly in relation to the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). This chapter provides a critical review of literature on the subject from related publications from articles, theses, and journals. The review covers the following sections; conceptual review, theoretical review, and empirical review.

2.1 Conceptual Review

The study undertakes a critical review of two concepts as far as the subject matter is concerned. These are development diplomacy and foreign policy. This section also provides an overview of the AfCFTA.

2.1.1 Development diplomacy

Development diplomacy is a nuanced and multifaceted strategy that involves the strategic application of diplomatic tools to promote the well-being and advancement of developing nations. Its primary goal is to offer assistance and aid to support the growth of these states, often intertwining with public diplomacy to align with broader foreign policy objectives (Zielińska, 2016). Additionally, the concept extends to sustainable development diplomacy, which applies diplomatic principles to negotiate agreements and advocate for shared agendas in the realm of sustainable development (Moomaw et al., 2016). This approach underscores the significance of diplomatic practices in addressing global challenges and facilitating collaborative efforts towards sustainable practices and equitable development.

Diplomacy, in a general sense, is a recognized methodology for influencing the decisions and behavior of foreign governments and populations through dialogue and negotiation. While not synonymous with foreign policy, diplomacy is crucial for cultivating relations with other nations and ensuring mutual cooperation. It also plays a vital role in conflict resolution and maintaining global peace (Freeman & Marks, 2024). These definitions and concepts collectively highlight the intricate and interconnected nature of development diplomacy, emphasizing its integral role within broader diplomatic efforts in international relations.

Development diplomacy, a critical aspect of international relations, encompasses various perspectives and methodologies to promote global cooperation and progress. The advent of digital technologies has revolutionized communication and engagement in international relations, giving rise to digital diplomacy. This approach utilises social media platforms, data analytics, and other digital tools to achieve development objectives. Governments, for example, can use social media to disseminate information about development programs, involve citizens in policy discussions, and build trust with international partners. Research by Hedling & Bremberg (2021) underscores the potential of digital diplomacy to enhance transparency, accountability, and citizen participation in development processes.

Public diplomacy plays a crucial role in shaping international perceptions and building goodwill, as emphasized by Joseph Nye (2008) in the context of "smart power." Nye argues that effective communication strategies are essential in influencing public opinion abroad. Development diplomacy can leverage public diplomacy tools such as cultural exchanges, educational programs, and media outreach to enhance understanding and collaboration on issues like poverty reduction, environmental sustainability, and human rights.

The contemporary diplomatic landscape involves a dynamic interplay of bilateral, multilateral, and polyilateral forms of engagement. Bilateral diplomacy encompasses direct interactions between two states, while multilateral diplomacy involves the participation of multiple states in addressing common challenges. Polyilateral diplomacy, as defined by Murray et al. (2011), adopts a flexible configuration of states and non-state actors to tailor approaches to specific development issues.

Abdurahmanli (2021) identifies three distinct types of diplomacy in the era of globalization. First, Track One Diplomacy involves formal negotiations and dialogues among official government representatives. Second, Track Two Diplomacy engages non-governmental actors such as NGOs, academics, and civil society organisations, fostering informal dialogues and collaborative problem-solving initiatives. Lastly, Track 1/2 Diplomacy represents a hybrid approach, combining elements of both official and unofficial diplomacy. This inclusive strategy creates spaces for multi-stakeholder engagement, particularly in addressing development issues, reflecting the evolving nature of diplomacy beyond traditional state-centric paradigms in the contemporary global landscape.

Understanding these diverse perspectives on development diplomacy is crucial for navigating the complex landscape of international cooperation. By effectively employing various diplomatic tools and approaches, stakeholders can collaboratively address global challenges and promote sustainable development. Development diplomacy serves as a catalyst for enhanced global cooperation by facilitating collaboration among states, non-state actors, and international organisations. This collaboration, highlighted by Biermann and Siebenhüner (2016), enables the pooling of resources and expertise to address complex global issues like poverty, hunger, and climate change. Effective development diplomacy also contributes to sustainable development goals (SDGs) by promoting knowledge sharing, technology transfer, and capacity building in developing

countries, as emphasised by Kurbanoglu & Akbulut (2021). Additionally, it plays a crucial role in conflict prevention and resolution by addressing root causes through inclusive economic and social development, ultimately contributing to lasting peace and stability (United States Institute of Peace, 2017). Open and transparent development diplomacy practices can enhance legitimacy and public trust, fostering stronger governance and a sense of global solidarity (Acuto & Rayner, 2020).

Despite its potential benefits, development diplomacy faces challenges that require careful consideration. Unequal power distribution among states and actors can lead to dominance and influence over development agendas, undermining the principle of equal partnership and ownership (Duarte, 2022). The tension between short-term political cycles and long-term development needs is another challenge, as the pursuit of immediate political gains may conflict with the sustainable development goals over time (Kurbanoglu & Akbulut, 2021). Additionally, assessing the impact of development diplomacy interventions poses difficulties due to complex factors and long-term timeframes, making accountability and adaptation challenging (Biermann & Siebenhüner, 2016). The rise of nationalism and populism further complicates matters, as growing sentiments of nationalism can impede international cooperation and undermine multilateral approaches to development, necessitating innovative strategies to foster inclusive dialogue (Acuto & Rayner, 2020).

2.1.2 Foreign policy

Foreign policy, which governs a state's interactions with other nations, is a complex and multifaceted domain. This literature review aims to establish a foundational understanding by exploring fundamental concepts, diverse perspectives, and valuable resources contributing to a deeper comprehension of foreign policy.

At its essence, foreign policy acts as the guiding framework for a state's engagement with the international community (Bátora & Hocking, 2021). It involves crucial decisions related to national security, economic relations, diplomatic engagements, and global participation, making the analysis of foreign policy essential for grasping the intricacies of international relations. Scholars and practitioners highlight three primary lenses through which foreign policy is scrutinized: realism, liberalism, and constructivism (Duryea, 2022; Armstrong et al., 2007). Realism underscores states' pursuit of security in the absence of a global government, while liberalism emphasizes economic interdependence, democracy, and international institutions as peace building factors. Constructivism focuses on how ideas shape the international system, providing unique insights into state interactions on the global stage (Armstrong et al., 2012).

The formulation and execution of foreign policy strategies are influenced by various factors. Key elements within this framework include safeguarding national interests, encompassing the protection of territorial integrity, economic prosperity, and citizen well-being. Power dynamics on the international stage significantly influence states' choices and interactions, and a state's political system, beliefs, and values play a crucial role in shaping foreign policy priorities and approaches. Additionally, domestic factors such as public opinion, political pressures, and economic constraints contribute to the analysis and implementation of foreign policy (Duryea, 2022; Armstrong et al., 2007; Armstrong et al., 2012).

Realism is a fundamental perspective in foreign policy analysis, emphasizing self-interest and power as central components of international relations. Scholars, including Bátora and Hocking (2021), advocate for foreign policies rooted in realism that prioritize a state's national security and military strength. In the realist paradigm, the international arena is perceived as inherently competitive, where states act in pursuit of their interests, employing strategies for survival and dominance.

In contrast, liberalism provides an alternative lens, focusing on cooperation, international institutions, and the promotion of democratic values in foreign policy analysis. Scholars aligned with this perspective advocate for foreign policies emphasizing multilateralism and peaceful conflict resolution. Liberalism envisions a world where collaboration and shared values lead to mutual benefits, with international institutions serving as platforms for dialogue and cooperation among nations (Mowle, 2003).

Constructivism adds another layer to foreign policy analysis, emphasizing the role of shared norms, beliefs, and identities in shaping diplomatic interactions. According to Kurbanoglu and Akbulut (2021), constructivism underscores the importance of cultural understanding and dialogue in forming foreign policy. Unlike realism and liberalism, constructivism contends that the international system is not solely driven by material interests but significantly influenced by the ideas and identities that states hold.

Ghana's foreign policy, dating back to its independence in 1957 and spanning ten different administrations, exhibits remarkable continuity in its core principles (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration [MFAR], n.d). Established during the First Republic, the policy's foundation was shaped by Ghana's historical, geographical, and economic perspectives (MFAR, n.d).

Essentially, Ghana's foreign policy is guided by principles such as non-alignment, Pan-Africanism, and good neighborliness. The commitment to sustaining peace and stability in the West African sub-region is fundamental, reflecting Ghana's dedication to fostering harmonious relations with neighboring nations (MFAR, n.d). Additionally, the country actively promotes regional

integration, supports the African Union, and engages in various multilateral organisations, demonstrating a commitment to collaborative diplomacy on the global stage (MFAR, n.d).

Ghana actively participates in international peacekeeping initiatives under the United Nations and is a member of the International Criminal Court, highlighting its dedication to global peace and justice (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration [MFAR], n.d). Additionally, Ghana's foreign policy goes beyond geopolitical considerations, emphasising close cooperation rooted in shared history and economic interests (MFAR, n.d).

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, working collaboratively with Ghana's diplomatic missions abroad, is entrusted with effectively steering the nation's foreign policy. Through strategic diplomatic initiatives and active engagement on international platforms, Ghana adeptly manages the intricate dynamics of global affairs while steadfastly adhering to its enduring principles and commitments (MFAR, n.d).

2.1.3 African continental free trade area

Initiated in 2018, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is a groundbreaking initiative covering a substantial portion of Africa. Notably, it holds the title of the world's largest free trade area in terms of participating countries (AfCFTA, 2023). The fundamental objective of AfCFTA is to create a unified market for goods and services across Africa, aiming to eliminate trade barriers and boost intra-Africa trade (AfCFTA, 2023).

The implications of AfCFTA are significant, presenting a considerable opportunity for African nations to spur economic growth, alleviate poverty, and attract foreign direct investment (World Bank Group, 2023). The agreement strategically focuses on industrialization, job creation,

and increased investment, positioning itself as a catalyst for enhancing Africa's competitiveness in the medium to long term (AfCFTA, 2023).

The operational phase of AfCFTA, initiated in January 2021, marks a crucial step in its implementation. This phase is expected to drive a substantial increase in intra-African trade by promoting deeper levels of trade liberalisation (Signé, 2022). Additionally, AfCFTA plays a crucial role as one of the flagship projects of Agenda 2063, the African Union's comprehensive development strategy. This strategy envisions transforming the continent into a strong global player (AfCFTA, 2023).

In essence, AfCFTA signifies a transformative influence with the potential to reshape Africa's economic landscape, fostering collaboration, economic diversification, and sustained development. As it progresses, AfCFTA is poised to play a crucial role in realising the socio-economic aspirations outlined in Agenda 2063, representing a significant stride toward a more integrated and prosperous African continent.

Ghana stands at a significant juncture for economic advancement by strategically capitalising on opportunities within the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The key focus areas for maximising AfCFTA's potential encompass trade facilitation, production and value addition, digital trade and e-commerce, institutional strengthening, policy coherence, and the efficient utilisation of tools and resources (Akomea, 2023; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2020; Akoto, 2022; World Trade Organization, 2023; Biney et al., 2021; Ministry of Trade and Industry, 2020; Amoah, 2020; Abor & Adjaye, 2023; Amoah, 2021; United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 2023; AfCFTA Secretariat, 2023; Ghana Export Promotion Authority, 2023; National Development Planning Commission, 2019; United Nations Office for Sustainable Development, 2023; African Development Bank, 2023).

In the domain of trade facilitation, critical measures include the optimization of customs procedures, the development of trade infrastructure, and the simplification of trade regulations to bolster cross-border trade and connectivity (Akomea, 2023; Akoto, 2022; World Trade Organization, 2023). Furthermore, emphasis on production and value addition through the establishment of industrial zones, support for SMEs, and initiatives promoting skills development aligns with overarching goals of enhancing industrial competitiveness and fostering economic diversification (Biney et al., 2021; Amoah, 2020; Abor & Adjaye, 2023). Initiatives in digital trade and e-commerce, such as creating online marketplaces, enhancing digital infrastructure, and advancing digital literacy, are poised to unlock significant opportunities in the digital economy (Amoah, 2021; United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 2023; AfCFTA Secretariat, 2023). Ensuring effective implementation requires a focus on institutional strengthening, policy coherence, and fostering public-private partnerships, emphasizing alignment with national development plans and adopting a multi-stakeholder approach (Ghana Export Promotion Authority, 2023; National Development Planning Commission, 2019; United Nations Office for Sustainable Development, 2023). Leveraging tools and resources, including trade finance instruments, trade information portals, and technical assistance programs, becomes integral for bridging gaps, supporting SMEs, and ensuring compliance with AfCFTA regulations (African Development Bank, 2023; Akomea, 2023; AfCFTA Secretariat, 2023).

2.2 Theoretical Review

2.2.1 Soft power theory

The concept of "soft power" was introduced by political scientist Joseph Nye in 1990 to describe how one country can influence the preferences of another through attraction and persuasion rather than coercion. During the Cold War, the United States utilized its art and culture, such as jazz and the avant-garde Abstract Expressionism movement, which were often government-funded and exported globally, to promote values like intellectual freedom and liberal democracy.

This contrasted with the ideology of the communist Soviet Union. Nye coined the term in response to concerns that the U.S. was overextending itself during the Cold War, potentially leading to a decline in its international standing. While Nye's concept of soft power has evolved over time to adapt to changing political contexts, it has faced criticism for perceived inconsistencies. Nonetheless, the flexibility of the concept allows for adaptation to political change, despite the challenges it may pose for scholars (Nye, 1990; Nye, 2002; Nye, 2004; Layne, 2010).

Nye's articulation of the concept of soft power has been a subject of criticism due to its lack of clarity and thorough explanation. Although introduced in 1990, the concept was not extensively elaborated upon initially, prompting critiques. Subsequent efforts by Nye to develop the idea further, as seen in his later work in 2004, aimed to provide more comprehensive descriptions and explanations of soft power. However, these endeavors still fall short of establishing a coherent theoretical framework and fail to engage with social and political theory rigorously. For instance, Nye's comparison of power to weather and love in his writings raises confusion regarding the precise meaning and implications of his analogies. Moreover, his characterization of power as chaotically distributed underscores the complexity of power dynamics in international relations, highlighting the involvement of various state and non-state actors beyond sovereign countries alone. Nye's conceptualization of soft power as encompassing foreign policy, political values, and culture reflects the multifaceted nature of contemporary global politics, which he likens to a three-dimensional chess game. While critiques of Nye's writings on soft power exist elsewhere, this discussion refrains from further elaboration on those critiques (Nye, 2004; Parmar & Cox, 2010).

The study relied on soft power theory as a conceptual framework to examine how Ghana strategically employs its cultural assets, diplomatic tactics, public outreach, and economic advantages to advance its goals within the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and broader foreign policy endeavors. It explored how Ghana leverages its diverse cultural heritage,

encompassing music, art, literature, and traditions, to cultivate positive relationships with AfCFTA member nations, thereby strengthening its diplomatic engagements and developmental diplomacy.

Furthermore, it assesses Ghana's diplomatic strategies within the AfCFTA context, utilizing soft power instruments like cultural exchanges and educational initiatives to promote its interests and achieve favorable outcomes in negotiations. Additionally, the study evaluates Ghana's public diplomacy efforts aimed at increasing awareness and garnering support for AfCFTA among various stakeholders, both domestically and internationally. Finally, it scrutinizes Ghana's economic strengths and contributions to AfCFTA, examining how its economic achievements and trade partnerships amplified its soft power and diplomatic influence in the region. In essence, soft power theory sheds light on Ghana's use of non-coercive methods to advance its objectives within AfCFTA and broader foreign policy domains (Parmar & Cox, 2010).

2.3 Empirical Review

2.3.1 Cultural assets in development diplomacy and foreign policy

Kabibo (2022) discussed cultural diplomacy in detail in an essay titled "Cultural Diplomacy." The essay explored how cultural diplomacy intersected with traditional diplomacy, public diplomacy, culture, and soft power. It offered a thorough examination of the theoretical discussions in international relations and diplomacy studies, shedding light on how cultural diplomacy was evolving within these academic fields. The essay also analyzed the various aspects of cultural diplomacy, highlighting its importance in international communication, negotiation, and mediation. The author emphasized the role of cultural diplomacy in shaping global interactions and perceptions, and raised questions about whether there was a universal culture in our interconnected world.

Gichuhi (2018) argued that cultural diplomacy, despite being increasingly recognized in the field of International Relations Theory, had not received enough academic attention, particularly concerning Africa and countries like Kenya. The study aimed to address this gap by investigating the role and impact of cultural diplomacy on development, using Kenya as a case study. Soft Power Theory underpinned the study, which employed a descriptive approach and primary data collection through questionnaires. The findings suggested that cultural diplomacy could effectively promote development in Kenya through various mechanisms such as leveraging sports, promoting cultural heritage, and endorsing the national language, Kiswahili.

Zhou (2022) focused on Japan's successful cultural diplomacy, specifically through the operations of the Japan Foundation in North America. The research methodology involved qualitative research, interpretivism, epistemology, and an inductive approach. The thesis comprised three main sections: theory, government policy, and the practical operations of the Japan Foundation. It drew on theoretical frameworks emphasizing the role of cultural diplomacy in soft power, government policies supporting cultural diplomacy, and the practical strategies implemented by the Japan Foundation. The study concluded that Japan's systematic approach had enriched its soft power resources, aligning with principles of achieving victory without direct confrontation.

Mariano & Vårheim (2022) examined the role of libraries, museums, and cultural centers as cultural ambassadors and foreign policy instruments. The scoping review aimed to understand emerging research areas on these institutions in foreign policy and cultural diplomacy within broader research paradigms. Through systematic mapping and analysis of relevant literature, the study identified key concepts, research themes, and knowledge gaps. The findings contributed to discussions on goals, actors, strategies, and instruments in cultural diplomacy, offering recommendations and directions for future research.

The studies suggest a promising outlook for investigating how cultural resources can influence development diplomacy and foreign policy. However, there are areas that need more attention. Some studies present overarching theoretical frameworks but lack real-world evidence, while others focused on specific cases without broader relevance. Although effective strategies are identified, ethical considerations and long-term consequences are often overlooked. Emerging trends such as digital technologies raise intriguing questions about their effectiveness and precise effects. Looking ahead, research should prioritize evaluating interventions, addressing ethical issues, assessing long-term consequences, and conducting detailed analyses across different regional contexts. Only by doing so can we fully understand both the potential and challenges of leveraging cultural resources for positive development and international relations outcomes.

2.3.2 Diplomatic strategies for foreign policy goals and agreement success

Prantl & Goh (2022) stressed the vital role of effective diplomacy in navigating the complexities of today's global environment. They highlight its significance in rallying support for strategic policies aimed at addressing urgent security and policy concerns. Their proposal introduces a strategic diplomacy framework grounded in complex adaptive systems thinking, aiming to expand the range of policy options available for dealing with intricate international issues. However, they recognize a crucial gap in the lack of empirical validation and testing of this framework across various geopolitical contexts. Hence, while their framework offers promising insights, further research is necessary to evaluate its applicability and effectiveness in diverse real-world diplomatic scenarios.

Böhmelt's (2010) study investigated the effectiveness of various diplomatic tracks (ToDs) in intervening during conflicts, identifying Track One Diplomacy as the most successful approach. However, while the study highlights effectiveness, it lacks a thorough analysis of potential drawbacks or unintended consequences associated with Track One Diplomacy. Additionally, there

is a significant gap in examining how ToDs fare in addressing non-traditional security threats beyond conventional conflict scenarios. This gap emphasises the necessity for further exploration into the strengths and limitations of different diplomatic approaches, especially in addressing modern security challenges that go beyond traditional war situations.

Dodd & Collins (2017) conducted an empirical examination of the message strategies employed by embassy Twitter accounts, highlighting a potential deficiency in strategic communication despite the diplomatic nature of these platforms. While their research illuminated the messaging approaches utilized by both Western and Central-Eastern European embassies, there remains a significant gap in understanding how these strategies contribute to tangible diplomatic outcomes or sway public perceptions and attitudes toward foreign policies. Additionally, the study could broaden its scope by conducting a comparative analysis of embassy communication strategies across various digital platforms beyond Twitter. Such a comprehensive approach would offer deeper insights into the effectiveness and influence of embassy communications on diplomatic relations and public opinion.

2.3.3 Public diplomacy for foreign policy awareness, understanding, and support

Tago (2017) aimed to investigate how the concept of public diplomacy is changing in the context of foreign policy and international relations. It examines different definitions, theories, and research methods associated with public diplomacy. The author discussed how there is not a single agreed-upon definition for public diplomacy and explores its relationship with theoretical frameworks like constructivism and realism. The study also highlights the rising use of empirical approaches, such as analyzing texts and social media data, to understand how public diplomacy works and its impact. The study observed that public diplomacy is gaining traction as a significant topic both in academic circles and practical policymaking. This is evident from its frequent mention in policy documents, academic literature, and media discussions. The shift towards empirical research, including studies on soft power rankings and media analysis, suggests a growing interest

in understanding public diplomacy through data-driven methods. In conclusion, the study underscores the importance of public diplomacy in today's international relations and foreign policy landscape. It suggests that while there may be different interpretations of public diplomacy, both constructivist and realist perspectives recognize its relevance. Furthermore, the increasing reliance on empirical methods indicates a trend towards a more evidence-based understanding of public diplomacy practices and their consequences.

Darnton (2019) paper investigated whether public diplomacy can play a role in resolving long-standing international conflicts. It examines the challenges identified by both rationalist and constructivist perspectives regarding domestic obstacles to peace-making efforts on the international stage. Drawing on Robert Putnam's idea of "reverberation," which suggests that diplomats can influence their opponents' willingness to cooperate by engaging with foreign publics, the study analyses a specific historical case: Argentine Ambassador Oscar Camilión's attempts to improve relations with Brazil in 1976–77. Despite eventual reconciliation between the two countries, public diplomacy had minimal impact on this outcome. Internal divisions within Argentina led to conflicting messages towards Brazil, while Brazilian leaders pursued their own public relations campaign, complicating and nearly derailing Camilión's mission. This case sheds light on the complexities of Argentine foreign policy during military rule and offers lessons for scholars and practitioners interested in public diplomacy and conflict resolution.

Brittain-Hale, A. (2023) explored the role of decentralized politics in shaping public discourse and its implications for leadership. Individual global figures have intensified their efforts in public diplomacy, particularly since 2016, amid heightened political unpredictability. The case of Ukraine and President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's use of digital and public diplomacy during the conflict with Russia underscores the significance of examining the impact of individual actors on international relations, beyond just states. The research aims to delve into how digital platforms,

like social media, influence public opinion and shape global events, considering them as powerful channels for political influence.

Ociepka (2018) explored the intersection of public diplomacy and political communication through case studies. The article aimed to summarize these case studies and assess the impact of research in this area on our understanding of political communication. The author utilized case studies to investigate how governments used public diplomacy as a tool in their foreign policy strategies. By referencing the definitions of political communication proposed by Denton and Woodward, as well as McNair, the author applied a network approach to analyse the New Public Diplomacy model within the context of political communication. The findings of the article underscored the growing importance of public diplomacy in contemporary international relations, evident from its widespread adoption by governments. The analysis emphasized the role of research in deepening our understanding of political communication dynamics within the realm of public diplomacy. Additionally, framing public diplomacy through a network approach shed light on the complex and interconnected nature of diplomatic efforts in the modern world. In conclusion, the article stressed the significance of research in shaping our comprehension of political communication processes, particularly within the framework of public diplomacy. Through the examination of case studies and the application of theoretical frameworks, the article contributed to a better understanding of how public diplomacy functioned as a foreign policy tool and its implications for international relations. Furthermore, the adoption of a network approach provided valuable insights into the intricate relationships and interactions involved in diplomatic endeavors, highlighting the importance of continued study and analysis in this field.

In summary, the studies together emphasize the evolving importance of public diplomacy in today's international relations and foreign policy. They highlight the increasing use of empirical methods and acknowledge public diplomacy's relevance from various theoretical viewpoints. By

examining historical case studies, they reveal the difficulties public diplomacy faces in resolving long-standing conflicts, illustrating the complexities of diplomatic endeavors. Furthermore, the exploration of decentralized politics showcases how individual actors and digital platforms play a significant role in shaping global discourse and events. Lastly, the analysis underscores the crucial role of research in deepening our understanding of political communication dynamics within the realm of public diplomacy, advocating for ongoing investigation in this area. Overall, these studies contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of public diplomacy's role, challenges, and implications in contemporary international affairs.

2.4 Chapter Summary

Chapter Two of the research extensively reviews literature focusing on how development diplomacy influences Ghana's foreign policy within the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). This review covers conceptual, theoretical, and empirical aspects. In the conceptual review, the research explores the details of development diplomacy, foreign policy, and AfCFTA, highlighting their importance in fostering global cooperation and sustainable development. Theoretical frameworks such as realism, liberalism, and constructivism are discussed, providing various perspectives for understanding how countries interact internationally. Ghana's foreign policy principles, rooted in non-alignment and Pan-Africanism, are discussed, showing its dedication to regional unity. The empirical review section emphasizes the need for more research to understand precisely how development diplomacy affects Ghana's foreign policy, especially within AfCFTA. Additionally, the research examines AfCFTA's establishment and potential, emphasizing its role in driving economic growth and regional integration in Africa. It also highlights the importance of diplomatic strategies and public diplomacy efforts in achieving foreign policy goals and ensuring the success of agreements like AfCFTA. Finally, Ociepka's (2018) exploration of the relationship between public diplomacy and political communication underscores the increasing

significance of public diplomacy in today's international relations, indicating the necessity for further research to deepen our understanding of its complexities and implications.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

Chapter Three detailed the methods used for the research. Typically, this chapter provided a clear plan for how the study was carried out, ensuring honesty and thoroughness in the research. It presented the research design, population, sample and sampling technique, data and collection, data analysis technique and ethical considerations. It also considered the limitations of the study.

3.1 Research design

The research adopted an interpretivist philosophy, which acknowledged the subjective nature of human experiences and perceptions (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This philosophy aligned with the aim of interpreting and comprehending the meanings attached to development diplomacy within the context of Ghana's foreign policy.

An inductive approach was employed, allowing the researcher to derive insights and theories from the data collected during the study (Bryman, 2016). This approach was conducive to exploring the impact of development diplomacy on Ghana's foreign policy within the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) without preconceived hypotheses, enabling a deeper understanding of the phenomenon.

The research utilised a qualitative strategy, focusing on exploring the dynamics and subjective experiences associated with development diplomacy and its influence on Ghana's foreign policy (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). A qualitative strategy was used to deeply understand social phenomena, human behaviour, and perceptions without using numbers. The study focused on getting a rich and detailed understanding of the data, exploring its meaning, interpretations, and patterns within a particular social or cultural setting.

A case study design was employed, allowing for an in-depth examination of the impact of development diplomacy on Ghana's foreign policy within the context of the AfCFTA (Yin, 2018). The case study focused specifically on Ghana's diplomatic efforts and policies related to the AfCFTA, providing a holistic understanding of the phenomenon. This design enabled the researcher to explore the complexities of diplomatic initiatives and their implications for Ghana's foreign policy.

3.2 Population

The population comprised policymakers and specialists from relevant entities. This included individuals from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration (MFARI), the AfCFTA secretariat, the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI), and representatives from Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). These individuals played crucial roles in shaping Ghana's foreign policy, particularly concerning its engagement with the AfCFTA. They possessed valuable insights and perspectives on diplomatic efforts and policies related to the AfCFTA, making them key informants for the study.

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The researcher employed a purposive sampling approach, ensuring participants were selected based on their expertise, backgrounds, and perspectives on development diplomacy and its impact on Ghana's foreign policy within the AfCFTA framework. This focused selection enhanced the study's ability to gather insights from key stakeholders who played significant roles in diplomatic decision-making and policy implementation (Palinkas et al., 2015).

The study included input from three key individuals from the MFARI: The Director-General of Pan-African Affairs at MFARI, the Chief Director of MFARI, and the Minister for MFARI.

Additionally, specialists from various departments within the AfCFTA secretariat were selected, including the director, chief negotiator, trade analysts from the Trade Policy and Negotiations department, and the director from the Research and Statistics department. Two specialists from the Legal department were also considered: The General Counsel and Legal Officer. At the MoTI, four participants were included: The Director of NACO, the Deputy/Ministerial Advisor on AfCFTA, Trade Policy Analysts/Experts, and the Private Sector Liaison Officer. Finally, one representative from each of the three civil society organizations—Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII), Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA), and Centre for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana)—was selected. In total, there were 17 participants in this study (Palinkas et al., 2015). Table 3.1 presents a summary depicting the sample size determination.

Table 3.1 Sample size determination

Category	Individuals	S ample
MFARI	Director-General of Pan-African Affairs, Chief Director, Minister for MFARI	3
AfCFTA Secretariat	Director, Chief Negotiator, Trade Analysts (Trade Policy and Negotiations), Director (Research and Statistics), General Counsel, Legal Officer	7
MoTI	Director of NACO, Deputy/Ministerial Advisor on AfCFTA, Trade Policy Analysts/Experts, Private Sector Liaison Officer	4
Civil Society Organizations	Representatives from Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII), Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA), Centre for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana)	3
Total		17

3.4 Data and Data Collection

3.4.1 Source of data

The study used two data collection sources; primary and secondary. Primary data comprised information collected directly from original sources (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Primary data was gained through interactions with key stakeholders, including policymakers, specialists, and

representatives from relevant organizations such as the MFARI, the AfCFTA Secretariat, the MoTI, and Civil Society Organizations. These interviews provided first-hand insights, perspectives, and opinions on the impact of development diplomacy on Ghana's foreign policy within the context of the AfCFTA.

On the other hand, secondary data; existing information produced by others for different purposes was used to complement the primary data (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). This included sources such as academic journals, government reports, policy documents, and other relevant literature. Secondary data was used to supplement and contextualize the primary data collected in the study, providing background information, historical context, theoretical frameworks, and empirical evidence related to development diplomacy, Ghana's foreign policy, and the AfCFTA.

3.4.2 Data collection instrument

The study used an interview guide as the data collection instrument. An interview guide is like a roadmap or a list of questions created to help interviewers have organized discussions with participants. It ensures that important topics are addressed consistently in each interview. These guides usually have a mix of questions that require detailed answers and ones that can be answered with a simple yes or no. They also provide space for participants to share their thoughts and stories. Sometimes, they include additional questions to explore interesting points further (Patton, 2015).

The researcher structured the interview guide into two; a section dedicated to collecting demographic information from participants (age, sex, education and experience). Again, the second section focused on the research objectives. A series of open-ended questions was formulated to delve into specific areas, such as Ghana's cultural assets in development diplomacy, its diplomatic approaches regarding AfCFTA, and its endeavors in public diplomacy to raise awareness and garner

support for AfCFTA. The utilization of open-ended questions facilitated in-depth responses. In all, five questions were dedicated to the demographic details of the participants while 20 questions were dedicated to the research objectives. During the interviewing process, the researcher provided a brief introduction to the interview's purpose, asked questions in a logical sequence, actively listened to the interviewee's responses, probed for clarification or elaboration when necessary, and respected the interviewee's time and perspective.

Validation of the instrument

Various data collection methods such as interviews and document analysis were utilised by the researcher to validate findings (Johnson, 2014). This strategy ensured the uniformity of outcomes from diverse sources, consequently reinforcing the dependability of the results.

Integral to the research process was the engagement in discussions with colleagues and field experts (typically the research supervisor) concerning the research design, data collection methods, and preliminary findings (Maxwell, 2013). These dialogues facilitated the provision of constructive criticism and aided in the identification of potential biases or oversights.

Subsequent to data collection, the researcher shared preliminary findings with participants for validation or critique (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). This iterative process allowed participants to authenticate the accuracy and interpretation of the data, thereby amplifying the credibility of the findings.

Throughout the study, the researcher demonstrated reflexivity by acknowledging personal biases, assumptions, and preconceptions (Charmaz, 2014). This introspective approach was documented to enhance transparency and enable readers to assess the reliability of the findings.

3.4.3 Data collection procedures

To explore how development diplomacy influenced Ghana's foreign policy, especially concerning the AfCFTA, the researcher established clear research goals and selected a qualitative approach best suited for the intricate topic. Purposive sampling was employed to select participants who could provide valuable insights into Ghana's stance on the AfCFTA. Interviews were utilised to capture diverse viewpoints and understand the dynamics behind Ghana's diplomatic strategies. Additionally, relevant documents were analyzed to deepen the findings. Throughout the process, data recording for accuracy and the application of qualitative analysis techniques such as coding were pivotal in identifying trends and themes. Strategies such as member checking and peer debriefing were implemented to ensure credibility. Finally, the researcher synthesized the findings into a detailed report, incorporating descriptive accounts and quotes to support the conclusions and contribute to the academic discourse on Ghana's development diplomacy and foreign policy.

3.5 Data Analysis

The study adopted a qualitative analysis technique, typically thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a way of examining qualitative data to find and understand patterns or themes. It is adaptable and can be used in different areas of research to discover important insights. This method usually includes steps like getting familiar with the data, coding it, identifying themes, reviewing them, and then writing up the findings (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The researcher began by preparing the data for analysis, which involved tasks such as transcribing interviews, converting handwritten notes into digital format, and organizing observational field notes. Care was taken to ensure that all data was well-organized and securely stored.

After data preparation, the researcher delved into the data by thoroughly reading through transcripts, notes, and other materials multiple times. Detailed notes were taken, important sections were highlighted and initial patterns or impressions were noted.

Following familiarization, the researcher proceeded to code the data by assigning descriptive labels or tags to different sections. This process facilitated the organization of the data into meaningful categories based on themes, concepts, or patterns. Both manual coding and software tools were utilized as needed.

Once coding was completed, the researcher analyzed the coded segments to identify recurring themes, patterns, or relationships within the data. Attention was paid to similarities, differences, and connections between various codes to gain a deeper understanding of the research topic.

The identified themes and patterns were interpreted in the context of the research questions. The researcher considered the broader context of the data and its relevance to the overall topic, reflecting on the implications of the findings and their contribution to understanding the research area.

To ensure the accuracy of the analysis, the researcher considered conducting member checking, where interpretations were shared with participants to validate their accuracy and relevance. This step aimed to ensure that the participants' perspectives were accurately represented in the analysis.

The researcher integrated and synthesized the identified themes and patterns to develop a coherent and comprehensive narrative aligned with the research goals. Quotes, examples, and interpretations were used to support the arguments and conclusions drawn from the data.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Implementing a comprehensive set of measures was crucial to ensure the ethical conduct of the study. These measures included obtaining informed consent from participants, prioritising the privacy and confidentiality of gathered information, and ensuring voluntary participation with the option to withdraw at any time. Throughout the study, the researcher remained committed to honesty and integrity, disclosing any potential conflicts of interest or biases. Seeking approval from ethical review boards, respecting participant autonomy and diversity, and maintaining open communication were all integral parts of the process.

3.7 Limitations

The study recognized the constraints inherent in its qualitative methodology, as interviews could introduce bias. While purposive sampling deepened the analysis, it limited the generalizability of findings. Despite providing depth, the case study design might not fully capture the complexities of Ghana's foreign policy. The exploratory nature of the analysis could result in less formal findings. Additionally, relying on key individuals within departments might restrict the inclusion of diverse perspectives. However, despite these limitations, the study aimed to offer a comprehensive understanding of how Ghana's foreign policy is influenced by development diplomacy within the context of the AfCFTA.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

Chapter Four deals with the presentation and analysis of the research findings. This chapter explores the collected data, providing insights and interpretations. The discussion section then contextualizes these findings within existing literature and theoretical frameworks, highlighting their real-world implications.

4.2 Demographic Details of Participants

Participant demographic details in the study includes factors such as age, gender, education, and experience. Analyzing demographic information helped the researcher understand how various demographic groups view the influence of development diplomacy on Ghana's foreign policy and its involvement in the AfCFTA initiative. Table 4.1 presents the demographic details of participants.

Table 4.1 Demographic details of participants

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	9	64.29%
	Female	5	35.71%
Age Group	25-35	2	14.29%
	30-40	4	28.57%
	35-45	2	14.29%
	40-50	4	28.57%
	45-55	1	7.14%
	50-60	1	7.14%

Education

Bachelor's Degree	6	42.86%
Master's Degree	4	28.57%
Ph.D.	2	14.29%
LL.B., LL.M.	2	14.29%

Experience

1-5 years	1	7.14%
6-10 years	5	35.71%
11-15 years	3	21.43%
15-above years	5	35.71%

Source: Field data (2024)

Table 4.1 presents the demographic details of participants. This table breaks down the participants based on key factors such as their gender, age, education, and work experience. Regarding gender, there were 9 male participants, making up 64.29% of the total, and 5 female participants, which is 35.71%. Looking at age groups, the most common were those between 30-40 and 40-50, with 4 participants each, making up 28.57% of the total for each group. Other age groups had fewer participants, ranging from 1 to 2 people. In terms of education, the majority had Bachelor's degrees, making up 42.86% of the total. Following closely were those with Master's degrees, accounting for 28.57%. Ph.D. and LL.BLL.M. holders each represented 14.29% of the total. Examining work experience, participants were evenly spread across different categories. The most common were those with 6-10 years and 15 or more years of experience, with 5 participants each, making up 35.71% of the total for each group. Other experience categories had fewer participants, ranging from 1 to 3 individuals.

The study shows a noticeable overrepresentation of male participants compared to females, suggesting a gender imbalance within the sample under investigation. The prevalence of

participants in the age brackets of 30-40 and 40-50 implies a higher engagement from individuals within these age ranges. The predominance of Bachelor's and Master's degree holders indicates a skew towards participants with higher educational attainment, potentially impacting result interpretation and generalizability. However, the relatively even distribution across various experience categories, particularly in the 6-10 years and 15 or more years brackets, suggests a diverse range of perspectives, which could enrich the study's insights.

4.3 To examine Ghana's cultural assets in development diplomacy for AfCFTA and foreign policy

Firstly, the researcher aimed to understand how Ghana's cultural heritage influences its participation in the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and shapes its foreign policy. This investigation delves into the impact of Ghana's cultural richness on its economic interactions within AfCFTA and its diplomatic relations with other member states. Across MFARI, the AfCFTA Secretariat, and MoTI, consensus exists on how Ghana's cultural legacy enhances trust among member states, eases negotiations, and drives economic advancement. Strategies like cultural events, exchanges, and incorporating Ghanaian culture into marketing efforts are highlighted for their efficacy in achieving these objectives. The following question was posed to the participants.

How does Ghana's cultural heritage contribute to AfCFTA success and shape foreign policy?

The following are excerpts shared by the participants.

MFARI

“Ghana's cultural legacy bolsters the competitive edge of local products in the AfCFTA marketplace”.

“Cultural gatherings reinforce diplomatic bonds and the global image of Ghana”.

AfCFTA Secretariat

“Ghana's cultural heritage cultivates trust among member states, smoothing negotiation processes”.

“Integrating Ghanaian culture into marketing initiatives amplifies export prospects and economic advancement”.

“Cultural exchange initiatives fortify solidarity among AfCFTA nations”.

MoTI

“Ghana's cultural heritage fortifies alliances with African nations, furthering diplomatic Goals”.

“Utilizing culture in negotiations fosters collaboration and mutual comprehension”.

Civil Society Organizations

“Ghana's cultural heritage safeguards inclusive trade policies that mirror diverse societal concerns”.

“Preserving cultural heritage contributes to national identity formation and social unity”.

The quotations underscore Ghana's culture's significant impact on its trade and diplomacy. MFARI and the AfCFTA Secretariat suggest that Ghana's cultural heritage directly aids its products' success in the AfCFTA market, crucial for economic advancement. Moreover, MFARI emphasizes how cultural events bolster Ghana's global reputation and foster positive international relations. The AfCFTA Secretariat and MoTI stress Ghana's culture's role in fostering trust, communication, and cooperation among member states. They advocate for using Ghana's cultural identity in marketing to boost exports and drive economic growth. Encouraging cultural exchange within the AfCFTA is seen as vital for promoting understanding and solidarity among member nations. Civil Society Organizations highlight Ghana's culture's role in shaping fair trade policies that are inclusive and promote a sense of belonging. Overall, these observations underline the significant impact of Ghana's culture on economic success, diplomatic relations, and social harmony, both domestically and internationally.

Secondly, the researcher sought specific instances where Ghana's cultural assets have strengthened its diplomacy within AfCFTA. This study aims to showcase concrete examples of how elements of Ghanaian culture, like music, dance, cuisine, or craftsmanship, have been used to strengthen diplomatic relations and further Ghana's interests in AfCFTA negotiations. The findings underscore Ghana's cultural heritage's vital role in bolstering diplomatic relations and affirming its presence in the AfCFTA. Different sources highlight various facets of Ghanaian culture, including symbols, festivals, music, dance, arts, cuisine, architecture, landmarks, and programs. These elements are pivotal in facilitating cultural exchange, fostering understanding among member states, elevating Ghana's cultural legacy, and strengthening its regional diplomatic influence within the AfCFTA context. The following question was posed to the participants.

Can you provide an example of Ghana's cultural assets enhancing AfCFTA diplomacy?

The following are excerpts shared by the participants.

MFARI

“Ghana's iconic kente cloth and cultural festivals like Homowo and Panafest bolster diplomatic ties and showcase the country's heritage”.

AfCFTA Secretariat

“Integrating Ghanaian music and dance enlivens diplomatic gatherings, fostering cultural exchange among member states”.

“Highlighting Ghana's arts and crafts at trade events amplifies its cultural legacy and diplomatic sway”.

MoTI

“Serving traditional Ghanaian cuisine at AfCFTA meetings fosters cultural understanding and camaraderie among delegates”.

“Showcasing Ghana's architecture and landmarks to visiting delegations reinforces its cultural heritage and diplomatic bonds”.

Civil Society Organizations

“Organizing cultural programs and workshops featuring Ghanaian expressions promotes collaboration among AfCFTA nations”.

“Backing initiatives in Ghanaian arts and culture boosts the country's diplomatic influence on the regional stage”.

The participants from MFARI, the AfCFTA Secretariat, and MoTI all stress the importance of utilising Ghana's cultural symbols, such as the iconic kente cloth, music, dance, cuisine, architecture, and landmarks, to strengthen diplomatic ties and showcase the country's rich heritage. This emphasizes the role of cultural artifacts and traditions as diplomatic tools, which enhance Ghana's global image and influence.

Moreover, both the AfCFTA Secretariat and MoTI emphasize the significance of incorporating Ghanaian cultural elements like music, dance, cuisine, and arts and crafts into diplomatic gatherings and trade events. This highlights the importance of cultural exchange in fostering understanding, camaraderie, and collaboration among member states, thus contributing to a more interconnected and harmonious diplomatic environment. Additionally, participants across all groups emphasise the proactive promotion of Ghanaian culture through various initiatives, including cultural programs, workshops, and exhibitions. These efforts aim to amplify Ghana's cultural legacy and diplomatic influence regionally and internationally by celebrating and disseminating its cultural expressions. Civil Society Organizations particularly underscore the potential of cultural diplomacy to enhance Ghana's regional influence within the AfCFTA, further highlighting the integral role of cultural diplomacy in Ghana's diplomatic engagements and regional influence.

Moreover, the study explored how Ghana can effectively use its cultural heritage to improve its global economic position within AfCFTA. It analyses strategies for incorporating cultural

elements into trade promotion, marketing, and investment efforts to leverage Ghana's unique cultural identity as a competitive advantage in the AfCFTA market. The findings underscore the crucial role of Ghana's cultural heritage in stimulating economic development, cultivating global partnerships, and preserving its cultural legacy within the context of the AfCFTA. The following question was posed to the participants.

How can Ghana better use its culture to boost global economic standing via AfCFTA?

The following are excerpts shared by the participants.

MFARI

“Utilizing Ghana's cultural heritage in marketing can amplify the presence of Ghanaian goods globally within AfCFTA.”

“Initiating cultural tourism ventures to exhibit Ghana's diverse heritage can draw international tourists and stimulate economic progress.”

AfCFTA Secretariat

“Infusing cultural aspects into trade promotion schemes can set apart Ghanaian products and services, heightening their competitiveness worldwide”.

“Partnering with cultural bodies and artists to craft promotional materials that celebrate Ghana's cultural wealth can elevate the nation's global reputation and allure investment”.

“Facilitating cultural exchange initiatives with AfCFTA peers can nurture economic collaborations and ease trade bonds”.

MoTI

“Offering financial backing and incentives to cultural ventures can ignite innovation and progress within Ghana's cultural sectors”.

“Reinforcing intellectual property rights for traditional knowledge and cultural expressions can preserve Ghana's cultural legacy and foster economic advancement”.

“Investing in infrastructure supporting cultural tourism can spawn jobs and revenue streams for local communities”.

Civil Society Organizations

“Championing policies prioritizing cultural conservation can safeguard Ghana's cultural endowments and drive sustainable development within AfCFTA”.

Participants from MFARI, the AfCFTA Secretariat, and MoTI underscore the potential of Ghana's cultural heritage in boosting economic growth and international standing. They advocate for the integration of cultural elements into various aspects of economic promotion, including marketing, tourism ventures, and trade initiatives, to enhance the competitiveness of Ghanaian goods and services within the AfCFTA and on the global stage. This highlights the economic significance of cultural heritage in driving trade, attracting investment, and fostering overall progress.

Moreover, the AfCFTA Secretariat emphasizes the importance of incorporating cultural aspects into promotional materials to elevate Ghana's reputation and attract investment. By collaborating with cultural bodies and artists, they aim to showcase Ghana's cultural richness and distinguish its products and services in the global marketplace. This underscores the potential of cultural promotion as a strategy to enhance international recognition and stimulate economic development. Additionally, the emphasis on cultural exchange initiatives by participants from the AfCFTA Secretariat highlights the role of cultural diplomacy in nurturing economic collaborations and facilitating smoother trade interactions among member states within the AfCFTA framework. These efforts contribute to mutual prosperity and growth, demonstrating the interconnectedness between Ghana's cultural heritage and its economic advancement within the AfCFTA and beyond. Furthermore, Civil Society Organizations stress the importance of prioritizing policies that conserve Ghana's cultural heritage to drive sustainable development within the AfCFTA. They advocate for measures to safeguard cultural endowments, preserve traditional knowledge, and protect intellectual property rights, highlighting the role of cultural conservation in promoting sustainable development and preserving national identity within the AfCFTA.

Furthermore, the researcher investigates how traditional Ghanaian practices impact trade negotiations in AfCFTA. This inquiry aims to reveal how cultural norms, values, and customs influence Ghana's trade diplomacy, negotiation strategies, and decision-making within the AfCFTA framework. The following question was posed to the participants. From the findings, Ghana's strategy in AfCFTA negotiations is deeply rooted in its cultural heritage. By prioritizing hospitality, storytelling, and consensus-building, Ghana draws on its traditions to foster a conducive atmosphere, facilitate mutual understanding, advocate for equitable trade, and ensure that agreements align with its values and priorities. The following question was posed to the participants.

Share thoughts on traditional Ghanaian practices influencing trade negotiations in AfCFTA.

The following are excerpts shared by the participants.

MFARI

“Ghana's traditional customs of hospitality and respect create a favorable environment for diplomatic talks in AfCFTA”.

“Storytelling and oral traditions are effective tools for expressing Ghana's trade interests and positions in negotiations”.

“Ghana's focus on consensus-building and communal decision-making informs collaborative approaches to AfCFTA negotiations”.

AfCFTA Secretariat

“Integrating traditional Ghanaian rituals and ceremonies into negotiation sessions fosters cultural understanding among member states”.

“Ghana's values of reciprocity and mutual benefit serve as guiding principles for fair trade agreements in AfCFTA”.

“Embracing Ghana's cultural diversity promotes unity among AfCFTA negotiators”.

MoTI

“Traditional Ghanaian trading practices like bartering inform negotiation strategies in AfCFTA”.

“Ghana's rich history in trade enhances its credibility and influence in AfCFTA negotiations”.

“Using traditional symbols and proverbs aids in conveying complex ideas during negotiations”.

Civil Society Organizations

“Advocating for the inclusion of traditional Ghanaian customs ensures that AfCFTA agreements align with Ghanaian interests and values”.

Participants from MFARI and the AfCFTA Secretariat emphasize Ghana's traditional values like hospitality, respect, and consensus-building as key factors in creating a positive atmosphere for diplomatic talks within the AfCFTA. These values encourage collaboration and unity among negotiators, fostering constructive dialogue and decision-making. Both the AfCFTA Secretariat and MoTI stress the significance of incorporating traditional Ghanaian rituals, ceremonies, and values such as reciprocity, mutual benefit, and unity into negotiation sessions. This integration aims to enhance cultural understanding among member states, guide the formulation of fair trade agreements, and bolster Ghana's credibility and influence in AfCFTA negotiations. Additionally, MoTI highlights how traditional Ghanaian trading practices, such as bartering, influence negotiation strategies, while Civil Society Organizations advocate for the inclusion of these customs in AfCFTA agreements to ensure they align with Ghanaian interests and values. These efforts collectively highlight the intertwined relationship between Ghana's cultural heritage and its diplomatic engagements within the AfCFTA, demonstrating the role of culture in shaping negotiation processes and outcomes.

Finally, this research examines how Ghana can use its cultural diversity to achieve diplomatic goals and promote sustainable development within AfCFTA. It explores ways to harness Ghana's diverse cultural landscape to facilitate intercultural dialogue, foster relationships with other member states, and drive inclusive economic growth in the AfCFTA region. From the findings, Ghana's rich cultural heritage offers a valuable resource to boost its position within the AfCFTA. Utilizing cultural diversity in negotiations and promoting exchange programs emerge as significant strategies. Cultural diplomacy efforts can encourage collaboration and highlight Ghana's strengths, while integrating cultural aspects into trade promotion attracts investment and benefits communities. The following question was posed to the participants.

In your view, how can Ghana leverage its cultural diversity for diplomatic gains and sustainable development within AfCFTA?

The following are excerpts shared by the participants.

MFARI

“Ghana can utilize its rich cultural heritage to strengthen diplomatic ties and foster collaboration among AfCFTA member states”.

“Leveraging cultural diversity can boost Ghana's influence in regional trade negotiations, promoting sustainable development”.

“Cultural exchange programs offer opportunities to enhance economic growth and development within AfCFTA through strengthened ties with other African nations”.

AfCFTA Secretariat

“Ghana's cultural diversity can facilitate intercultural dialogue and mutual respect among member states, fostering cooperation within AfCFTA”.

“Cultural diplomacy initiatives, like festivals and exhibitions, can showcase Ghana's cultural richness and contribute to sustainable development goals”.

“Embracing cultural diversity positions Ghana as a leader in promoting inclusive economic growth within AfCFTA”.

MoTI

“Incorporating cultural elements into trade promotion enhances Ghana's global competitiveness and attracts investment for sustainable development”.

“Cultural tourism initiatives leverage Ghana's cultural assets to create jobs and empower local communities economically”.

“Collaboration with cultural institutions drives innovation and entrepreneurship, leveraging Ghana's cultural diversity in key economic sectors”.

Civil Society Organizations

“Advocating for policies that embrace Ghana's cultural diversity ensures that sustainable development initiatives within AfCFTA are inclusive and reflective of the country's heritage”.

Participants from MFARI emphasize Ghana's cultural heritage as a means to strengthen diplomatic ties and foster collaboration within the AfCFTA, highlighting the potential of cultural diversity to bolster Ghana's influence in regional trade negotiations and promote sustainable development through enhanced interstate relations. Similarly, both the AfCFTA Secretariat and MoTI stress Ghana's cultural diversity's role in facilitating intercultural dialogue and cooperation among member states. They advocate for cultural diplomacy initiatives, such as festivals and exhibitions, to showcase Ghana's cultural richness and contribute to sustainable development objectives, positioning Ghana as a leader in advocating inclusive economic growth within the AfCFTA.

Furthermore, MoTI emphasizes integrating cultural elements into trade promotion strategies to enhance Ghana's global competitiveness and attract investment for sustainable development. They point out how cultural tourism initiatives capitalize on Ghana's cultural assets to generate employment and empower local communities economically, while collaborations with cultural institutions drive innovation and entrepreneurship, utilizing Ghana's cultural diversity in vital economic sectors. Civil Society Organizations advocate for policies that embrace Ghana's cultural

diversity to ensure inclusive and heritage-reflective sustainable development initiatives within the AfCFTA, emphasizing the necessity of considering cultural aspects in policy formulation to promote equitable development outcomes and preserve Ghana's cultural identity amid economic expansion. These themes collectively underscore Ghana's cultural heritage's essential role in shaping diplomatic ties, economic growth, and sustainable development within the AfCFTA, highlighting the interconnectedness between culture, diplomacy, and economic progress.

4.4 To assess Ghana's diplomatic strategies for AfCFTA goals and agreement success.

The researcher investigated Ghana's diplomatic strategies within the AfCFTA, aiming to reveal how Ghana promotes intra-African trade and economic integration. This inquiry focused on uncovering Ghana's specific diplomatic approaches within the AfCFTA framework. The findings revealed that Ghana employs diverse diplomatic strategies within the AfCFTA, harnessing its cultural heritage for collaboration (MFARI) and engaging in economic diplomacy for trade negotiations (MoTI). The AfCFTA Secretariat aids in negotiation facilitation, and civil society organisations advocate for inclusive representation and public awareness. The following question was posed to the participants.

What diplomatic tactics has Ghana used to advance AfCFTA goals?

The following are excerpts shared by the participants.

MFARI

"Ghana employs cultural diplomacy, showcasing its heritage to foster collaboration among AfCFTA states."

"Using bilateral agreements and trade missions to strengthen economic ties within AfCFTA."

AfCFTA Secretariat

"Engages in multilateral negotiations to address trade barriers and implement AfCFTA agreements smoothly."

"Hosts summits to coordinate efforts and gain support for AfCFTA goals."

MoTI

"Leverages economic diplomacy to negotiate beneficial trade agreements for AfCFTA."

"Forms alliances with stakeholders to amplify Ghana's influence in AfCFTA discussions."

Civil Society Organizations

"Advocate for inclusive diplomacy in AfCFTA, ensuring diverse stakeholder participation."

"Run public campaigns to raise awareness and garner support for AfCFTA policies."

The quotations reveal Ghana's multifaceted approach, encompassing cultural diplomacy, economic engagement, multilateral negotiations, strategic alliances, advocacy, and public awareness efforts, to advance the goals of the AfCFTA. MFARI underscores the importance of leveraging Ghana's cultural heritage to strengthen diplomatic ties and foster collaboration within the AfCFTA, highlighting the strategic implications of using cultural identity as a tool for building relationships. Additionally, MFARI's emphasis on Ghana's proactive use of bilateral agreements and trade missions underscores the strategic implications of Ghana's efforts to enhance economic ties and maximize opportunities for trade and investment within the AfCFTA region. The AfCFTA Secretariat's focus on multilateral negotiations and coordination reflects the strategic implications of collective action and coordination among member states to address trade barriers and implement AfCFTA agreements smoothly. MoTI's emphasis on economic diplomacy and alliances highlights the strategic implications of Ghana's efforts to negotiate beneficial trade agreements and amplify its influence in AfCFTA discussions. Finally, Civil Society Organizations' advocacy for inclusive diplomacy and public awareness efforts emphasize the strategic implications of ensuring diverse stakeholder participation and raising awareness to ensure the legitimacy and effectiveness of AfCFTA initiatives. Overall, these themes collectively underscore the strategic and multifaceted

approach taken by Ghana and the AfCFTA Secretariat to advance the goals of the AfCFTA, reflecting the strategic importance of cultural diplomacy, economic engagement, multilateral negotiations, strategic alliances, advocacy, and public awareness efforts in achieving success within the AfCFTA framework.

Secondly, the researcher aimed to investigate how Ghana interacts and collaborates with other states and regional blocs to foster cooperation and synergy within the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). This delves into the diplomatic engagements and partnerships forged by Ghana to drive collective efforts towards achieving AfCFTA's objectives. The findings revealed Ghana's proactive approach in strengthening the AfCFTA by forming alliances, participating in bilateral agreements and cultural exchanges. The AfCFTA Secretariat oversees multilateral discussions, while MoTI conducts trade missions to support AfCFTA goals. Civil society organizations stress Ghana's involvement in international forums and collaborative efforts to attain mutual objectives within the AfCFTA. The following question was posed to the participants.

How does Ghana engage with other states and blocs to drive AfCFTA cooperation?
The following are excerpts shared by the participants.

MFARI

"Ghana engages in bilateral discussions and agreements to enhance cooperation with individual states, both within and beyond the AfCFTA."

"Participates in cultural exchanges and diplomatic missions to foster collaboration with other blocs and nations."

AfCFTA Secretariat

"Facilitates dialogue and collaboration between Ghana and other states or blocs through multilateral forums and negotiations."

"Organizes joint initiatives and projects to promote economic integration and cooperation among AfCFTA member states."

MoTI

"Initiates trade missions and diplomatic visits to establish partnerships and cooperation frameworks with other states and blocs, supporting AfCFTA objectives."

"Negotiates trade agreements and partnerships with non-African states or blocs to complement AfCFTA goals and bolster regional cooperation."

Civil Society Organizations

"Advocate for Ghana's involvement in regional and international forums to foster dialogue and cooperation with other states and blocs, advancing AfCFTA objectives."

"Engage in partnerships with civil society organizations from other countries or regions to promote common values and goals under the AfCFTA."

These statements describe how Ghana actively works with other countries and groups to improve cooperation and collaboration, both within and beyond the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). They engage in talks, cultural exchanges, and trade discussions to strengthen relationships with individual countries and groups. For example, MFARI highlights Ghana's efforts to form partnerships with other countries and promote collaboration through cultural exchanges. Similarly, the AfCFTA Secretariat helps Ghana work with other countries or groups through meetings and projects aimed at boosting economic integration among member states. MoTI organizes trade missions and talks with other countries to create frameworks for cooperation that support AfCFTA goals, even partnering with non-African entities when needed. Civil Society Organizations advocate for Ghana's involvement in global discussions and work with groups from other regions to promote shared values and goals within the AfCFTA. These efforts show Ghana's proactive approach to building partnerships, fostering dialogue, and advancing AfCFTA objectives with various partners.

Thirdly, the researcher sought to identify the obstacles and challenges encountered by Ghana in its diplomatic endeavors within the AfCFTA and analyze the strategies employed to overcome these challenges. This aimed to explore the diplomatic resilience and problem-solving

approaches demonstrated by Ghana in navigating the complexities of AfCFTA diplomacy. The findings underscore the challenges of uniting such a large and diverse continent. Yet, the steps taken to tackle these obstacles show a dedication to overcoming difficulties and realizing effective AfCFTA implementation. The following question was posed to the participants.

What challenges has Ghana faced in AfCFTA diplomacy and how were they tackled?

The following are excerpts shared by the participants.

MFARI

"Managing diverse cultural norms among member states was a challenge, tackled through cultural sensitivity training and inclusive dialogue."

"Language barriers were addressed in negotiations with interpreters and translation services ensuring effective communication."

AfCFTA Secretariat

"Divergent economic interests among member states were tackled through extensive consultations and compromise-building efforts."

"Logistical hurdles, like infrastructure limitations, were addressed via coordinated efforts with member states and external partners to enhance connectivity and trade facilitation."

MoTI

"Harmonizing trade policies and regulations across member states required capacity-building initiatives to enhance regulatory coherence."

"Resistance from domestic industries to trade liberalization measures was managed through stakeholder consultations and targeted support programs."

Civil Society Organizations

"Advocacy for transparency in AfCFTA negotiations faced challenges due to limited access to information, addressed through advocacy campaigns and engagement with policymakers."

"Concerns over social and environmental impacts of trade liberalization were addressed by integrating sustainability principles into AfCFTA implementation strategies and policies."

These statements outline the challenges encountered within the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the measures taken to tackle them. MFARI acknowledges the difficulty of managing diverse cultural norms among member states, which was addressed through cultural sensitivity training and inclusive dialogue, alongside overcoming language barriers with interpreters and translation services. The AfCFTA Secretariat navigated divergent economic interests through extensive consultations and compromise-building efforts, addressing logistical hurdles like infrastructure limitations through coordinated actions with member states and external partners. MoTI focused on harmonizing trade policies and regulations across member states, requiring capacity-building initiatives, and managed resistance from domestic industries through stakeholder consultations and targeted support programs. Civil Society Organizations faced challenges in advocating for transparency due to limited access to information, which they countered through advocacy campaigns and engagement with policymakers, while also integrating sustainability principles into AfCFTA implementation to address concerns over social and environmental impacts. Overall, these efforts underscore the complexity of implementing the AfCFTA and highlight collaborative endeavors aimed at ensuring its success and sustainability.

Furthermore, the researcher aimed to examine how Ghana collaborates with international entities and organizations to strengthen its diplomatic efforts within the AfCFTA. This delved into the strategic alliances and engagements established by Ghana with global partners to enhance AfCFTA implementation and effectiveness. From the findings, Ghana is utilizing international partnerships to thrive within the AfCFTA. Collaborating with global organizations enhances expertise, strengthens Ghana's influence in trade negotiations, and promotes development objectives. Civil society shares this sentiment, employing partnerships to push for inclusive and sustainable AfCFTA implementation. The following question was posed to the participants.

How does Ghana partner with international entities to bolster its AfCFTA diplomacy?

The following are excerpts shared by the participants.

MFARI

"Ghana teams up with global organizations to access resources and expertise, bolstering its negotiating skills in AfCFTA."

"Partnerships with international institutions offer Ghana valuable insights and best practices, enriching its diplomatic approaches and trade strategies."

AfCFTA Secretariat

"Collaboration with international entities enables knowledge sharing and capacity-building efforts, empowering Ghana in AfCFTA negotiations."

"Forming strategic partnerships with global allies amplifies Ghana's influence in regional trade talks, furthering its diplomatic aims."

MoTI

"International collaborations assist Ghana in executing trade-related projects, contributing to its economic development agenda."

"Working with foreign governments and agencies reinforces Ghana's position in AfCFTA negotiations, promoting cooperation and mutual gain."

Civil Society Organizations

"Teaming up with global civil society networks gives Ghana platforms and resources to advocate for inclusive and transparent trade policies in AfCFTA."

"Engagement with international NGOs boosts Ghana's capacity to tackle social and environmental issues, ensuring sustainable development outcomes in AfCFTA."

These statements illustrate Ghana's active involvement with various global organizations and networks to elevate its status within the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). MFARI highlights Ghana's partnerships with global entities, which provide valuable resources and expertise, thereby enhancing its diplomatic and trade strategies. Similarly, the AfCFTA Secretariat emphasizes the importance of collaborating with international entities to empower Ghana in negotiations and bolster its influence in regional trade discussions. MoTI discusses how international partnerships contribute to Ghana's economic development agenda and reinforce its

position in AfCFTA negotiations. Moreover, Civil Society Organizations stress the importance of collaborating with global civil society networks and international NGOs to advocate for equitable and transparent trade policies, ensuring sustainable development within the AfCFTA. In summary, these statements underscore Ghana's dependence on international partnerships to strengthen its diplomatic, economic, and social initiatives within the AfCFTA, ultimately resulting in increased influence and sustainable development outcomes.

The researcher sought to explore how Ghana manages to reconcile its national interests with the overarching goals of the AfCFTA in its diplomatic endeavors. This aimed to analyze the diplomatic strategies and negotiation tactics employed by Ghana to strike a balance between advancing its own interests while contributing to the collective success of AfCFTA. In general, Ghana's strategy towards AfCFTA seems thoughtful and strategically aimed at achieving mutually advantageous results. However, there is a need for enhancing data-driven decision-making and effectively managing potential conflicts between national and AfCFTA objectives. The following question was posed to the participants.

How does Ghana balance its interests with AfCFTA's goals in diplomatic efforts?

The following are excerpts shared by the participants.

MFARI

"Ghana ensures its economic interests align with AfCFTA's goals of intra-African trade promotion."

"By focusing on sectors of comparative advantage, Ghana balances its economic agenda with AfCFTA objectives."

AfCFTA Secretariat

"Ghana actively engages in decision-making, advocating for policies benefiting both its interests and AfCFTA's goals."

"Through constructive dialogue, Ghana seeks compromises that serve its interests while upholding AfCFTA principles."

MoTI

"Ghana assesses trade policies to align with AfCFTA's objectives, adjusting strategies as necessary."

"Engaging in negotiations, Ghana aims for solutions benefiting its priorities and AfCFTA's success."

Civil Society Organizations

"Advocating transparency, civil society holds Ghana accountable under AfCFTA, safeguarding national interests."

"Through inclusive dialogue, Ghana ensures AfCFTA goals reflect diverse stakeholder interests."

Ghana's involvement in the AfCFTA necessitates a careful balancing act between national economic priorities and the broader objectives of the agreement. All parties stress the significance of harmonization, which entails promoting trade within Africa while advancing outcomes that benefit both Ghana and the AfCFTA as a whole. Achieving this equilibrium is paramount. Ghana must tactfully manage its specific requirements alongside the overarching aims of the AfCFTA. This entails concentrating on sectors where Ghana holds a competitive edge and advocating for policies that serve the interests of both Ghana and the AfCFTA. Active engagement in decision-making processes and negotiations is essential for achieving this synchronization. Civil society organizations play a crucial role in ensuring transparency and holding Ghana accountable for safeguarding national interests within the AfCFTA framework. Their emphasis on inclusive dialogue further guarantees that the AfCFTA reflects the concerns of all stakeholders.

4.5 To evaluate Ghana's public diplomacy for AfCFTA awareness, understanding, and support

Firstly, the researcher aimed to study how Ghana has worked to raise awareness about the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) within the country. This involved looking into the specific actions and strategies employed by the Ghanaian government and other relevant groups to

educate people about the benefits and opportunities brought about by AfCFTA. The findings revealed that Ghana is fully committed to the AfCFTA through an extensive awareness campaign. They are utilizing various channels such as public seminars, social media campaigns, integration into school curricula, and establishing information centers to educate both citizens and businesses. This comprehensive strategy also involves partnering with local leaders and providing training programs related to the AfCFTA, ensuring widespread understanding and opportunities for everyone to benefit from the free trade agreement. The following question was posed to the participants.

What steps has Ghana taken to boost AfCFTA awareness domestically?

The following are excerpts shared by the participants.

“Organizing seminars in different regions to highlight the advantages of AfCFTA.”

“Starting campaigns across television, radio, and social media platforms to raise awareness about AfCFTA.”

“Working with local businesses to host trade fairs focused on AfCFTA opportunities.”

Incorporating AfCFTA education into school curriculums.”

“Involving community leaders to spread awareness about AfCFTA at the grassroots level.”

“Setting up a dedicated center for AfCFTA information.”

“Partnering to provide business training related to AfCFTA.”

“Encouraging discussions to shape AfCFTA policies.”

These methods are grouped into four main areas aimed at boosting understanding and awareness of the AfCFTA. First, in Public Awareness and Education, efforts include broad campaigns on TV, radio, and social media, along with regional seminars targeting specific groups. Additionally, integrating AfCFTA education into school curriculums and setting up information centers make knowledge more accessible. Second, Business Enablement and Support strategies involve hosting trade fairs with local businesses and providing tailored training to help them

participate effectively. Third, Grassroots Mobilization engages local leaders to spread information, ensuring it reaches everyone. Finally, Policy Shaping and Participation initiatives promote discussions to shape AfCFTA policies, encouraging inclusivity and engagement from all stakeholders. This comprehensive approach aims to increase awareness across society, benefiting individuals, businesses, and policymakers alike.

Secondly, this study focused on examining how Ghana spreads information about AfCFTA with the aim of gaining support from the public. The researcher analysed different communication methods, including media campaigns, community involvement, and educational initiatives, to effectively convey the goals and advantages of AfCFTA to the people of Ghana. The findings revealed that Ghana is adopting a thorough strategy to raise awareness about the AfCFTA, employing diverse methods to reach every part of the nation. This encompasses workshops and seminars for detailed information, online engagement through social media and targeted advertising, and partnering with local leaders for community outreach. The following question was posed to the participants.

How does Ghana spread AfCFTA information to gain public backing?

The following are excerpts shared by the participants.

"Conducting workshops and seminars across the country."

"Implementing social media strategies and focused advertising efforts."

"Involving grassroots leaders to champion the cause."

"Employing conventional media platforms such as radio and TV."

"Arranging community gatherings in diverse locations."

"Dispensing informative leaflets and brochures."

The statements focus on strategies to inform and involve different groups of people in supporting a cause, likely the AfCFTA. They highlight organizing workshops and seminars nationwide to educate the public about AfCFTA, showing a structured approach to reaching various

regions and demographics. Using social media and targeted advertising is seen as a modern way to communicate, especially to younger audiences who are active on social platforms. Involving grassroots leaders suggests a bottom-up advocacy approach, acknowledging the influence local leaders have and using it to gain broader support for AfCFTA. Additionally, employing traditional media like radio and TV alongside community gatherings underscores the commitment to direct engagement and outreach in local environments. Dispensing informative materials such as leaflets and brochures complements these efforts, offering detailed information for people to reference at their convenience.

Thirdly, the researcher set out to identify and showcase successful public campaigns initiated by Ghana to boost awareness and acceptance of AfCFTA. This included reviewing past efforts and assessing their impact on public engagement, perception, and endorsement of AfCFTA among Ghanaians. From the findings, it is clear that Ghana's AfCFTA awareness initiative goes beyond conventional tactics. They are employing a mobile "AfCFTA Roadshow" in urban areas, conducting online webinars for broader engagement, and collaborating with influencers to amplify the message. Targeted efforts cater to remote regions and youth, while partnerships with educational institutions ensure sustained awareness. This inventive strategy ensures diverse audiences across the country are reached with the AfCFTA message. The following question was posed to the participants.

Can you cite successful public campaigns by Ghana for AfCFTA?

The following are excerpts shared by the participants.

"Conducting a mobile 'AfCFTA Roadshow' in key urban centers."

"Hosting webinars online to engage diverse audiences."

"Working together with influencers and famous personalities."

"Running focused campaigns in remote rural regions."

"Organizing events aimed at young people to highlight AfCFTA advantages."

"Forming alliances with educational institutions to raise awareness."

From the quotations, the first theme focuses on specific audience groups: urban professionals are targeted through an "AfCFTA Roadshow" in major cities, while webinars engage a diverse online audience. Events tailored for young people and targeted campaigns in rural areas aim to highlight the advantages of AfCFTA for upcoming entrepreneurs and geographically isolated communities, respectively. The second theme, outreach strategies, emphasises direct interaction through face-to-face engagement in roadshows and youth events, along with digital engagement via online webinars to broaden accessibility. Collaborating with social influencers and forming partnerships with educational institutions further enhances outreach efforts, leveraging existing reach and credibility to embed AfCFTA knowledge effectively. This breakdown demonstrates a holistic approach to AfCFTA promotion, encompassing a wide range of target audiences and utilizing multiple outreach methods. By acknowledging the diversity of audiences and employing various engagement strategies, such as live events, digital platforms, influencer collaborations, and educational partnerships, the promotion endeavors to effectively convey the benefits and significance of AfCFTA.

Moreover, this research delved into how Ghana tackles misconceptions about AfCFTA and encourages active involvement and support from its citizens. The researcher investigated the strategies used by Ghana to address any misunderstandings or doubts about AfCFTA and to promote a positive view of regional economic integration. The findings revealed that Ghana is actively addressing misconceptions surrounding the AfCFTA by organizing public discussions, implementing focused educational programs, and directly confronting inaccuracies through social media. Expert collaborations ensure the dissemination of accurate information, while local workshops and informative materials target specific concerns and debunk common myths within communities. This comprehensive approach guarantees that Ghanaians gain a precise understanding of the AfCFTA. The following question was posed to the participants.

How does Ghana address AfCFTA misconceptions and encourage engagement?

The following are excerpts shared by the participants.

"Arranging public meetings to discuss and clear up misunderstandings openly."

"Starting specific educational efforts to correct false beliefs."

"Using social media to directly confront and correct misconceptions."

"Working with specialists to ensure the information given is precise."

"Holding local workshops to tackle community concerns."

"Producing materials that explain and correct common mistakes."

These strategies can be thematically analyzed regarding their approach to rectifying misconceptions. The breakdown unfolds as follows: Under the theme of Open Communication and Education, efforts such as arranging public meetings, initiating educational campaigns, and hosting local workshops aim to openly discuss and clarify misunderstandings while providing accurate information. In contrast, the theme of Accuracy and Collaboration underscores the importance of collaborating with specialists to ensure precision and reliability. Moreover, using social media to directly address and rectify misconceptions suggests a targeted approach to communication. This analysis delineates a dual strategy focusing on transparent communication and educational initiatives alongside expert collaboration to ensure accuracy and effectively combat misconceptions.

Finally, the researcher aimed to explore Ghana's collaborative endeavors with various entities, including government bodies, private sector actors, civil society groups, and international partners, to advocate for and support AfCFTA. This involved examining the types of partnerships, joint projects, and coordinated efforts undertaken by these entities to further the objectives of AfCFTA within Ghana and on a broader scale. The findings revealed that Ghana's approach to AfCFTA awareness involves extensive collaboration. They are partnering with diverse organizations, including local businesses for joint promotions, civil society groups for grassroots

engagement, government bodies for national influence, and global trade associations and universities for expertise and broader outreach. Strong relationships with media outlets facilitate effective information dissemination across multiple platforms, ensuring widespread awareness of the AfCFTA message throughout the country. The following question was posed to the participants.

How does Ghana collaborate with various entities to promote AfCFTA support and advocacy?

The following are excerpts shared by the participants.

"Teaming up with nearby enterprises for shared promotional initiatives."

"Involving civil society groups to enhance the spread of messages."

"Aligning efforts with government bodies for awareness drives."

"Joining forces with global trade associations to expand outreach."

"Establishing partnerships with universities for research and education endeavors."

"Maintaining strong ties with media channels to ensure efficient information distribution."

The strategy categorization based on partnership types for advancing AfCFTA reflects a nuanced approach acknowledging the complexity of the initiative. Engaging local businesses, civil society groups, and government agencies provides AfCFTA access to localized expertise, networks, and trust, vital for grassroots support and expanded outreach. This grassroots involvement fosters broader awareness and community ownership, laying a foundation for sustainable growth. Additionally, collaboration with governments offers resources and legitimacy, while partnerships with civil society groups ensure inclusivity and diverse perspectives, crucial for addressing diverse community needs. Conversely, partnering with global trade associations, universities, and media outlets extends AfCFTA's reach and expertise. Trade associations offer international networks and experience, universities contribute research and educational resources, and media channels amplify messaging, enhancing public awareness. This strategic alignment with external entities equips AfCFTA with specialized knowledge and resources essential for effective regional economic integration.

4.6 Discussion of Findings

4.6.1 Cultural assets in development diplomacy and foreign policy

The research findings on how Ghana utilizes its cultural diplomacy within the AfCFTA context are closely in line with what existing literature says about the role of cultural assets in development diplomacy and foreign policy. Kabibo's (2022) study dives into cultural diplomacy, explaining how it is evolving in international relations and how it intersects with traditional diplomacy and soft power. Similarly, the research reveals how Ghana taps into its cultural heritage to strengthen both its diplomatic relations and economic interactions within the AfCFTA, fitting into the broader understanding of cultural diplomacy as a strategic tool in international communication and negotiation.

Gichuhi's (2018) research, which looks at how cultural diplomacy can promote development in African nations like Kenya, echoes the findings on how Ghana uses its cultural assets to boost economic prosperity within the AfCFTA. Both studies emphasise how cultural diplomacy can drive economic growth by leveraging cultural heritage and soft power resources.

Examining Japan's successful cultural diplomacy, as discussed by Zhou (2022), sheds light on effective strategies for using cultural assets in foreign policy. Similarly, the research highlights Ghana's strategic deployment of cultural elements, such as cultural exchange programs and initiatives, to encourage intercultural dialogue, cooperation, and inclusive economic growth within the AfCFTA. This alignment suggests that leveraging cultural resources can enhance a country's soft power and diplomatic engagements, as seen in both Japan and Ghana.

Furthermore, Mariano & Vårheim's (2022) study exploring libraries, museums, and cultural centres as tools in cultural diplomacy, complements the findings on Ghana's establishment of dedicated centres for AfCFTA information sharing. Both studies underscore the importance of

cultural institutions in promoting cultural exchange, fostering dialogue, and advancing foreign policy goals, showing consistency between the research findings and broader discussions on cultural diplomacy.

In summary, the research on Ghana's cultural diplomacy within the AfCFTA aligns well with existing literature on the role of cultural assets in development diplomacy and foreign policy. It underscores the strategic value of leveraging cultural heritage and soft power resources to drive economic growth, strengthen diplomatic ties, and encourage international cooperation within regional trade agreements like the AfCFTA.

4.6.2 Diplomatic strategies for foreign policy goals and agreement success

The research results regarding Ghana's diplomatic tactics within the AfCFTA closely align with existing studies on successful diplomacy, stressing the need to manoeuvre through global landscapes to reach strategic aims. Prantl & Goh (2022) highlight the crucial role of diplomacy in addressing urgent security and policy matters, advocating for strategic frameworks to broaden policy options. Similarly, Ghana's diverse approach to AfCFTA diplomacy mirrors a strategic reaction to the array of challenges and opportunities within the regional trade pact, including cultural diplomacy, economic engagement, negotiations, alliances, advocacy, and awareness campaigns.

Böhmelt's (2010) examination of diplomatic tracks in resolving conflicts underscores the effectiveness of Track One Diplomacy while suggesting further exploration of its limitations and application beyond conventional conflict scenarios. Likewise, Ghana's diplomatic endeavours within the AfCFTA entail tackling various hurdles such as cultural differences, language barriers, and logistical challenges, underscoring the necessity for flexible strategies and ongoing assessment to effectively address evolving situations.

Dodd & Collins (2017) analyzed embassy communication strategies, revealing potential shortcomings despite the diplomatic nature of digital platforms like Twitter. Similarly, while Ghana collaborates with international entities to reinforce its AfCFTA diplomacy, gaps may exist in understanding the contribution of these partnerships to tangible diplomatic outcomes or public perceptions. Extending the analysis to include various digital platforms and conducting comparative studies could provide deeper insights into embassy communications' effectiveness and impact on diplomatic relations and public opinion, aligning with the call for comprehensive evaluation in existing literature.

In summary, the research findings on Ghana's diplomatic efforts within the AfCFTA echo existing studies on successful diplomacy, stressing the importance of strategic frameworks, adaptable approaches, and thorough evaluation to navigate complex geopolitical environments and achieve strategic goals.

4.6.3 Public diplomacy for foreign policy awareness, understanding, and support

Ghana's initiatives to promote awareness and garner support for the AfCFTA closely resonate with the principles outlined in the realm of public diplomacy literature. This correlation is evident through various avenues. Initially, Ghana adopts a diverse strategy, utilizing a range of platforms such as workshops, social media, and media campaigns. This mirrors the concept of public diplomacy, which emphasizes engaging diverse audiences through multiple channels (Tago, 2017).

Secondly, Ghana's emphasis on education via seminars, integration into school curricula, and dissemination of informative materials reflects a fundamental aspect of public diplomacy: molding public perception and understanding (Tago, 2017). Furthermore, by involving businesses, civil society, and academic institutions, Ghana follows the public diplomacy model of fostering

partnerships and alliances to amplify messages and garner backing (Ociepka, 2018). Moreover, Ghana's utilisation of public gatherings and social media to rectify misinterpretations aligns with public diplomacy's role in addressing negative perceptions and promoting a positive image (Tago, 2017).

These observations also tie into the broader discourse on the evolution of public diplomacy. Ghana's integration of social media and online platforms reflects the increasing significance of digital tools, as underscored by Brittain-Hale (2023). Although the specifics regarding the evaluation of Ghana's campaign impact are lacking, the focus on workshops, webinars, and social media interaction suggests a potential shift towards a more data-centric approach to public diplomacy, as discussed in Tago (2017).

It is noteworthy that the provided insights do not ascertain the effectiveness of Ghana's campaign. Success in public diplomacy endeavors isn't always guaranteed (Darnton, 2019). In summary, Ghana's multifaceted strategy closely aligns with both the theoretical underpinnings and practical applications of public diplomacy as elucidated in the literature. There is also a prospect for Ghana to transition towards a more data-oriented approach in the future.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Chapter Five provides a summary of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations extracted from the earlier chapters of this study. By thoroughly analyzing the collected data and discussions, this chapter seeks to outline the main insights, draw conclusions from these findings, and offer actionable recommendations for stakeholders. It also provides policy implications and suggestions for further studies.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The study embraced an interpretivist philosophy and an inductive approach, aiming to deeply understand how development diplomacy shapes Ghana's foreign policy, especially in relation to the AfCFTA. Qualitative methods, including a case study, were used to capture the subjective views of key stakeholders. The participants were carefully chosen policymakers and experts to ensure a variety of perspectives. In total, there were 17 participants in this study, however, 14 of them participated in the study. Data came from interviews with these key figures as well as existing literature and policies. Interviews followed a guide to ensure consistency and depth in responses. To ensure accuracy, methods like member checking and peer debriefing were used. The data was then analysed thematically to find patterns and themes. Throughout, ethical guidelines were followed to protect participants and maintain integrity. However, the study acknowledges limitations such as possible bias in interviews and the limited scope of the sample. Despite these challenges, the study aimed to provide a thorough understanding of how development diplomacy influences Ghana's foreign policy within the AfCFTA context.

On the objective, to examine Ghana's cultural assets in development diplomacy for African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and foreign policy, stakeholders across sectors stress the

role of Ghanaian culture in enhancing economic interactions and diplomatic ties within AfCFTA. Examples include integrating cultural symbols into diplomatic gatherings and advocating for their inclusion in trade promotion efforts to boost Ghana's global economic position. Traditional practices also facilitate cooperation during trade negotiations. Leveraging Ghana's cultural diversity for diplomatic gains and sustainable development in AfCFTA is deemed essential, with recommendations for cultural exchange programs and partnerships with cultural institutions.

To assess Ghana's diplomatic strategies for AfCFTA goals and agreement success, the research on Ghana's diplomatic strategies in the AfCFTA shows a varied approach to advancing AfCFTA goals and Ghana's interests. Ghana uses cultural diplomacy, economic engagement, negotiations, alliances, advocacy, and awareness campaigns to navigate AfCFTA diplomacy. Strategies include leveraging cultural heritage, bilateral agreements, and alliances to strengthen economic ties. Challenges like cultural differences, language barriers, and economic disparities are addressed through training, dialogue, and capacity-building. Ghana collaborates with international entities for resources and expertise. Balancing national interests with AfCFTA goals involves aligning economic interests, seeking compromises, and promoting transparency. These findings illustrate Ghana's resilient efforts to navigate AfCFTA challenges while promoting regional integration and sustainable development.

To evaluate Ghana's public diplomacy for AfCFTA awareness, understanding, and support, the findings revealed that Ghana is taking extensive measures to raise awareness and gather backing for the AfCFTA. Their approach is multifaceted, involving diverse stakeholders and communities. Ghana employs various strategies such as regional seminars, media campaigns across television, radio, and social media, integrating AfCFTA education into school curricula, engaging community leaders, establishing information centres, and partnering with local businesses for trade fairs. Ghana is actively promoting awareness and support for AfCFTA through a variety of strategies including

education, business assistance, grassroots involvement, and policy influence. They utilise workshops, social media, traditional media, community events, and educational materials to engage the public. Initiatives such as mobile roadshows, webinars, influencer partnerships, targeted events, and youth engagement have been successful. To address misconceptions, they employ public meetings, educational efforts, social media interaction, expert collaboration, and informative materials. Ghana collaborates with various stakeholders including businesses, civil society groups, government bodies, universities, and media to enhance outreach, research, education, and information dissemination for AfCFTA. These efforts demonstrate Ghana's commitment to promoting understanding and backing for AfCFTA both locally and globally.

5.3 Policy Implications

Ghana can use its rich cultural heritage as a potent asset. It is essential for policymakers to weave cultural symbols, traditions, and exchange programs into AfCFTA efforts, enhancing economic bonds, diplomatic ties, and fostering sustainable development within the trade area.

Ghana's effective use of a multifaceted diplomatic strategy suggests the need for ongoing diversification. Policies should promote cultural diplomacy, economic collaborations, strategic alliances, and continuous negotiations to navigate the complexities of AfCFTA and safeguard Ghana's interests.

The significance of public awareness is clear. Policies should prioritise extensive awareness campaigns across various media platforms, educational initiatives, community involvement, and cooperation with diverse stakeholders to ensure broad support for AfCFTA throughout the nation.

Dealing with challenges such as cultural and economic gaps requires transparency. Policies should encourage open communication, initiatives to enhance capacity, and cooperation with international partners to overcome these obstacles and achieve successful AfCFTA implementation.

Ghana's successes underscore the crucial importance of working together. Policies must actively promote and cultivate partnerships with a range of stakeholders, such as businesses, civil society groups, educational establishments, and media channels. These collaborations play a vital role in broadening engagement, sharing valuable knowledge, and effectively communicating the goals and advantages of the AfCFTA. Through collective action, these diverse actors can harness their unique strengths to enhance the effectiveness of AfCFTA programs, leading to sustainable economic advancement and development throughout the region.

5.4 Conclusion

Ghana relies on its rich cultural heritage and a versatile diplomatic approach to drive its strategy within the AfCFTA. By tapping into culture, it bolsters economic connections and diplomatic relations. Employing a range of tactics like negotiations, alliances, and public awareness initiatives helps Ghana overcome obstacles and realise its objectives under the trade agreement. Through efforts such as education, business assistance, and partnerships with various groups, they actively advocate for AfCFTA, aiming to ensure broad comprehension and backing for its initiatives.

5.5 Recommendations

5.5.1 Use of cultural resources in diplomacy and trade promotion

Ghana should continue incorporating its cultural symbols and traditions into diplomatic meetings and trade promotions within the AfCFTA. This approach has the potential to enhance economic interactions and diplomatic ties, thereby solidifying Ghana's position in the global

economy. By highlighting its distinct cultural heritage, Ghana can make itself a more appealing trade partner and establish stronger connections with other AfCFTA nations. This could result in more trade prospects and elevate Ghana's influence in the global economic scene.

5.5.2 Promotion of cultural exchange programs and partnerships

Ghana should concentrate on developing strong cultural exchange initiatives and building important alliances with prominent cultural organizations to make the most of its varied cultural legacy for diplomatic benefits and sustainable progress within the AfCFTA. This involves finding common ground between cultural assets and AfCFTA goals, setting up official exchange programs with partner nations, and partnering with respected cultural institutions at home and abroad. By taking this proactive stance, Ghana can enhance its diplomatic influence and play a role in fostering economic growth and mutual cultural appreciation throughout the region.

5.5.3 Broaden diplomatic strategies

In navigating the AfCFTA, Ghana's diplomatic strategy should remain diverse, encompassing cultural diplomacy, economic engagement, negotiations, alliances, advocacy, and awareness campaigns. This broad approach has been effective in advancing AfCFTA objectives and safeguarding Ghana's interests. Cultural diplomacy utilizes Ghana's cultural heritage to bolster diplomatic relations and foster understanding among member states. Economic engagement involves active participation in trade and investment to drive regional economic growth. Negotiations are essential for securing agreements beneficial to Ghana and its partners, while alliances help address common challenges and pursue shared objectives. Advocacy seeks to promote Ghana's interests within the AfCFTA, and awareness campaigns ensure stakeholders are well-informed and involved. Embracing this multifaceted strategy enables Ghana to navigate AfCFTA complexities and contribute to its success while protecting its own interests.

5.5.4 Tackle challenges through training and dialogue

To surmount challenges like cultural disparities, language barriers, and economic gaps within the AfCFTA, Ghana needs to persist in investing in training, dialogue, and capacity-building endeavors. Through these efforts, Ghana can improve its capacity to handle the complexities inherent in the AfCFTA framework. Training initiatives provide individuals with essential skills and knowledge to comprehend and adapt to cultural intricacies, linguistic variations, and economic hurdles. Dialogue programs establish open channels of communication, enabling stakeholders to address issues and discover mutually beneficial resolutions. Capacity-building activities strengthen Ghana's institutions and workforce, equipping them to effectively interact with the AfCFTA and capitalize on its opportunities.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Studies

Future research should aim to expand the sample size beyond the current study's 14 out of 17 participants. This would involve including a broader range of perspectives from policymakers, experts, and stakeholders involved in Ghana's foreign policy within the AfCFTA framework. By doing so, researchers can gain a more comprehensive understanding of the topic.

Further studies should conduct comparative studies to examine how other countries within the AfCFTA region implement development diplomacy in their foreign policies. This comparative analysis would highlight differences and similarities in approaches and outcomes, providing valuable insights for Ghana and other countries.

There is a need to complement qualitative findings with quantitative analysis to measure the impact of development diplomacy on Ghana's foreign policy objectives within the AfCFTA. Statistical modeling could be employed to identify correlations between diplomatic strategies and economic outcomes.

There is a need for future studies to explore the role of cultural diplomacy in other regional trade agreements beyond the AfCFTA. Comparative studies could analyze how cultural diversity influences diplomatic efforts and economic integration in various regional contexts.

Finally, studies should investigate the challenges and successes of implementing AfCFTA-related policies at the national level in Ghana. This research could involve examining policy documents, conducting stakeholder interviews, and analyzing case studies to understand the practical implications of diplomatic strategies on policy implementation.

REFERENCE

- Abdurahmanli, E. (2021). Definition of Diplomacy and Types of Diplomacy Used Between States. *Anadolu Akademi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 3(3). Retrieved from <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/2000617>
- Abor, J., & Adjaye, S. (2023). Skills Development for the Future of Work: Preparing Ghanaian Youth for the AfCFTA. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 76, 106230.
- Acuto, M., & Rayner, T. (2020). Envisioning a “science diplomacy 2.0”: on data, global challenges, and multi-layered networks. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 7(1), 1-10. doi: 10.1057/s41599-020-00636-2
- African Union. (2023, August 2). Linkages between AfCFTA and Peace Fund, a path to sustainable development: Op-Ed by AU Director, Peace Fund Secretariat. African Union.
- AfCFTA. (2023). About the AfCFTA. <https://au-afcfta.org/about/>
- AfCFTA Secretariat. (2023). AfCFTA Digital Trade Strategy. <https://www.afronomicslaw.org/category/analysis/digital-trade-african-continental-free-trade-agreement-exploring-its-promises-and>
- AfCFTA Secretariat. (2023). Technical Assistance Programme. <https://au-afcfta.org/>
- Akomea, F. N. (2023). AfCFTA Trade Information Portal: Enhancing Access to Market Opportunities for Ghanaian Businesses. *Journal of African Business Management*, 17(1), 34-45.
- Akomea, F. N. (2023). The Role of Trade Facilitation in Boosting Intra-African Trade under the AfCFTA: The Case of Ghana. *Journal of Economic Integration & Development*, 34(1), 1-12.
- Amoah, V. A. (2020). Supporting SMEs in Ghana to Access AfCFTA Markets: The Role of Financial and Technical Assistance. *African Journal of Business Management*, 14(8), 116-127.
- Amoah, V. A. (2021). E-commerce and the AfCFTA: Opportunities and Challenges for Ghana. *Journal of African Business*, 22(5), 492-512.
- Armstrong, D., Farrell, T., & Lambert, H. (2007). Three lenses: realism, liberalism, constructivism. In Cambridge University Press eBooks (pp. 69–114). <https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511808753.004>
- Armstrong, D., Farrell, T., & Lambert, H. (2012). Three lenses: Realism, liberalism, and constructivism. In *International Law and International Relations (Part I - The foundations)*.

Published online by Cambridge University Press on June 5, 2012. Retrieved from <https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/abs/international-law-and-international-relations/three-lenses-realism-liberalism-and-constructivism/1A5394682AA23149EDF18131634228ED>

Biney, P. A., Addae-Boateng, M., & Assibey-Yeboah, G. (2021). Industrial Zones and Economic Transformation in Ghana: Prospects and Challenges under the AfCFTA. *Journal of African Business*, 22(4), 349-373.

Biermann, R., & Siebenhüner, B. (2016). Sustainable Development Diplomacy: Diagnostics for the Negotiation and Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals. *Global Policy*, 7(4), 532-542. doi: 10.1111/1758-5899.12350

Brittain-Hale, A. (2023). Public Diplomacy and Foreign Policy Analysis in the 21st Century: Navigating Uncertainty through Digital Power and Influence. Old Dominion University. https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1033&context=gsis_studentconference

Böhmelt, T. (2010). The effectiveness of tracks of diplomacy strategies in third-party interventions. *Journal of Peace Research*, 47(2), 167-178. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343309356488>

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>

Charmaz, K. (2014). *Constructing Grounded Theory* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). Sage Publications.

Darnton, C. (2020). Public Diplomacy and International Conflict Resolution: A Cautionary Case from Cold War South America. *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 16(1), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1093/fpa/orz003>

Diallo, M. (2023, January 26). The African Continental Free Trade Agreement's Ventures in 2022. Wilson Center.

Dodd, M. D., & Collins, S. J. (2017). Public relations message strategies and public diplomacy 2.0: An empirical analysis using Central-Eastern European and Western Embassy Twitter accounts. *Public Relations Review*, 43(2), 417-425.

Duarte, J. A. (2022). The Challenges of Diplomacy in a Changing International Order. In H. Wang, L. Miao, & J. A. Duarte (Eds.), *Global Governance and the Future of International Relations* (pp. 267-282). Singapore: Springer. doi: 10.1007/978-981-16-8086-1_17

- Duryea, S. (2022). Realism, Liberalism, and Constructivism: A Primer on International Relations Theory. Power & Market. <https://mises.org/power-market/realism-liberalism-and-constructivism-primer-international-relations-theory>
- Freeman, C. W., & Marks, S. (2024). Diplomacy. Encyclopedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/diplomacy>
- Ghana Export Promotion Authority. (2022). National Export Development Strategy (2020-2029). <https://www.gepaghana.org/national-export-development-strategy/>
- Ghana Export Promotion Authority. (2023). Ghana's AfCFTA Trade Promotion Strategy. <https://www.gepaghana.org/>
- Ghana Investment Promotion Centre. (2022). Why AfCFTA Matters to Businesses in Ghana. Retrieved from <https://www.gipc.gov.gh/why-afcfta-matters-to-businesses-in-ghana/>
- Ghana Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration. (n.d.). Foreign Policy Objectives. Retrieved from <https://mfa.gov.gh/index.php/foreign-policy/foreign-policy-objectives/>
- Ghana Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration. (n.d.). Ghana's Foreign Policy Guideline. Retrieved from <https://mfa.gov.gh/index.php/foreign-policy/ghanas-foreign-policy-guideline/>
- Ghana Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration. (2021). Ghana's Foreign Policy Guideline. Retrieved from <https://mfa.gov.gh/index.php/foreign-policy/ghanas-foreign-policy-guideline/>
- Gichuhi, G. N. (2018). Role of Cultural Diplomacy in Promoting Development in Africa: A Case Study of Kenya. Research project submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in International Studies of University of Nairobi. Available at: <http://tinyurl.com/ynb8y2yf>
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 105–117). Sage Publications.
- Hedling, E., & Bremberg, N. (2021). Practice Approaches to the Digital Transformations of Diplomacy: Toward a New Research Agenda. *International Studies Review*, 23(4), 1595–1618. <https://doi.org/10.1093/isr/viab027>
- Johnson, R. B. (2014). Examining the validity structure of qualitative research. *Education*, 135(2), 295–302.

- Kabibo, N. (2022). Cultural diplomacy. Thesis (University of Bucharest). https://www.academia.edu/95009195/Cultural_Diplomacy
- Kurbanoglu, S. S., & Akbulut, Y. (2021). Taking the pulse of science diplomacy and developing practices of valuation. *Science and Public Policy*, 49(2), 191-201. doi: 10.1093/scipol/scab003
- Mariano, R. and Vårheim, A. (2022), "Libraries, museums and cultural centers in foreign policy and cultural diplomacy: a scoping review", *Journal of Documentation*, Vol. 78 No. 3, pp. 651-672. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JD-05-2021-0103>
- Maxwell, J. A. (2013). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2015). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* (4th ed.). Jossey-Bass.
- Ministry of Trade and Industry. (2020). Ten Point Industrial Transformation Agenda. <https://moti.gov.gh/v2/10-point-agenda/>
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration. (n.d.). Ghana's Foreign Policy Guideline. Retrieved from <https://mfa.gov.gh/index.php/foreign-policy/ghanas-foreign-policy-guideline/>
- Moomaw, W. R., Bhandary, R. R., Kuhl, L., & Verkooijen, P. (2016). Sustainable Development Diplomacy: Diagnostics for the Negotiation and Implementation of Sustainable Development. Publisher Name. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1758-5899.12350>
- Mowle, T. S. (2003). Worldviews in Foreign Policy: Realism, Liberalism, and External Conflict. *Political Psychology*, 24(3), 561-592
- Murray, S., Sharp, P., Wiseman, G., Crikemans, D., & Melissen, J. (2011). The Present and Future of Diplomacy and Diplomatic Studies. *International Studies Review*, 13(4), 709-728. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41428877>
- Nye, J. J. S. (2008). Public diplomacy and soft power. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 616(1), 94-109. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716207311699>
- Ociepka, B. (2018). Public diplomacy as political communication: Lessons from case studies. *European Journal of Communication*, 33(3), 290-303. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0267323118763909>
- Owusu, E. K. (2023). The Dos and Don'ts of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement Pose the Ghana's Maritime Industry Vis-A-Vis Its National Industrialization Drive. *The Dos and*

Don'ts of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement Pose Ghana's Maritime Industry Vis-A-Vis Its National Industrialization Drive.

Palinkas, L. A., Horwitz, S. M., Green, C. A., Wisdom, J. P., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2015). Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, 42(5), 533–544. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-013-0528-y>

Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.

Prantl, J., & Goh, E. (2022). Rethinking strategy and statecraft for the twenty-first century of complexity: a case for strategic diplomacy. *International Affairs*, 98(2), 443–469. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iab212>

Signé, L. (2022). Understanding the African Continental Free Trade Area and how the US can promote its success. Commentary Testimony.

Tago, A. (2017). Public Diplomacy and Foreign Policy. Oxford Research Encyclopedias. <https://oxfordre.com/politics/display/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228637-e-471>

TAYO, T. T. (2023). The Road to Africa's Single Market: Progress so far and challenges for the future. Retrieved from <https://afripoli.org/the-road-to-africas-single-market-progress-so-far-and-challenges-for-the-future>

Trade Unions in AfCFTA. (2023). Perspectives on the AfCFTA from Informal Economy Workers in Ghana. Retrieved from <https://tradeunionsinafcfta.org/perspectives-on-the-afcfta-from-informal-economy-workers-in-ghana/>

Trade Unions in AfCFTA. (n.d.). Perspectives on the AfCFTA from informal economy workers in Ghana. Trade Unions in AfCFTA.

U.S. Department of Commerce. (n.d.). Ghana African Continental Free Trade Area Investment Protocol. U.S. Department of Commerce.

U.S. Department of State. (2021, August 2). U.S. Relations With Ghana. United States Department of State.

United Nations Development Programme. (2023). Unlocking Africa's Production and Trade Potential: Ghana-Kenya Expo Spotlights the AfCFTA as the Continent's Path to Prosperity. Retrieved from <https://www.undp.org/ghana/press-releases/unlocking-africas-production-and-trade-potential-ghana-kenya-expo-spotlights-afcfta-continent-path-prosperity>

- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. (2023). E-commerce for Development: Harnessing the Opportunities of the AfCFTA for African Businesses. <https://unctad.org/meeting/unctad-eweek-2023-shaping-future-digital-economy>
- United States Institute of Peace. (2017). Fostering Diplomatic-Défense-Development (3D) Cooperation in Responding to Complex Crises. Retrieved from <https://www.usip.org/publications/2017/12/fostering-diplomatic-defense-development-3d-cooperation-responding-complex>
- United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. (2020). AfCFTA Implementation Guide: Enhancing Trade Facilitation through Automation and Simplification. <https://www.uneca.org/stories/implementing-the-afcfta-agreement-will-boost-intra-african-trade-and-industrialization>
- United Nations Office for Sustainable Development. (2023). Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships for Implementing the AfCFTA. https://unctad.org/system/files/information-document/ARFSD-2022-concept-note_en.pdf
- World Bank. (2022). Making the most of the African Continental Free Trade Area. World Bank.
- World Bank Group. (2023). The African Continental Free Trade area. In World Bank. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/trade/publication/the-african-continental-free-trade-area>
- Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods* (6th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Zhou, J. (2022). The Developing Role of Cultural Diplomacy in Soft Power: A Case Study of Japanese Cultural Promotion. Retrieved from <https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1704816/FULLTEXT01.pdf>
- Zielińska, K. (2016). Development Diplomacy. Development Aid as a Part of Public Diplomacy in the Pursuit of Foreign Policy Aims: Theoretical and Practical Considerations. *Historia i Polityka*, DOI:10.12775/HiP.2016.009

APPENDIX 1

INTERVIEW GUIDE

(To be answered by MFARI and AfCFTA Secretariat, MoTI, and Civil Society Organizations)

Dear Participant,

This interview guide is designed to understand how Ghana is approaching its diplomacy and public outreach efforts related to the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). Participants' insights are vital for uncovering Ghana's strategies in advancing AfCFTA goals, encouraging cooperation among member countries, and informing the public about the benefits of the agreement. This is meant for academic purposes and you are assured of confidentiality of information you provide. The interview will last for approximately 20 minutes maximum.

Part A: Demographic Details of Participants

- 1.Age.....
- 2.Sex.....
- 3.Education.....
- 4.Experience.....

Part B: To examine Ghana's cultural assets in development diplomacy for AfCFTA and foreign policy

1. How does Ghana's cultural heritage contribute to AfCFTA success and shape foreign policy?
2. Can you provide an example of Ghana's cultural assets enhancing AfCFTA diplomacy?
3. How can Ghana better use its culture to boost global economic standing via AfCFTA?
4. Share thoughts on traditional Ghanaian practices influencing trade negotiations in AfCFTA.

5. In your view, how can Ghana leverage its cultural diversity for diplomatic gains and sustainable development within AfCFTA?

Part C: To assess Ghana's diplomatic strategies for AfCFTA goals and agreement success.

1. What diplomatic tactics has Ghana used to advance AfCFTA goals?
2. How does Ghana engage with other states and blocs to drive AfCFTA cooperation?
3. What challenges has Ghana faced in AfCFTA diplomacy and how were they tackled?
4. How does Ghana partner with international entities to bolster its AfCFTA diplomacy?
5. How does Ghana balance its interests with AfCFTA's goals in diplomatic efforts?

Part D: To evaluate Ghana's public diplomacy for AfCFTA awareness, understanding, and support

1. What steps has Ghana taken to boost AfCFTA awareness domestically?
2. How does Ghana spread AfCFTA information to gain public backing?
3. Can you cite successful public campaigns by Ghana for AfCFTA?
4. How does Ghana address AfCFTA misconceptions and encourage engagement?
5. How does Ghana collaborate with various entities to promote AfCFTA support and advocacy?

Thank you for your active participation in the study. I am very grateful.