

**The Transformation of Diplomacy as an Instrument of Good Governance:
Higher Education Internationalisation in South Africa**

Danny Thapelo Bokaba

2018679825

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Supervisor: Professor Jo-Ansie van Wyk

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DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENT WORK

I, **Danny Thapelo Bokaba**, **Student Number: 2018679825**, am a student registered for Masters in Governance and Political Transformation in the 2022 academic year at the university of the Free-State. I hereby declare the following:

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Signature: MR D.T Bokaba

Date: 8 January 2022

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AU:	African Union
ANC:	African National Congress
CHE:	Council on Higher Education
DIRCO:	Department of International Relations and Cooperation
DBSA:	Development Bank of Southern Africa
DHET:	Department of Higher Education and Training
DoD:	Department of Defence
DTCI:	Department of Trade, Industry and Competition
EU:	European Union
IEASA:	The International Education Association of South Africa
ICC:	International Criminal Court
FPA:	Foreign Policy Analysis
HEI:	Higher Education Internationalisation
IGO:	Intergovernmental Organisation
IR:	International Relations
IEASA:	International Education Association of South Africa
NGO:	Non-governmental Organisation
NDP:	National Development Plan
NRF:	National Research Foundation
PHE:	Private Higher Education
RSA:	Republic of South Africa
SAQA:	South African Qualifications Authority
UN:	United Nations
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
USF:	Universities South Africa

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND SCIENTIFIC ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION:

Diplomacy has played a crucial role throughout history, serving as a tool to advance the interests of the countries it represents, foster international relationships, and pursue advantageous foreign policies. It offers a means to enhance a country's position in the global arena without resorting to the use of force. Diplomatic efforts prioritise peaceful dialogue and constructive discussions to reach agreements and resolve disputes between states (Barston 1997: 84).

The concept of diplomacy typically involves diplomatic and political cooperation between countries, often through bilateral agreements, aimed at addressing conflicts and promoting peacemaking efforts (Berridge 2010:1). Traditionally, diplomacy has been seen as a means to resolve conflicts through negotiation, serving as an alternative to resorting to war. In extreme cases where diplomacy fails, war is often the result. Therefore, diplomacy can be viewed as an active practice that combines the art and science of collaboration among states to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes through peaceful negotiations. However, it is important to note that diplomacy can also encompass initiatives that may involve both cooperative measures and coercion, including the use of threats or even force if necessary (Du Plessis 2006:124).

Diplomacy and its various activities have been present throughout human history, with some evidence and examples dating back to the 5th century and the Treaty of Westphalia (1648) (Van Langenhove 2016: n.p). Following the conclusion of World War II in 1945, a new era emerged, highlighting the significance of diplomacy in its diverse forms and the member states of the newly formed United Nations (UN) recognised the importance of formal collaboration and cooperation through diplomacy and the utilisation of diplomats to foster a more interconnected global community. During this time, the practice and role of diplomacy were significantly influenced by several intricate and interconnected factors, particularly concerning the functions and positions of states in the international arena. This cooperative approach led to the expansion of bilateral diplomacy, which focuses on relations between two sovereign states or countries and further expanded to multilateral diplomacy, involving more than two sovereign states or countries. These diplomatic frameworks became fundamental building blocks for international relations (IR) (Berridge 2005:5).

In spite of their differences, diplomacy and foreign policy are sometimes conflated. Diplomacy is the primary tool for foreign policy, but it is not the only one, since political leaders decide foreign policy and diplomats may provide advice on foreign policy in the light of objectives, methods, and tactics. The evolution of diplomacy describes the history of diplomacy and showcasing how the concept transformed far beyond the diplomacy of states and governments. The traditional role of diplomacy classified as the exclusive function of the state and its ruling government of the day, has over time gradually been transformed and, in some cases, replaced by modern trends and opportunities presented by technological developments and globalisation. Reference in this instance is made to the government because government is temporary and changes over time unlike the state which is permanent (Peterson 2014:1). The government in traditional diplomacy perspectives, for instance, is mandated to conduct international relations (IR) through appointed representatives such as heads of state between governments of sovereign states perceived as the professional management of relations, characterised by the non-violent nature to secure foreign policy objectives by advising, shaping and implementing (Barston 2013:1).

The transforming nature of diplomacy is not limited to developing countries like South Africa, as even developed nations like China are navigating the evolving landscape of modern diplomacy. This highlights the increasing need for changes in the nature of diplomacy in the 21st century. The concept of diplomacy and its relationship to global issues have undergone significant shifts, necessitating governments to critically analyse how they should proactively respond to the challenges posed by modern diplomacy. This includes addressing questions such as how governments should adapt to these changes and engage with new modes and actors in diplomatic processes (Stanzel 2018:6). One of the key factors in modern diplomacy that challenges traditional ideas is the role of non-state actors and how governments should incorporate them to achieve foreign policy objectives. The presence of non-state actors in diplomatic affairs raises important considerations for governments. These perspectives of modern diplomacy directly challenge traditional diplomatic theories, thereby influencing the transformation of diplomacy as a whole.

Operating in public spaces is rather complex and brings about difficulties requiring state functions to develop new and transparent ways to interact with emotional non-state role players. The above is particularly important to contextualise and fully comprehend the traditional views and theories regarding diplomacy, whilst observing transformation resulting

from the changing world over time presenting new challenges for the traditional diplomacy approach as a result of, for example, technological development and progress across the globe (Stanzel 2018:07). In professional diplomatic spheres, it is crucial to acknowledge the participation of various stakeholders, including non-governmental organisations (NGOs), the private sector, religious groups, immigrants, the media, conference experts, and other civil society entities. These actors have the ability to engage in both domestic and international lobbying, operating across multiple countries to mobilise support from home and host governments. Their influence can even extend to attracting former bureaucrats and political figures (Ataman 2003:60). While these role players exert diverse influences on foreign policy, this study will specifically focus on public universities in South Africa as significant non-state actors which contribute to their government's foreign policy and diplomacy through the practice of Higher Education Internationalisation (HEI).

In South Africa, the landscape of higher education includes a diverse mix of public and private universities actively engaging in internationalisation efforts. South Africa boasts a total of 26 public universities, all of which are affiliated with Universities South Africa (USF); furthermore, South African universities are strategically located across the nine provinces within the country (Universities South Africa 2023: n.p.). It is noteworthy that each province has at least one university, and most recently, the Northern Cape and Mpumalanga have also established their own educational institutions, a development that occurred between 2014 and 2015 with Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University (SMU) in Gauteng also established during is period. Specifically, three provinces - Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, and Gauteng - house a notable concentration of universities, making them South Africa's three main metropolitan regions (Universities South Africa 2023: n.p.).

In the present landscape, it is observed that South Africa hosts approximately more than 150 registered private universities (Tan 2023: n.p.). Mabizela (2002) points out that Private Higher Education (PHE) has been a part of South Africa's educational fabric since the early 1800s; however, for much of the 20th century, PHE remained largely unnoticed by both the government and the academic community. It is essential to emphasise that all public universities are actively involved in the process of Higher Education Internationalisation (HEI). Nevertheless, certain private universities may choose not to participate in these efforts due to the significant financial commitments associated with internationalisation which is viewed as collaborative interaction that extends beyond national boundaries with

the objective of pursuing shared goals for mutual advantages, as this process primarily relies on trust and confidence and is characterised by physical movement, the exchange of ideas and collaborative projects (Mabizela 2002:18).

Universities, as non-state actors, have taken on a greater role as specialists in the internationalisation process in recent decades, actively challenging the traditional view that diplomacy is a core function of the state, with internationalisation management rooted in higher education institutions and not necessarily with the state or diplomats (Louw and Mayer 2008:617). As a result, the need to investigate the role and function of HEI in 21st century diplomacy becomes apparent (Du Plessis 2006:39). In this instance, South Africa is presented as an illustrative case study. States have in the 21st century made many strides to construct and secure at least one higher education institution or university as a result of the interconnected nature of the global world states operate in. This move classifies education as a significant worldwide occurrence with which sovereign states engage to promote teaching, learning and research (Mello 2013:405).

Universities can now actively collaborate with the state to achieve foreign policy objectives under the provision of modern diplomatic approaches. In this instance, universities should actively collaborate with and align their HEI efforts with that of the state in order to ensure consistency in the implementation of the country's internationalisation strategy as an important foreign policy goal. Although the state is a primary actor in IR, states often devolve the internationalisation of higher education to universities. However, states must assist universities in understanding the global landscape in which they operate including quality assurance thereof, in the absence of diplomats taking the lead (Hedling and Bremberg 2021:9). This leads to the understanding that the advancement of South Africa's foreign policy in relation to internationalisation is a shared responsibility between the state and universities. This illustrates how non-state actors in diplomacy can be identified as significant players who serve as vehicles for communication with the ability to negotiate important agreements amongst sovereign states whilst playing a vital role providing updated information on global matters of interest (Hall 2010:6).

Good governance is an integral function of government and includes how sovereign countries like South Africa formulate and realise important foreign policy related objectives. Diplomacy as an instrument of good governance is highly dependent on implementation of

good governance polices, procedures and functions which enable a government, for example, to achieve its foreign policy goals and objectives; therefore good governance is perceived as an enabler for diplomacy (Global Diplomatic Forum 2015: n.p.). Good governance should in principal be perceived as an important government function that all spheres of government strive to uphold whilst performing state functions. Stoker (1998:17) in his interpretation of governance theory, also recognises the importance of comprehending and including good governance principals in all aspects of state functions including internationalisation and to encourage an adequate understanding of good governance principals when universities are representing South African higher education internationally. Furthermore, Stoker (1998:2) alludes to good governance as involving non-state actors, voluntary actors on public matters and the private sector to actively influence government policies and processes, thereby spearheading the role of non-state actors in diplomacy and over time encouraging the transformation of diplomacy and transparency.

The significance of this study is that it investigates the concept of HEI as an instance of diplomatic transformation. In presenting South Africa as a case study, it illustrates the practice and implementation of this type of diplomacy because of increasing pressure from factors such as globalisation, scientific competition and resource constraints within South African public universities, to actively promote and participate in HEI and to develop policies and practices that truly result in internationalisation (Sehoolle 2016:3-4). It is important to note that before the introduction of the policy framework for internationalisation of higher education in South Africa, published on 6 November 2020, universities had been operating blindly in the absence of a regulatory framework (Quinlan & Singh 2022: n.p.) and often without guidance from South Africa's foreign policy establishment.

1.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

This section explores the literature in relation to how the concept of diplomacy in South Africa has transformed to include, accommodate and mobilise non-state actors to consider the impact the transformation of diplomacy has had on foreign policy and good governance principals. In essence, it ultimately explores the role and function of universities and their practice of HEI diplomacy in the 21st century as a non-state actor and how they have influenced foreign policy in relation to academia and the use of soft power.

As Barston (2013:1) asserts, diplomacy fundamentally encompasses the management of strategic relationships between states and other significant actors. It also involves the promotion of key strategic matters that shape foreign policy, including the state's viewpoint on implementing a foreign policy that is both efficient and effective, with well-defined objectives.

According to Berridge (2005:5), diplomacy plays a vital role in fostering peaceful relations among states through effective communication and constructive engagement. In the contemporary global landscape, it is rare to find a sovereign state that does not have an active foreign Ministry responsible for managing and advancing the country's international position in order to achieve its foreign policy objectives. These foreign ministries are considered essential partners to the diplomatic services provided by states.

As part of a government's declared foreign policy, state diplomacy is viewed as an important tool for conducting IR where foreign policy is shaped partly by and within a foreign ministry (Berridge 2005:1-2). In the case of South Africa, the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) is responsible. IR and diplomacy are essentially politically contested concepts of interest characterised by adequate resources and skilfulness, enabling states to secure its foreign policy objectives in the international arena without the use of violence or force (Barston 2013:1).

Lohmann (2017:50) in his perspective on diplomacy, argues that the concept of diplomacy has been neglected over time in both the theory and practice of diplomacy, as the focus had shifted to other perspectives with the neglect coming from a theoretical perspective resulting in power politics benefiting from the above-mentioned neglect. Thus academics have spent more time in recent years exploring the notion of diplomacy and a need to build on the concept's differences in different contexts and analytical viewpoints through high-level interaction between academia and practitioners in the field. The role of academia has become more evident through internationalisation of academic projects contributing to the understanding of diplomacy and that the state is not perceived as the only actor.

Cooper, Heine and Thakur (2013:8) refer to the transformation of diplomacy, as advancing theories of modern diplomacy and the changing nature of diplomacy from the function of the government or head of state, has generally reduced the state's overall role and influence in many instances at the expense of the local ambassador or diplomats. Cooper *et al.* (2013:8)

further argue that the use of ambassadors or government officials who are not necessarily experts in a particular field or topic, may actually lead to important issues arising from foreign bilateral or multilateral summits being misrepresented, distorted or ignored entirely because the representative is unfamiliar with a fundamental topic, subject, or field. This gives rise to the importance of non-actors such as universities in HEI, who are perceived as expert role players to address global issues of concern in relation to academia; for example in foreign policy diplomacy.

The research conducted by Kerr and Wiseman (2018:94) sheds light on the evolving nature of diplomacy and the significant role non-state actors play in the global arena. Their findings suggest that non-state actors have brought about changes in the diplomatic landscape, which has implications for the independence of states in their actions, both directly and indirectly. Additionally, there is a perception that non-state actors lack legitimate power, leading to suspicions that they may encroach upon the traditional role and function of states in conducting foreign policy. Consequently, states are compelled to share and shape the diplomatic space with non-state actors.

According to Klavins (2012:1), diplomacy has changed largely in response to a rapidly evolving international system with new actors, such as international organizations, and strategic interest groups, entering the international arena. Stanzel (2018:1) further implies that diplomacy and diplomatic actors are undergoing transformation issues and as a result, traditional diplomacy is impacted in the international arena by the fundamental changes introduced by globalisation and modern diplomacy at an increasing rate, directly impacting the character of diplomacy as known to us traditionally.

Another factor influencing the transformation of diplomacy as indicated by Rashica (2019:77-78), is the large number of technological developments, primarily digitisation, impacting the understanding of diplomats' work; a growing number of domestic and international actors are becoming more involved in diplomacy; the public is more engaged in foreign policy, thus they seek to influence diplomacy through social media platforms for instance. An important feature concerning the transformation of diplomacy is the unprecedented growth in institutions and their ability to coordinate and cooperate in solving and attending to key international issues (Klavins 2012:2). It clear that through this analysis that theories of modern diplomacy have a role in 21st century diplomacy.

Cooper *et al.* (2013:3) outline that the scope and domain of diplomacy has over the years become very vast and broad, thus rapidly increasing beyond the traditional issue of diplomacy and foreign policy, which again indicates that non-state actors have an important role to play. Over the years there has also been confusion regarding the role of foreign policy and diplomacy, which is particularly important to acknowledge as these are essentially different concepts that are interrelated within IR. This highlights the importance for this study to explore these concepts in the coming chapters.

Prominent scholars have made notable contributions to the literature on HEI by exploring the concept of knowledge diplomacy within the context of HEI, highlighting its unique aspect in modern diplomacy. Nye (2011:1) introduces the concept of "soft power," which refers to the ability to influence others and achieve national self-interests through persuasion rather than through force, violence, or sanctions. In recent years, the term "soft power" has been used to describe the role of education and intellectual exchange in establishing international connections.

Knight (2014:n.p) in her work concerning HEI as an instrument of diplomacy and the need to attain its foreign policy goals and objectives, strongly emphasises the importance of soft power and the need for soft power to be integrated in the absence of constructivist and interpretive interpretations by understanding soft power through the concrete perception that knowledge diplomacy should be viewed differently from the classic notion of soft power. This is due to the relative difference in power concepts and comprehension to that of the diplomatic framework. However, Johnston (2012) highlights the importance of the capabilities of the state regarding soft power profiling and how the state can actually utilise knowledge diplomacy as a means of attaining so-called soft power. Thus the need for knowledge diplomacy must be enhanced and create ample opportunities for universities to be the main actors in diplomacy of HEI through internationalisation and thus be endorsed as crucial non-state actors.

Khan, Ahmad and Fernald (2020:1) in their argument on HEI as an important vehicle for soft power, refer to the ideal soft power achieved through conventional diplomacy showcasing state focused mandates with a strict focus on political structures, classified by high level protocol and negotiations that are not necessarily inclusive of universities as important non-state actors. This view supports the traditional notion of diplomacy and is

regarded as non-progressive in terms of modern diplomacy and transformation principals which perceive universities as major drivers and players in the diplomacy of HEI.

Consequently, Khan *et al.* (2020:1) indicate how joint collaboration agreements driven by soft power attributes are mandatory factors to consider for global diplomacy. However, although the state might be the key driver in foreign policy implantation it remains the universities' function through internationalisation to lead and spearhead joint collaborative agreements. Khan *et al.*'s (2021:1) explanation highlights the connection between the state and HEI based on the supporting or complementary role they both play in the transformation of diplomacy; moreover, through universities leading the way with knowledge diplomacy, the impact of globalisation increases the expectation of advancing political goals for the nation resulting in greater economic prosperity.

As Jones (2012:42) indicates, modern-day states, including South Africa's HEI sector, apply principles of modern diplomacy to actively utilise soft power principals as a foreign policy tool to advance relations both locally and internationally through institutional or research specific agreements. Thus the HEI sector operates the same way the states would to engage the concept of diplomacy to secure international partnerships and secure strategic relationships. The state and diplomats' roles are thus constantly evolving due to changing trends and dynamics at the global and national levels; therefore adaptability to fast-changing diplomatic contexts and flexibility towards changing diplomatic patterns are essential for both the aforementioned stakeholders. According to Ton (2015), universities must adapt and maintain competitiveness in the dynamic realm of diplomacy by continuously innovating their strategies and methods for internationalisation. This is particularly crucial due to the growing significance of diplomacy and its interconnection with certain trends. One such trend is the internationalisation of domestic policy areas, which highlights the necessity for more specialised forms of diplomacy. This includes the involvement of permanent representation, diplomats and non-state actors who possess specific expertise in vital fields such as climate change, food and water security, sustainable development and human rights.

The emergence of so-called 'hybrid diplomacy' is also important in the 21st century, demonstrating how IR should essentially invest in hybrid methods of implementing foreign policy strategies which cannot be achieved through traditional diplomacy only. As a result,

hybrid diplomacy incorporates both traditional intergovernmental diplomacy and contemporary network diplomacy, which also includes non-state and other actors (Ton 2015:n.p). Another illustration of this concept is the utilisation of bilateral and multilateral agreements in international affairs, depending on the context and appropriateness of each approach at a given time.

The significance of the virtual diplomacy trend in the contemporary world should not be underestimated, given the interconnected nature of our globalised world. The virtualisation of diplomacy and its growing importance cannot be ignored as technology continues to advance. With the development of virtual applications, stakeholders from various countries can now communicate and convene in real-time without the need for physical travel. Virtual platforms and the utilisation of social media further contribute to the advancement of this trend, enabling effective communication of foreign policy initiatives.

Ghosh (2014) emphasises the presence of five distinct features that characterise the transformation of the diplomatic environment. Firstly, there is a noticeable increase in the number and diversity of actors involved, encompassing governments, multinational corporations, non-governmental organisations, and others. Secondly, the scope of diplomatic practice has expanded to encompass a wide range of public policy and governmental activities. Thirdly, globalisation processes have had an impact on the various levels at which diplomatic activities occur, ranging from local to bilateral, regional, multilateral and even global engagements. Fourthly, the tools and equipment employed in diplomacy have undergone significant evolution to incorporate digital technology. Lastly, the evolution of diplomacy is also evident in its forms, styles and approaches. The changing modes, types and methods of diplomacy reflect the shifts in the diplomatic environment, necessitating more complex strategic planning and the adoption of new strategies for successful outcomes.

In South Africa, both private and public higher education institutions are governed by the Higher Education Act No. 101 of 1997 and enjoys a noteworthy level of statutory autonomy (Republic of South Africa 1997:2). As mentioned by Weiler (2019:5), this autonomy highlights the critical importance of ensuring that the governance and management systems within these institutions strictly adhere to a uniform and well-defined framework as stipulated within the provisions of the aforementioned Higher Education Act as It is imperative that

universities' institutional structures maintain accountability with stakeholders by aligning themselves with the regulatory framework established in the abovementioned legislation. According to the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) (DHET 2013), in South Africa, Private Higher Education institutions (PHEs) are acknowledged as playing a role in fulfilling the objectives outlined in the white paper on Post-School Education and Training. However, it is important to note that these private institutions vary significantly in terms of their scope, size and the academic disciplines they offer. Collectively, they constitute only a modest portion, approximately 10-15%, of the total higher education participation rate (Cloete 2014:1356).

It is worth highlighting that the South African Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 (DHET 1997b) stipulates regulations regarding the use of the term 'university,' reserving it exclusively for public institutions. This restriction presents challenges for private institutions attempting to establish themselves within the university domain and to convince the public of the equivalence with traditional university degrees of the qualifications they offer. The narrow approach regarding jargon as stipulated by DHET (2013) hampers private institutions from effectively identifying and promoting their unique strengths and offerings. Nonetheless, it is notable that the South African government acknowledges the importance of private higher education and even expresses a desire for its expansion, as articulated in the DHET's 2013 policy document. According to a report by the Council on Higher Education (CHE) (2016:8), it is evident that the public higher education system in South Africa is facing considerable challenges, with several institutions struggling to sustain the higher education mission. Given this context, one might speculate that the current situation presents an opportune moment for private higher education institutions to thrive and according to Coan (2017:p.n), this is primarily due to the growing number of high school graduates seeking admission to universities and the public universities' limitations in meeting this surging demand. However, the CHE (2016:10) contends that the public higher education sector still holds an advantageous position and that the private sector has not yet earned recognition as a significant contributor to the envisioned unified higher education system.

According to the DHET (1997b), the South Higher Education Act of 1997 established a structured framework for governance within South Africa's public higher education institutions. However, there is a notable absence of specific guidelines addressing governance practices within the realm of PHE and this is a significant criticism regarding the

difference in the governance of public and PHE institutions. While public institutions benefit from the clear guidance provided by the Higher Education Act, the same level of structured guidance does not extend to private institutions, highlighting a difference in the regulatory approach between the public and private sectors of higher education.

Stander and Herman (2017:10) acknowledge that the PHE sector in South Africa encompasses a wide spectrum of institutions ranging from smaller entities that specialise in specific disciplines, for example nursing, to larger and more comprehensive private institutions that offer programmes spanning various disciplines. Private institutions often concentrate on delivering less resource-intensive programmes, such as business courses, which require fewer infrastructure investments and specialised facilities. Additionally, they often rely on part-time staff members in comparison with public universities, especially during their initial years of operation. PHE has not yet significantly contributed to critical fields such as engineering and medicine, which are highly needed in the South African and African context due to their focus on cost-effective programmes and their institutional composition may account for this. Furthermore, the management and ownership structures of private institutions are quite diverse and often not subject to the same regulatory restrictions imposed on public institutions by the government. As noted by Stockley and De Wit (2011:50), some private institutions in South Africa have international association affiliations and multinational higher education consortia indeed explain some are of local PHE origins; therefore the diversity in origins highlights the complexity of private higher education in South Africa.

As Higher education Institutions (HEIs) engage in internationalisation Henrikson (2005) emphasises that effective international cooperation would be virtually impossible without the foundation of trust, collaboration, shared objectives, shared values and the teamwork that underlies the concept of internationalisation. Modern diplomacy encompasses qualities that extend beyond the traditional means of diplomatic practice and contributes to the transformation of diplomacy itself.

From the existing literature, two main themes have emerged: the evolution of diplomacy as a tool for promoting good governance over time and the role of Higher Education Internationalisation (HEI) as a manifestation of this transformative process. Moreover, the existing literature reveals certain gaps in our understanding of diplomacy. Firstly, there is a

recognition of the growing complexity and interconnectedness of the global system, which poses challenges for diplomacy in effectively addressing international crises. Secondly, there is a need for non-state actors to develop diplomatic skills and a comprehensive understanding of the international arena. Another gap identified is the necessity for more flexible and innovative approaches to diplomacy on an international scale, including the opportunity to shape new forms of diplomatic leadership that involve both state and non-state actors. These gaps highlight areas where further research and development are needed to enhance our understanding and practice of diplomacy. Finally, it is essential for both state and non-state actors to embrace and effectively utilise technological advancements within the realm of IR.

Each study employs a unique methodology guided by research concepts and theoretical frameworks grounded in diplomacy theory and practice within IR. These frameworks elucidate the evolving nature of diplomacy over time, from traditional to modern perspectives. Extensive literature exists on the transformative aspects of diplomacy, encompassing fundamental concepts that support the theoretical framework. This approach allows for two perspectives; firstly, the use of constructivism serving as a valuable analytical tool for understanding and studying the transformation of diplomacy. As an IR theory, constructivism emphasises the role of social construction, norms, ideas and identities in shaping international interactions and outcomes. When applied to the study of diplomacy, constructivism highlights how diplomatic practices, norms and institutions are not fixed or predetermined, but rather shaped by the shared understandings and beliefs of actors involved. Secondly, a conceptual analysis needs to establish connections between foreign policy, globalisation, good governance, internationalisation, knowledge diplomacy and universities. Thus, this study examines the relationship between these elements are through the lens of diplomacy and presented accordingly.

1.3 THE MEANING, RATIONALE, NATURE AND IMPLICATIONS OF HEI IN SOUTH AFRICA

The meaning of HEI in South Africa refers to the process of actively engaging with global networks, partnerships and collaborations in the field of higher education. It involves promoting international mobility, attracting international students and faculties, facilitating joint research projects, and integrating global perspectives into the curriculum. The objective

is to create a more inclusive and globally competitive higher education system that benefits students, faculties, and the nation as a whole. De Wit (2002) outlines how universities in South Africa have taken initiatives to strengthen institutional prestige and global exposure. This includes improving the quality of teaching and learning, fostering cross-border collaboration, supporting faculty and student mobility, and forming strategic collaborations with international research organisations.

Sehoole (2006:4) suggests that internationalisation is not a recent phenomenon in South Africa. It has been present since the establishment of formal education by the colonisers, given that the colonial system, which has global roots, influenced the higher education system in South Africa. Knight (2003) defines internationalisation in higher education institutions (HEIs) as the integration of transnational perspectives, insights, prospects and mandates into the learning practices of these institutions. Knight also states that rationales are significant motivators for a country's engagement, attention and investment in internationalisation-related activities. In South Africa, internationalisation has become a crucial component of the higher education system due to the legacy of racial segregation and the need to compete globally.

Pillay and Kishun (2006:9) explain that the rationale behind higher education internationalisation in South Africa is actually multifaceted. Firstly, it aims to enrich the quality of education by providing students and faculty with exposure to diverse perspectives, methodologies and research approaches from around the world. This exposure can lead to enhanced academic experiences, critical thinking and a broader knowledge base. Additionally, HEIs in South Africa actively participate in various programmes and activities that foster the development of international partnerships and alliances. Secondly, internationalisation enhances the reputation and visibility of South African higher education institutions on the global stage; thus, collaborating with renowned international universities and participating in global academic networks can attract international students and scholars, thereby increasing institutional prestige and fostering academic excellence (Pillay 2006:12). In addition to above rationales, Sehoole (2006:5) emphasises the need for South Africa to overcome its historical isolation in the international academic sector caused by apartheid, considering that internationalisation can help improve the quality of academic standings and enable universities in South Africa to compete globally among the best. HEI in South Africa has significant implications for elevating universities' international standing,

promoting academic prestige and advancing cultural learning and transfer. However, internationalisation also presents challenges, such as language and communication problems.

The implications of higher education internationalisation in South Africa are far-reaching. On the one hand, it can lead to obtaining academic excellence and attract talented international students and scholars who contribute through broader integration to the academic community including the South African society at large. Moreover, the cultural exchange element of internationalisation can foster intercultural understanding and promote global citizenship. On the other hand, HEI can lead to the emigration of the country's brightest students and prominent faculty may seek educational or career opportunities abroad. In order to mitigate this, South Africa must ensure that its higher education system remains attractive and competitive while providing opportunities for academic and professional growth within the country.

The nature of higher education internationalisation in South Africa is characterised by a comprehensive and proactive approach towards engaging with the global academic community. It involves a series of strategic efforts and initiatives aimed at integrating international perspectives, promoting cross-cultural interactions and fostering global collaboration within the higher education landscape of the country. South African higher education institutions actively seek to create alliances with international counterparts to facilitate student and faculty exchange programmes, joint research projects and academic collaborations. These partnerships not only enhance the academic quality but also contribute to creating a diverse and vibrant learning environment. The nature of higher education internationalisation also involves the internationalisation of the curriculum and attraction and retention of international students and scholars. South Africa welcomes students from different countries, providing them with opportunities to pursue their higher education in diverse academic disciplines. However, it is imperative for South African universities to work towards incorporating global perspectives, case studies and research findings into the academic curriculum, enabling students to gain a broader understanding of global issues and challenges.

Rensburg, Motala and David (2015:92) argue that universities worldwide must internationalise their higher education programmes to attract top students from around the

world. Internationalisation promotes global social and cultural connectivity, economic advancement, knowledge production and a multicultural society. According to Knight (2003), the concept of internationalisation in higher education is characterised by the integration of transnational perspectives, insights, prospects and mandates into learning practices within institutions. Knight further emphasises the importance of rationales as the primary motivating factor behind a country's engagement and investment in internationalisation-related issues. Given South Africa's historical context of racial segregation and the need to compete on the global stage, internationalisation has emerged as a significant element within the country's higher education system. De Wit (2002) points out various initiatives implemented by universities to enhance their institutional reputation and global exposure, improve teaching and learning quality, foster cross-border collaborations and support faculty and student mobility. Many of these initiatives involve the recruitment of international students and the formation of strategic partnerships between higher education institutions and international research organisations.

Rensburg *et al.* (2015:92) provide an overview of the global trend wherein universities worldwide are increasingly prioritising the internationalisation of their higher education programmes. This strategic approach is also implemented in South Africa and aims to attract top students from diverse backgrounds to pursue their research and studies in South Africa. Academic institutions play a crucial role in facilitating internationalisation and embracing the opportunities presented by globalisation, as these factors significantly impact developments in university education. The rationale behind promoting internationalisation is strengthened by the interconnectedness of global societies and cultures, the ongoing economic progress and competition, the production of knowledge that can be shared across borders and the pursuit of an inclusive, compassionate and multicultural society (Rensburg *et al.* 2015:92). In addition to these reasons, Sehoole (2006:6) highlights another key motivation for HEIs in South Africa to internationalise, which involves addressing the historical isolation the country experienced within the international academic community during the apartheid era. Therefore, internationalisation is seen as a means to enhance the academic reputation of universities in South Africa, enabling them to compete on a global scale and foster the acquisition of expertise and knowledge

1.4 RESEARCH PROBLEM STATEMENT

Globalisation without doubt has had a profound impact on global diplomacy; therefore sovereign states including South Africa are required to actively respond to the challenges of globalisation. According to Cooper *et al.* (2013:7), diplomacy can no longer be viewed as reserved for state-to-state relations; rather international relations and decision-making processes are highly activated and influenced by those who have a vested interest in the system including universities in relation to internationalisation. It also important to be mindful of sovereign states and the role sovereign states occupy in the international arena supported by good governance practices. Sovereign states have not disappeared in the globalising world but are rather expected to adjust their roles and functions in order to accommodate the emerging intersocial diplomacy which accommodates state and non-state actors (Kerr and Wiseman 2018:89).

If one looks at multilateral diplomacy in the world and having to mitigate global problems and challenges which requires global actions, then multilateral diplomacy can be viewed as accommodating interaction and thus offers ample opportunities for participation by non-state actors in comparison with the notion of bilateral diplomacy, which often prioritises state actors only and is not necessarily open to sharing the platform because sharing the platform with non-actors might be viewed as symbol of weakness (Kerr and Wiseman 2018:89). The increasing prevalence and activities of non-state actors are viewed as significantly impacting diplomacy and of course in the long run seeking to conduct their own foreign policy and operating in contested diplomatic spaces, which highlights and advances the need to comprehend the transforming nature of diplomacy in the 21st century.

This study focuses on the transformation of diplomacy in South Africa, as well as the effect the above transformation has on diplomacy and on good governance, including the role and function of universities in HEI as non-state actors influencing foreign policy in traditional diplomatic spaces for years in the absence of a governing policy framework. This research problem examines and identifies the reasons that have led to the transformation of diplomacy in South Africa as well as the role universities play as prominent non-state actors. Clearly, diplomacy is undergoing an unprecedented transformation in the international arena with increasing non-state actors operating in spaces previously reserved for the state appointed diplomats

South Africa has actively participated in HEI without a comprehensive policy framework with defined goals for many years. Also the academic space has embraced the prevailing western concept of internationalisation for years. These two attributes, combined with an analysis of international relations provide a fresh new perspective for a study of the phenomenon.

1.5 MAIN RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the problem statement, the study aims to answer the following research questions:

- How has the concept of diplomacy undergone transformation in South Africa?
- How has South Africa actively responded to the transforming nature of diplomacy?
- Who are the main non-state actors who have emerged as significant influencers shaping South Africa's diplomacy endeavours?
- What role does diplomacy play in influencing the principles and practices of good governance in South Africa?
- What is the role and function of higher education internationalisation in the transformation of diplomacy and the implications thereof?

1.5.1 Subsidiary Research Questions

Accordingly, to answer the above questions, a number of subsidiary research questions arise:

- What is government's role in higher education internationalisation, and the implications thereof?
- What challenges does modern diplomacy pose for traditional diplomacy?
- What influence do global trends have on higher education internationalisation?

Information is gathered presented and predetermined by the literature to respond to the individual subsidiary research questions and thereby ultimately responding to the broader main research questions.

1.6 MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Firstly, the main objective of the study is to analyse and respond to the first research question relating to “how has the concept of diplomacy undergone transformation in SA?” It therefore focuses on the transformation of the practice of diplomacy in South Africa by focusing on HEI’s response to the abovementioned research questions. This is achieved by means of providing an overview of the origins and evolution of diplomacy in South Africa from the traditional views of diplomacy, which for decades focused on a narrow fundamental understanding that sovereign states are the main and only legitimate power in diplomacy, then leading up to new developments and methods of diplomacy in the 21st century.

Secondly, the study provides insight into how south Africa has responded to the transformation of diplomacy and the impact the transformation has had on diplomacy; thereby actively responding to the second main research question. Contrary to the above traditional views, collaborative diplomacy has contributed significantly to new forms of thinking around modern diplomacy, considering the increased number of emerging non-state actors and functions.

The third objective is linked to the third research question, “Who are the main non-state actors who have emerged as significant influencers shaping South Africa’s diplomacy endeavours?” South Africa has embraced the diplomacy transformation with particular reference to the study’s case study on HEI as supported by Riordan (2003:30) who asserts that the transformation of diplomacy over time is primarily a consequence of the changing role of the state. These changes therefore create ample opportunities for the emergence of non-state actors to better understand universities and their implementation of internationalisation. Thus, universities have become the main non-state actors occupying and shaping critical roles in the South African professional diplomatic space. Non-state actors are accordingly divided into two groups or types: intergovernmental organisation (IGOs) whose members are states and non-governmental organisation (NGOs) whose members are private individuals and groups (Kegley and Wittkopf 2004: 137).

The fourth main research objective linked to “What role does diplomacy play in influencing the principles and practices of good governance in South Africa?” zooms into diplomacy as an instrument for good governance as well as the importance for universities to integrate good governance principles into their internationalisation efforts in order to address the

opportunities and challenges of the global world and to become even more open and relevant to modern world foreign policy trends as important non-state actors within HEI. To thoroughly examine good governance as an instrument and enabler for diplomacy in the implementation of South Africa's foreign policy objectives, the interrelated concepts of governance, diplomacy, and foreign policy are analysed. In this context, the above concepts are significant since they aid in the study's navigation to answer the research questions by connecting key concepts related to diplomacy and determining how diplomacy's transformation influences good governance.

The study's final main research questions addressed through the case is to respond to “What is the role and function of higher education internationalisation in the transformation of diplomacy as a non-state actor and the implications thereof?”. Here the relationship between diplomacy and internationalisation is explored, considering South Africa’s presence and leadership on critical issues as part of its soft power in internationalisation (NPC 2012: 241). Many states including South Africa have inherently advanced their national interests through education resulting in universities gaining increased autonomy to advance HEI and universities' abilities to gradually implement foreign policy; however, this is highly dependent on government policy on HEI. For the longest time, universities in South Africa have been operating within the foreign policy area in anticipation of a governing policy (Jooste and Hagenmeier 2020:n.p). In order for HEI to be successful and apply good governance principles, both the government and universities must understand their respective roles and the complexity of HEI, where the government acts as a foreign policy maker and universities act as the implementers of the government's foreign policy objectives. This must occur in the absence of diplomatic intervention due to the autonomy that universities enjoy when responding to government’s role in higher education internationalisation, and the implications thereof. Thus this goal connects to the studies first subsidiary research question which explores an understanding of government’s role in higher education internationalisation, and the implications thereof and the link to good governance in the study (Hedling & Bremberg 2021:9).

Traditional diplomatic approaches in the 21st century are out of synchronisation with key features and functions of collaborative diplomacy, which appears to challenge and address Western supremacy in understanding and cooperation. Modern diplomacy ideas indicate that non-state actors play a vital role in diplomacy and that diplomacy is not solely a state

function. This objective will assist in responding to the second subsidiary question concerning the challenges modern diplomacy poses for traditional diplomacy. The state's perception of modern diplomacy recognises that it is not just the state in the international arena addressing the challenges modern diplomacy poses for traditional diplomacy (Barston 2006:1). Subsequent to the above, the last objective of this research discusses the third subsidiary question what is the impact of global trends on HEI. This comprises factors that directly impact the transformation of diplomacy; for instance, how globalisation and digital world has transformed the diplomacy field as many of the growing diplomacy models and practices in the 21st century are navigating in this direction with the global emergence of technology and the internet taxing traditional diplomacy views (Hedling and Bremberg 2021:1-2).

This study, then, effectively examines how the practice of diplomacy has transformed over time by using a case study that focuses on internationalisation, which effectively depends on diplomacy and the implementation of foreign policy including collaboration and partnerships. Since universities serve as non-state actors in HEI diplomacy, traditional and modern diplomacy including constructivism serve as the research's theoretical and analytical framework, considering it is most appropriate for the case study selected and the transformation of diplomacy. Furthermore, the purpose of this study is to contribute positive knowledge on the transforming nature of diplomacy as an instrument of good governance in South Africa by demonstrating how non-state players, such as universities, are occupying the HEI space and advancing foreign policy.

1.7 CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

The following are the main concepts which are fundamental to this study: diplomacy globalisation, good governance, internationalisation, knowledge diplomacy, and the concept of a university, which is the first concept discussed below.

1.7.1 University

According to Cox (2000), the Oxford Dictionary provides a definition of a university as an institution of higher education where students engage in degree programmes and conduct scholarly research. A university can be conceptually defined as an educational establishment that provides the highest calibre of instruction, learning, and research,

typically delivered by experts and scholars in their respective fields (Cox 2000:n.p). Upon the successful culmination of their educational journey at a university, students are conferred with academic degrees across a spectrum of disciplines and faculties. Peercy & Svenson (2016) provides a more expansive definition, characterising a university as a higher education institution equipped with facilities dedicated to teaching, learning and research resources. It possesses the authority and privileges to confer undergraduate and postgraduate degrees and often includes provisions for research and collaboration. Some universities also incorporate a graduate school within their structure.

1.7.2 Diplomacy

Diplomacy can be defined as a state's projected action plan that outlines its interactions with other countries in the international arena, forming an integral part of its foreign policy. It involves the management of relations between sovereign states through the engagement of officials both within the home country and abroad (Berridge and James 2003:4).

1.7.3 Globalisation

Globalisation can be defined as "the process of transforming transcontinental or interregional patterns of human organization, activity, and power exercise into transcontinental or interregional ones." In addition to linking nations and regions across national geopolitical boundaries, globalisation also connects cultures across continents and civilizations (Woods 1999:40).

Many authors have attempted, with varying degrees of success, to define globalisation. Some argue that it cannot be done, while others argue that doing so will confine the meaning.

Defined as the process of furthering the integration of the nations around the world is substantially advanced. It is characterized as a complex interaction between capitalism and democracy, involving both favourable and undesirable features, which both empower and weaken individuals and groups. In contrast, the term "globalisation" is also referred to as a fresh perspective on international politics and economics that is adopted by the government, industry, academia and nonprofit groups (Borcan 2012:3)

Alternatively, the term "globalisation" refers to the acceleration of global trade in products, services, money, technology and cultural norms. One result of globalisation is that it encourages and intensifies relationships between various groups and locations worldwide (Woods 1999:40)

Based on Anfara and Mertz's (2015) definition, globalisation is characterised by greater interconnectedness and interdependence among countries and people. In general, it consists of two intertwined components: opening international borders, which facilitates the faster movement of ideas, finances and things; and adjusting the institutional and policy settings that facilitate such movements at the national and international levels.

1.7.4 Good Governance:

Good governance refers to the process through which a country's political and administrative authorities make decisions and govern the nation. It encompasses both the decision-making process itself and the subsequent implementation of strategic state decisions (Weiss 2000:797). A robust system of good governance relies on collaborative and supportive relationships between the state, civil society and the private sector. It is crucial to consider the dynamics of interactions among these three actors and to establish effective systems that facilitate their cooperation. Key elements of good governance include participation, transparent decision-making, accountability, adherence to the rule of law and predictability. According to Weiss (2000) It is important to note that good governance is normative in nature as it is based on the values and standards set by the defining actors and institutions involved.

1.7.5 Internationalisation:

In the context of higher education, internationalisation refers to introducing an international or intercultural component into teaching and learning through internationalisation of the curriculum including research and service functions (Knight 2004:9).

1.7.6 Knowledge Diplomacy:

Knight (2019) presents a definition that focuses on the essential elements of knowledge diplomacy, which include cooperation, reciprocity and mutuality. This concept provides higher education institutions with an opportunity to enhance internationalisation efforts and contribute to addressing global challenges. By fostering international collaboration in higher

education, research, and innovation, knowledge diplomacy offers a novel approach to strengthening relationships between nations and collectively addressing common global issues.

These concepts and how they are interrelated will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter two.

1.8 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

According to Kowalczyk and Scalia (2013), research involves conducting a comprehensive study using scientific methods to address a specific problem and contribute to the development of knowledge or theory in a particular field. In this study, a qualitative approach is employed, relying on systematic information gathering and the selection of relevant content as the preferred research method. Furthermore, the research is designed as a qualitative case study, following the approach outlined by Yin (1994:4). Case studies are often used for exploratory and descriptive purposes, allowing for an in-depth examination of the "why" and "how" questions related to the transformation of diplomacy in the specific context of HEI. By utilising a case study approach, this research aims to provide explanations and descriptions of the transformation processes, addressing the underlying factors and mechanisms driving this transformation (Yin 1994:8).

In order to comprehensively understand the transformation of diplomacy as an instrument of good governance, this research utilises HEI in South Africa as a case study within the context of real-time dynamics. The study draws upon the existing literature and incorporates significant variables to examine the role of HEI as a form of diplomacy and universities as non-state actors on the international stage. By employing the HEI case study, this research aims to provide an explanatory approach to elucidate why universities are regarded as influential non-state actors, particularly through their internationalisation efforts, and their significance in diplomacy. Moreover, the study explores the role and function of HEI in 21st century diplomacy. The case study approach also assists to actively address the transformation of diplomacy and HEI in South Africa, shedding light on how the concept of diplomacy has transformed within the country.

Nevertheless, qualitative research is not without its limitations. One potential weakness is the risk that the original research objectives may deviate due to the evolving context of the

study, resulting in different conclusions drawn from the same information depending on the researcher's perspective and characteristics (Matveev 2002:2). To mitigate this weakness, the research can strive for coherence among the theories presented in the paper, ensuring alignment with the chosen research methods, concepts and findings. Furthermore, it is essential to avoid the utilisation of a conceptual framework that lacks implications or excessively dominates the findings, promoting a balanced and comprehensive analysis. In this study, the researcher primarily relies on secondary data rather than statistical or mathematical data to address the problems in this study, thus classifying it as a qualitative study. The literature review and sources utilised encompass a range of primary sources, including government documents on new policies, government policy frameworks and higher education internationalisation policy frameworks. Additionally, secondary sources such as academic books, research analysis journals, articles, online resources, scholarly works by various experts in the field of diplomacy and transformation, empirical studies, newspaper articles and conference papers are incorporated as relevant sources of information.

1.9 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

This study centres on examining the transformation of diplomacy in South Africa, with a particular emphasis on its evolving nature as an instrument of good governance. The research focuses specifically on universities as non-state actors and their pivotal role in facilitating HEI. The study's scope is limited to South Africa within the African continent, paying particular attention to internationalisation efforts. This choice is motivated by the fact that South Africa stands out as one of the few African countries that has extensively and truly entrenched internationalisation within its higher education system.

There is limited of research examining the relationship between internationalisation and diplomacy in South Africa, specifically in terms of the country's response to the transformation of diplomacy and its implications. Furthermore, the existing literature presents challenges in quantifying South Africa's progress in internationalisation due to the unregulated nature of internationalisation activities conducted by South African universities over the years in the absence of a policy framework guiding internationalisation in the country until November 2020, in comparison to developed nations in Europe, America and Asia. The absence of a clearly defined strategy for many years further complicates the

analysis of internationalisation efforts and advancements achieved through universities as non-state actors in South Africa.

A significant limitation faced by internationalisation activities worldwide was the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, which had a devastating impact. The internationalisation industry heavily relies on travel and in-person cultural experiences for students and staff who benefit from the rich diversity and cultural background of host institutions. Likewise, the local communities hosting international visitors on campus also benefit from cross-cultural interactions and the process of Internationalisation at home and enculturation. However, due to the pandemic's restrictions on travel and physical interactions, these aspects of internationalisation have been severely disrupted.

1.10 SIGNIFICANT AND CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

The study holds significant value in its contribution to the academic literature on the transformation of diplomacy. Its primary objective is to enhance the understanding of internationalisation by examining the evolving nature of diplomacy in South Africa, with a specific focus on HEI as a case study. The research aims to bridge the gap between traditional diplomacy literature and modern diplomacy practices, shedding light on the transforming dynamics and implications for good governance. By emphasizing the role of non-state actors, particularly HEI, in South African foreign policy, this study provides insights into the transformation and modernisation of diplomacy.

This research also addresses a crucial gap in the existing literature, which predominantly revolves around Western theories of diplomacy and internationalisation, leaving limited exploration of Africa, specifically South Africa, as an active participant in internationalisation efforts. By filling this gap, the study contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of 21st century diplomacy and the role played by non-state actors, such as universities particularly in South Africa.

Furthermore, this research holds practical implications by informing universities and the South African government about the transforming nature of diplomacy, particularly in the light of the adoption of a new policy framework on HEI. It recognises the need for higher education institutions in South Africa to acquire knowledge and experience in effectively

implementing the new HEI policy framework, ultimately supporting informed decision-making and policy development in the HEI sector.

1.11 RESEARCH STRUCTURE

The study unfolds in five chapters:

1.11.1 Chapter One: Introduction

This chapter unpacks the scientific orientation to the study which explains the rationale of the study and defines and articulates the background concerning the transformation of diplomacy with the available relevant literature. Furthermore, it also explains the problem statement, the research objectives, the research design and methodology, the analysis of the data, including the structure and overview of the study indicating what subsequent chapters will explore.

1.11.2 Chapter Two: Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

The chapter defines and reviews the main concepts of the study and examines the definitions and theoretical framework on the transformation of diplomacy in the context of international relations and good governance. In addition, this chapter explores the relationship between key concepts and how these concepts are interrelated including other relevant important concepts such as governance, foreign policy and diplomacy.

1.11.3 Chapter Three: The Transformation of Diplomacy

This chapter examines the transformation of diplomacy, and South Africa's response thereto, for example, to include non-state actors and as an instance of good governance.

1.11.4 Chapter Four: Higher Education Internationalisation - an example of the transformation of diplomacy as an instrument of good governance: South Africa Illustrative Case Study

The primary focus of this chapter is to provide an overview of the selected case study within the context of this research. It centers on HEI in South Africa and illustrates the evolving nature of diplomacy over time as an instrument for good governance. This chapter places universities at the forefront of this transformation in diplomacy, with a particular emphasis

on their role in shaping diplomatic strategies. It explores the position of universities as non-state actors in South Africa's diplomacy and foreign policy, providing valuable insights into their influence and contributions in this field. In recent years, education and academic exchange have been recognized as a form of "soft power" for building international relationships and influencing the perspectives and actions of other nations.

1.11.5 Chapter Five: Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter presents the conclusions of the study, based on the findings. It provides the contribution that the study has made regarding the transformation of diplomacy over time under the principle of good governance and the role of universities as non-state actors in diplomacy and the important role universities occupy. Furthermore, the limitations of the study are acknowledged against the available theory and finally recommendations for future research are made.

CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is divided into three primary sections. The first part delves into the central concept of the study, namely diplomacy. This concept is carefully defined and elucidated through a comprehensive conceptual analysis. Moving on, the second part of the chapter establishes the connections between the various concepts under study. It highlights the interrelationships and interdependencies within the subject matter. Lastly, the chapter concludes with an explanation of the chosen theory for the study and the theoretical framework applied. The approach will examine the transformation of diplomacy over time, transitioning from traditional to modern practices. This emphasis on the evolving nature of diplomacy will be further explored in the case study, focusing on universities in HEI that have a strong foundation in diplomacy. This exploration is essential, considering that internationalisation cannot be understood in isolation and will be discussed in detail in the study.

2.2 DEFINING DIPLOMACY

Diplomacy is a multifaceted concept with diverse interpretations worldwide. Its evolution from a state-centric approach to acknowledging non-state actors is evident in historical analyses of various definitions. For instance, in the 19th century, diplomacy was described as "the application of knowledge and skill to the conduct of official relations between governments of sovereign countries" (Berridge, Keens-Soper and Otte (2001: 163). Moving into the 20th century, Harold Nicolson (2005) viewed diplomacy as the "art of bargaining" aimed at fostering positive relations among sovereign nations.

To encompass a broader perspective on diplomacy, Donna and Hocking (2011) emphasise the management of international relations through non-violent means, encouraging persuasion and negotiation involving state and non-state actors. The continuous use of diplomacy in current international relations underscores the existence of two contrasting views. One perspective sees diplomacy as a method of managing relationships, including information, while the other perceives it as an art form.

Diplomacy, as per Barston (1997: 1), refers to the intricate process by which states and non-state entities employ a variety of tactics, both official and informal, such as representation,

coordination and negotiation, to pursue their specific or broader interests. These tactics encompass diverse means like written correspondence, face-to-face meetings, the exchange of ideas, advocacy threats, and discreet interactions. Moreover, diplomacy primarily involves managing relations not only between countries but also with other actors, while also encompassing the direction, formulation and execution of foreign policy (Baraston1997:1).

This study adopts Barston's comprehensive definition of diplomacy as the working definition. It is applied throughout the research due to its encompassing nature, which includes representation of all stakeholders both state and non-state, negotiations and the exchange of information, all of which are of crucial importance to this investigation.

2.3 CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

The concepts chosen for the research study should hold significance in relation to the research problem, contributing to the theoretical development within the selected field of research (Anfara and Mertz 2015:4). To ensure their enduring significance beyond specific situations, these concepts should be highly abstract yet precise enough to allow for recognition of their limitations. When selecting concepts, it is essential to avoid primitive terms that can only be defined by examples and generic terms that encompass multiple meanings (Ravitch and Riggan 2017:3).

According to Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014), a concept can be defined as a word or phrase representing an idea or phenomenon. In the context of conceptual analysis, it involves breaking down a concept into simpler parts to reveal its logical structure. Conceptual analysis encompasses the examination of concepts, terms, variables, constructs, definitions, assertions, hypotheses and theories. It entails scrutinising them for clarity and coherence, critically assessing their logical relationships and identifying underlying assumptions (Miles et al. 2014:2).

The foundational principles that steer conceptual analysis have been identified as epistemological, logical, pragmatic and linguistic principles (Miles *et al.* 2014:2). The epistemological principle emphasises the necessity to differentiate concepts from one another and define them coherently. Similarly, the logical principle emphasises the methodical and coherent connection between concepts within the research. Moreover, the

pragmatic principle dictates that concepts must be operationalised, making them usable and widely accepted in real-world applications. Lastly, the linguistic principle emphasises that concepts must be appropriately suited for contextual usage

Miles *et al.* (2014) propose an inductive methodology for analysing and identifying concepts. In the context of this study, the key concepts of internationalisation, diplomacy, foreign policy knowledge diplomacy and good governance are subject to conceptual analysis to establish their operational definitions. The utilisation of conceptual analysis in this manner aims to precisely define the meaning of these identified key concepts.

2.4 CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

The study primarily centres around two key concepts: internationalisation and diplomacy. Additionally, it explores associated concepts such as foreign policy, good governance, knowledge diplomacy and universities. These interconnected concepts form the foundation of the study and will be examined in depth.

2.4.1 Internationalisation

Internationalisation has been subject to various interpretations worldwide, shaped by different perspectives and social contexts. Among these, the concept presented by Jane Knight and Hans de Wit holds significant prominence.

Jane Knight, an esteemed figure in the field of Higher Education Institutions (HEI), expounds on the definition of internationalisation. According to her, internationalisation is a dynamic process that entails incorporating an international, intercultural and global dimension into all aspects related to teaching, learning, impactful research and appropriate services offered by Higher Education Institutions at the institutional, national and international levels (Knight 2008b).

Another esteemed figure in HEI Hans de Wit (2015) offers another perspective, defining internationalisation as a purposeful and intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the goals, functions, and delivery of post-secondary education. This is done to enhance the quality of education provided by higher education institutions, to actively engage in impactful research for the benefit of all students and staff, and to contribute significantly to society by producing graduate global citizens equipped with

global graduate attributes. Such graduates are well-prepared for the job market, culturally sensitive and ready to make meaningful contributions worldwide through internationalisation.

The aforementioned definitions pertaining to internationalisation hold significant relevance and have exerted a shaping influence on the trajectory of internationalisation for a considerable amount of time; hence universities worldwide are navigating an environment characterised by heightened levels of internationalisation and globalisation (Van Damme 2001:415). As a result, the process of internationalising university education has made significant strides over the past few decades.

The definitions of internationalisation provided by both Jane Knight and Hans de Wit provide significant indicators, as they share common action words such as "purposeful," "intentional" and "dynamic processes." These terms emphasise the proactive and deliberate nature of internationalisation, highlighting its role in driving research and innovation with South African universities.

Without doubt internationalisation as a purposeful and all-encompassing process, should be deeply integrated into the strategic objectives of universities in the 21st century and be perceived as one of the dimensions showcasing empirical evidence of the transformation of diplomacy. This considers that internationalisation is not the sole responsibility of any university's international office; instead, it should permeate the entire university and South African universities provide a tangible example of this approach, actively fostering global partnerships that reflect the deliberate and intentional nature of internationalisation (Msweli 2013:45-46).

Furthermore, Stockley and de Wit (2011) demonstrate how South African universities actively promote internationalisation by hosting partner universities, fostering collaborations and facilitating frequent visits. Moreover, these interactions further highlight the dynamic nature of internationalisation as another dimension for the transformation of diplomacy providing imperial evidence, leading to the sharing of best practices, joint research ventures and the cultivation of a global academic community. In essence, South African universities align with the purposeful, intentional and dynamic principles outlined by Knight (2008b) and De Wit (2015), which significantly contribute to the advancement of research and innovation on a global scale. Henrikson (2005) recognises the manner in which universities have evolved into dynamic and influential players in contemporary diplomacy through assuming

roles once exclusive to diplomats and thus contributing to the transformation of diplomacy from traditional, state-centric practices to a more modern, multifaceted and inclusive diplomacy. This is necessary, as modern diplomacy engages a wide array of actors and approaches to address the complex challenges of the interconnected world.

It is of paramount importance for South African universities to adopt a deliberate approach when it comes to documenting their internationalisation initiatives. Internationalisation should not be regarded as an occasional or arbitrary undertaking, where universities pick and choose certain facets while disregarding others. In South Africa, the term "comprehensive internationalisation" is frequently employed to highlight the importance of a holistic approach. Therefore, it becomes imperative to not only embrace comprehensive internationalisation but also to nurture its growth and development further as emphasised by Dominguez-Whitehead and Sing (2015:78).

As part of the interconnected global landscape, Mello (2013) contends that South African universities are strategically positioned to actively engage in problem-solving as many of the challenges in modern diplomacy demand interdisciplinary solutions, a task well-suited for universities as they actively engage in research and innovation to tackle global issues such as climate change, pandemics and economic development. By collaborating across borders, academic institutions work together to find solutions to shared challenges, mirroring the cooperative spirit of modern diplomacy. Attracting international students and fostering collaborations with international universities are strategies employed by South African universities to strengthen diplomatic ties and enhance national influence in the context of internationalisation as Knight (2013) explains.

As further highlighted by Knight (2021:), a consistent theme is the evolving character of diplomacy, particularly when assessed through the lens of cultural diplomacy. This transformation is particularly interesting when compared against the traditional diplomatic perspective, given the ongoing evolution within the sphere of International relations (IR) in the 21st century, as both Knight's and de Wit's definitions on internationalisation highlight the significance of integrating intercultural elements into internationalisation. Traditionally, diplomats were entrusted with the responsibilities of promoting cultural exchanges and forging international partnerships. However, in the modern diplomacy domain, the aforementioned function is also assumed by universities through internationalisation activities; therefore HEI can be viewed as an important force driving the transformation of

diplomacy, a stance this study is actively taking. HEI activities such as cultural exchange and soft diplomacy are noteworthy as universities facilitate the exchange of students and scholars, a dynamic process that holds substantial influence in the sector of cultural exchange and soft diplomacy, which is significant when recognising universities as focal points for the international students and faculty serving as catalysts for these diplomatic endeavors (Wilkins Balakrishnan and Huisman. 2012:413-433).

In summary, the definitions discussed above collectively convey the idea that internationalisation is a dynamic and continuous process, as opposed to a fixed or static process (Msweli 2013:47). From the preceding discussion, it becomes evident that internationalisation is a well-defined concept, both in terms of its construct, meaning and its intended outcomes. This understanding aligns with the prevailing global perspective, which is shared by countries worldwide, including South Africa. This consensus holds true even though internationalisation was not initially a prominent feature of the South African Higher Education landscape.

2.4.2 Diplomacy

According to Barston (1997), diplomacy is closely interconnected with the overall formulation of foreign policy. It involves advising, shaping and executing foreign policy on the international stage, offering states ample opportunities to actively pursue specific objectives through formal interactions with other representatives. Key aspects of diplomacy include high-level communication, engagement, propaganda, exchanging of views and related essential activities. Moreover, diplomacy can also be described as a well-established means of influencing the decisions, behaviour, and attitudes of foreign states and their populations through non-violent methods, including high-level engagement, negotiations, discussions and more.

Barston (1997) presents a more comprehensive definition, characterising diplomacy as the process by which state and non-state actors articulate, coordinate and secure specific or broader interests. This is achieved through various means, such as correspondence, private conversations, exchanges of views, lobbying, visits and even threats, all aimed at attaining their foreign policy goals. Diplomacy encompasses the management of relations between states and between states and other actors. Additionally, it involves advising, shaping and implementing foreign policy on the international stage (Barston 1997: 1).

States possess a wide array of diplomatic tools and methods to effectively manage and advance their interests and relationships with other nations on the global stage. In the realm of international relations, diplomacy is precisely defined as "the establishment and management of connections between and among countries" (Barston 2006: 36-47). It is important to note that foreign policy and multilateral governance are distinct from diplomacy, each serving different functions and roles in the context of international affairs.

2.4.3 Knowledge Diplomacy

Based on the account by Knight (2015), the term "knowledge diplomacy" is new and undeveloped. Only a few researchers have thoroughly examined the idea solely in the field of politics of intellectual property in connection to international competitiveness. Therefore, applying the word to the function and contribution of HEI and research to IR is still in its infancy and requires more thought and effort. A conceptual framework for knowledge diplomacy is currently being developed and modelled (Knight 2015).

It is inherently a more specialised type of diplomacy involving higher education institutions and HEI with the goal of promoting international education through sharing of knowledge, teaching, learning, research and developing strategic international relations through reciprocation between sovereign countries (Nye 2011:1). Knight (2019) indicates that knowledge diplomacy is ideally a two-way process which refers to the role that HEI plays in research, teaching, learning and innovation to establish and foster international relations as well as the reciprocal function that HEI occupies. Marks (2012) defines knowledge diplomacy as a fresh approach to thinking about how HEI, research and innovation may be used to improve IR and provide solutions to pressing global issues.

Knight and de Wit (2018) indicate that knowledge diplomacy is distinct from internationalisation in the context of higher education and defines it as the strengthen and ability to develop connections between and among countries through international higher education and research. Furthermore, knowledge does not have to be viewed as a one-way street. Relationships between and among nations should be regarded as a two-way reciprocal process that advances international higher education and research. There are several instances of the latter and interest in the possibilities of the former is rising.

2.4.4 Good Governance

Woods (1999) emphasises the importance of recognising that "good governance" lacks a universally accepted, singular definition. Instead, it encompasses a wide range of aspects, such as the complete adherence to human rights, the fair implementation of laws, meaningful participation, collaborative partnerships involving multiple actors, political diversity and numerous other aspects. In a comprehensive sense, governance encompasses all forms of governing, including the institutions, procedures and practices employed to address and manage matters of public interest. The concept of good governance adds a normative or evaluative dimension to the governing process, emphasising the pursuit of positive and effective governance.

Since its introduction into donor development frameworks around a decade ago, the term "governance" continues to lack a clear and universally accepted definition. However, according to Simonis (2004), governance relies on establishing mutually supportive and cooperative relationships between government, civil society and the private sector. The nature of these relationships and the need to enhance viable mechanisms for facilitating interactions become pivotal aspects of governance.

On the other hand, Simonis (2004) highlights that "good governance" can be characterised by possessing one or a combination of the following elements: participation, transparency of decision-making, accountability, rule of law and predictability. Furthermore, good governance is a normative concept, meaning that the values underpinning governance practices are determined by the actors and institutions involved in the process.

Moreover, Stoker (1998:2) suggests that good governance encompasses the active involvement of non-state actors, including voluntary entities engaged in public affairs and the private sector. These actors play a significant role in influencing government policies and processes, thereby promoting the importance of non-state actors in diplomacy and fostering a shift towards more transparent practices over time. This progressive scholarly perspective on good governance establishes a connection between good governance and effective policy formulation and implementation.

2.5 EXPLORING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN KEY CONCEPTS AND THEIR LINK TO DIPLOMACY THEORY

This section of the study focuses on the concepts defined in terms of the selected theory and theoretical framework; namely diplomacy. Furthermore links are made to show how these study concepts of foreign policy, internationalisation, globalisation, good governance, knowledge diplomacy and universities, are related to diplomacy. As suggested in the chapter title, the chapter also provides the study's conceptual framework.

2.5.1 Foreign Policy and Diplomacy

Diplomacy serves as both an input and an output in the context of foreign policy analysis. It encompasses various elements that influence foreign policy decisions and decision-making processes. These elements include diplomatic information exchanged between institutions, aimed at fostering relations or advancing foreign policy objectives. Diplomacy is considered to be a process of communication and representation that extends beyond interactions solely between states, incorporating non-state actors as well (Strezhneva & Rudenkova 2016:29). Throughout the academic discourse, there has been an ongoing debate concerning the most common definition of diplomacy. Generally, it is described as the complex network of relations between sovereign states, involving communication, negotiation and representation. However, it can also be viewed as a set of tools and methods used by governmental and non-governmental institutions to facilitate non-violent international relations (Baryshnikov, Kostyuk and Tkachenko 2009:5)

Diplomacy operates in spaces that lie between power politics and civilised behavioural strategies, undergoing transformation alongside other political norms over time. Consequently, successful and skillful diplomacy is fundamentally a political endeavour, capable of becoming a crucial component of power (Berridge 2005:1). The end of the Cold War sparked a surge of academic interest in the function and role of diplomacy, leading to a deep exploration of its evolving ability to intermediate and build relationships. In the 21st century, authors propose a dynamic and flexible examination of diplomacy, moving away from complex discussions of "old" (traditional) versus "new" (Modern) diplomacy.

Another understanding of diplomacy is the implementation of foreign policy through peaceful means, employing government representatives at various levels (Constantinou 1996:5).

Mills (2000) indicates foreign policy encompasses the theory and practice of prioritising diplomatic efforts whilst preparing for crises and pursuing strategic, operational and tactical diplomatic objectives in place of domestic and global factors. The above understanding is rather wide, considering the manner in which emphasis is placed on diplomatic activities while simultaneously acknowledging other actors both state-and non-state actively participating in diplomacy in the 21st century. Additionally the above definitions demonstrate how diplomatic circumstances, strategies, techniques and tools are continuously transforming. It is frequently observed that many of the institutional infrastructures of diplomacy include the mandatory objective of mediating disputes whenever required. It goes without saying that the world is a global village which is highly connected and all states are dependent on each other; hence the development of diplomacy will remain ongoing in nature well into the future (Zondi 2016:17).

There is no single theory that explains how foreign policy is made and carried out. Rather, according to the available literature, the different perspectives are based on conflicts over terminology and techniques between state and non-state players, including academic and non-academic institutions. In its broadest sense, foreign policy could be thought of as the legislative arm of international relations while diplomacy is the executive counterpart. At times diplomacy and foreign policy are utilised interchangeably in IR. The implementation of foreign policy decisions employs a variety of tools including diplomacy. Military intelligence and economic instruments, which are frequently coordinated and skillfully employed to achieve foreign policy objectives, are seen as additional means or resources that sovereign states may choose to employ as a mechanism to influence one another (Mills 2000: 186).

Accordingly, Foreign Policy is derived from the goals, values, decisions and actions taken by states in the context of the external relations of national societies. It is an attempt to design, manage and control the foreign relations of national societies (Webber and Smith 2002: 9-10). Alternative definitions of foreign policy include the objectives and goals that a state seeks to realise in its dealings with other nations and international governmental organisations. According to Hill (2003), understanding the underlying meaning of foreign policy is just as important as breaking it down into its components, concepts, processes and influence, but also requires comprehending its deeper significance especially in IR. Numerous readings clearly articulate foreign policy analysis has developed into a subfield of the larger IR field with the same complexity inherent in the nature of the subject. Leading

researchers in the area offer some insight into what international relations and foreign policy are and where the subtle distinctions between the two reside. Depending on which dominant theory they support, different researchers will approach this through different lenses (Hudson 2007:5).

2.5.2 Globalisation and Diplomacy

Borcan (2012:32) explains how globalisation and diplomacy are two facets of IR that are crucial to both global political relations and the IR discipline. Moreover, these concepts are simultaneously fundamental as globalisation can assist diplomacy achieve its primary goal which is to prevent conflict and foster collaboration. Diplomacy can operate as a method of connectivity, with diplomatic agents being some of the actors who play an increasingly crucial part in globalising the world along with non-state actors. As foreign policy transitions from geopolitics to global politics, it is important to keep in mind that all countries are responsible for strengthening, upholding and adapting the policies of the international institutions that safeguard their international rule of law. Global politics simply put, refers to ties between countries or concerns affecting all, such as environmental legislation to combat global warming, which necessitates international collaboration, or other important issues requiring the attention of all world leaders, such as the COVID-19 pandemic for instance (Borcan 2012: 32).

Globalisation in South Africa has brought many opportunities, but it has also brought many serious risks. With climate change, rapid population growth, urbanisation, social stresses particularly around food security, access to essential resources and environmental degradation, are all exacerbated. There is a high potential for instability in our region as a result of the aforesaid stresses. Considering globalisation and the growing interdependence of national economies, South Africa is a strong advocate of multilateralism. In the context of an integrating global economy, many countries are marginalised, especially those in Africa, and there is a question of coherence in global economic policy-making (DIRCO 2011:25).

Since the advent of democracy in April 1994, South Africa has experienced an increase in trade and financial integration and after the collapse of apartheid, immigration and emigration flows have increased as well. The majority of migrants arrive from the SADC region, largely the result of political, social and economic developments in other parts of

Africa. There has been a shift towards increased trade with Africa in recent years as South Africa's major trading partners are China, Germany, India, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States. South Africa's global ambitions are shaped by a rapidly changing regional and international context (Vickers 2012).

2.5.3 Good Governance and Diplomacy

Diplomacy must first dispel the myths of ideology and armed conflict traditionally associated with it to become an effective instrument of sustainable global governance. Today, its objective is to seek a balance of interests rather than the balance of power (Petrovsky 1998: n.p.). Good governance is an integral function of government including how sovereign countries like South Africa formulate and realise important foreign policy related objectives via diplomacy. Diplomacy as an instrument of good governance is highly dependent on the implementation of good governance policies, procedures and functions enabling government for example to achieve its foreign policy goals and objectives; therefore good governance is perceived as an enabler for diplomacy (Global Diplomatic Forum 2015: n.p.). Munzhedzi (2021:2) suggests that many scholars interested in governance theories associate good governance with the principles of accountability, transparency and efficiency which to some extent diplomats are likely to utilise in state issues to offer solutions to real-life world developmental challenges prominent in developing countries including high inequality, unemployment and poverty.

Cooper *et al.* (2008) suggest that the link between diplomacy and good governance is based on contentious themes like the nature of globalisation and the function of the state in the 21st century, Although the academic community has been reluctant to acknowledge the link between diplomacy and good governance, there are emerging connections; thus a major debate is raging about diplomacy's adaptability (Cooper *et al.* 2008:3). Since diplomacy has engaged good governance practices through segmented design, then due to a number of apparent conflicts in its elevated form, governance has been remodelled in a more pragmatic appearance, resulting in many of the aspirational objectives of good governance not being met conceptually in terms of openness and accountability. As a result, comprehending organisational change both within and at the interfaces between the state and its international environment is one of the fundamental dimensions of the range of

interactions between good governance and diplomacy, assuming diplomacy engages global governance through segmented configuration (Hamilton and Langhorne 1995: 239).

The contextual problems that both encounter serve as an interface between international diplomacy and good governance. The widespread belief is that the practice of diplomacy is currently in crisis as a result of the numerous and diversified pressures of globalization. According to Hamilton and Langhorne (1995) there is evidence that non-state players contribute disproportionately to good governance diplomacy outside of the purview of governmental authorities.

2.5.4 Internationalisation and Diplomacy

In higher education, internationalisation has witnessed an unprecedented growth as a strategically planned project. It encompasses various aspects such as content, methods, people and international structures. In the past, internationalisation was often an ad hoc outcome arising from the individual efforts of professors and researchers within small research centres in universities. However, with the rise of modern diplomacy and states including the demands of the 21st century global landscape, internationalisation is now evolving into a more deliberate and intentional process. It is no longer merely a passive experience in higher education worldwide (De Wit 2015). An internationalised university bears significant responsibilities in the context of the 21st century's globalisation process. Universities are expected to compete on an international scale, attracting, abundant resources, and cutting-edge technology. This importance of internationalisation in higher education was underscored by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in a document published in 1995, in preparation for the World Conference on Higher Education held in Paris in 1998 (UNESCO 1995: 32).

On the other hand, Marginson (2016b: 175) suggests that while diplomacy has undergone transformation in the 21st century, the development and progress of internationalisation have faced criticism for being perceived as a means to impose traditional diplomatic values and practices on other entities. This criticism is particularly directed at consortium settings like the European Association for International Education (EAIE) or BRICS countries, which propose the establishment of networked institutions to foster 21st century partnerships. The historical origins of IR development and internationalisation policies within universities,

significantly impact the nature of their internationalisation programmes, the level of funding allocated and consequently, their influence on university internationalisation initiatives. These influences have also evolved over time, as policy directives in both areas shifted, in this case, towards a focus on economic imperatives, for example within Canada's foreign policy (Marginson 2016b:175)

Nearly all sovereign countries actively engaged in the international arena acknowledge the significance of exercising 'soft power' through various avenues, such as international cultural relations, to advance their foreign policy objectives encompassing political, economic and cultural interests. However, it is essential to emphasise that each sovereign country bears the responsibility of coordinating its diplomatic initiatives across sectors, depending on the level and nature of its investments and programmatic approaches to foreign policy and, in this context, internationalisation efforts. These distinctive efforts contribute to each country's comprehensive internationalisation endeavours. Indeed, each country's approach to internationalisation has unquestionably evolved within the framework of its unique historical and political context, shaped by its aspirations in higher education and past developments. These approaches are also influenced by the evolving nature of diplomacy, international events, and the changing dynamics of international power relations. Consequently, globalisation and internationalisation are often conflated, despite their distinct characteristics. It is essential to recognise that internationalisation encompasses diverse possibilities, while globalisation may be an irreversible phenomenon (Knight and Altbach 2007:298).

2.5.5 Knowledge Diplomacy and Diplomacy

Knight (2018) suggests that knowledge diplomacy stems from the increasing diplomacy in HEI, thus it builds on the fundamental functions of education, research, knowledge production and service to society. In the context of the knowledge society, higher education which for centuries constituted a limited and elitist function in most countries around the world, has developed into a significant influence and is now essential to the advancement of monetary, social, and state-centric growth. The global evolution of higher education has been fueled by diplomacy and the acknowledgment that it has tremendous economic and social value for nations around the world which seek to improve the quality of their human resources, a crucial component of economic competitiveness.

As diplomacy is all about establishing and managing contacts between countries, knowledge diplomacy is all about producing, sharing, and utilising knowledge to interact with the international community through diplomacy and engage in IR. However, knowledge diplomacy should actively be viewed as a two-way process in diplomacy, adding value to the advancement of knowledge and its contribution to society, much as knowledge diplomacy contributes to IR as each aids the other. Therefore, a two-way interaction and mutual advantages are fundamental to the idea of knowledge diplomacy. In essence, information exchange and mutual gain are essential to comprehending and implementing knowledge diplomacy (Knight 2015:37).

Knowledge diplomacy is a more holistic approach to internationalisation than individual initiatives like student mobility. As with many new concepts in diplomacy, there are misunderstandings about how to apply and interpret knowledge diplomacy. Global access to higher education is also recognised as a crucial tool for eliminating opportunity disparities and increasing social mobility and interaction. Barbosa and Neves (2020) indicate that through diplomacy initiatives, highly internationalised higher education institutions are constantly faced with the challenge of producing new knowledge in science, technology and innovation. The distribution of knowledge based on access to scientific and expert knowledge across nations as well as among non-state and subnational actors, determines the structure of both international cooperation and national policy-making. Within HEI diplomacy, there are numerous knowledge diplomacy future scenarios depicting potential knowledge diplomacy scenarios in which scientists and professionals engage with state and non-state entities (Knight 2015:39)

2.5.6 Universities and Diplomacy

In today's interconnected world, universities across the globe are confronted with the importance of internationalisation. With global information networks and systems prevailing, internationalisation has transformed from an optional activity in Traditional diplomacy to becoming a core responsibility for all universities in the 21st century modern diplomacy. Higher education institutions now continually engage in international education activities, leading them to reinvent themselves and offer solutions to pressing issues and demands prescribed by HEI networks and best practices (Beverly 2019: 27).

The growth of HEI is a reflection of the worldwide emphasis on higher education and its significance in the realms of teaching, learning, and research. This shift underscores the diminishing role of traditional diplomats, while higher education gains prominence in diplomacy. This is further reinforced by the processes of economic and political integration, along with the growing demand for intercultural understanding and utilisation of global natural resources (UNESCO 1995: 33). The global discourse spurred by movements for HEI through diplomacy has eventually influenced legislation to acknowledge high education institutions as significant non-state actors in diplomacy, playing a pivotal role in internationalisation. To achieve this, several institutional initiatives and strategies should be implemented. De Wit (2001) delves into the historical trajectory of practices and focuses on four key areas that have been impacted and transformed by HEI: politics, foreign policy, mutual aid and the economy. However, it is important to note that other agents and factors may also play a significant role in this process.

The remarkable surge in university enrollments worldwide has emerged as the most significant trend in higher education since the aftermath of the Second World War, largely attributed to universities' diplomatic efforts in internationalisation. Between 1970 and 2007, global higher education enrollments witnessed a fivefold increase, soaring from 28.6 million to 152.5 million students. Notably, the majority of the 51.7 million new students enrolled in the 2000s hailed from regions that had previously accounted for a relatively small percentage of the overall global higher education student population. Recent statistics indicate that in 2018, the number of university students worldwide exceeded 200 million, a substantial rise from 132 million in 2014 (Altbach & Reisberg 2018:1).

2.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: OVERVIEW OF DIPLOMACY THEORY

Adler-Nissen (2015:285) points out that theories of diplomacy existed prior to their association with the field of IR. Despite their relevance and potential for integration into diplomacy theory, these theories which originated outside of IR, have not been fully incorporated into the field (Constantinou and Sharp 2016:14). By adopting new theoretical perspectives, drawing from various disciplines such as sociology, psychology, cultural studies and multidisciplinary approaches, a more inclusive and comprehensive

understanding of diplomacy theory can be achieved, according to Constantinou, Kerr and Sharp (2016:15). In contemporary academia, theorising involves the systematic organisation of ideas, the formulation of concepts and the establishment of principles to explain or govern specific events. Early attempts at theorising in diplomacy may have been fragmented and unsystematic, but certain modern strands of theorising, particularly those aligned with Adler-Nissen's (2015:286) anarchistic theory of knowledge, share certain similarities.

Throughout the course of diplomatic history, political considerations have consistently held a dominant position in diplomatic activities. This inclination towards politics is understandable, given that diplomacy emerged as a discipline with the primary objective of preventing hostile circumstances and conflicts. Beck (2000) highlights that initially, collective security and defense principles were not inherent in diplomacy; however, as the scope of diplomatic scrutiny expanded to include technological advancements and other factors, discussions arose regarding the need to deviate from traditional diplomatic practices. The transformation of societies has played a crucial role in necessitating a new form of diplomacy, as it shifted the dynamics away from monarchies, aristocracies and Europe as the central players. This shift has prompted a reevaluation prevalence of bilateral diplomacy over multilateral diplomacy.

Hocking (2005:9) argues that one of the primary drivers for societal transformations demanding a new type of diplomacy, is the growing influence of democratic ideologies. During this time, states are increasingly inclined to cooperate in order to advance their shared interests in the international community. This shift towards democracy requires a more open and inclusive diplomatic system with the last few decades leading up to the development of modern diplomacy, witnessing even more significant transformation in diplomatic practice. According to Lohmann (2017:21), the analysis presented by Stagnell (2016, as cited in Lohmann 2017) creates a blurred line between theoretical and analytical aspects of diplomacy, which ultimately hinders our understanding of crucial dynamics and processes within International Relations (IR). To address this limitation, Stagnell (2016) proposes the integration of theoretical and analytical approaches in the study of diplomacy. This approach maintains the traditional understanding of diplomacy as the contact between sovereign entities while also expanding the scope of theorisation to encompass the means and purposes involved in diplomacy, thus a more nuanced understanding of diplomacy that

embraces both its traditional and modern dimensions can potentially be achieved adopting this comprehensive approach.

Gatea (2021:3252) provides an explanation of how the transition from traditional to modern diplomacy has turned the discipline into a significant component of soft or smart power for many nations. The effects of modern diplomacy have far-reaching consequences, influencing actions, conversations and perceptions on a global scale. Additionally, Murray (2012) emphasise the importance of recognising diplomacy and diplomatic studies as incorporating a theory of resistance. However, the previous focus on the state as the central player and subject of academic research has resulted in overlooking this theory of resistance. Initially, diplomatic theory primarily aimed to explain, characterise, and provide guidance on official state-centric diplomacy, which was perceived as an elite practice, leading to a large, monolithic and rationalist approach. However, with the emergence of a diplomatic "renaissance" and advancements in the field, it becomes crucial to acknowledge the presence of a theoretical culture of resistance. By acknowledging and embracing this aspect, diplomatic efforts can continue to build upon recent achievements and further evolve (Murray *et al.* 2012:19).

Murray, Sharp, Wiseman, Criekemans, and Melissen (2011) further suggest that while traditional theorising in diplomacy has garnered significant attention in academic research and contributed to the field's advancement, it has also created a distinct knowledge environment. In contrast, Sharp (1999) challenges the perspective of modernisation theorists by asserting that diplomacy theory and practice have become vital tools in international communication, particularly as the global system has become more integrated and interconnected. Furthermore, the growing involvement of non-state actors like NGOs, business diplomats and individuals in managing IR, has displaced professional diplomats. Therefore, diplomatic theory holds greater importance than ever before, necessitating its expansion to include civil society education (Sharp 2019:13). On the other hand, Zondi (2016:28) raises the concern that diplomatic theory is rooted in Western ideologies and beliefs, limiting its applicability to Western civilisations by default. This critique arises from the epistemology and methodology underlying diplomatic theory, which are influenced by eurocentrism, excluding the experiences, voices, and archives of non-Western populations. Zondi (2016:29) argues that although many diplomatic actors reject statist theories of international relations, dominant perspectives in diplomatic theory and IR, such as realists

and idealists, still uphold Western worldviews, thereby marginalising non-Western perspectives (Zondi 2016: 29).

As stated by Siko (2014:56), it is challenging to determine the true nature of diplomacy theory solely based on individuals' statements and their utilisation of the theory. This difficulty highlights the risk of inadvertently marginalising, excluding, or suppressing alternative interpretations when striving to establish objectives and authoritative diplomacy theories. Therefore, in the theoretical framework of this study, it is crucial to consider both traditional and modern diplomacy, acknowledging the primary distinction as well as the similarities between these two approaches.

2.6.1 Traditional Diplomacy

The doctrine of diplomacy has been predominantly shaped by traditional writing, giving rise to a unique way of thinking and writing about diplomacy. Traditional diplomacy focuses on involving state actors and government representatives in diplomatic procedures, particularly in political and economic matters. However, Stanzel (2018:18) argues that traditional diplomacy is undergoing significant changes that are altering the nature of diplomacy as we know it. While traditional diplomacy is primarily concerned with interactions between recognised sovereign states on the international stage, it has also been an influential communication tool for decades. For example, negotiation processes between two sovereign countries still rely on traditional diplomatic procedures that have been in place for centuries, despite the prevalence of modern diplomacy-related issues in today's international agenda (Terruso 2016:326).

Seib's (2012:72) readings suggest that traditional diplomatic processes are a crucial part of IR and provide a foundation for negotiations between countries and the value of traditional diplomacy cannot be ignored, especially as military-security trade agreements, diplomatic procedures, international travel and communication continue to grow at an unprecedented rate. Traditional diplomats aim to promote strategic interests that align with their state's goals in international affairs and establish connections with official representatives of foreign countries. Historically, diplomacy theory was founded on the concept of competitive nation-states, with each state striving for maximum autonomy and independence. However, despite

global interdependence, Nowotny (2018:18) acknowledges that much of traditional diplomacy is no longer necessary and can be ineffective at times.

According to Murray (2006:21), the traditional perspective on diplomacy theory places greater emphasis on political activities while overlooking economic transactions; this view recognises how traditional diplomacy tends to downplay the impact of the information age, as it does not receive significant attention in the existing body of diplomatic studies. Traditional diplomacy theory argues that diplomats should primarily focus on their core role as diplomats rather than becoming information technology driven, placing excessive emphasis on how the of the information age can potentially detract from fulfilling the traditional diplomacy theory responsibilities of diplomacy. Thus It is worth noting that an increase in the quantity of information does not necessarily correspond to a proportional increase in its quality (Murray 2006:69). In addition, it is important to consider the insights provided by traditional diplomacy theory when examining the role of technology in diplomacy. According to this theory, computers should be seen as facilitators of diplomatic activities rather than substitutes for human judgment, which is a fundamental characteristic of traditional diplomacy and the traditional diplomatic perspective has historically been centred around the state and tends to overlook non-traditional forms of diplomacy (Murray 2006:70). In practical terms, traditional diplomacy has experienced significant growth and remains a vital component of IR.

Prominent diplomacy writers such as Sharp (2019:17) argue that ICT has challenged the agenda of traditional diplomacy by leveraging the media and the internet to establish peace and prevent war. Murray (2012:9) suggests that the utilisation of modern technology networks has undermined the objectives of traditional diplomacy. The traditional framework of diplomacy, with its unilateral message transmission between countries, is at risk of becoming obsolete in an interconnected world of networks. This new approach emphasises the inclusion of all group initiatives and tactics, and views foreigners not as targets, but as powerful advocates in diplomacy (Beck 2000:3). Gatea's (2021: 3250) literature suggests that traditional diplomats strive to advance strategic interests that align with their state's strategic objectives in international affairs and seek to establish a connection with official representatives of foreign nations to gain favour. Muller (1999:n.p) believes that traditional diplomacy involves continuous efforts to persuade government officials in other countries to

adopt particular stances. Stanzel (2018:19) further highlights that in traditional diplomacy, the state is the most crucial institution with mediation developed to reconcile the interests of all parties and enable governments to operate as sovereign states without the influence of other actors. Diplomacy recognises the tension between individual needs and state requirements and manages this tension without harming the state's interests.

However Cooper and Hocking (2000:17) reiterate how traditional diplomatic theory places little value on non-state and sub-state actors due to their perceived connection with the expanding influence of companies, NGOs, media outlets and criminal and terrorist organisations, which are often seen as peripheral to state-dominated diplomacy. The prevailing sentiment in traditional diplomacy theory is that it strengthens the emphasis on shared values and interests, facilitating a predictable pattern of interaction between states driven by national interests and governed by established diplomatic norms (Zondi 2016:29). Studies on diplomacy substantiate its crucial role in assisting societies in achieving their goals. While earlier research on diplomacy focused on the differences between traditional and modern diplomacy, as Gatea (2021:3251) notes, diplomacy has the ability to influence government policy and societal ideas and beliefs by coordinating a range of factors, including public opinion, globalisation of ideas and beliefs, internationalisation of institutions and cultures.

According to Murray (2006:74), the number of diplomats, embassies and foreign ministries has increased dramatically since the beginning of the 20th century, indicating the continued relevance of the traditional diplomatic institutions. It is important to acknowledge that traditional diplomacy theory still holds the view that technology should be utilised as tools to enhance diplomatic processes rather than as replacements for the informed decision-making abilities of diplomats. However, it is essential to recognise that the exclusive focus on traditional diplomacy may lead to an unconscious disregard for alternative forms of diplomacy. Murray (2006:76) acknowledges that traditional diplomacy theory's emphasis on historical perspectives may result in the oversight of diplomatic practices that exist beyond the confines of traditional diplomacy. Moreover, while traditional diplomacy theory emphasises the importance of human judgment and the use of technology as facilitative tools, it is crucial to broaden our perspective to encompass diverse forms of diplomacy that exist outside the traditional realm.

Coolsaet (2004:1) argues that diplomacy has undergone substantial transformation, with a focus on relations between regional governments and great powers. This shift has resulted in significant changes in the way diplomacy is understood and conducted. While the traditional approach of maintaining diplomatic missions and consular posts in bilateral relations has been challenged, the importance of human interaction remains crucial and cannot be replaced by virtual communication. Key diplomacy theories highlight the significance of this element (Coolsaet 2004:1).

It is important to highlight the viewpoint presented by Lee and Hudson (2004:348) regarding traditional diplomacy theory and its stance on the state's diminishing influence in IR. According to their perspective, the increasing complexity of the global system demands a robust approach emphasising the necessity for firmness and progression through conventional diplomatic practices. Additionally, their argument advocates the notion that states should be considered as superior actors within the global arena; thus supporters of traditional diplomacy contend against characterising states as outdated or obsolete, asserting that established diplomatic practices remain relevant and effective (Lee and Hudson 2004:348). They argue that reliance on these time-tested methods does not render them old-fashioned or futile. Instead, they believe that the state system relies on traditional diplomacy to navigate the inherent unpredictability and challenges present in the system. By utilising classical diplomatic channels, traditional diplomacy maintains that states, along with diplomatic institutions, continue to play a paramount role within the modern diplomatic landscape.

Traditional diplomacy theory acknowledges, to a certain extent, that the prevailing notion of a transformative shift towards a new political order, replacing the state with an alternative form of governance, has limited validity. Nevertheless, an intriguing aspect of traditional diplomacy lies in its perception of non-state actors as products of states and serving states' interests (Burt & Robison 1998:14). According to Burt and Robison (1998:16), the involvement of non-state actors in IR system is viewed as an annoyance to diplomacy, hindering the resolution of complex issues. Moreover, traditional diplomacy theory draws a clear distinction between the domains of politics and commerce associating diplomacy solely with politics and disregarding commerce as irrelevant to diplomatic theory. For proponents

of traditional diplomacy, the focus primarily revolves around matters of high politics, with commerce considered to hold minimal significance.

2.6.2 Modern Diplomacy

The development of modern diplomacy theory can be traced back to the crisis in the European balance of power system and the emergence of the United States and the Soviet Union, as highlighted by Gatea (2021:3253). This transformation was influenced by a nation with a history of isolationism and a dictatorship that challenged the social, political and ideological structure of European society. Interestingly, proponents of modern diplomacy theory have given significant prominence to traditional diplomacy, holding it responsible for the outbreak of World War One. In today's complex and interconnected world, the significance of modern diplomacy theory cannot be overstated. As the global landscape continues to evolve, traditional concepts of diplomacy are being tested, necessitating diplomats and policymakers to adapt to new realities. Modern diplomacy theory provides the necessary framework and tools to effectively navigate these changes and foster international cooperation.

According to Dube (2013), modern diplomacy theory aims to address the needs of its constituents and establish fundamental principles for foreign policies, particularly as the global shift towards democratic states with rule of law institutions, drives this change. Consequently, states prioritise building relationships with each other and employ other forms of diplomacy, including media, to shape the perceptions and beliefs of their populations regarding specific issues (Gatea 2021: 3254). Modern diplomacy theory also aims to cultivate robust international relations by emphasising the importance of mutual comprehension of cultures and values, as articulated by Gatea (2021:3255). Such an understanding plays a crucial role in facilitating effective international cooperation, as it enables states and officials to interact with one another more effectively. Cultural diplomacy serves as a means to introduce and acquaint oneself with the identity of counterparts in a suitable and respectful manner (Sofer 1998:197).

One of the key aspects of modern diplomacy theory is its recognition of the multiple stakeholders involved in global affairs. In the past, diplomacy primarily focused on

interactions between states, with diplomats representing the interests of their respective governments. However, in the modern era, diplomacy must account for the growing influence of non-state actors such as multinational corporations, non-governmental organisations, and international institutions. Modern diplomacy theory emphasises the need to engage and collaborate with these actors to address global challenges effectively. Proponents of modern diplomacy theory argue that it encompasses new issues in international relations, such as human rights and moves away from traditional approaches. However, Ewert (2018:27) sees the importance of diplomacy as being founded on democratic control rather than solely relying on a balance of power in arms or trade battles. Despite this, the modern state system of diplomacy is subject to dynamic change, resulting from changes in states and interactions between them.

Coolsaet (2004) highlights two major transformations in modern diplomacy theory that arose as a result of shifts in state dynamics following the establishment of the Westphalian international order. The first transformation occurred as state sovereignty transitioned from monarchs to nations, and the second transformation stemmed from the evolution of the state system, characterised by the rise of multilateral diplomacy. This shift was propelled by increasing interdependence and the rapid pace of globalisation. Modern diplomacy theory aimed to overhaul the diplomatic system as a whole, envisioning the establishment of a more harmonious and peaceful international order. According to Ewert (2018:28), modern diplomacy theory encompasses a diverse range of academic and professional perspectives, each offering distinct characteristics. The scholarly literature on modern diplomacy acknowledges that the traditional model of state-to-state diplomacy is no longer the sole approach to conducting diplomatic relations. Instead, scholarly research on the contemporary diplomatic landscape takes into account a multitude of variables. While the United Nations is recognised as one aspect, NGOs are also considered as significant components in this context (Ewert 2018:28). It is important to note that NGOs have diverse objectives, including political, humanitarian, business, or technical goals and they collaborate to advocate for changes in government policies.

Modern diplomacy theory also recognises the influential role played by multinational corporations in the diplomatic landscape of the 21st century. These well-established multinational firms possess the capacity to generate revenues that exceed the gross

domestic products of many countries, thereby influencing the regulatory capabilities of sovereign state actors (Ewert 2018:28). Moreover, international governmental organisations are often established by governments to address shared challenges and their diplomatic endeavours typically encompass a multilateral dimension. The advancement of information and communication technology is widely acknowledged as a crucial element shaping the modern diplomatic arena, significantly impacting the context and execution of diplomatic practices (Ewert 2018:29). In this context, modern diplomacy theory encompasses commercial diplomacy, military diplomacy and political power, all of which are closely intertwined with land and territory, particularly when viewed through an economic lens. It is important to note that the emergence of modern diplomacy alongside territorial states has resulted in its association with territorial interests.

According to Nowotny (2018:20) historical records show that in the past, controlling and exploiting land held great significance as a gauge of political and economic power. However, as the 20th century approached its conclusion, the dynamics of power underwent a substantial shift from being centred around nation-states to encompassing the global stage. This transformation gave rise to new actors, approaches, and challenges, ultimately leading to a complete overhaul of the practice of diplomacy as we understand it today. Nguru (2020:n.p) highlights how modern diplomacy theory is characterised by an interconnected network of powerful states, economics, information, industry and culture that have largely gone global. Another significant aspect of modern diplomacy theory is its emphasis on soft power and public diplomacy. In today's interconnected world, the use of military force or economic coercion alone is often insufficient to achieve foreign policy objectives. Instead, modern diplomacy theory highlights the importance of building positive relationships and influencing public opinion through education, culture and digital diplomacy.

Modern diplomacy recognises the importance of conflict resolution and consensus-building as fundamental elements in the interactions among contemporary states, contributing to the preservation and guidance of global interconnectedness. According to Langhorne (2008:1), there has been a significant transition in modern diplomatic theory, where the balance of power has shifted from states towards non-state actors, which is attributed to the growing influence of non-state players, including commercial interest groups and organisations working towards resource, ecological and international law enforcement objectives.

Traditional diplomacy has been compelled to acknowledge and accommodate these non-state entities. As a result, diplomacy has become more accessible to the general public and non-state actors have gained the ability to exert effective pressure on governments (Barston 1997:5).

In the 21st century, modern diplomacy is characterised by the utilisation of advanced diplomatic tools and techniques to achieve objectives, alongside the recognition of the importance of other actors in diplomacy and the application of modern technology. It dominates the realm where traditional diplomacy intersects with IR. As per Ewert (2018:28), the transformation from traditional to modern diplomacy represents a significant element of modern diplomacy, introducing a new approach that is no longer strictly hierarchical in nature; therefore personnel deployed in foreign affairs ministries can actively engage in horizontal dialogue, fostering interactions not only among elected leaders but also among various departments, non-state actors, and NGOs with specific interests.

Modern diplomacy is characterised by Johnson (2018) as the utilisation of advanced diplomatic tools and techniques to achieve diplomatic objectives, while also recognising the significance of non-state actors in diplomacy and leveraging modern technology, thus occupying a prominent position at the intersection of traditional diplomacy and IR in the 21st century. The transition from traditional to modern diplomacy represents a fundamental aspect of contemporary diplomatic practice, introducing a new paradigm that goes beyond traditional top-down approaches, according to Johnson (2012), while diplomatic personnel in foreign affairs ministries now have the opportunity to engage horizontally, facilitating dialogue and collaboration not only among elected leaders but also across different departments and with non-state actors who possess specific interests in foreign policy and diplomacy. Moreover, modern diplomacy theory acknowledges the importance of diplomacy beyond traditional bilateral negotiations; therefore modern diplomacy theory provides the conceptual tools to engage in multilateral diplomacy, navigate complex negotiations, and build coalitions to address these pressing issues. It emphasises the importance of international institutions like the UN, where states can come together to find common solutions.

Furthermore, modern diplomacy theory acknowledges, according to Nye (2004:1), the significant impact of technology on diplomatic practices. In the digital age, state representatives including diplomats must possess the skills to effectively utilise information and communication technologies for various diplomatic activities, including intelligence gathering, audience engagement and online diplomacy. The emergence of social media platforms, digital networks, and artificial intelligence, has revolutionised the way diplomacy is conducted. Modern diplomacy theory offers valuable insights into how technology can be harnessed for diplomatic purposes, while also addressing the challenges and risks associated with its use. Technological advancements have led to the creation of new organisational processes, the restructuring of hierarchy and power relations and the elevation of information as a crucial source of national power and influence. In this context, information holds great significance as a form of power, and modern information technology has facilitated the widespread dissemination of information like never before (Nye 2004:1).

2.7 HIGHER EDUCATION INTERNATIONALISATION AS A MEASURE OF THE TRANSFORMATION OF DIPLOMACY

This section makes a case for the measure available to highlights the crucial role of HEI as a key indicator of the transformation of diplomacy from traditional to modern diplomacy while supporting the notion that indicates the move from traditional to modern diplomacy has taken place. For the purpose of this study only five measure will be presented, as outlined below.

Firstly, Sehoole (2006:2-3) highlights an important measure for the transformation of diplomacy as the impact of globalisation, considering that transformation involves the integration of the international dimension within the framework of HEI, transitioning from its previous isolated state of individual activities, strategies, and processes. This evolution becomes evident through the obvious transition from traditional modes of diplomacy in IR towards modern diplomacy. In the contemporary context, universities actively engage in HEI initiatives that align with strategies closely linked to the fundamental functions of diplomacy, driven by the forces of globalisation, while recognising and harnessing the changes introduced by globalisation in the realm of diplomacy. The above recognition is essential for fostering a collaborative approach aimed at addressing urgent global challenges, a responsibility increasingly adopted by universities in modern diplomacy. The shift from

traditional to modern diplomacy to some extent illustrates the profound transformation that diplomacy has undergone in the 21st century, signifying its adaptation to the dynamics of our interconnected world.

Secondly, a pivotal shift measure is observed in contemporary diplomacy when transitioning from a state-centric approach, which typically relied on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and diplomats, to a more inclusive involvement of universities through internationalisation (Hocking *et al.* 2012). This transformation signifies a broader diversification in diplomatic actors and approaches, redefining the landscape from traditional to modern diplomacy. Knight (2015b) provides a third measure supporting the ongoing transformation of diplomacy, which centres on universities actively engaging in HEI and capitalising on their expertise across various domains; for example functioning as research centres and in expert networks and foundations. Considering the above roles, universities take a prominent leadership position within HEI in modern diplomacy which highlights the transforming nature of diplomacy shifting from a traditional state-centred approach and increasingly placing universities at the forefront of shaping IR.

The fourth measure according to Knight (2022:4-5) demonstrates the shift towards modern diplomacy, with universities taking a central role. In the context of this research, in relation to what is known as knowledge diplomacy encompassing the establishment and reinforcement of connections between universities in different countries leveraged on HEI to face global challenges. This takes into consideration that central to the concept of knowledge diplomacy is the understanding of collaboration among diverse universities and their various stakeholders and partners. Knowledge diplomacy enables the formation of consortia comprising universities from various continents. These consortia work collectively to address shared interests and global issues, underlining the growing significance of universities in shaping IR through knowledge-driven internationalisation initiatives.

Nye (2004) identifies the fifth key measure concerning the transformation of diplomacy, which is notable transformation in the significance of utilising soft power in IR where universities in modern diplomacy have mastered the principles of compliance through attraction and persuasion as a means of wielding influence and in the context of South Africa, universities have adeptly harnessed the concept of soft power to drive

internationalisation efforts. Thus, the strategic use of soft power highlights the important role played by universities in contemporary diplomacy, where the focus has shifted from traditional diplomacy power dynamics to modern diplomacy power of attraction and persuasion.

2.8 DIPLOMACY THEORY ANALYTICAL PERSPECTIVE

For the purpose of this study, a constructivism perspective is utilised as the analytical tool in relation to the transformation of diplomacy. In accordance with Ruggie's (1998:4) insights, the realm of constructivist thought indicates how a range of perspectives exist, including conventional political, social constructivism and others; therefore when examining diplomacy and foreign policy in relation to other states, it becomes necessary to employ these diverse constructivist approaches collectively. Social constructivism, for instance, endeavors to elucidate elements that neo-utilitarianism presumes, specifically focusing on the identity and interests of various state and non-state actors in the international arena. The constructivist perspective does not adopt an explicitly optimistic or pessimistic stance recognising the capacity of humanity to bring about transformations that can either enhance or deteriorate global conditions in the future. Constructivism emphasises the significance of shared meanings and perceptions of international affairs held by social collectivities; therefore highlighting the role of these collective understandings in shaping ideas, identities, ideals and images, which are all socially constructed by different groups (Weber 2001:28).

Ruggie (1998:27) asserts that Constructivists aim to broaden the empirical and explanatory dimensions of IR theory beyond the constraints imposed by neo-realism and neoliberal institutionalism; thus the above understanding actively incorporates a number of approaches such as critically looking into the make-up of states and their identities including transformation of states in the international arena, along with their interests. Moreover, recognising the transformation of diplomacy as an instrument of foreign policy as a recurring element in international politics is also recognised. Although transformations, especially in relation to diplomacy, may occur infrequently and take diverse paths, Ruggie (1998:27) highlights the significance of incorporating and acknowledging them within systemic diplomacy theory, as such an inclusive approach enables a more comprehensive understanding of the complexities within the international landscape.

Constructivism places central emphasis on the influence of ideas in shaping social interactions, encompassing not only state actors but also non-state actors in 21st century diplomacy. This stands in contrast to traditional diplomacy, which primarily focused on state agents. Moreover, constructivism seeks to highlight the socially constructed nature of all entities involved in IR, thereby closely linking the study of constructivism with the fields of diplomacy, and foreign policy (Burchill 2005: 210). Interactions and activities play a crucial role in shaping positive relations between state and non-state actors within diplomacy. By engaging in these activities, role players can better comprehend one another and contribute to the constructive development of the international arena. Through various platforms, both states and non-state actors have the opportunity to interact and foster their relations. Following the constructivist approach, they construct social relationships based on shared knowledge, understanding and opinions. This allows them to navigate the transforming nature of diplomacy, thereby shaping IR. Through diplomacy and mutually shared understanding, these interactions help prevent conflicts and wars. The essence of constructivism lies in fostering cooperation and dialogue among diverse actors, creating an environment conducive to peaceful resolutions in the international arena.

In Leander's (2006:19) exploration of constructivism, a central emphasis lies in comprehending how historical events shape the perceptions of actors in IR encompassing both state and non-state entities. This emphasis revolves around the foundation of historical processes. Nonetheless, constructivism is confronted with challenges when attempting to interpret and provide a strategic approach as to how states confront complex issue of future uncertainty, particularly in the context of transformations in diplomacy and foreign policy within the international arena, fueled by the forces of globalisation. In addition, constructivism offers insights into how non-state actors such as social groups, influence and shape IR looking at more than just the role of the state. Furthermore, it is essential to recognise the significance of transnational movements and various non-state actors in the process of globalising politics on an international scale (Weber 2001:28).

According to Murray (2006:256), constructivism approaches the interpretation of state and non-state linkages in varied and distinct manners, which emphasises the growing significance of state and non-state connections, highlighting that the relationships are crucial for fostering stability and harmony within the modern IR system. Consequently, diplomacy

has undergone a transformation, encompassing other key actors within the international arena, whose emergence has played a pivotal role in diversifying and broadening the scope of diplomatic thought. Commonly regarded as a relatively recent theory, constructivism gained prominence after the conclusion of the Cold War, offering alternative perspectives on diplomacy. This way of thinking differs from other diplomatic theories, including liberalism and realism. Moreover, constructivism presents alternative perspectives for understanding the present-day state of IR, going beyond the traditional dual categorisation of actors as either state or non-state. Instead, constructivism explores the interconnectedness and ongoing state power within the modern IR system, emphasising the need to consider simultaneously emerging facets and elements transforming the IR system (Murray 2006: 257-258).

Constructivism holds significance not only due to its central position in IR but also because it purposefully excludes more radical perspectives. Therefore this approach has effectively bridged the gap between local and international politics, a feat unmatched by other IR theories. Furthermore, constructivism takes into account the influence of globalisation, making it an ideal framework for analysing the transformation of diplomacy. As diplomacy's evolution is fueled by globalisation and related factors, constructivism proves invaluable in comprehending these dynamic changes (Biersteker 2007: 252). Another crucial aspect of diplomacy that constructivism can shed light on, is the transforming norms and practices of diplomatic engagement. For example, the emergence of new technologies and the media has transformed the way diplomats interact and communicate with each other, including the general public. Through the constructivist lens, these changes can be seen as a reflection of evolving social norms and expectations of diplomacy and can help explain how they influence the behaviour and strategies of actors in the international system.

Risse (1999:8) brings attention to a crucial aspect of social constructivism, emphasising that it does not take actors' interests lightly, Instead, it problematises the interests of all actors due to the influence of global forces and the ever-transforming nature of diplomacy, as constructivists view the world as an ongoing project, constantly evolving in response to the changing needs of states. Adler (2005:90) asserts that constructivism is a perspective that recognises the dynamic interplay between the material world and human actions and interactions. As a critique, constructivism is a social theory that forms the basis for theories

of international politics, shedding light on significant aspects of IR that were previously overlooked (Adler 2005:90). Regarding diplomacy and foreign policy, constructivism highlights the importance of understanding the identity and interests of all actors in the international arena, a notion underscored by Adler (2005).

In terms of theory, the transformation of diplomacy can be analysed using constructivism, which Garcia and Klotz (2013:21) articulate as an analytical framework that may be used to study how diplomatic institutions and procedures have transformed over time, as well as how new standards and perspectives have shaped modern diplomatic relations. A further focus is placed on establishing diplomacy practices, institutions and norms and their evolution over time. As Kowert (1998:14) argues, constructivism can be used to comprehend why changes in diplomacy practices and ideas can lead to a shift in behaviour and practices of countries and other players in diplomatic transformation. Constructivism is an effective tool for analysing how actors' beliefs and perspectives in diplomacy affect their behaviour and the outcomes that follow. For example, Biersteker (2007: 252) highlights how a state's perception of its strategic objectives and interactions with other actors can significantly influence its diplomatic strategy, impacting its willingness to cooperate or engage in conflict.

2.8.1 Critique concerning the theoretical analytical perspective of the study

The critique of constructivism in IR has been an ongoing discussion for over two decades. Within this discourse, constructivists have been striving to find a middle ground between traditional constructivism and more radical post-modern constructivism. Critics argue that constructivism has predominantly functioned as an approach for comprehending international phenomena rather than a distinct and coherent theory. Additionally, across the various branches of constructivism, there is a perceived lack of well-developed mechanisms for explaining and facilitating change. According to Bickhard (2001), the term 'constructivism' has been used inconsistently within the broader literature, resulting in varying implications depending on the context. Consequently, critics contend that empirically testing constructivism can be challenging and is often regarded as unjustifiable.

This difficulty arises from the theory's focus on the role of ideas, beliefs and norms in influencing behaviour, making it complex to measure and rigorously test these concepts.

Furthermore, critics argue that constructivism may overlook material and structural factors that also play a significant role in shaping IR. Guba and Lincoln (2005) assert that, as a research paradigm, constructivism is characterised by a relativist ontology and a transactional or subjectivist epistemology. This particular philosophical stance may contribute to an incomplete understanding of intricate issues. Additionally, critics contend that the limited predictive power associated with constructivism diminishes its utility for policymakers. In recent years, a growing number of critics in the field of IR have questioned the centrality of legitimacy within the theory and practice of global politics. These critics assert that constructivists may not adequately consider the intricacies of social dynamics in international relations. As a result, they have taken a prominent role in arguing for the reevaluation of global rules and norms. Critics such as Kirschner, Sweller and Clark (2006: 79) have argued that constructivist pedagogy is less effective compared to direct instruction highlighting shortcomings in constructivist theories, particularly in their ability to understand and explain historical events and outcomes rather than accurately forecasting future ones. In some cases, constructivism has been accused of being used as a tool to promote imperialist agendas that undermine indigenous cultures. Furthermore, Smardon (2009) underscores the diverse manifestations of constructivism across various sectors. She also points out that personal constructivism often diverges from developments in sociocultural contexts, suggesting inconsistencies within the theory's application.

2.9 CHALLENGES MODERN DIPLOMACY POSES TO TRADITIONAL DIPLOMACY

Traditional diplomacy involves interactions between officials of two countries and excludes the general public from the process. On the other hand, modern diplomacy is viewed as a powerful instrument for understanding policy decisions that affect a country's direction and the implementation of national interests in relation with other nations (Terruso 2016: 329). According to Sofer (2009:194), World War I marked a defining moment in modern diplomacy, which was unique in both principle and technique compared to traditional diplomacy. However, the division between old and modern diplomacy is superficial, and the notion of modern diplomacy was not a result of flaws in the diplomatic process but rather a crisis in the European balance of power system, which propelled industrialised nations to prominence. Interestingly, proponents of modern diplomacy elevated traditional diplomacy, making it a fundamental cause of World War I (Sofer 2009: 195).

The advocates of traditional diplomacy emphasised the importance of diplomatic protocol and the establishment of rights, privileges and immunities. However, supporters of modern diplomacy argue that foreign policy should be subject to public scrutiny, and national policy should not rely on a balance of power that promotes arms races, trade conflicts and colonial rivalries. The undemocratic nature of systematic errors was criticised by proponents of modern diplomacy, who aimed for disarmament, free trade and awareness among states. Traditional diplomacy was dependent on the cultural homogeneity of the European ruling class, which limited its stability. In contrast, modern diplomacy recognises the changing nature of IR and the need for a more open approach, in contrast to the highly secretive traditional diplomacy (Terruso 2016: 329). However, critics of modern diplomacy overlook the fundamental issues that challenge the traditional diplomacy agenda, which has a narrow and parochial character that is defined by major ideological conflicts.

As a result of modern diplomacy, according to Stanzel (2018:20), traditional diplomacy faced three fundamental ideological challenges: first, Bolshevik revolutionism; second, radical right totalitarianism; and third, the emergence of new, non-Western governments in international society. The common denominators are a tendency toward revisionism and enmity toward the current international order. Furthermore, Stanzel (2018:21) reaffirms that traditional diplomacy ideas have endured for a century; despite the fact that international society has become global and is defined by a diversity of cultures championed by modern diplomacy. The notion that traditional diplomacy's stability was predicated on the cultural homogeneity of Europe's ruling elite is challenged by modern diplomacy, in which states are viewed as equals in IR.

In a shifting political environment, traditional diplomacy must change in order to comprehend and handle new difficulties raised by modern diplomacy, and where national efforts have proven insufficient to meet global challenges. Traditional diplomacy, as it was practiced by small or medium-sized governments, was limited by the actions and constraints of their respective territories. However, the rise of modern diplomacy and the involvement of new actors have significantly transformed this dynamic, allowing for the active participation of all states regardless of their size (Terruso 2016: 327). While traditional diplomats had long credited themselves with a better understanding of the art of diplomacy, the rise of non-state actors and specialists has challenged this notion, with universities and

other Higher Education Institutions (HEI) now playing a critical role in certain sectors. The traditional diplomatic system, where diplomacy was conducted by resident missions with a receiving or accredited state based on a bilateral nature, has been challenged by modern diplomacy. In this newer system, state relations take place regardless of mutual recognition as a sovereign and legitimate government, or the presence of an accredited resident mission, with relations being multilateral in nature (Berridge 2005:151). Modern diplomacy does not replace traditional diplomacy, but rather complements it, creating mutually inclusive options for states to choose from.

2.10 THE DIPLOMACY TENETS

Five tenets that characterise the duties of diplomacy in the framework of IR, foreign policy and interaction are brought to the fore by the framing of diplomacy within its present operational setting, particularly the primacy of the foreign ministry in accordance with Du Plessis (2006: 124-125).

2.10.1 International interaction is characterised by diplomacy, which is a dialogue or communication process between international actors: As the international community is shaped by diplomacy, diplomats use a large communication network to defend the interests of their governments and international governmental organisations. Since diplomacy is founded on rules and communication practices that provide a shared organisational framework for states to interact and exist, predictability and organisation provide a framework for their interactions (Batora 2003:1).

2.10.2 Diplomacy also contributes to the creation of foreign policy: Concerning the influencing or taking part in the creation of foreign policy, Du Plessis (2006:125) recognises a specific function for diplomacy. In addition to offering the knowledge required for making informed decisions, diplomacy functions as an institution inside the foreign policy bureaucracy where policy is developed. The degree of democratisation and the location of foreign policy decision-making in a given state determine how much of this function diplomacy plays. In addition, the foreign ministry is the body responsible for formulating foreign policy. As such, it serves as the brain of foreign policy, adhering to, evaluating and

formulating international policy. It is also the source of the ideas that diplomatic representatives use to create actual foreign policy (Coolsaet 2004:6).

2.10.3 Diplomacy is connected to the administrative branch of government as a tool of foreign policy: In their respective state, the professional diplomat serves the sovereign authority. The diplomatic service is a branch of the civil service, which is supposed to be nonpartisan. Instead, it has a responsibility to offer advice, put its knowledge at the government's disposal and, if necessary, voice concerns. Consequently, if the foreign minister disregards advice, it is the civil service's obligation and responsibility to carry out orders without further enquiry (Coolsaet 2004:4) According to Coolsaet's (2004) account, diplomacy is a profession, the diplomatic service is an institution of diplomacy, the diplomatic corps or representative's department of government that deals with administrative matters and foreign policy.

2.10.4 Diplomacy is the master instrument within the foreign policy process, in the context of foreign policy and as a means to an end: Diplomacy can be utilised as a synonym for foreign policy; thus diplomacy is viewed in this sense as the primary instrument of foreign policy and is considered to be the most direct, conventional, traditional and nonviolent tool available. As a result, diplomacy serves largely as a political tool to advance goals of foreign policy, maximise governments' national interests and act as foreign policy's executive branch (Du Plessis 2006: 124).

2.10.5 Diplomacy is the leading institution of IR in the context of world politics: Berridge (2005) reiterates in a number of his readings how diplomacy is perceived as the best instrument developed by civilization for prohibiting the sole use of force to manage IR; accordingly It is referred to as the pinnacle of IR institutions. To put it another way, it is the instrument by which foreign policy aims to achieve its goals through negotiation as opposed to violence and thus ensures the seamless conduct of international affairs.

2.11 ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF DIPLOMACY

The three distinct roles of diplomacy include information gathering and analysis, negotiation and the promotion of national interests, such as trade, finance, politics, culture, and tourism

(Mills 2000:187). According to Barston (1997) ,there are six functions that are relevant to the practice of diplomacy, including representation formal or substantive; information collection particularly the identification of significant issues and emerging internal or foreign trends, coupled with their ramifications, related to timely warning of bad developments; laying the groundwork or building the framework for a policy or new initiatives; when there is real or potential conflict, reducing friction or furthering the idea of bilateral or multilateral contacts; promoting order and orderly transformation; involving the development, drafting and modification of a large corpus of normative and regulatory international rules to provide structure in the global system.

A framework indicating the nature of diplomacy is provided by Barston (1997), who defines it as the conduct of global relations through bargaining; the technique by which diplomats and diplomatic missions modify and maintain the above relations; the business or art of the diplomat. The increased importance of personal diplomacy at the head of state or government level often at the disadvantage of the resident ambassador, does not diminish the value of having a foreign representative explain policy at critical junctures, analyse politics, work on economic and trade issues and attend conferences around the world. Multilateral diplomacy and regional diplomacy have risen in tandem with the fast expansion of the international system since the 1960s through summits, conferences and informal gatherings of a political, specialised or economic nature (Barston 1997: 5).

2.12 HIGHER EDUCATION INTERNATIONALISATION AS AN INDICATOR OF THE TRANSFORMATION OF DIPLOMACY

Knight and de Wit (2018) adopts a blank approach to the indicators of internationalisation to the transformation of diplomacy since they consider that the dynamics thereof remain similar and therefore they identify the following: over the past decades, internationalisation has advanced from a marginal and minor component to a global, strategic and mainstream function in higher education. Throughout the course and history of Internationalisation, Knight and De Wit (2018) recognise themselves as active participants and witnesses of the transformation of diplomacy, wherein they raised paramount concerns about the history of internationalisation and considering where it came from in relation to higher education as a result of the transformation over time in the 21ST century and due to the transformation

indicators, the question arises regarding what are universities' plans for the future? This question should be effectively addressed; thus it becomes more important for universities to plan proactively. The question posed above remains unanswered at this stage, despite the fact that internationalisation has been altered significantly. Another indication is how internationalisation has developed into a very broad and complicated concept, including a plethora of new rationales, approaches and strategies in a variety of ever-changing contexts. It is intriguing to observe how the terminology used to identify HEI has transformed over the last five decades (Knight and de Wit 2018:4).

Given the aforesaid, there is no doubt that internationalisation has attained maturity, indicating that the sector is transforming and that internationalisation is longer an ad hoc or marginalised component of South African universities (Jones and de Wit 2012:36). An additional indicator would be the fact that internationalisation in the 21st century is now widely recognised and incorporated in university strategic plans and HEI pronouncements, which was not the case five decades ago.

There is also an increasing appeal from sector intellectuals, and scholarly studies all underlining the need of internationalisation in higher education in consideration of the evolving global platforms of the international system (Jones and de Wit 2012:37). For instance, in South Africa, IEASA (2015) and universities began lobbying on government for a policy framework and policy pronouncements as a consequence of transforming diplomacy norms and the necessity for South African universities to actively participate in the global forum in a regulated manner. Another key indicator for transformation is the recognition and interest from economic and political rationales in influencing national best practices and now policy relevant to HEI (Jones and de Wit 2012:37).

In addition, Jones, Leask and Brandenburg (2021) argue that internationalisation and social responsibility agendas need to be aligned by using the construct of higher education integrated into modern diplomacy as an indicator of accelerated transformation coupled with the growing need to commercialise higher education focusing on meeting objectives rather than debating possible ethical issues and hazards. The internationalisation approach, especially in South Africa, is fast tracked due to the sector's contribution to a universities social responsibility. Furthermore, indicators show there has been a need for universities to

think locally and internationally about the social and intercultural engagement of internationalisation, align multiple institutional agendas and increase opportunities for modern diplomacy, which has been spontaneously created. (Jones *et al.* 2021: 332). IEASA (2014) recognises the importance of HEI where universities have been in the forefront for decades in the absence of the sector's regulatory framework, which was mainly due to the realisation that Internationalisation and South Africa's national Higher Education (HE) policy are not intertwined.

The process of transformation in South Africa's diplomacy concerning higher education is motivated by the need for internationalisation in higher education, which is challenged and transformed by the processes of globalisation recognised by the information society and, to some extent, the rest of the world. Consequently, it is crucial for the country's higher education sector to address its position within the global context by engaging in HEI where traditional diplomats were not necessarily impactful. Furthermore, the country's past marginalisation from the intellectual interaction and mobility patterns characteristic of internationalisation pose challenges to international repositioning. Based on IEASA's (2014) analysis, the country's diplomacy should be dedicated to a two-fold process of internationalisation, to introduce the general public to truly innovative ideas from other nations that are relatively new and ultimately forecasting collaboration in global transformation serving as the foundation for the emergence of advanced generational initiatives. Thus expanding available opportunities for HEI can be achieved through universities.

2.13 CRITICISM IN RELATION TO DIPLOMACY THEORY

Murray *et al.* (2011) point out that the traditional perspective on diplomacy has drawn common criticisms in diplomatic studies. Firstly, relying on a single grand theory cannot adequately explain the complexities of contemporary plural diplomacy. To understand the diverse diplomatic landscape effectively, plural diplomatic theories are necessary. Secondly, there has been limited attention from philosophers, sociologists, or psychologists in studying diplomacy from its historical inception onwards. The focus on the practical aspects of diplomacy has overshadowed deeper exploration of its historical context. Thirdly, Nye (2011) argues that diplomatic studies have become too closely tied to their mundane subject matter,

leading to challenges in maintaining intellectual integrity and resulting in frequent misinterpretations. Moreover, a narrow approach in traditional diplomacy theory has been criticised for its failure to acknowledge the role of non-state actors in the diplomatic realm. The critique suggests that diplomatic theory may only embellish the recognisable aspects of a long-established structure, potentially overlooking the shifting foundations underneath. As a consequence of decades of state-centred focus, diplomatic studies and its experts have faced stigmatisation in the field of IR, with accusations of being unwilling to challenge the traditional perspectives and embrace modern diplomacy (Murray *et al.* 2020:7). To address these criticisms, scholars must embrace a more diverse and comprehensive approach to diplomatic studies, acknowledging the evolving global landscape and the contributions of non-state actors respectively.

2.14 RELEVANCE AND APPLICATION OF DIPLOMACY THEORY IN THE STUDY

Despite previous critiques directed towards diplomacy, there are several significant factors that contribute to its relevance in contemporary studies. Firstly, the theory of diplomacy aids in understanding the historical foundations and principles that underpin traditional diplomatic practices. This understanding allows for an examination of the conventional roles and functions of diplomats, the state-centric approach, and the emphasis on bilateral relations between sovereign entities, therefore familiarising with aforementioned traditional aspects, it is possible to evaluate the strengths and limitations of diplomacy as a tool for effective governance throughout history. Secondly, diplomacy theory facilitates an exploration of the dynamics and shifts brought about by modern diplomacy, acknowledging the evolving landscape of IR, wherein non-state actors such as international organisations, NGOs and civil society play influential roles alongside states.

In the 21st century, modern diplomacy theory remains relevant due to its acknowledgment and the importance placed on inclusive governance and the involvement of multiple stakeholders in decision-making processes, offering valuable insights into how diplomacy can adapt and effectively address global challenges, encompassing areas such as human rights, environmental sustainability and economic cooperation. By recognising the evolving nature of diplomatic engagements and appreciating the continued relevance of traditional diplomacy theory in some instances, a better understanding of the intricacies involved in

diplomacy theory practices and potential for creating positive global impacts can be realised.

Diplomacy theory serves as a foundation for studying the transformation of diplomacy as a means of promoting good governance, aiding in the identification of key concepts, as discussed in this chapter, that contribute to effective governance at both national and international levels. By analysing these concepts through the lens of diplomacy theory, it becomes possible to assess their applicability, effectiveness and implications for fostering good governance in contemporary diplomatic practices. Furthermore, diplomacy theory serves as a valuable resource for researchers, offering guidance in analysing the transforming role of diplomats as agents of good governance. It enables an in-depth exploration of the essential skills, competencies and ethical considerations that diplomats must possess to effectively tackle global challenges and promote principles like transparency, accountability, inclusiveness and participation (Nordberg 2011:12).

2.16 SUMMARY

The primary aim of this chapter was to lay the foundation for the upcoming chapters by presenting a comprehensive theoretical framework that will guide the study. It also aimed to provide a thorough understanding of the nature, scope and practice of diplomacy, while establishing the analytical conceptual framework for the research. Throughout this chapter, the study's key concepts were thoroughly explored and their relevance to diplomacy was clearly explained.

The interconnections between key concepts, along with the essential indicators for the transformation of diplomacy are highlighted. The chapter further investigated the intricate world of diplomacy theory, exploring the evolution from traditional to modern diplomacy and the important role of HEI as a measure of this transformation. Diplomacy through various analytical lenses is examined in this chapter including the constructivist analytical perspective also shedding light on the challenges that modern diplomacy poses to its traditional counterpart.

The dynamic landscape of diplomacy is constantly transforming with modern diplomacy presenting new complexities and opportunities. As the study navigates this transformation,

the enduring tenets that underpin diplomacy were also highlighted regarding core principles that remain important in the practice of diplomacy even as the methods and contexts evolve.

The role and functions of diplomacy have expanded beyond state-centric interactions to include a wider array of actors and issues, reflecting the changing nature of IR and highlighting how HEI serves as an indicator of the broader transformation of diplomacy, showcasing how education and cultural exchanges have become integral components of diplomatic strategies in the contemporary world. Criticism surrounding diplomacy theory is also underpinned in this chapter as it serves as a valuable source of reflection and refinement. In the study of the transformation of diplomacy, the theory presented in this chapter provides an essential framework for analysis, interpretation, and adaptation to the ever-changing global landscape guiding the study in comprehending the transformation of diplomacy from traditional to modern diplomacy. It thus provides insights into how diplomacy has adapted to the transformation of the 21st century, acknowledging that diplomacy is not static but rather a dynamic and evolving discipline. Moving forward, the subsequent chapter will delve into examining the transformation of South Africa's diplomacy approach.

CHAPTER 3: THE TRANSFORMATION OF SOUTH AFRICA'S DIPLOMACY APPROACH

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter offers a comprehensive overview of the transformation of diplomacy and foreign policy in South Africa, serving as a crucial basis for the study. It analyses the country's response to this transformation and delves into the evolving nature of diplomacy as a tool for shaping foreign policy within the South African context. Furthermore, the chapter critically examines key texts on foreign policy analysis, providing a theoretical comprehension that sheds light on the involvement of non-state actors in foreign policy decision-making. Notably, the complexities associated with non-state actors, such as the media, public opinion, civil society and business, are thoroughly explored. These actors are identified as significant contributors to the study, as their influential roles shape South Africa's foreign policy landscape.

It is worth noting that South Africa and Africa as a whole have received limited scholarly attention in the fields of foreign policy implementation and IR theory. Consequently, this author aims to shed light on the roles played by both state and non-state actors in the evolving landscape of South African diplomacy. The chapter emphasises the significant impact of non-state actors in modern diplomacy and their influence on the country's transforming diplomacy and foreign policy space, all while maintaining a commitment to the fundamentals of good governance (Anissimov 2009:n.p).

3.2 TRANSFORMATION OF SOUTH AFRICA'S DIPLOMACY AS AN INSTRUMENTY OF FOREIGN POLICY

Muller (1999) notes how South Africa has undergone unprecedented and unexpected transformation in its sociopolitical landscape over the past couple of decades including its national objectives, internationally recognised character, and role. In addition, these transformations ultimately reflect in the conduct of the country's diplomacy and diplomatic relations with other countries. Muller (1999) also points out the manner in which the country's diplomacy has transformed in a number of ways; noting a once fascinating case study of "pariah diplomacy," currently traditional in nature and somewhat intriguing especially with the rise of non-state actors and entities in South Africa, is indicative of a transforming

diplomacy environment, resulting in the emergence of increased interest in diplomacy, especially post-democracy 1994. The new South Africa's adaptation to a constantly transforming global diplomacy system examined in light of its historical context including the advancement of global diplomacy.

Ayodele (2021:381) admits how as diplomacy transformed, due to the nature of the international system and increasing non-state actors in diplomacy, the South African government recognised the value of working with other countries and international organizations to address global concerns; thus as a result, the country joined the UN in 1994 and actively participated in a number of UN institutions, such as the Security Council and the General Assembly, considering how economic development also became an important factor to develop from diplomacy and the promotion of trade, investment and economic growth. This assists South Africa's forecasted growth whilst at the same time developing trade missions and signed trade treaties with other countries, most importantly with the SADC region and the African Union (AU). In essence the transformation of diplomacy in South Africa thus makes provision for transitional diplomats to engage with the public or other stakeholders, bypassing some conventions of diplomatic practice as a result of modern diplomacy.

In the 21st century, South Africa finds itself in a position to explore new opportunities and embrace flexibility in its diplomatic practices. This approach allows the country to align its policies and utilise existing tools to promote socioeconomic stability and create an enabling environment for success. The transformation of South Africa's diplomacy involves a departure from traditional diplomatic engagement and extends beyond the involvement of non-state actors in diplomatic practices. This unique shift in diplomatic approach sets South Africa apart and opens doors to fresh possibilities. Pfister (2005) explains that in the aftermath of World War I, South Africa underwent a transformative process that enabled it to establish relations with other nations independently, free from British control or any other external influence. This newfound independence from Britain led to the establishment of South Africa's own Department of External Affairs in 1927, which later became the Department of Foreign Affairs in 1960. The primary objective of this department was to establish diplomatic missions across the world. From 1919 to 1948, successive South African governments made significant efforts in their foreign policies to enhance the country's international standing and operate as a sovereign state recognised by the global

community. These efforts marked a pivotal shift in South Africa's foreign policy instrument and provided the initial indications of its transformation.

Pfister (2005) further mentions how both idealism and realism theories of IR have played a significant role in transforming perceptions of South Africa from a nation associated with disorder within the international society to a respected international actor. Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge that the international community imposed trade and investment restrictions on South Africa during the apartheid era, which had a profound impact on the country's economy, foreign relations and diplomacy. This necessitated the need for transformation, especially during South Africa's political transition (Alden and le Pere 2009:150). A key guiding principle in South Africa's diplomacy is multilateralism, which has undergone a notable shift from bilateral diplomacy to a multilateral approach since the country's inception as a democratic state. Multilateralism is highly valued by the South African administration and is considered a crucial principle in IR.

In a rapidly changing global landscape characterised by interconnectedness and dynamism, Vale and Taylor (1999:630) highlight the importance of South Africa continuously assessing and maximising its national interests. They argue that diplomacy and foreign policy cannot be separated from domestic politics. While South African diplomacy places a priority on the African continent and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), alongside its commitment to South-South cooperation, multilateralism, and the strengthening of bilateral social, political and economic relations, it remains firmly rooted in the constitutional principles that have shaped post-apartheid South Africa. However, the transformation of the country's foreign policy apparatus has led to notable adaptations as it strives to establish itself within Africa and expand its influence beyond the continent. The rapid transformation of diplomacy in South Africa has sparked extensive scholarly research over the past two decades. This transformation has taken place within a broad contextual framework, characterised by significant philosophical challenges and transitional processes that align with the terms of the country's three post-apartheid presidents.

The period of 1994-1999 witnessed the formulation of South Africa's foreign policy, where the protection and promotion of human rights emerged as a key focus. The significant role played by the anti-apartheid movement, as well as governments from the third world and their representatives in international organisations, cannot be overlooked. Their concerted

efforts in advocating for human rights contributed to shaping the new South Africa (Spence 2001:4). Consequently, upon assuming power, the African National Congress (ANC) placed due emphasis on human rights within its foreign policy agenda. Analytically, the ANC's approach to IR theory falls under the classification of "idealism." The ANC's foreign policy agenda reflects its aspirations for a world characterised by harmony and the avoidance of wars, which resonate with the principles upheld by adherents of idealism (Barber 2004:92).

Theoretically, it is worth noting the profound influence that human rights considerations had on shaping South Africa's diplomacy during the specified period. The anti-apartheid movement, along with governments from the third world, played a crucial role in championing human rights through extensive campaigns conducted at various international forums. The ANC's prioritisation of human rights in its foreign policy agenda demonstrates a conscious effort to uphold the principles that guided the struggle against apartheid. In the realm of IR theory, the ANC's adoption of an idealist perspective reflects its commitment to creating a peaceful global order by preventing conflicts and promoting harmonious relations among nations.

South Africa's transformational nature in relation to diplomacy further took on a new direction owing to Nelson Mandela expressing the cornerstone of South Africa's foreign policy would be around the promotion of democracy in the world, considering the journey South Africa encountered leading up to the new democratic country where all people are recognised as equals benefiting from all the rights and privilege associated with modern state diplomacy (Qobo and Dube 2015:4). Furthermore, peace is an important imperative that all countries worldwide should strive for and that no one person can operate in an unstable environment. Peace enables states to actively advocate and advance foreign policy when maintained on global platforms. The diplomacy of peace is an essential aspect to enable South Africans to present their concerns and interests, represented in the country's foreign policy decisions, supported by considerable economic development and greater collaboration in an interdependent world.

Alden and Soko (2005:383) describe how diplomacy transformed and how foreign policy goals received greater clarity and attention during the period 1999-2008, when foreign policy focused on the idea of an African Renaissance and there was a clear absence of any domestic development strategy to ground foreign policy objectives beyond rhetoric and

emphasis on the concept of an African Renaissance. As a result of South Africa's reluctance to present a concrete economic diplomacy plan to support the country's economic objectives, a one-way divergence was apparent, according to Mills (2000:299), indicating the importance of rational foreign policy that is based on procedures rather than inhabitants guided by broad perspectives as opposed to singular events. During the period 1999-2008, the transformation of South Africa's diplomacy emphasised the significance of the country's involvement in the Western-driven globalisation processes (Tjemolane 2011:114).

The international order of the 21st century is progressively transforming and the new South Africa and Africa acceding to which represent this transition to a new world order. The transformation of diplomacy as a foreign policy tool from 2009 to 2018 was underpinned by several key pillars and guided by various concepts and principles. Firstly, there was a particular emphasis on the SADC region and the broader African continent. South Africa recognised the importance of collaboration with countries in the South to address shared challenges, particularly those related to social justice. Secondly, South Africa sought active partnerships with developed countries in the North, aiming to establish genuine and effective collaborations for a better world. Lastly, the country took initiative in strengthening the multilateral system, actively showcasing and advancing the diversity of its people, which was crucial for maintaining a central role in global governance (Landsberg and van Heerden 2020:17-18).

Dlamini (2019:29) highlights the importance of diplomacy and establishing strategic political and economic relationships with countries of interest, which is crucial to effectively advance the country's diplomatic efforts and respond to the evolving needs of 21st century diplomacy and foreign policy initiatives. Additionally, Landsberg and van Heerden (2020:18) illustrate how South Africa transformed its diplomacy by openly supporting its economic interests. Investments were actively encouraged into South Africa as a means to penetrate the African continent, with a particular focus on strengthening ties with neighboring countries and prioritising relationships within the SADC region. This strategic shift was deemed necessary to overcome the perception that South Africa's diplomatic approach is outdated and unable to meet the challenges of the 21st century. The authors Langa and Shai (2020:) argue that moving towards a rules-based system, emphasising principles such as South-South cooperation through multilateralism, and prioritising Africa's centrality in South African foreign policy actively contribute to reorganising the global governance system; although

preparations for this step began long before the year 2000. Mpungose (2018:18) emphasises that it was the invitation to join the BRIC consortium during this period which transformed South Africa's foreign policy space and is considered the biggest diplomacy and foreign policy achievement as global engagement and advocacy are seen as an important imperative for the transformation of diplomacy. The country sought to position itself as a responsible global actor, contributing to global decision-making processes and advancing its national interests on a global scale.

South Africa strategically pursued membership in consortiums like BRICS as an alternative to the traditionally Western-dominated international organisations such as the United Nations (UN). Within South Africa's diplomacy, BRICS took centre stage as a focal point of its foreign policy. Despite the limited economic and political commonalities among the BRICS nations, South Africa showcases the benefits of its membership and mobilises support for the consortium, as the country envisions playing a greater role within BRICS, with the aim of driving faster economic growth and development with the aim to take the lead in guiding and uplifting the rest of the African continent to higher standards (Landsberg & van Heerden, 2020:19). Against this backdrop, concerns were raised about South Africa's entry into the BRICS consortium based on rational decision-making and whether the move was strategic. Notably, prominent writers in IR such as professor Siphamandla Zondi really questioned the BRICS mandate especially concerning the absence of precise policy thinking which drove South Africa's desire to join BRICS, leading decision-makers to doubt whether South Africa was merely looking for political support from outside the continent (Zondi 2012: n.p)

South Africa as with many other countries, considers the pursuit of "status" and "prestige" as a motivator for states to actively participate on the international arena; hence the country's fixation on the BRICS network in order to secure economic benefits labelled as one of the major foreign policy considerations of this era (Zondi 2012: n.p) Many believed that the newly acquired objective concerning diplomacy prestige and foreign policy to secure economic benefits from the BRICS connections for African nations; although there is no concrete evidence to illustrate economic and political interests are in alignment despite South Africa frequently posing as the leader and representative of the African continent within the BRICS consortium and participating in the global system of governance promoted in South Africa's foreign policy during this time (Landsberg 2014:166).

A crucial transformation of its diplomacy imperative, South Africa as with many other countries globally, has embraced digital diplomacy as a means to enhance its diplomatic efforts. The use of technology and social media platforms has allowed South Africa to engage with foreign audiences, promote the country's image, and disseminate its foreign policy messages. Digital tools have provided new avenues for diplomatic communication, enabling more efficient and immediate interactions with other nations and international audiences. These examples demonstrate how South African diplomacy has changed over time, emphasising inclusivity, regional integration, economic diplomacy, global engagement and the adoption of digital tools to enhance diplomatic efforts.

3.3 SOUTH AFRICA'S RESPONSE TO THE TRANSFORMATION OF DIPLOMACY

In response to the changing diplomatic landscape, South Africa implemented various strategic initiatives following the end of apartheid in 1994. Lipton (2009:336) notes that South Africa's approach to diplomatic transformation has been shaped by its unique historical and geopolitical context, including the legacy of apartheid and colonialism. South Africa recognises the value of diplomacy in promoting equity, fairness and human rights. Since gaining democracy and freedom, South Africa's diplomacy has undergone significant changes, with a pronounced emphasis on idealistic principles. Diplomatic strategies have prioritised themes such as economic diplomacy, regional integration, human rights advocacy, collaboration and peacebuilding, especially with a focus on supporting the development of other countries, particularly within the Global South.

Moreover, Lipton (2009:337) acknowledges that South Africa's approach in response to diplomatic transformation aligns with its commitment to promoting human rights and democracy both domestically and internationally. This commitment is reflected in the country's foreign policy agenda, which aims to advance national security, peace, sustainable economic development, human rights and the rule of law. South Africa has implemented an economic diplomacy programme to leverage its position as a significant economic leader in Africa, aiming to enhance trade and investment opportunities. Simultaneously, efforts have been made to integrate foreign policy with domestic priorities, as highlighted by the RSA DIRCO (2011:35). The establishment of DIRCO in 2009 provided an opportunity for the government to reassess its role in fostering broader and more extensive partnerships and utilising these collaborations to achieve national interests. Given the increasingly complex

and multifaceted nature of international issues, South Africa recognises the need for a coordinated approach and consistent response across all levels of government, corporate entities, industry partners and non-state actors. To fully reap the benefits of its foreign policy implementation, South Africa emphasises the importance of an ongoing and coordinated strategy.

The importance of recognising how South Africa has adopted an active response to the transforming nature of diplomacy, both at home and abroad cannot be over-emphasised. Locally, there have been attempts to diversify the diplomatic corps and strengthen the participation of historically under-represented groups in the foreign policy agenda and the rationale for Initiatives to train and teach diplomats from different backgrounds, as well as to increase female engagement in diplomacy, has been part of this. The shift to multilateral diplomacy clearly illustrates how South Africa's diplomacy has evolved from bilateral diplomacy as an important and first empirical example, despite the fact that bilateral diplomacy continues to be important (Qobo and Dube 2015:4). Jordaan (2012) highlights that in response to the changing landscape of diplomacy, South Africa has adopted a proactive approach to address the challenges it faces in the international community. The country has embraced and prioritised multilateralism as a key diplomacy strategy. This is evident through its active involvement and leadership in various multilateral forums, including the SADC, Commonwealth and the UN. South Africa's participation and prominent role in these multilateral forms demonstrate its commitment to engaging with global issues in a collaborative and cooperative manner.

It is crucial to acknowledge the aforementioned elements as fundamental features of South Africa's diplomacy and its position in the hierarchy of importance, which, at best, remains marginal. The South African administration has emphasised multilateralism as a significant ideal in foreign relations, although recognising its limited capacity to effect change independently. The realisation that South Africa cannot operate in isolation and the endorsement of collaborative approaches to advance foreign policy, including the involvement of non-state actors, are inseparable from the country's internationalist character, rooted in the country's struggle for liberation. These factors are also reflected in South Africa's economic stature when compared to influential developed countries in global affairs (Qobo and Dube 2015:3).

In response to the evolving dynamics of diplomacy, South Africa has effectively incorporated non-state actors into various initiatives, recognising their crucial role in international relations (IR). Over the past few decades, the country has actively engaged with non-state actors, including civil society organisations, as an integral part of its diplomacy strategy. This inclusive approach began after the apartheid era, emphasising the country's commitment to democracy, human rights and development. South Africa's foreign policy decision-making strategy in the 21st century diplomacy arena now involves the active participation of non-state actors in policy formulation and engagement. This approach aligns with the country's National Development Plan (NDP), which highlights the importance of foreign policy provisions and underscores the significance of involving diverse actors in the policymaking process. The South African government as explained by Muller (1999:20) placed much emphasis and importance on economic diplomacy dating as far back as the early 2000s, utilising government resources to advance the country's growth through increasing trade and establishing trade agreements, encouraging investment and collaborating with strategic countries in relation to bilateral and multilateral platforms.

In light of the aforementioned, Tow (2016:231) acknowledges South Africa's proactive response to economic diplomacy, employing diplomatic mechanisms to advance the nation's economic interests and stimulate foreign investment with a primary focus on economic affairs. This strategic pursuit aims to promote prosperity through fostering cooperation among nations and non-state actors, placing significant emphasis on World Trade Organisation (WTO) matters, particularly in negotiations for free trade agreements and favourable trade terms that address challenges like dual taxation. South Africa recognises economic diplomacy as a crucial component whilst responding to the transformation of diplomacy effectively promoting national interests and driving socioeconomic progress. The country actively engages in trade negotiations, seeks foreign investment, and cultivates economic partnerships with other countries, leveraging its emerging economic status and position as a gateway to the African market; thus attracting investment and nurturing economic alliances. Undoubtedly, economic diplomacy has emerged as a pivotal aspect of South Africa's diplomacy framework.

In addition to the abovementioned, the response to the transformation of the county's diplomacy has also seen the engagement with key non-state actors such as the private sector recognising the significance of economic diplomacy therefore an important

consideration on how South Africa has cooperated with non-state is through the international and regional organisations including the SADC, UN and African Union, for example, an organisation that really embraces the role of non-state actors and their participation including academia and business. The aforementioned also highlights the emphasis South Africa has placed on regional integration within the African continent, which played a leading role in addressing regional challenges, fostering cooperation and promoting economic development within the region. This focus on regional integration has allowed South Africa to build stronger relationships with its African neighbors and contribute to regional stability and growth. In conclusion, the fact that universities are operating in HEI, indicates a transformation and overall, South Africa's response to the transformation of diplomacy includes a proactive approach to higher education internationalisation, recognising it as a vital component of its diplomatic endeavors to promote national interests, cultural exchange and global collaboration in an increasingly interconnected world.

3.4 INTERNATIONALISATION TRAJECTORY IN SOUTH AFRICA

As outlined in the work of Rensburg, Motala and David (2015:91-92), the inescapable trajectory toward internationalisation in the sphere of higher education stands as a shared imperative for a majority of universities in South Africa and worldwide in modern diplomacy. Universities in South Africa actively aspire to draw the best students and established researchers from across the globe play a pivotal role in propelling globalisation and internationalisation forward and in turn, globalisation and internationalisation exert a substantial influence on the transformation of diplomacy, making way for universities to excel in HEI (Rensburg *et al.* 2015:93).

3.4.1 South African universities' participation in internationalisation

Figure 3.1 below depicts South African universities' participation in internationalisation.

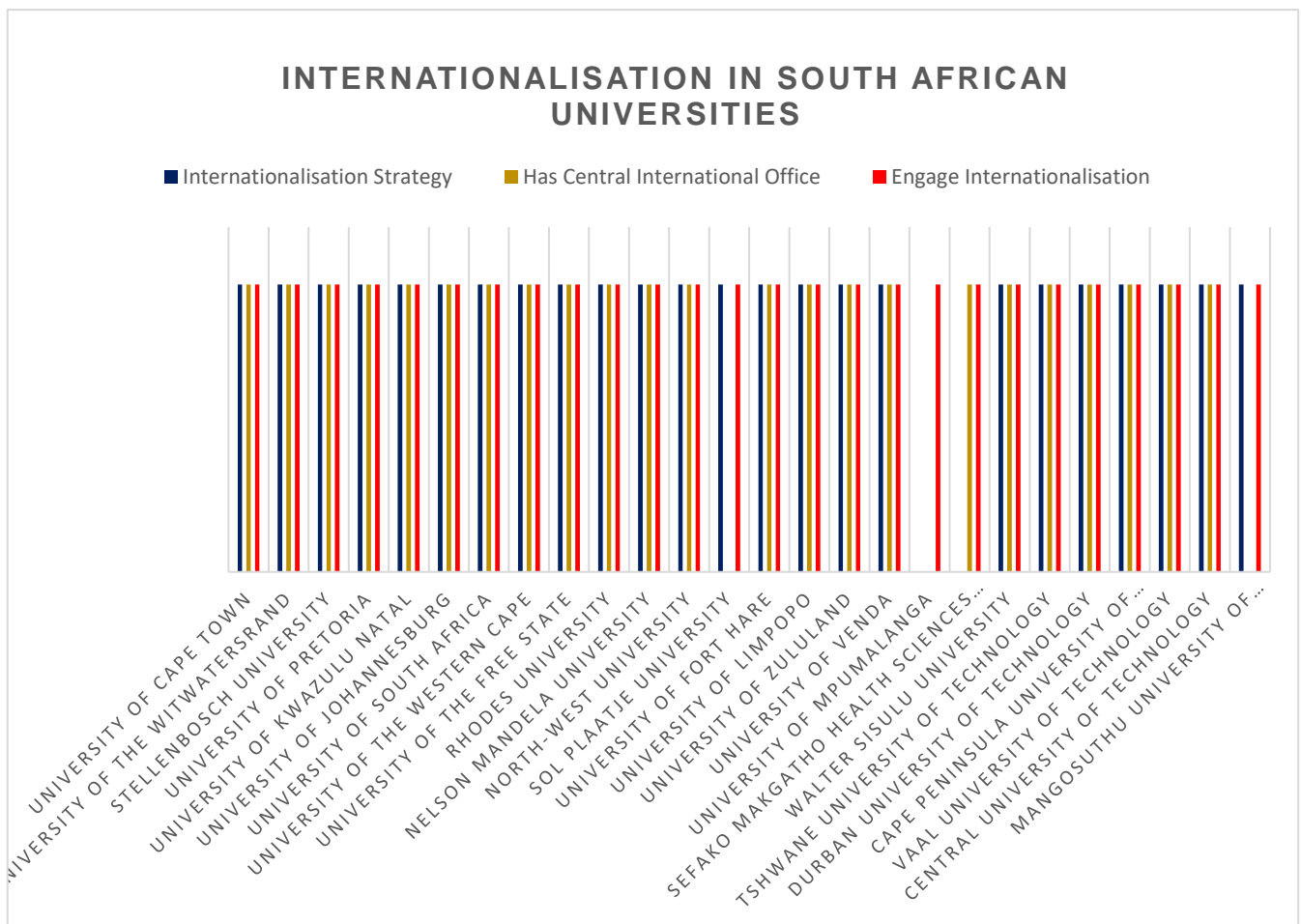


Figure 3. 1: Internationalisation in SA Universities

Source: Researcher's own compilation (2023)

As per **Figure 3.1**, membership in the international education association of South Africa IEASA (2015), encompassed all 26 universities within South Africa as active members of IEASA. This membership signifies adherence to specific requirements, including the establishment of Internationalisation activities or active involvement in international engagements, whether in formal or informal capacities, encompassing research, innovation, collaboration, partnerships, and facilitating staff and student mobility, including joint programmes and online learning initiatives.

Notably from **Figure 3.1**, emerging universities like Sol Plaatje University, University of Mpumalanga, and Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University, including Mangosuthu University of Technology, may not have formally established international offices, but they actively engage in internationalisation efforts. In the absence of a centralised international office, these institutions rely on senior executives, such as the vice-chancellor, deputies, deans of faculties, and directors of various departments, including marketing, community engagement, research and innovation, to spearhead their internationalisation endeavours (Jooste & Heleta 2015:254). Additionally, these universities accommodate international students, even without a dedicated central international office to provide specialised international student services or an internationalisation strategy (Nikols 2016:14).

from this display of the 26 universities illustrated in figure 3. 1, Quinlan and Singh (2022) emphasise the distinctive role and responsibility assigned to each South African university in relation to internationalisation. According to Rouhani (2002), in support of Quinlan and Singh, the responsibility involves developing a comprehensive internationalisation strategy that seamlessly integrates into the broader strategic plans of universities to ensure internationalisation is really embedded as a significant university strategy. The aforesaid is particularly pertinent when considering that three years have lapsed since the publication of the Policy Framework for Internationalisation of Higher Education in South Africa in 2020.

3.4.3 Key stakeholders closely linked HEI in South Africa

In this section the focus will be on the reactions and positions articulated by key relevant stakeholders closely associated with the sector for HEI in South Africa for the purpose of this study, only six who support South Africa's science diplomacy are explored namely. Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), The Council on Higher Education (CHE), International Education Association of South Africa (IEASA), Universities South Africa (USAf) and UNESCO International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (IESALC). Certainly, it is crucial to note that the study mentions numerous other stakeholders, particularly in Chapter 4. However, for the purpose of this section, only the six mentioned above will be explored.

3.4.4 Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO)

According to Jooste and Heleta's (2015) research, DIRCO is the central and most important entity responsible for South Africa's foreign policy and diplomacy strategies, employing traditional political diplomacy techniques and managing diplomatic relations with foreign nations through a network of global embassies and missions. Notably, universities benefit from this diplomatic network, using it as a platform for international engagement with universities in other countries. DIRCO, in essence, sets the stage for HEIs to expand their global presence. Universities leverage DIRCO's diplomatic infrastructure to promote internationalisation, foster academic collaborations and advance their educational initiatives. This cooperative relationship underscores DIRCO's crucial role in advancing South Africa's education agenda on the international stage, effectively paving the way for HEIs to operate and thrive globally.

3.4.5 Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET)

The DHET plays a central role in advancing the internationalisation of higher education in South Africa. DHET's involvement is multifaceted, encompassing the provision of policy guidance to universities and organizations like IEASA with the policy framework on HEI, financial support for research and innovation in partnership with the National Research Foundation (NRF), quality assurance to ensure international collaborations meet high standards, and strategic direction for universities to engage in global academic partnerships and attract international talent (DHET 2019: 45). The efforts of the DHET (2019) are aligned with South Africa's broader goals of fostering a competitive knowledge economy and global partnerships. Additionally, the DHET provides funding and incentives to higher education institutions, helping them cover the costs associated with internationalisation while ensuring that these efforts align with the country's national development objectives. Thus the DHET ensures that internationalisation efforts align with South Africa's foreign policy.

3.4.6 The Council on Higher Education (CHE)

The CHE is in full support of HEI in South Africa and recognises the importance of international students both for full degree and short stay students and the diversity they bring to advance internationalisation at home on campus. Researcher exchanges and mobility are

essential for the advancement of the South African higher education sector in its effort to rebuild and transform the country's economy and society (Badat 2004).

3.4.7 International Education Association of South Africa (IEASA)

IEASA is especially important in HEI in South Africa; the association is at the forefront of internationalisation in the country, proactively addressing urgent deliberations including trends in the sector; thus, studies concerning internationalisation in South Africa acknowledge the significant role and contribution of IEASA and how HEI has considerably advanced in South Africa and international platforms through the association's participation in global exhibitions (Jooste & Heleta 2015:259). Jooste and Hagenmeier (2022) recognise the mother body role that IEASA has embraced over the years, which has seen the association take the lead and vigorously forge linkages among like-minded organisations all across the world, placing IEASA as a formidable international force known for its relevance for decades and leaving its mark through various partnerships and linkages with like-minded associations around the world (IEASA 2015:n.p).

3.4.8 Universities South Africa (USAf)

USAf, formerly recognised as Higher Education South Africa (HESA), functions as a pivotal organisation representing the interests of South Africa's public universities holding an important role in the promotion and advancement of internationalisation efforts within South Africa. Moreover, USAf through policy advocacy, information sharing, research and various support services, empowers South African universities to engage with the global academic community, enhance their international reputation, and contribute to the country's development and competitiveness in the global knowledge economy (Universities South Africa 2014:n.p).

3.4.9 UNESCO International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (IESALC)

UNESCO (2019) is a strategic and focused agency within the UN system, has a dedicated mission to enhance higher education in its member states, and South Africa actively participates in its initiatives. The Institute strategically organises its initiatives by designing working programmes that are in alignment with priority themes. The themes are determined biannually by the Governing Board of the Institute and are subsequently ratified by the

UNESCO General Conference. These four major work programmes encompass a range of activities, including research, capacity building, technical cooperation, and collaborative advocacy efforts, all of which collectively contribute to achieving its mission (UNESCO 2019)

Being a part of UNESCO brings several advantages to South Africa, which include promoting the ratification of global and regional degree recognition, conventions and sharing their advantages with the academic community. UNESCO also aids in developing educational materials for higher education internationalisation and academic mobility, targeting various stakeholders like governments, parliaments, universities and students. Additionally, UNESCO supports the exchange of ideas and trends in international education and mobility, conducts comparative studies on the role of academic credits in student mobility, and explores alternative accreditation models. Furthermore, UNESCO assists in preparing studies on mobility programmes for students, teachers and researchers at national, regional and international levels, enhancing educational opportunities in South Africa.

3.5 THE ROLE OF DIPLOMACY INFLUENCING GOOD GOVERNANCE IN SOUTH AFRICA

In contemporary times the intricate challenges faced by South Africa highlight the necessity for collaboration and collective action, acknowledging that tackling these challenges in isolation is inadequate, as even the most powerful nations understand the importance of cooperative efforts and joint action. Hence, states engage in bilateral and multilateral agreement and universities in HEI also engage in similar partnerships with other institutions abroad, taking the lead in this regard. Consequently, it becomes imperative to work together to effectively address the complexities and identify viable solutions to the prevailing issues. Diplomacy assumes a critical role in fostering cooperation and joint endeavours to address issues of good governance, both domestically and, to some extent, internationally. According to Waltz (1998:698), good governance encompasses not only formal government systems but also informal and non-governmental entities that meet the needs and aspirations of the people, thus transcending the narrow scope of government. Waltz (1998:698) also emphasises that governance is built upon a set of widely accepted laws, with rule-making, roles, responsibilities and processes serving as its fundamental pillar.

Lwokwng (2002:77) describes good governance as a concept marked by "good" and "democratic" qualities, which are determined by the level of transparency demonstrated by a country's institutions and practices, including parliament and various ministries. South Africa serves as an example in this regard. The processes of good governance encompass essential aspects, such as conducting free and fair elections, upholding corruption-free constitutional procedures and being accountable to citizens. Given South Africa's history of apartheid, its ability to meet these criteria significantly impacts its integrity and global reputation (Lwokwng 2002:78). To promote democratic integrity, South Africa has implemented principles of good governance, including fairness, inclusivity, diversity, transparency, accountability and constitutional legitimacy. Adhering to these principles can lead to increased legitimacy in parliamentary representation, election processes and the development and implementation of laws benefiting the entire nation. Additionally, an efficient and effective judicial system upholding constitutional supremacy plays a crucial role in supporting these endeavours (Lwokwng 2002:79).

Good governance refers to the leadership of the South African government, which holds the authority to administer and uphold the country's constitution in a democratic manner, with the primary objective of safeguarding the welfare and integrity of its citizens. The nature of the government and its governance style profoundly influences the well-being of both the governed population and the government itself. A system that prioritises the needs of the citizens is considered the epitome of good governance (Anger 2010:56). Diplomacy assumes a critical role in addressing the challenges related to good governance in South Africa, necessitating collaboration among various stakeholders to foster collective efforts in achieving shared goals. South Africa actively supports the principles of diplomacy, effectively leveraging them to uphold the principles of good governance. The country's strategies for promoting good governance are carefully examined to showcase their effectiveness. Moreover, South Africa actively participates in promoting good governance and global governance through diverse means, including conferences, international organisations, and diplomatic missions; thus the country's international organisations serve as platforms for multilateral diplomacy, continually expanding their significance in global governance diplomacy (Leguey-Feilleux 2017:1).

In South Africa, non-state actors are gaining increasing influence in the realms of diplomacy and good governance, as they strive to secure significant roles in international affairs. The

involvement of non-profit organisations and civil society entities in global issues has experienced remarkable growth in the 21st century, including a new generation of non-state actors which has emerged, actively contributing to good governance diplomacy beyond the scope of governmental agencies. The five pillars of good governance are peace and security, economic governance, social issues, human rights and environmental protection which all bear the influence of diplomacy and require innovative approaches and diplomatic strategies to address their unique challenges. While some issues, such as poverty alleviation, are more amenable to good governance practices in South Africa, others present greater difficulty in terms of control or management (Leguey-Feilleux 2017:2).

The transforming landscape of good governance diplomacy in South Africa is driven by a variety of actors who seek to play an important role in shaping good governance principles in the 21st century, Good governance is characterised by a pluralistic and multi-layered approach, involving both the state and civil society, as it encompasses legal structures across all spheres of human activity, from the household to the larger community (Sharp 2000:43). However, good governance should not be seen as a threat to diplomacy, as some realist views suggest, but rather as a tool for enhancing the effectiveness of diplomacy in addressing complex issues in a changing world and the participation of non-state actors in good governance diplomacy calls for a re-evaluation of the traditional concept of diplomacy, to retain its professional and conceptual identity in the ideal world (Sharp 2000:43).

The notion of governance, as highlighted by Waltz (1998:698), is far more inclusive and flexible than just focusing on government. It encompasses informal and non-governmental systems that facilitate the realisation of needs and desires. Additionally, Waltz emphasises good governance as a framework built upon a widely accepted set of laws, supported by rule-making, roles, responsibilities and processes that serve as its fundamental pillars. In line with this, Woods (1999) argue that the discourse surrounding good governance has undergone a significant transformation in the past two decades as, while states remain crucial and active participants in global governance, their dominance has diminished, and their role is expected to continue evolving over time. States' centrality has been created socially and is predicated on consent (Lennox 2008:7). South Africa actively engages in good governance by assuming various responsibilities, whether these pertain to economic, political, administrative, or adjudicative matters. It is crucial to recognise that the concept of good governance evolves over time (Anissimov 2009:4).

Schoeman (2019:69) indicates the significance of diplomacy in South Africa as a valuable tool for promoting good governance, particularly in relation to factors such as security and stability. The modern diplomatic endeavours have played a crucial role in advancing the principles of good governance, emphasising consistency, security and tranquility, all of which are vital for states in the 21st century. Diplomacy is recognised as a vital instrument for promoting good governance in South Africa, as it facilitates cooperation and engagement with key stakeholders. By doing so, diplomacy supports the country's indicators of good governance through the involvement of both state and non-state organisations, among other critical functions (Schoeman 2019:70).

In Schoeman's (2019:71) analysis, an essential dimension of diplomacy as a tool for good governance is the cultivation of trust and cooperation among diverse parties within South Africa. Diplomatic initiatives hold the potential to mediate conflicts and foster empathy between different groups, especially in regions that have experienced past unrest or tensions. Embracing good governance principles enables South Africa to align with international best practices and standards, ensuring responsible adherence to the values and norms associated with good governance. Diplomacy, when employed as an instrument of good governance, can effectively support South Africa's local and global endeavours by utilising existing diplomatic resources to promote increased prosperity, stability and social cohesion among its people (Schoeman 2019:72).

3.6 NON-STATE ACTORS IN SOUTH AFRICA'S DIPLOMACY PROCESS

As we explore the evolving landscape of modern diplomacy, it becomes evident that non-state actors are playing an increasingly diverse role in enhancing diplomatic efforts. Davenport (2013:32) highlights that, similar to other state policies, South Africa's foreign policy is shaped by various state and non-governmental organisations, each exerting varying degrees of influence within the country's system. These institutions can be effectively integrated to pursue specific foreign policy objectives outlined in the National Development Plan (NDP). However, Nye (2011) argues that state actors remain the primary focus when it comes to the concept of soft power.

According to Masters (2012:33), in today's world, non-state actors, once on the periphery of foreign policy decision-making, are now a major influence on the shape and direction of foreign policy, as diplomacy transforms and seeks an active role in foreign policy decisions.

Therefore, a number of diverse and important non-state actors such as businesses, NGOs, civil society, media, academia etcetera are briefly discussed in the following section of this research study, creating a complex yet subtle opportunity for South Africa to actively project its influence through entities by enabling and empowering non-state actors to advocate for South Africa's interests. The state must be a willing partner with non-state actors and organisations in the execution of foreign policy in order to draw them closer into South Africa's foreign policy process and recognise them as stakeholders under contemporary diplomacy, however this will not happen automatically as alluded to by Habib (2005). In order to achieve the country's objectives through the NDP's foreign policy driven by mutually beneficial rewards derived on behalf of the country, non-state actors must be able to play significant roles on behalf of South Africa. In situations where national interest cannot be handled solely by the state, the above-mentioned entities are typically able to bring together governments and other international entities, as the White Paper on South Africa's Foreign Policy in 2011 illustrates (Isike and Ogunnubi 2017: 285).

3.6.1 Academia: Higher Education Institutions

In comparison to other fields of study, the influence of academics on foreign policy decision-makers has received less attention. A major contributor to the discussion of foreign policy is academia consisting of top scholars who are also distinguished as members of the global elite and actively engage in critical foreign policy discussions in an informed and sophisticated manner. This is unlike other actors in the foreign policy sector with a distinguished mandate to influence foreign policy for their own benefit.

Mushelenga (2018:215-216) suggests the literature in IR studies acknowledges the influence of academics on foreign policy and asserts that because of their larger network, academics are particularly helpful in diplomacy to explain and positively influence how the public perceives and interprets policies. Academic institutions comprise a set of key stakeholders whose interactions with policymakers should not be disregarded because of the important role they play. Some of the methods that academics can now employ to contribute to foreign policymaking is through research and publications, public lectures, seminars and organised discussions between academics and policymakers; although there are also several opportunities for academics to contribute to foreign policies through people-to-people relationships.

The first window of encouraging involvement with civil society was quickly dominated by van Wyk (2014:121), who describes the emergence of a "routine-based foreign policy," in which the participation of academics, non-governmental organisations, think tanks, and other actors was strictly "by invitation only." The aforesaid is particularly important given the expert role academia has established. The influence of HEI in South Africa, where universities have assumed the lead in this field from what used to be a diplomatic contested space, demonstrates that academia in the south has a role to play in the formulation of foreign policy. Various geographical areas demonstrate how non-state actors actively participate in modern diplomacy and that foreign policymakers have relocated decision-making beyond the foreign ministries' cabinet. According to literature analysing foreign policy via a liberal perspective, the involvement of non-state actors enhances foreign policy making and the positive results are noted van Wyk (1999).

Academics in South Africa should take care not to let their friendly and personal relationships with foreign policymakers compromise their academic integrity and professionalism. Siko (2014) reiterates academics are able to remain objective due to the lack of career pressure and due to the lack of political adversity or media pressure. When analysing foreign policy, academics focus on four areas: speculating on the consequences of a particular foreign policy; analysing and seeking a better understanding of current trends; making recommendations regarding foreign policy; and evaluating past foreign policy developments in order to contribute intellectually to policymaking. Academics should however, publish articles relevant to foreign policy mostly influenced by their familiarity with academic topics, harnessing the desire for policymakers to read academic works. Consequently academics are encouraged in their work to utilise vocabulary that is easy to comprehend as a suggestion (Mushelenga 2018:218). The South African government benefits from effective engagement with non-state actors in defining the country's national interest and in advancing human development in South Africa, supporting one of the country's fundamental Constitutional principles of a participatory democracy. From the above, it is clear that universities' involvement in the foreign policy processes is not restricted or tied to specific events such as multilateral academic summits that universities usually host on internalisations.

Mushelenga (2018:219) makes an insightful analysis between large and small states, suggesting that academic institutions, think-tanks, and individual academics contribute to

the foreign policymaking process more in sophisticated states such as South Africa with a large number of universities; consequently the smaller number of universities in Namibia, make a less influential academic contribution to foreign policymaking. This is supported by general trends adopted by many small states where the influence of academics on foreign policymaking is minimal. In Namibia and Lesotho for example, where there is a centralised decision-making process, this also limits the ability for academics to influence foreign policy comprehensively.

Based on the study of academia and its contribution to HEI, universities are highly involved in policy making related to internationalisation. For years, South African universities have operated and engaged in internationalisation without the support of a governing policy framework, as mentioned in Chapter one. As a result of increased pressure from universities, the government was forced to support the development of a policy framework on internationalisation of higher education, a process led by universities with government playing a supportive and advisory role in the process (Chasi & Quinlan 2021:206). Universities South Africa (USAf) has supported universities in South Africa by lobbying the South African government to develop and implement a policy framework for internationalisation. Because South African universities lack a national macro policy framework, their growth potential is constrained in this regard, even though they are moving ahead by internationalising their scholarship, research and innovation (USAf 2014).

3.6.2 Media

The South African media has played a significant political and social role in the country for more than two decades since the end of apartheid. The media has also made a significant contribution to a culture of primary political debate and served as an effective oversight mechanism to hold political powers accountable by publishing investigative reports into corruption and wrongdoing, both of which are supported by robust constitutional protections for freedom of expression and the right to information as Wasserman (2020) clearly articulates. The public and the majority of decision-makers have traditionally obtained their knowledge about global affairs from mass media, particularly the print media given its prominence in discussions on foreign policy in the three tiers: the South African public media, commercial media and community media (Wasserman 2020:459). Due to the increasing usage of both satellite television and the internet, citizens now have more

information and news sources to choose from as well as different perspectives on a range of international affairs.

The print media and the internet are the main sources in South Africa providing adequate coverage for international affairs; despite the fact that mass media establish the agenda for each election campaign, impacting the salience of attitudes toward the political problems. One aspect of South Africa's transition to democracy and the societal changes that have followed it, is the interaction between the media and political authority, which is essential. Considering these encouraging achievements in the young democracy, there has also been debate over the media's position in South Africa, as well as being accused of primarily serving the elite as the media exhibits many of the same serious socioeconomic disparities that still exist in South African society. In order to be more sensitive to the requirements of the evolving South African society, normative self-regulatory policy in the nation has also been disputed and undergone several adjustments.

Hill (2003:276-277) points out that journalists may occasionally have direct contact with decision-makers and other prominent individuals, providing them with the opportunity to influence policy discourse while also providing a chance for policy maker "trial balloon" launches. The connection between the media and the decision-maker is not merely one of unidirectional pressure via the public, notwithstanding the fact that decision-makers across the world closely watch their domestic press to ensure that the court of public opinion remains favourable on foreign policy matters. This ensures the media is regulated to some extent.

3.6.3 Civil Society

The current administration in South Africa is also focused on facilitating public participation at various points in the legislative process. In addition to the public consultation processes that result in the green and white papers, parliamentary portfolio committees provide opportunities for public participation. According to the 1996 South African Constitution, citizens have the right to participate in defining their government's policies, first and foremost through their choice of representatives, and secondly, through the two houses of parliament, the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces (Bridgman 2002:72).

The need to establish a more fruitful communication process between civil society and those who make foreign policy decisions is essential provided South Africa is serious about improving the legitimacy and quality of its foreign policy. This conversation might assist in defining and reinforcing South Africa's future goals and activities. For instance, it became apparent that the country would confront a crucial year in its multilateral engagements in 2020. (de Carvalho 2021:n.p.).

Sufficient public discussion of South Africa's foreign policy ideas has not been held in the past, so DIRCO recognised this need and attempted to address it accordingly. To fill the gaps representatives from DIRCO and civil society organisations from around the world formulated prescriptions for South Africa's UNESCO chairmanship in December 2020 (de Carvalho 2021:n.p.). However, a panel discussion at the South African Institute of International Affairs stressed the importance of the abovementioned interactions enabling think tanks and civil society organisations to critically analyse government initiatives in a private setting, in order to gain a deeper understanding of government perspectives and policies. DIRCO's official assessment of its UNESCO membership can be aided by the above-mentioned important discussions (de Carvalho 2021: n.p.).

3.6.4 Business

The business community has been focusing on foreign policy as a result of globalisation during the past two decades, trying to persuade home governments to support initiatives that would either allow for international expansion or safeguard domestic interests against foreign intrusions, depending on the corporate emphasis. Businesses in South Africa have embraced the attitude of globalisation to increase their presence throughout the globe, especially after 1994. These businesses have placed a special emphasis on Africa, and as a result, the majority of capital investment on the continent is now made by South African businesses, considering South Africa's presence has significantly expanded (Bridgman 2002:72).

Businesses in South Africa and around the world try to sway government decisions that impact their growth and profitability, just as they typically influence governments in their host countries to decrease taxes and relax restrictions in order to encourage growth through lobbying, political donations and occasionally downright corruption. Success or failure of these initiatives depends on a variety of variables, including how transparently a government

responds to private sector proposals and how coherent and well-organised corporate partnerships are (Hajaig 2007:n.p.). Business-related interests have dominated how foreign policy has been influenced throughout South Africa, especially post-apartheid. It goes without saying that South Africa's business sector interactions with other countries is governed by the country's foreign policy intended to further certain objectives including trade and security (Hajaig 2007:n.p.). Most importantly, the country's foreign policy is to safeguard South Africa's national interests abroad while also safeguarding the country's security and defense.

Foreign policy is influenced by a wide variety of facts including but not limited to political, economic, military and national interests. South Africa has maintained its position during the last two decades where at times the public is purposely kept in the dark about some of the business goals that drive some of government's most important choices and the majority of its foreign policy-related operations. This is despite the fact that the country's foreign policy objectives are intended to promote democracy and defend national security. Business without doubt has a significant impact on South African foreign policy and commercial interests are also used to dictate the country's foreign policy (DIRCO 2011:19). Technology has been adapted to developing markets and new business models have been pioneered by South African business.

In sectors such as mobile communications and financial services, South Africa has been able to explore previously untapped markets. To open up market sectors, South Africa should utilise similar leapfrogging strategies to pursue business opportunities. South Africa's foreign policy has shown an interest in free and open markets; as a result, democracy and capitalism are linked to open markets, and the nation has developed democracy and capitalism throughout the African continent and globally as top priorities (RSA DIRCO 2011:19).

3.6.5 Public Opinion

Scholars from various schools of thought have disagreed on the topic of public opinion and its impact on foreign policy; thus this argument is among the oldest in the field of foreign policy analysis (FPA) extending back to even the 1950s when the term was first conceptualised theoretically as Foyle (1997: 141) explains any discussion of participation in South Africa's foreign policy is inextricably related to the country's democracy wherein there is unquestionably very little overall public involvement in the country's foreign policy. One

may argue that this is largely because of the unique features of the democratic order that was put in place in 1994, although the ANC is committed to a democratised policy-making process moving forward.

While there are multiple examples of Western governments considering public opinion on foreign affairs when making decisions over the past forty years, it is unclear to what degree states truly take public opinion into account when making policy. Van Der Westhuizen and Smith (2015) assert that because foreign policy is complicated, ordinary people cannot meaningfully contribute to its formulation because they lack the necessary background knowledge, especially the rational prerequisites of effective foreign policy. They claim that “governments cannot from the outset count on the support of a public whose preferences are emotional rather than rational” (Van Der Westhuizen and Smith 2015:322). Neorealists also believe that domestic issues, such as public opinion, have a minimal impact on foreign policy supported by the lack of knowledge and competence on foreign policy concerns. During the Mbeki administration, when foreign policymaking became increasingly centralised, public input into the process was further restricted (Van Der Westhuizen and Smith 2015).

3.7 TRENDS IN GLOBAL DIPLOMACY AND HIGHER EDUCATION TRANSFORMATION

3.7.1 Diplomacy in the era of global Transformation

The landscape of diplomacy is experiencing rapid change, with significant evolution observed in its three key aspects: representation, non-state players' influence, and communication methods. Over time, the nature and role of diplomatic representation have undergone substantial shifts. While traditional functions like defusing security threats and military tensions still hold relevance on a global scale, modern diplomacy also emphasises promoting economic interests and safeguarding citizens traveling or residing abroad (Newsom 2010:11). Secondly, non-state entities and players, particularly those with expertise in specific industries or areas where traditional diplomats may lack representation abilities, now play a significant role in contemporary diplomacy's art of negotiation. Thirdly, the transformation in communication channels and the increased involvement of numerous international state and non-state actors have profoundly impacted information flow. The influence of information on foreign policy agendas is growing, and the evolving global

information environment has redefined the functioning and structure of diplomatic institutions.

The balance between generalists and specialists is being redefined, diverse communication channels are being embraced, innovative information technologies are being integrated, and swift decision-making is being emphasised (Newsom 2010:12). In this dynamic and ever-changing landscape, diplomacy is continually adapting to meet the challenges and opportunities posed by the global transformation, as it seeks to navigate complex international relations effectively. Last but not least, while globalisation and its effects have transformed diplomacy, its essential essence has not changed; rather, only its approach has changed. Building, maintaining and leveraging relationships have always been key components of diplomacy, and this has not changed despite the onset of globalisation. Globalisation has, however, changed how traditional diplomacy functions. In theory, sovereignty is necessary for diplomacy to work, but as was already said above, as globalisation has emerged, state sovereignty has theoretically transformed and as a result, diplomacy's approach has also transformed. With globalisation, information can be shared quickly and easily, and non-state players can participate in diplomatic missions and although not done formally, this ultimately disrupts diplomacy.

3.7.2 Higher Education in the midst of transformation

According to David, Alexander and Wiseman (2018), the landscape of higher education and related academic programmes is undergoing significant volatility and change in the 21st century, with the remarkable global expansion of higher education being a key driver of this rapid transformation. The number of students enrolling in higher education institutions worldwide has reached unprecedented levels, marking a substantial increase in student participation. David et al. (2018) further indicate that some academics have perceived a shift in the purpose of higher education over the past five decades, moving from an elite system to a more accessible mass system, which has contributed to its rapid growth. As a result of this expansion and shift in focus, the dynamics of students, faculty, curriculum and assessment methods are all undergoing changes.

Furthermore, the significance of higher education in society and its impact on socioeconomic development are also undergoing shifts, leading to implications for socioeconomic status, human resources and technological advancements (David *et al.* 2018:10). As higher

education adapts to these transformations, its role in shaping society and fostering advancements in various fields becomes increasingly prominent. It is important to note how universities' roles have multiplied as a result of the global expansion and transformation of higher education and they have become complex organisations facing transformation in the spheres of management, governance, academic administration, education provision, student services, research administration, infrastructure facility management, financial matters, legal issues and many others. Higher education policy, in this sense, may be related to globalisation and its constant transformation as an academic notion (Barbosa and Neves 2020:18).

Most societies' higher education systems have been particularly challenged by the transformation of democratising access and enhancing social justice, as well as the ramifications of such transformation for the functioning and expansion of their universities. In response to the transformation of the higher education sector, where global knowledge networks and systems predominate, universities are confronted with the notion of becoming internationalised, which is no longer merely a marginal activity, but a requirement for universities worldwide to respond to the transforming global world (Barbosa and Neves 2020:40) Global transformation of the higher education industry necessitates prompting and reinventing universities, as well as providing solutions to global challenges and needs. Another global transformation requirement for universities is the creation and maintenance of worldwide networks for research, collaboration, teaching and learning, as universities cannot function in isolation in the 21st century (Hénard, Diamond & Roseveare 2012:41).

3.8 SOUTH AFRICA'S RESPONSE TO TRENDS IN GLOBAL DIPLOMACY AND HIGHER EDUCATION TRANSFORMATION

South Africa's response as stated by Gillwald (2020), acknowledges the growing significance of science diplomacy on the global stage and actively encourages scientific collaboration and research partnerships as diplomatic instruments for addressing global challenges. This strategic approach aligns with the prevailing global trend of employing science and technology as pivotal components in diplomacy and fostering international cooperation that includes and embraces non-state actors. Furthermore, another response from the country is amplifying its response to globalisation by associating with various multilateral organisations; for instance the African Union (AU) and BRICS. Knight (2015)

reiterates the manner in which South Africa's response highlights a significant emphasis on embracing new modes to communication, social justice and global equity as these attributes resonate with the broader international trend emphasising the significance of efficient and effective communication coupled with social responsibility and ethical considerations within diplomatic engagements.

As a critical response Sehoole (2013) observes how South African universities have responded to the trends by prioritising internationalisation efforts to adapt to the changing landscape of higher education through actively seeking global partnerships, engaging in research collaborations, and facilitating student and faculty mobility to enhance their global competitiveness. Middlehurst and Woodfield (2017) argue how South Africa recognises the importance of equitable access to higher education and efforts made to increase access to historically disadvantaged students, aligning with the global trend of promoting inclusivity and diversity in higher education. South African universities are actively engaged in research and innovation initiatives, reflecting the global trend of universities playing a central role in knowledge creation, technology transfer and innovation ecosystems.

3.9 SUMMARY

This chapter examines the evolution of South Africa's diplomacy, which has been driven by transitional processes in an interconnected and globalised world. South Africa has had to adapt its diplomatic instruments, institutions and processes to cope with an unpredictable and turbulent world order. The chapter further articulates the concept of transforming diplomacy and discusses the role of higher education institutions in using diplomacy as a tool for promoting good governance. Furthermore, it analyses the impact of non-state actors on the transformation of diplomacy.

Chapter 3 of this study has delved deeply into the multifaceted landscape of higher education internationalisation in South Africa. Throughout this chapter, the research has primarily focused on understanding the perspectives and positions articulated by key stakeholders closely associated with the higher education sector in South Africa. This exploration is integral to comprehending the dynamic interplay between diplomacy, higher education and global trends that characterise the contemporary landscape of South African higher education.

Key stakeholders, namely DIRCO, DHET, the CHE, IEASA, and USAf have been highlighted as central actors in shaping the discourse and policies surrounding higher education internationalisation in South Africa. By examining the roles, reactions, and positions of these stakeholders, this chapter has shed light on the intricate web of relationships and collaborations that underpin South Africa's efforts to navigate the complexities of global diplomacy while advancing its higher education agenda. In particular, the study has briefly mentioned the role of science diplomacy in South Africa's internationalisation efforts. Science diplomacy, which involves the use of scientific collaboration and research partnerships as diplomatic tools, has gained prominence in the global arena. South Africa, recognising the significance of science diplomacy in fostering international collaboration and addressing global challenges, has actively sought to promote this dimension of diplomacy.

Furthermore, this chapter has situated South Africa's responses to global trends within the context of diplomacy's role in influencing good governance. As higher education institutions worldwide grapple with the challenges posed by the transformation of diplomacy and the evolving nature of internationalisation, South Africa's approach has been characterised by a concerted effort to align its policies, strategies, and partnerships with principles of good governance. The next chapter will utilise the internationalisation of higher education as a case study to illustrate South Africa's diplomatic transformation.

CHAPTER 4: HIGHER EDUCATION INTERNATIONALISATION AS AN EXAMPLE OF DIPLOMATIC TRANSFORMATION: THE SOUTH AFRICAN CASE STUDY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to explore and analyse specific research questions related to the study, focusing on the involvement of South African universities as non-state actors in higher education internationalisation and highlighting their significant contribution to the development and progress of the country's initiatives in this field, operating independently from traditional diplomats' interference. While bilateral relations remain relevant in the 21st century, there is a noticeable shift towards multilateral relations and modern diplomacy in higher education worldwide. This chapter further delves into the examination of the higher education internationalisation landscape in South Africa, global trends impacting HEIs in South Africa, encompassing the government's role and its corresponding response to these institutions, along with the potential implications thereof.

4.2 THE HIGHER EDUCATION INTERNATIONALISATION LANDSCAPE IN SOUTH AFRICA

Rouhani (2007) asserts how South African universities have transformed and positioned themselves as prominent participants in the global education arena, considering the manner in which all 26 public universities are actively integrating and prioritising internationalisation as an integral component of their mission and strategic objectives. The higher education landscape in South Africa consists of three distinct categories of institutions. Firstly, there are Eleven traditional universities which prioritise academic pursuits and scholarly research. Secondly, there are six universities of technology, primarily dedicated to providing vocational and practical education and finally, there are nine comprehensive universities that offer a balanced approach, combining career-oriented vocational education with an emphasis on both teaching and research activities (IEASA 2023:05) In addition to the 26 public universities, the higher education landscape in South Africa comprises various sectors, encompassing Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges, both private and public higher education institutions all these institutions are subject to governance by the DHET.

Notably, as pointed out by Teferra and Altbach (2004:22), South Africa stands out as one of the few countries on the African continent to possess a comprehensive higher education system. Internationalisation has globally and in South Africa become accepted as one of the critical processes advancing the main activities of universities, while internationalisation further encompasses the ongoing and thorough process of re-evaluation and adaptation (Schoorman 1999:38–39).

In accordance with Heleta and Jithoo's (2023) research, South Africa's higher education policies advocated for the expansion of research collaboration with both the African continent and the Global South before the year 2030. In examining South Africa's trends and patterns in International Research Collaboration (IRC) over the period from 2012 to 2021, particularly focusing on scholarly publications with co-authors, Heleta and Jithoo (2023) conducted an analysis and their research zooms into the extent to which South African public universities have engaged in collaborative knowledge production and the regions of the world they may have overlooked for many years. The authors conclude that there is a notable increase in South Africa's IRC activities and an expansion in the number of countries with which its universities collaborate. Secondly, despite this growth, South African universities still tend to advance collaboration with the Global North regions. This preference often overshadows research collaboration with the African continent and the Global South, despite the stated policy goals of expanding such collaborations (Heleta and Jithoo 2023: 2).

In their study published in 2023, Heleta and Jithoo list (2023) the top 20 countries with which South African institutions have collaborated but also falls within the top 100 countries engaging in research collaboration with South Africa. Additionally, the study delves into South Africa's research network. South African academics and researchers have forged collaborative partnerships with peers hailing from 223 different countries and territories across the globe, marking a substantial upsurge from the comparatively narrower engagement, where South Africa had collaborated with only 115 countries back in 2005. This expansion highlights the nation's growing reach and influence within the global research landscape.

South Africa's research endeavours, contributing approximately 1% of the global research output, also fall within the top 10% most frequently cited globally (IEASA 2023: 5). South

Africa's achievement as recorded by USAf (2019), spans across various fields of knowledge. Specifically, 55% of our research activities are conducted in collaboration with international counterparts, primarily at research-intensive institutions where the research capabilities of South Africa were notably defined as part of Africa's increasing research output. The credit mentioned in the study by Van Schalkwyk, Blanckenberg, Cloete, Maassen and Mouton (2021) suggests that the success can be attributed to a consortium of 16 research-intensive institutions affiliated with the African Research Universities Alliance (ARUA), including six South African universities notably surpassing their regional peers.

In 2019, higher education in South Africa enrolled between 40,000-41,000 international students, with a significant proportion hailing from Sub-Saharan Africa, notably Zimbabwe. However, it is noteworthy that the momentum behind internationalisation efforts within South African universities has experienced a decline sparking a new energy to increase the number of international students from African and global regions in the future. As per the DHET (2021), in 2021 South Africa's response to the SADC Protocol on Higher Education stipulates that a minimum of 5% of international students should originate from countries within the SADC region, excluding South Africa. However, Quinlan and Singh (2022) further elaborate that the numbers enrolled in South Africa's universities saw a decline from 5.93% to 3.09% by the conclusion of 2020 in relation to undergraduate students. Similarly SA universities experienced a decline from 15.82% in 2015 to 12.94% in 2020 for postgraduate students.

In 2021, data from IEASA (2023) reveals that international student enrollment at South African public universities followed distinct patterns. Approximately 69.2% of international students, totaling 32,726 individuals, were registered for onsite learning; meanwhile, the remaining 30.8% (14,580 students) opted for off-campus distance learning. Furthermore, when examining the top countries of origin for international students in private higher education institutions during the same year, the statistics reveal notable trends in student mobility. Namibia stands out as the top sender, with more than 4,000 students, followed by Zimbabwe in second place, contributing just over 3,000 students, and Eswatini with slightly over 1,100 students. The Democratic Republic of the Congo secures fourth place, hosting over 540 students, while Botswana follows with just over 320. In the realm of private colleges, the primary countries of origin for international students were Zimbabwe, boasting 602 students, the Democratic Republic of the Congo in second place with over 250 students,

followed by Lesotho and Angola, each with under 200 students, and Botswana with fewer than 100 students, as per data from IEASA (IEASA 2023:10).

As an important note, the presence of international students is not limited to the public higher education sector alone; a significant number of students pursue their studies in private higher education institutions, notably observing a fluctuation in the proportion of international student enrollments at private higher education institutions in South Africa, ranging from a high of 11.3% in 2013 to a lower figure of 6.2% in 2021. This trend indicates a decline in the number of international students choosing private higher education institutions during the aforementioned period (IEASA 2023:10).

As per information from IEASA (2023), it has been reported that in the academic year 2022-2023, a total of 12,295 South African students were engaged in student mobility worldwide with very few uptakes of mobility opportunities for African countries. Interestingly, several African countries have been hosts to South African students on mobility programmes. Mauritius accommodated over 130 students, while Namibia hosted more than 100 students. Kenya, Egypt, and Morocco each hosted fewer than 40 students. It is noteworthy that the majority of South African students traditionally lean towards Europe and America, with a substantial portion of over 12,000 students choosing these destinations (IEASA 2023:11). Furthermore, UNESCO plays an important international strategic role for HEIs in South Africa providing valuable insights into the mobility patterns.

The policy framework on HEI is really meant to “guide and regulate the activities that relate to internationalisation of higher education by higher education institutions and other role-players in the sector in South Africa” and is by no means prescriptive (DHET 2017:2). Furthermore, the lack of a policy framework for the longest time in South Africa really prevented the universities’ growth and development, according to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013: 15). In accordance with the policy framework, South African universities are all aiming to embrace the new policy’s directive of achieving comprehensive internationalisation and playing a pivotal role in shaping the future of internationalisation in South African higher education.

The ambition is particularly evident among research-intensive universities in South Africa which strive to secure positions among the country’s best universities. The approach for South Africa to internationalisation is characterised by a comprehensive strategy

encompassing various key facets driven by global forces, including research and innovation, strategic partnerships and collaborations, fostering student mobility and exchanges, providing international student support services, promoting internationalisation at home and enculturation and internationalisation of the curriculum. The aforementioned components collectively constitute South Africa's internationalisation landscape, each of which will be discussed in more detail, particularly focusing on the advancement of comprehensive internationalisation.

4.2.1 Research and innovation internationalisation

As mentioned by Kwiek (2021), internationalisation plays a pivotal role in establishing connections between any university and the global knowledge landscape, serving as a crucial mechanism for driving research and innovation initiatives. In order to transform these dynamics, the universities in South Africa are required to actively leverage international collaboration; thereby facilitating the seamless integration of its research efforts. According to Rensburg (2016), effective facilitation of research cooperation and exchange is achieved through engagement in research university networks, namely the South African Research Chairs Initiative (SARCHI). The aforementioned networks hold significance in facilitating global knowledge exchanges and fostering discussions that span both disciplinary and interdisciplinary boundaries, ultimately promoting transdisciplinary international research. South African universities place a strategic focus on allocating resources and providing support for international research activities in fields where they exhibit strengths and unique contributions (Rensburg 2016:315)

4.2.2 Partnerships and collaborations

A trend that illustrates the increased impact of HEI is indeed the increasing significance of collaborations and partnerships amongst universities in South African and their international equivalents abroad. Through collaborations universities are able to share information, ideas and research that matters, as well as relevant resources, which contribute to the country's higher education institutions being globally and strategically competitive (Jones 2018:69). For instance, the University of Pretoria has more than 210 active collaborations with other universities globally and the University of Cape Town has more than 170. In spite of the fact that both research Intensive universities have gained international prominence through

internationalisation strategies, some challenges still face the growing HEI sector in South Africa.

In alignment with the internationalisation strategies adopted by most South African universities, there is a distinct emphasis on fostering stronger ties within Africa, the BRICS nations, and the Global South as the Southern partnerships are usually not explored as extensively as they should be (Obamba, Kimbwarata & Riechi 2013:152). consequently, as previously mentioned South African universities are more committed to further enhancing and diversifying their relationships and collaborations in the Global North while also actively seeking engagement with pertinent international networks and organisations, aiming to establish international partnerships. South African universities actively participate in international networks, including but not limited to the Erasmus+ programmes, the European Association for International Education (EAIE), the Association of International Education Administrators (AIEA), and the Asia Pacific Association for International Education (APAIE). It is important to note that the above networks are predominantly influenced by institutions from the Global North and concerns raised by Jooste and Heleta (2015) revolve around the nature of mutuality within these partnerships, highlighting that these collaborations tend to be skewed towards research and financial dominance, often lacking balanced reciprocity and equitable participation from both sides.

Ford and McMullin (2016:292) emphasise the growing popularity and significance of global strategic partnerships as a tool for universities to enhance their capabilities and global presence including their international standing; therefore South African universities' approach to international partnerships is underpinned by a set of guiding principles such as mutual trust and respect. Universities are able to identify numerous strategic partnerships that receive targeted support, while concurrently encouraging other collaborative initiatives from academics within faculties and departments. Most importantly the international offices can manage the partnerships usually through a partnerships manager or senior officer of partnerships, which are centred around harnessing the momentum generated from the partnerships.

4.2.3 Student mobility and exchanges

There is a high level of emphasis on student exchange partnerships between South African universities and universities abroad as another example of HEI development and greater

activity from South African universities boosting active international partnerships abroad (Smith 2020:47). Smith (2020:48) conveys how diligently South African Universities are working to offer active and competitive study abroad programmes for universities to acquire international knowledge and exposure necessary to position themselves as global universities by developing strategic programmes that enable students to study abroad for a semester or a full academic year at a partner university. To facilitate the internationalisation of undergraduate programmes, two key strategies are employed: the exchange of teaching staff at the undergraduate level and the implementation of Collaborative Integrated Online Learning (COIL) (IEASA: 2023:3)

4.2.4 International student support services

Based on the findings presented by Gomes, Berry, Alzougool and Chang (2014), the literature review indicates that a majority of universities in South Africa have measures in place to provide for international student services, dedicated to supporting international students in their efforts to effectively integrate into the new university. Hyams-Ssekasi, Mushibwe, and Caldwell (2014) indicate that South African universities place considerable importance on delivering extensive support services to both international students and staff and this emphasis is particularly important to ensure the well-being and positive experience of students attending South African universities. Usually these services are offered by a dedicated student advisor.

Mudhovozi (2011) recognises the significance of offering social support to international students which includes the provision of counselling facilities while South African universities extend comprehensive support tailored to the needs of international students pursuing full-degree programmes, covering various aspects such as study visa applications/renewals, admissions, registration, medical aid and housing. Ideally, south African universities should establish support services for both incoming and outgoing international students encompassing those participating in short term mobility programmes.

4.2.5 Internationalisation at home and enculturation

An essential component of internationalisation involves the deliberate integration of international and intercultural aspects into both the formal and informal curriculum offered to all students at South African universities (Knight 2006: 27). Additionally, South African

universities acknowledge the pivotal role of nurturing their students' international and intercultural competencies through a concept known as internationalisation at home, which strives to ensure that every student enrolled in a South African university will eventually partake in an international experience during their academic journey (Beelen and Leask 2021:5).

South African universities typically develop a comprehensive programme for internationalisation at home, which unfolds throughout the academic year. To oversee and facilitate these initiatives, universities often designate an international student support services officer, particularly in institutions equipped with international offices. This is particularly important to ensure that students do not feel lonely, isolated and left out as especially upon their arrival at the host institution, international students may encounter challenges in adapting to the new learning environment stemming from differences in language, culture and customs, as stipulated by Mudhovozi (2011). In addition, internationalisation at home efforts encompass various events and activities that celebrate cultural diversity, such as Africa Day, International Students Day, and numerous other relevant occasions, inviting active participation from members of the university community.

4.2.6 Internationalisation of the curriculum

Majee and Ress (2020) state that curricula should not only meet global standards but should also be designed to empower students in addressing deeply entrenched societal structures rooted in colonialism and apartheid. Bourn (2011) suggests that the internationalisation of the curriculum plays a pivotal role in cultivating a global perspective. This involves expanding educational content and adopting teaching methods that empower students to nurture critical thinking skills, enabling them to question conventional ideologies and drive transformative change. As a result, Leask (2013) highlights a deliberate focus on incorporating international and intercultural elements into both the formal and informal curriculum within the confines of domestic educational settings, as the intentional emphasis on curriculum internationalisation is considered a crucial element within the larger framework of curriculum transformation and a pivotal objective within this endeavour is the creation of a curriculum tailored to address the unique developmental requirements of South African universities.

2007:472). Notably, while non-government actors also play significant roles in the South African context, the government, particularly the DHA, plays a key role in overseeing the compliance process for international students to obtain visas. Simultaneously, the higher education sector, including institutions and important regulatory bodies like USAF and SAQA, plays a vital role in the process. Accordingly, higher education sector in South Africa is optimistic that the policy framework will foster increased cooperation among these stakeholders.

4.4 RATIONALE FOR UNIVERSITIES' INVOLVEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION INTERNATIONALISATION

The need to evaluate the number of conferences focusing on internationalisation in South Africa, such as the annual IEASA conference, has sparked discussions and calls over the last two decades for HEIs in the country to enhance their efforts in this area. The integration of international and intercultural elements into university internationalisation initiatives is deemed essential as part of their mandate to address South Africa's specific needs and by doing so, institutional standing and related activities can be significantly strengthened, as emphasised by IEASA (Lutabingwa 2015:1109). CHE in South Africa recognises the significance of international students, both those studying for full degrees and those on short-term stays, for advancing internationalisation efforts on campus. Furthermore, researcher exchanges and mobility play a crucial role in the advancement of South African higher education, contributing to the country's efforts to rebuild and transform its economy and society (Badat 2004:24).

The policies and decisions made at the national level have a significant impact on higher education in South Africa with various state and non-state actors applying pressure on universities and offering benefits; thus HEI is influenced and shaped accordingly. Notably, an interesting perspective proposed by IEASA (2005) suggests that the South African government's foreign policy should encompass HEI recognising the important role in the country's broader international engagement and diplomatic endeavors. According to IEASA (2005), international agreements whether bilateral or multilateral, have a major influence on the process of internationalisation; therefore scholars in this field should recognise the importance of acknowledging that South African universities have diverse motivating factors

for internationalisation as each university will have its own favourable and predefined set of motivations driving its internationalisation efforts.

Four reasons can be identified as possible reasons why universities seek to internationalise, and Knight (2004) provides a useful framework for understanding the different rationales and reasons through the lens of South African and many other universities around the world. As Lutabingwa (2015) highlights, firstly one key factor influencing internationalisation is the political rationales driven by states, displaying the country's position and role as a country on the global stage aligning with IEASA's earlier assertion that HEI should be integrated as an integral part of the South African government's diplomacy as an instrument of foreign policy. The second rationale really ties in with economic perspectives and the understanding from states to actively utilise the higher education sector in the country to secure status and prestige to aid the country to compete in the global economic marketplace. Reference here is made to international students who study abroad for a short period of time in the different categories: exchange students, electives, or free movers as such students, even after being abroad for a short time, develop global graduate attributes and are recognised to some extent as global citizens once graduated (Lutabingwa 2015:111)

Thirdly, through the internationalisation of curricula, South African universities are able to advance the quality of teaching, learning, and research. In order to benefit from multilateral engagements, South African universities should actively participate in networks and consortiums that encourage diversity and facilitate the sharing of best practices in the sector. These aspects are of utmost significance for the advancement of the higher education sector in South Africa, as emphasised by Hall (2004). A relevant illustration of these efforts is the Yebo Project, a three-year capacity development initiative (2017–2020) centred on the internationalisation of PhD studies in South Africa (Yebo 2018:n.p). The project received backing from the European Commission's Erasmus+ programme and fostered collaboration among seven universities from South Africa and five from Europe. The purpose of the capacity building project is to substantially advance the internationalisation of PhD studies in South Africa and in Europe comparing best practices through the PhD lifecycle from application to graduation. The objective of the project is achieved through increasing awareness about diverse funding opportunities within the university community and providing comprehensive professional training and resources.

The project encompasses various programmes and activities aimed at supporting university personnel involved in the entire PhD studies lifecycle (Yebo 2018: n.p).

Lastly, as Ramphele (1999) points out, the cultural and social aspect holds significant importance, particularly in cultivating global citizen attributes in South African graduates. These attributes include being culturally sensitive, developing understanding and being accommodating to individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. By fostering such attitudes, South African university graduates will develop a deeper understanding of their own cultures and languages, as well as foreign cultures and practices contributing to their overall growth as well-rounded individuals with a broader global perspective.

Increasing emphasis on knowledge diplomacy is also a key driver for internationalisation at South African universities, supported by Knight's (2004) argument for a diverse staff complement within universities while developing and recruiting human capital is a priority for universities through international education initiatives directly impacting university rankings and competitiveness. International collaborative research platforms together with relevant and impactful education programmes encourage staff and student movement abroad as effective strategies to promote internationalisation in South Africa. It is argued by Hall (2004) that joining global networks is a compelling idea and international agreements that promote postgraduate education and growth are of particular importance to South African universities considering that universities strive to form reciprocal partnerships that meet their strategic needs; although the current trend is the formation of strategic alliances and networks related to particular fields of study and research.

A number of South African universities, including the University of Cape Town, Stellenbosch University, University of Pretoria and the University of Johannesburg to mention a few, have expressed their desire to collaborate with top universities around the world. Although the universities lack sufficient funding to service all active collaboration agreements globally, this does not impede institutions' desire to explore partnerships, which is commendable given the high cost of internationalisation. Although short-term programmes like summer schools and virtual engagements are good in promoting student mobility and often cost less than traditional mobility options, virtual mobility has been criticised for its perceived lack of impact and impersonalisation, as well as the absence of vital cultural interaction and exchange. It is important to acknowledge that educational exchanges not only enhance

formal diplomatic relations but also contribute significantly to informal diplomatic ties (Lutabingwa 2015:1112).

The appeal of international travel, in any form, lies in its capacity to generate income for the recipient country, and trade remains a fundamental aspect of internationalisation, making it an attractive rationale to engage in the sector. As a result, changes in the number of international students can significantly impact universities' revenues. The COVID-19 pandemic, which led to global travel restrictions to safeguard national borders, resulted in a substantial decrease in university revenue from 2020 to 2022. An estimation suggests that the inflow of international students contributes R3.1 billion to the country's income annually. When considering its spillover effects, this expenditure generates an economy that contributes more than R4 billion to South Africa's GDP each year (Aloyo and Wentzel 2017:394). Without a doubt, South Africa's interest in internationalisation promotes nation building and supports Knight's (2004) writing, which claims that some countries engage in international education or the importing of education services for nation building; even though many of these countries lack infrastructure and financial resources.

4.5 THE ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION INTERNATIONALISATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

The increasing recognition of collaboration, as highlighted by Chasi (2021), and the establishment of novel partnerships in international higher education are of utmost importance as such relationships form the bedrock of successful internationalisation and require effective management, which South Africa's universities achieve through a well-structured partnership management system. There is a growing trend to engage in collaborations with European universities, driven by the clear benefits of accessing Erasmus+ funds to support comprehensive internationalisation endeavours, including facilitating staff and student mobility. The aforementioned partnerships offer opportunities for joint research publications, the development of joint degrees and collaborative projects, all of which contribute to enhancing universities' rankings and international reputation. For universities, the allure of creating an internationalisation policy framework and exploring its potential implementation, along with the associated advantages, is undeniable (Quinlan and Singh 2022:n.p).

The COVID-19 pandemic brought about several educational advantages, including the utilisation of technology to connect with the global community, particularly through the expansion of virtual classrooms. This shift has enabled students and staff to interact with their counterparts in virtual learning environments, thus improving access and broadening collaboration models for international education. Notably, IEASA, a non-state actor, has taken a leading role in South Africa concerning internationalisation matters. They are actively fostering collaboration across the higher education sector, addressing issues that impact internationalisation both at the national and international levels (Jooste and Hagenmeier 2020:n.p). Participation in internationalisation initiatives holds significant importance, as it grants institutions enhanced status and prestige on a global scale and It also ensures their recognition and support within the international academic community. While numerous roles contribute to driving internationalisation practices in South Africa, this study will focus on five specific roles.

Firstly, to promote the enhancement of higher education in South Africa, the Policy Framework on HEI must be implmeted: The policy framework is aimed at establishing a national framework for universties, enabling them to define and coordinate their individual internationalisation policies and plans. The Policy Framework outlines essential criteria, including standards for both public and private universities interested in offering cross-border collaborative programmes. Moreover, it addresses the accreditation and approval process by the Council of Higher Education (CHE) for such programsme. The framework also addresses concerns related to co-badged and joint degree credentials, emphasising the collective decision-making process for granting joint degrees and ensuring proper regulation and sustainability of skilled labor within the country (Chasi 2021:30-31).

Secondly, to enhance the strategic position of South Africa's HEI sector globally: Higher education in South Africa has become increasingly crucial as a potent tool of influence in the development of Africa, reaffirming its dedication to being a significant regional and global player embracing the concept of soft power. Changes in the higher education system are driven by the need to address the history and influence of apartheid while integrating higher education into the broader context of a competitive global economy (Ogunnubi and Shawa 2017:82).

According to IEASA (2018), there is empirical evidence that supports the strategic position of South African HEIs in the internationalisation sector. The substantial increase in the number of international students enrolled in South African universities, rising from 35,000 in 2005 to 107,000 in 2017, demonstrates the country's growing appeal as a destination for international students. Furthermore, as highlighted by Smith (2020:49), the participation of South African universities in global academic forums and collaborations serves as a significant indicator of the country's strategic position in the realm of higher education. These collaborations enable South African universities to gain increased recognition for their research contributions and academic excellence which is of absolute importance.

Thirdly, the transforming diplomacy landscape in South Africa is evident in the government's recognition of the significance of transitioning from traditional to modern diplomacy: This shift emphasises the importance of HEI in transforming the country's international credibility and reputation, enabling South Africa to achieve its foreign policy objectives and establish strategic regional and global positioning (NPC 2012: 241). Chapter 2 of this study highlights the transformation of diplomacy with globalisation playing a central role in an increasingly interconnected world, where the active participation of non-state actors in IR and diplomacy-related matters becomes essential (Nanyonga 2019:149). Moreover, technological advancements have further advanced the evolution of diplomacy, demanding global engagement on a wide range of issues where traditional diplomats may lack expertise. In this context, academia, including universities involved in internationalisation efforts, is called upon to take the lead in advancing the country's education diplomacy (Stanzel 2018:n.p).

The fourth aspect concerns South Africa's utilisation of diplomacy in the HEI sector: This aligns with the country's effective engagement in soft power diplomacy within the higher education space, therefore necessitating a national strategy explicitly focused on how South Africa strategically employs its universities as diplomatic tools to further its goals in internationalising education, as this approach positions South African universities as key non-state actors in 21st century diplomacy, with a noteworthy role played by IEASA in advancing the sector.

Finally, the significant impact of globalisation on HEI in South Africa must be noted: It is evident in the country's ability to employ innovative approaches in response to global

trends regarding internationalisation (Knight 2014:15). In this context, South African universities have taken a proactive stance, implementing comprehensive internationalisation plans to be proactive as these universities efficiently and effectively utilise their limited human, monetary and material resources to advance internationalisation. This involves strategic collaborations with various funding sources (Hénard et al. 2012:40)

4.6 IMPORTANT FUNCTIONS IN RELATION TO HIGHER EDUCATION INTERNATIONALISATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

According to Ogunnubi and Shawa (2017), universities focus on the following six important functions concerning internationalisation highlighted below:

4.6.1 Excellence and mutual benefit

Excellence is the benchmark of all internationalisation as universities aspire to attract the best students from all over the globe to position South Africa to be a favourable destination of choice to further high education studies. International students, however, should be selected on merit and academic ability to perform in a particular programme of study. Universities often enter into collaboration agreement with partners; thus their important collaborations take the form of bilateral and multilateral agreements, although multilateral settings are usually under a consortium where funding possibilities are prevalent and partnerships should inherently benefit all partners participating in the agreement.

4.6.2 Equity and institutional culture

Internationalization should promote equity and change, which is very important considering that universities in South Africa face many transformational issues, especially historically predominately white universities. Issues around equity need to be addressed in the 21st century context to ensure the university serves all students and that all students are equal regardless of nationality and are able to identify with the institution.

4.6.3 University position in Africa

One aspect of internationalisation is to strengthen ties within the SADC region and to admit students from the SADC region on the same terms as local students. This is supported by the argument that South Africa continuously strives to be a leader in the region and

recognised as a regional hub for education and training, including research excellence. As a result, many universities, such as the University of Pretoria and many others, are seeking to position themselves as global African universities that influence and lead African research and are recognised for their commitment to developing the region; 'hence the university of Pretoria established their future African campus that focuses on African research and creates a hub for important, multidisciplinary research.

4.6.4 Research and academic autonomy

Academics have the right to develop their own individual academic connections and collaborations, both formal and informal. This is important and supported by the centralised or decentralised international office, which is discussed in the next section. Academics drive partnerships based on their research interests and focus areas. The international office or designee cannot develop a strategic partnership on their own without faculty approval, as the agreement must be linked to a specific faculty and in some instances an academic to ensure the active nature of the agreement.

4.6.5 Curriculum

The university must be measured against international standards without losing sight of the need for the curriculum to be relevant to local, regional and international conditions. This is important as universities in South Africa strive to be relevant in their teaching and learning activities, including producing research that is impactful and linked to the strategic goals of the university, which also align with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Additionally, this provision is justified by the need to produce graduates who are global citizens; as a result, universities work to implement comprehensive internationalisation, preparing students for the job market, enhancing their ability to compete globally and facilitating their ability to adapt, work and live anywhere in the world.

4.6.6 International student numbers

It is recommended that an annual cap on the number of international students be established to ensure that local students benefit from being in the same university as international students. This is done with the recognition that international students bring a wealth of diverse perspectives to their host institution, particularly in the classroom, which differ from those of South African origin. Local students can, in turn, benefit from these diverse

viewpoints, helping them appreciate the existence of differences beyond their own context and the significance of embracing such perspectives. It is reasonable to conclude that most institutions are having trouble meeting the policy framework's provision that at least 10% of their student population be international students. This issue arises from deficiencies in postgraduate-level supervision capacity, ambiguities in student quotas, and a variety of other factors that hinder the attainment of this goal.

This study has identified two additional crucial functions that can actively promote internationalisation in South Africa. Firstly, Advocacy and Promotion for internationalisation, which involves emphasising that universities have a greater science diplomacy function as experts in education to take the lead and champion for HEI with the support of university top management, national government and other relevant stakeholders, as diplomacy is a national imperative and comprehensive Internationalisation is a university-wide imperative. The above entails emphasising the important role of universities in serving as authoritative figures in the realm of education to promote and advocate for HEI. However, it is important to note that the International office cannot fulfill this role alone and requires the support of the above stakeholders.

Another vital aspect is funding. Securing adequate funding for internationalisation remains a significant challenge for South African universities, primarily due to the high costs associated with key drivers of internationalisation, such as student mobility and partnerships, especially when it comes to servicing partnerships and exchange students. South African universities typically host more students than they send out on exchange programmes. Consequently, universities need to be intentional in their efforts as per the definition of Internationalisation; therefore they need to develop a sustainable funding model for comprehensive internationalisation.

4.7 CHALLENGES FACING SOUTH AFRICA'S HIGHER EDUCATION INTERNATIONALISATION SECTOR

Lutabingwa (2015:1113) indicates the importance of how higher education institutions manage their resources to develop and coordinate various international programmes and services, as they address the complexities of internationalisation. Given the limited space and the high demand from students seeking access to universities in South Africa, admissions of international student's present challenges. South Africa currently has limited

capacity to accommodate matriculants who complete high school in the country and wish to attend university each year. On the other hand, universities must consider the 10% Provision for international students to be part of the university community as this expectation ensures that universities account for international students and make provisions for them in line with the internationalisation policy framework, although this practice was in place even before the policy framework was introduced.

South African universities encounter significant management challenges as they engage in comprehensive internationalisation and increasing internationalisation brings forth new obstacles for universities, necessitating a deeper commitment to implementing comprehensive internationalisation, including cultural exchange in teaching and learning. Furthermore, the process of internationalisation poses financial challenges for HEIs, as it requires significant funding that universities cannot unfortunately avoid. The rising costs of travel and meeting international obligations contribute to the ongoing challenges in financing internationalisation initiatives. As a result, universities' strategic imperatives for internationalisation may be negatively challenged, especially when there is an expectation for comprehensive internationalisation without sufficient resources to support the strategy.

As stated by Gacel-Avila (2005), the issue of transformation within South African universities continues to be a significant challenge. While some universities in South Africa are actively working on this aspect, a considerable number of universities are still struggling to fully adopt internationalisation in their higher education systems. The reluctance to change and a lack of comprehensive understanding among university officials about internationalisation contribute to the hesitancy in adopting this approach. In some cases, there is an attitude to ignore it and see internationalisation as a disadvantage or an unnecessary luxury or expense in the university's structure. There is also a high level of resistance by some university staff members to integrate internationalisation dimensions to broader university initiatives and activities.

Louw and Mayer (2008:617) mention a critical challenge which requires investigation. The internationalisation challenges arising from fragmented and diverse strategies and understandings within South African universities impact South African universities from attaining a prominent position as major players in internationalisation, despite their crucial role in this field. This perspective highlights the considerable efforts that universities in South

Africa still need to undertake to achieve the desired status and recognition on the global stage.

The financial implications of #FeesMustFall had a significant impact on universities, coupled with inadequate planning as universities were not prepared for this. The demanding political climate necessitated a quick adaptation to emergency situations, prompting universities to make adjustments and transition to online teaching and learning. This challenging environment forced universities to respond rapidly to the circumstances they found themselves in. Furthermore, events like the looting and destructive floods in KwaZulu-Natal and severe droughts in the Eastern Cape have further added to the challenges faced by the sector. Regrettably, these incidents did not present a favourable image of the country in the eyes of the international community, potentially discouraging prospective students from pursuing their studies in South Africa (Quinlan and Singh 2022: n.p).

Leadership in South African universities is continuously under pressure due to the occurrence of the daily challenges they encounter, considering these challenges may differ from university to university due to historical imbalances within the higher education system, with the classification of historically privileged and underprivileged universities in the country. Consequently, the significance of innovative leadership has grown, especially in the context of internationalisation in South Africa, which can unite all the essential elements required for a modern university (Quinlan and Singh 2022: n.p).

South Africa faces unique yet significant challenges in relation to attracting international students, lecturers, and staff. The country's immigration laws and the SAQA assessment criteria are among the factors that have played a big role in discouraging individuals from choosing to come to South Africa. The above issues have led to South Africa losing its attractiveness in the eyes of other parts of the continent and globally. Lengthy wait times for Police Clearance Certificates (PCCs) and SAQA evaluation results, as well as working restrictions on the partners of highly skilled internationals, are some examples that require careful consideration and attention by government as these issues have a negative impact on prospective internationals; furthermore, the country's backlog with the Department of Home Affairs in processing international student visas has also added to the challenges (Jooste and Hagenmeier 2020: n.p).

4.8 INTERNATIONALISATION POLICY FRAMEWORK IN SOUTH AFRICA

In accordance with Jooste and Hagenmeier (2018), IEASA identified the need for a national internationalisation framework policy in 2003 and significantly contributed to its development, given South African universities have been participating in internationalisation activities since 1994, albeit in individual university capacities. Universities South Africa (USAf) also played a significant part in supporting universities' endeavours to advocate for the national government's consideration of a policy governing HEI in South Africa. As universities expanded internationally to advance their research and other related aspects, the lack of a national policy framework restricted their ability to progress in important areas such as research, innovation, mobility and scholarship opportunities. Therefore, the development of a national policy framework became imperative to facilitate universities growth and development in internationalisation.

Chasi (2021) emphasises how through effective lobbying, IEASA and USAf successfully influenced the government to establish and implement an internationalisation policy framework in 2015. During the process, all relevant stakeholders were fully consulted on the draft of the policy, which was first published in 2016. Through national government, a rigorous process of public engagement followed the policy's development, during which experts from around the world were engaged to contribute to the first concept document. As a result, a comprehensive policy framework was formulated. The approval of South Africa's first national internationalisation policy represents significant progress in the advancement of HEI in the country. Considering the broader issues impacting the nation's higher education system, it is pertinent to approach internationalisation from a South African perspective free from external influence (Chasi 2021:31).

Heleta (2022) states that the policy framework on internationalisation aims to establish essential general guidelines for universities to develop and align their individual institutional internationalisation objectives and policies. Heleta also emphasises the importance of analysing the policy in the context of the entire range of higher education policies. Furthermore, Heleta concurs with Jooste and Hagenmeier (2020: n.p) that the South African internationalisation policy will act as a guiding roadmap for HEI including relevant stakeholders involved in internationalisation in South Africa. However, it is essential to acknowledge that the final approval of the policy framework lies with the CHE.

The DHET (2019) emphasises that the primary objective of the policy framework is to help South African universities understand the importance of internationalising their campuses and adopting a comprehensive approach to HEI. The policy also addresses key aspects of internationalisation, such as promoting mobility for the entire university community and fostering significant research collaborations. The concept of joint collaborative programmes has gained popularity, becoming a standard practice in the 21st century internationalisation efforts, allowing students to graduate with the prestige of being associated with both a South African university and a foreign university after pursuing a joint degree. Additionally, the policy advocates for the implementation of internationalisation at home and enculturation to ensure the proper integration of international students into the broader university community (Chasi 2021: 33). The comprehensive application of internationalisation is crucial to ensure that the entire university community benefits from the initiative and recognises its significance (DHET 2019:43).

It is essential to highlight that following its release in November 2020, the policy framework gained immediate legal binding status on South African universities. Consequently, universities proactively prepared for the policy's implementation needs,, leveraging support from university management and structures to foster internationalisation (Jooste and Hagenmeier 2020:n.p). Furthermore, Chasi and Quinlan (2021) recognise the significance of individual universities devising specific funding models for internationalisation, as it should primarily be supported through internal university funding. Both IEASA and the universities recognise the value and potential of generating revenue from internationalisation activities to support institutional initiatives and create a more comprehensive and targeted approach to the internationalisation project. Additionally, the policy framework positions the South African higher education system competitively in a globalised world, while simultaneously enhancing educational quality.

There is no doubt that the conceptual evolution of the policy framework on internationalisation has the potential to elevate the South African higher education system as a leader in promoting internationalisation in developing countries. Chasi (2021:9) asserts that for the policy to achieve genuine success, the strategy for implementing the policy framework is of paramount importance. Undoubtedly, historically underprivileged universities will need support to enhance their capacity to implement the policy, particularly through IEASA, (Jooste and Hagenmeier 2020: n.p).

Considering the aforementioned, it becomes imperative for both the CHE and DHET to effectively provide guidance to universities, ensuring they adhere to the provided roadmap and fulfill the commitments associated with the policy framework. Additionally, universities must recognise the value of inter-institutional collaboration in promoting internationalisation and the significance of incorporating the framework's guiding principles into their individualised internationalisation policies (DHET 2019:45). Moreover, the policy allows room for innovation, encouraging the notion of traditional mobility approaches blended with digital mobility initiatives serving as a model for other higher education systems while presenting opportunities for both private and public institutions to engage in internationalisation efforts.

4.8.1 South Africa's response to the policy framework

In light of the release of the policy framework on HEI over two years ago, it becomes crucial for South African universities to understand the reasons behind their involvement in comprehensive internationalisation as a university wide initiative according to Stacey (2020). However, the DHET (2019) cautions that the policy framework is a guideline and not very prescriptive in nature, making the policy very flexible for universities to consider. Jooste and Hagenmeier (2020) emphasise the sector's positive response to the policy framework, noting that universities have readily embraced it. This widespread acceptance is attributed to the comprehensive consultation process involving both local and international stakeholders during the policy's development. Consequently, universities find it easier to align with the policy's requirements, and the framework is recognised for its innovative nature, being described as a document that is at the forefront of international discourse. Chasi (2021) agrees with the above, explaining that universities aim to proactively integrate internationalisation into their strategic objectives, highlighting that this integration is essential for internationalisation to become a driving force at the institutional level as mentioned earlier.

As a result of the policy framework, universities are mandated to provide annual reports on their international activities to the DHET, which serves as a crucial means to showcase the internationalisation initiatives adopted by universities, which has been enthusiastically embraced by South Africa universities (DHET 2019:44). As outlined by IEASA (2020), South African universities have expressed a positive reaction regarding the policy framework,

perceiving it as an avenue to showcase their internationalisation initiatives and align these efforts with the overarching national objectives. Moreover, universities have also as part of the positive response, proactively engaged in discussions and collaborations with diverse stakeholders, including government, industry partners, and global organisations, which is deemed a necessary approach for the successful implementation of comprehensive Internationalisation

Nevertheless, Rodny-Gumede (2020) mentions some critiques have emerged regarding the Policy Framework's omission of explicit connections between internationalisation and the advancements associated with the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) as an important point in the sector, also reiterating the importance for the sector to actively reevaluate the approach to student engagement particularly on online platforms. Particularly imperative to establish improved collaboration with stakeholders both locally, DHA, medical aid service provers and international to secure much needed funding to support internationalisation.

4.9 EXPLORING STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIPS IN HIGHER EDUCATION INTERNATIONALISATION

This section of the study examines the intricate relationship between DIRCO, the DHET, and the broader context of higher education internationalisation within the framework of diplomatic transformation.

Undoubtedly, the role of DIRCO (2011) in South Africa is of paramount importance considering its core responsibility lies in the management of the country's IR and diplomatic initiatives, a mandate that encompasses extensive engagement with international counterparts, foreign governments, globally recognised organisations, and strategically important countries as outlined in South Africa's foreign policy. Central to DIRCO's mission is the promotion and advancement of South Africa's interests on the global stage (DIRCO 2011:4). It assumes a pivotal role in policy formulation, setting the agenda for international engagements across various South African government departments and agencies. In executing its duties, Smith (2012) argues that DIRCO orchestrates South Africa's national interests including foreign policy while at the same time developing initiatives and objectives that encompass international partnerships and exchanges. In his work, Holsti (1995:17-16) characterises policy decision-makers as "state behaviour." Simultaneously, DIRCO is engaged in the complex responsibilities of negotiating, formalising, and executing

international agreements, treaties and conventions on behalf of South Africa, encompassing both bilateral and multilateral agreements, positioning DIRCO as the most important and influential body for South Africa's engagement with the global community. This highlights the role DIRCO plays as an important actor with multifaceted responsibilities in facilitating the country's international mandate and indispensable role in shaping South Africa's global engagement strategies.

The DHET is responsible for higher education training in South Africa with a mandate of developing policies. Thus the Policy Framework for Internationalisation of Higher Education in South Africa is regulated in terms of Section 3 of the Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act 101 of 1997) as amended. As per the findings from IEASA (2023), it is evident that a connection exists between DIRCO and the DHET in their joint efforts to ensure that HEI in South Africa is harmonised with the country's foreign policy and international agreements. The relationship between DIRCO, the DHET, and HEI, as described above is characterised by its multifaceted nature considering that collectively, these institutions play a significant role in shaping the landscape of higher education in South Africa by collaborating in areas where IR connects with education and research; thus advancing the country's internationalisation standing. Moreover this collaboration is clearly exemplified on DIRCO's website where DHET's international scholarships opportunities are promoted and advanced (DIRCO 2023:n.p).

For instance, DIRCO promotes and entices the international community regarding South Africa as strategic global partner while it also facilitates partnerships between International counterparts, enabling universities through HEI to establish relations due to the groundwork conducted by DIRCO (2023). The DHET (2019) ensures that university partnerships actively align with South Africa's higher education policies and standards. Moreover, higher education internationalisation is an important aspect of the country's engagement with the global knowledge economy, driving innovation, research excellence and academic collaboration.

DIRCO, the DHET and HEI collectively contribute to the growth and global recognition of South African higher education, considering the manner in which internationalisation activities are influenced by South Africa's foreign policy, which determines the country's relationships with other sovereign countries including international organisations (DHET

2019). IEASA (2023) for instance, describes how foreign policy can affect visa regulations for international students and staff, funding for international research collaborations and the establishment of partnerships between South African universities and foreign institutions. South Africa's foreign policy plays a significant role in shaping the internationalisation of higher education in the country. It influences various aspects of higher education, including student and staff mobility, research collaboration and partnerships with foreign institutions.

4.10 GOVERNMENT'S ROLE IN HIGHER EDUCATION INTERNATIONALISATION AND IMPLICATIONS THEREOF

As part of the country's national higher education policy, the parameters which universities should develop to operate effectively in the international arena are shaped by the country's national environment, as Mbizela (2018) explains from the government's perspective. The new policy framework for internationalisation allows universities to formulate their internationalisation agenda with sufficient flexibility, with universities responsible for advising the national government on the policy framework; with the understanding that certain provisions are non-negotiable, including a comprehensive funding criterion to provide a model that is relevant to an institution and its specific needs; thus Mbizela (2018) believes that national government should support universities in their leadership role in the sector.

According to the DHET (2019), the government has little direct influence on the implementation of internationalisation activities and strategies by universities, recognising that internationalisation plays a very important role in the continuous growth and development of the country's higher education sector under the leadership of universities; thus universities enjoy full autonomy in internationalisation initiatives. This is why Fielden (2019) suggests that the government should at some point regulate certain internationalisation activities, as the current model grants universities full autonomy to truly operate as they see fit, resulting in traditional diplomats playing little to no role in the sector.

The internationalisation policy frameworks should effectively incorporate intergovernmental collaboration and integration, as intergovernmental collaboration is critical to avoid future obstacles. In light of this, universities and IEASA expect that the national government should oversee the implementation of the internationalisation policy in the country. A study by Jarle (2010) indicates the South African government is increasingly aware of the importance of comprehensive internationalisation in promoting understanding around the sector's

relevance and impact considering this underscores the need for South African universities to collaborate and cooperate to build internationalisation capacity. Universities must consider the government's role as a facilitator and enabler rather than an authoritarian. In addition, universities should include internationalisation strategies in their five-year strategic plans that set specific internationalisation goals. Prior to the policy for data collection on internationalisation activities, the DHET (2019) would occasionally request information from universities; however, now the policy ensures the above reporting is enforced allowing the DHET as the mandated structure to safeguard "national interest" in relation to internationalisation.

Considering the analysis by Hénard *et al.* (2012:40), for governments to develop internationalisation across four areas moving forward in the sector, the South African government may opt to support internationalisation in the country in the following ways: steering internationalisation policy, for example IEASA steering the sector and universities with the support of the DHET. Secondly, through continuous support and investment in the higher education sector through increased university subsidies, government can ensure the country's higher education sector remains attractive and internationally competitive, ensuring that it remains among the best in the world. Government can further ensure universities have sufficient resources to operate optimally. In addition, government must corroborate that comprehensive internationalisation is implemented and promoted within universities, and that university staff and students fully comprehend that internationalisation is a university-wide initiative albeit led by the international office. Lastly, government must assist universities in optimising internationalisation strategies by aligning university internationalisation strategies with government strategies including foreign policy (Hénard *et al.* 2012:40).

4.11 THE EFFECTS OF GLOBAL TRENDS ON INTERNATIONALISATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

Internationalisation in South Africa is impacted by greater globalisation as indicated by Louw and Mayer (2008) creating new opportunities while at the same time presenting new challenges and obstacles to universities' internationalisation programmes, which are viewed as integral to a continuous process of transformation and adaptation. Stone (2006) asserts that universities in South Africa are focused on improving their international reputation and

developing strategic partnerships as part of the internationalisation project. Thus, as the higher education sector undergoes continuous transformation, universities should assess how they effectively handle internationalisation and determine whether their strategies need to be revised and realigned to keep up with the shifts in globalisation considering change is a major driver of globalisation.

Due to competition among universities and the economic benefits for the industry, globalisation has primarily changed how HEI is organised, including the evolving nature of IR. The DHET (2019) internationalisation policy framework has a commercialisation expectation, pre-empting that universities will become self-sufficient and self-sustaining through internationalisation activities in the future. For example, Nelson Mandela university (NMU) has established a self-sustaining office for internationalisation funded through external initiatives rather than using the traditional university funding through budget allocations, positioning NMU as a pioneer in the sector as it has implemented significant measures to raise funds through the development of international summer schools and camps as well as charging an international student levy, to mention a few initiatives (Nelson Mandela University 2023:n.p) The preceding example illustrates commercialisation of HEI as a public benefit and facilitator to assist the delivery of quality education at all levels of the university, thereby influencing the knowledge economy as industrialised countries welcome approximately 75% of all foreign students. However, developing countries such as South Africa have emerged as major destinations for international students in recent years especially (IEASA 3023:11)

The DHET (2017) states the manner in which HEI, as a reaction to globalisation, necessitates appropriate consideration of a number of factors, as Kwaramba (2012) assert, first and foremost how international student mobility has transformed higher education in the last decade, with several benefits to local communities in South Africa, as well as aiding in the internationalisation of the community in which the university is located due to exchange students engaging with the locals and engaging in community engagement projects as a university imperative; for instance offering tutoring sessions to local communities and businesses. Next, Altbach and Teichler (2001) argue that Internationalisation as a response to globalisation in higher education requires due recognition of the movement of both staff and students across national boundaries to study or work on a short mobility programme often driven by cross-cultural exchange opportunities. This raises the prospect

of learning new approaches to pedagogy and curriculum and allows the chance to build international networks on a longer-term basis with students spending more than a semester at a partner university for research or a study project.

Zhou (2019:n.p.) emphasises the significance of fostering and implementing internationalisation of the curriculum for South African and institutions worldwide to ensure institutions' curricula are relevant and competitive with universities abroad, and align with industry demands to enable students to easily secure employment, as incorporating international aspects into course content is a powerful force for globalisation. The importance of designing and developing programmes that can attract the International community cannot be underestimated; particularly as internationalisation of the curriculum does not only focus on formal studies but also cultural learning, including building intercultural teaching methodologies and research cooperation (Bourn and Shiel 2019: 672).

Joint collaborative degrees (also known as joint degrees) are becoming increasingly popular with South African students at the master's and PhD levels. According to Cloete and Moja (2015) in the context of South Africa, the introduction of a joint degree programme not only enhances the quality of student achievements but also amplifies research productivity within the education sector. Moreover, Botha (2016) highlight that, in light of the aforementioned factors, the process involved Initiating a joint degree is rather extensive, which entails taking into account the legislation in both countries, including the respective university rules and regulations. Joint degrees formed through bilateral relations are preferred over multilateral settings, as the latter tend to be more intricate and often unfeasible, although the growing trend suggests that higher education can effectively accomplish specific academic, economic, political and cultural goals (Botha 2016:4-5).

In order to link national and regional development goals with global agendas, African students and faculty are increasingly emphasising the need to Africanise higher education at South African institutions (Botha 2016:8). South Africa students benefit from interacting with international students in many ways. For example, by participating in the institution's international programmes whether through the curriculum, enrolling in classes with international students who bring a new perspective to the classroom, or simply just making friends with other students. The ability and means to incorporate internationalisation activities into some crucial components of higher education, primarily research, including

teaching and learning, are made available to universities by the global interconnectedness of academia which benefits university stakeholders who can travel and take part in international activities, providing stakeholders access to a plethora of knowledge they can share with the institution, inspiring the campus community to think globally and take advantage of opportunities.

4.12 IMPLICATIONS AND ASSESSMENT OF THE STUDY'S THEORETICAL AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

This section explores the theoretical implications of the transformation of diplomacy in the contemporary global landscape. Knight (2001) has observed a notable acceleration in HEI in recent times, largely attributed to the impact of globalisation and the transformation of diplomacy worldwide. The theoretical framework of the study sheds light on how diplomacy has evolved from its traditional roots to its modern form. Jones (2018:68) explains how his transformation is seen as a response to the changing nature of the global world in the 21st century. The study's theoretical framework highlights the transformation from a traditional, state-centric approach to diplomacy to a more modern format that includes a diverse range of actors and incorporates innovative methods. Traditional diplomacy heavily relied on nation-states and followed formal protocols, while modern diplomacy involves a broader spectrum of actors, including non-state entities. It also incorporates digital technologies and creative diplomatic approaches (Cooper *et al.* 2013:45).

These transformations in diplomacy have significant implications for IR diplomats, policymakers and other stakeholders who need to understand and conform to the transforming nature of diplomacy (Ton 2015:n.p). Notably, universities play a central role in driving this transformation, specifically in the HEI sector. The Implications for HEI and exploration of the connection between diplomacy and HEI has important connotations for universities and policymakers in the higher education sector, indicating the important role and function that universities play as diplomatic actors and emphasising their role in enhancing and solidifying international connections, given that that the above comprehension can inform the implementation of strategies and policies designed to elevate internationalisation initiatives for universities (Ton 2015:n.p).

The assessment of the theoretical frameworks and its relevance to HEI forms the foundation of the relationship and connections between diplomacy and HEI, which might not be

immediately apparent. However, it bears considerable importance (Klotz 2000:21). On the other hand, the assessment made regarding the study's examination of the connection between diplomacy, including the transformation thereof, and HEI has significant implications for universities and policymakers in the education sector as it actively demonstrates the pivotal role that universities assume as diplomatic actors and emphasises their contributions to reinforcing international connections. Thus, this assessment can also provide important insights for shaping strategies and policies aimed at improving internationalisation endeavours.

A further assessment also confirms the transformation of diplomacy in the 21st century, where modern diplomacy has extended well beyond the traditional notions, particularly concerning the political and economic interactions which now includes educational and cultural exchanges. Important internationalisation imperatives really highlight the transformation of diplomacy and showcase the role of universities in modern diplomacy, as universities emerge as valuable instruments regarding countries wishing to strengthen their global connections (Sofer 1998:205). The aforementioned is accomplished by means of active strategic educational partnerships. This connection reiterates how universities are an important part of modern diplomatic efforts.

Utilising constructivism as an analytical tool for this study has implications and without doubt for those interested in IR, considering how the concept showcases the significance of constructivist theories in assessing complex international occurrences, beyond traditional state-centric analyses. Individuals exploring research in this field may find value in adopting this approach to gain deeper insights into how ideas, norms and identities influence diplomatic interactions across diverse contexts (Ruggie 1998:27). Additionally, constructivism implemented in the sector of HEI can be seen as an enabler to explore how transformations in diplomatic practices impact the ways in which universities engage with international partners.

A challenge for constructivism which has dominated throughout is the whole notion of ideas and norms in shaping behaviour. Applying it to the context of HEI, this understanding demonstrates the manner in which the moves in diplomacy application influence the ideas and beliefs held by universities regarding their international engagement. It also highlights how universities align themselves with transforming ideas and norms, particularly in areas

like promoting cultural exchanges. Knight (2014) states how soft power and cultural diplomacy represent an important component of modern diplomacy utilised to foster a favourable perception of South Africa on the global platform, aligning with universities' objectives in relation to their internationalisation endeavours, wherein they function as cultural ambassadors. When rolling out comprehensive internationalisation efforts, universities effectively serve as cultural ambassadors. Therefore, it can be concluded in this context that constructivism offers a framework for examining how universities execute soft power approaches and the considerable impact they have on diplomatic relations.

The effectiveness of the theoretical frameworks can be assessed bearing in mind how well it aligns with the research questions and objectives, particularly how diplomacy has transformed over time as an instrument of good governance and objectives underscored by the confirmation of the case study regarding the transformation of diplomacy including the role universities occupy in the 21st century diplomacy. This provides an important interplay between the theoretical framework and analytical approach evaluating the interplay between diplomacy, HEI and constructivism. Additionally, showcasing the study's theoretical framework and analysis in chapter 2 provides insights and contributing to the academic discourse on the transformation of diplomacy.

The above resonates with the study's working definition as stated by Barston (1996:1). According to this definition, diplomacy is the process by which states and non-state entities utilise various tactics, including official and informal representation, coordination and negotiation, to advance their specific or broader interests. Diplomacy primarily involves managing relations among countries, as well as other actors, while directing, formulating and implementing foreign policy (Barston 1996:1).

4.13 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOOD GOVERNANCE AND INTERNATIONALISATION

For effective good governance, government support becomes indispensable, and university policies and strategies should directly align with government policies. By aligning their efforts towards promoting higher education, South Africa and its universities possess the potential to convey a coherent message on internationalisation goals through good governance; therefore highlighting the importance of good governance in HEI. This includes establishing

global governance objectives and priorities, which can assist universities in understanding the global landscape in which they operate (Hénard *et al.* 2012:10). For effective governance, government support plays a crucial role, and therefore, university policies and strategies should be directly aligned with government policies. By aligning their efforts towards the promotion of HEI, South Africa and its universities have the potential to project a coherent message on internationalisation goals through good governance. Setting global governance objectives and priorities is an example of how good governance can help universities comprehend the global landscape in which they operate (Hénard *et al.* 2012:10). An excellent illustration of this can be found in how good governance guarantees the seamless coordination, consistent execution and alignment with the national development objectives of policies in the context of higher education internationalisation, as exemplified by the policy framework outlined by the DHET (2019) regarding clear guidelines for HEI.

Undoubtedly, Hénard *et al.* (2012:11) highlight the relationship between good governance and internationalisation when they argue that good governance plays a crucial role in creating a favourable environment for internationalisation, while at the same time, internationalisation can contribute to good governance by introducing new ideas and practices, fostering growth and development within the HEI sector through collaboration and partnerships. An imperial example of this would be growth in partnerships and collaboration, observed through the increased demand for partnerships and collaborative endeavours. Effective governance supports research collaborations with global institutions, providing South African universities with access to international knowledge and resources through joint research initiatives.

South Africa's HEI sector has the potential to attract international investment through a number of initiatives; for instance hosting international students at their universities. To successfully attract and engage with international students and scholars, open and consistent policies, well-functioning structures, and adherence to the rule of law are all essential components of good governance; therefore, creating an environment that includes these principles is essential in promoting internationalisation and furthering South Africa's global standing in higher education. A good example of the relationship between good governance and internationalisation relates to the importance of robust financial administration. Good governance necessitates sound financial management practices, particularly in the context of South African universities, which frequently engage in funding

for research projects, or and capacity-building initiatives. In this regard, transparency and accountability in financial management are paramount.

Rouhani (2007:479) reiterates how internationalisation can play a significant role in advancing good governance by exposing South African students to relevant ideas and policies in higher education, as internationalisation fosters creativity and competitiveness among universities. Additionally, enabling local students to interact with their international counterparts promotes cultural exchanges and offers opportunities to benefit from the diversity and enculturation on campus through internationalisation at home. Kwaramba (2012:2) highlights that membership in global organisations and signed agreements are key examples of the link between good governance and internationalisation in South Africa. An important example here would be to highlight South Africa's participation in student mobility activities, where all universities engage in exchange agreements, enabling South African students to gain international exposure and experiences. This contributes to their academic and personal growth.

For effective engagement in the region including international organisations and agreements, honest and accountable decision-making, coupled with a strong commitment for execution and adherence to the rule of law, are all essential aspects of good governance. Furthermore, internationalisation can contribute to good governance by exposing South African universities to best practices in HEI and partnership development. This interdependent relationship between good governance and internationalisation enables collaboration, thus establishing South Africa as a dynamic, cutting-edge player in the global economy's internationalisation sector. A pertinent illustration of this concept can be found in South Africa's involvement in prominent international consortia, such as the South Africa-Sweden University Forum (SASUF) which encompasses Partner Countries serving as another notable example of South African universities actively participating in international consortium through collaborative efforts. SASUF's overarching objective is to fortify the ties between Sweden and South Africa in the realms of research, education, and innovation. This collaboration is jointly funded by the national research foundations of both countries. Notably, the core foundation of SASUF 2030 comprises 40 partner universities, forming the fundamental pillars of the project (SASUF 2023:n.p). None of these collaborations would exist without good governance.

South African universities effectively implement the policy framework into practice by aligning their university strategies and practices with the national guidelines, taking into consideration the sustainable development goals (SDGs). Moreover, an integral part of this process involves the continuous evaluation of programmes, ensuring they stay in line with overall national objectives and goals in the realm of higher education internationalisation.

On average, South African universities typically have at least a minimum of 10 active international partnerships worldwide. These partnerships not only signify their commitment to global cooperation but also contribute to enriching their internationalisation endeavours. As part of these initiatives, South African universities typically host a minimum of around five international partner visits on their campuses each year of course, these visits serve as platforms for discussions and activities related to internationalisation.

As per data from IEASA in 2023, the Central University of Technology in the Free State has actively pursued comprehensive internationalisation through its central international office. It has effectively managed a solid portfolio of 69 active international partnerships. Notably, more than 15 of these international partners engage in reciprocal visits to the university on an annual rotational basis. This exchange fosters ongoing collaboration and global engagement. Similarly, Stellenbosch University has marked a significant milestone, celebrating three decades of dedicated internationalisation efforts this year. The university's commitment to global engagement is evidenced by hosting over 3,000 full degree seeking international students coming from over 100 countries. Additionally, they oversee and manage a remarkable 68 research chairs, each playing a vital role in maintaining relationships with over 300 partners spanning six continents (IEASA 2023: 58). The University of Pretoria, as a comprehensive academic institution, stands out with a robust commitment to internationalisation. It annually hosts a substantial minimum of 300 exchange students, illustrating its dedication to fostering a diverse and globally connected student body. Furthermore, the university manages an impressive portfolio of over 110 active institutional agreements and extends its international reach with over 90 agreements at the faculty level. Over the past two decades, the University of Pretoria has forged collaborations with an extensive network of more than 330 institutions worldwide and annually hosts over 3200 full degree seeking international students on campus from 112 countries, emphasising its role as a key player in the global higher education landscape (Mokoduwe 2023:n.p). The above highlights the proactive and dynamic approach of South African universities in

embracing internationalisation and their role in fostering global partnerships and cooperation.

4.15 HIGHER EDUCATION INTERNATIONALISATION IN SOUTH AFRICA AS KNOWLEDGE DIPLOMACY

A comprehensive national framework that includes South Africa's interactions with higher education institutions in Africa and the rest of the world would be highly advantageous and as such, a plan would allow South Africa to explore areas where it can as a country expand its influence through knowledge diplomacy. By addressing and resolving disputes and limitations, the framework would effectively enhance South Africa's soft power in higher education. Knight (2014) highlights that using higher education as a soft power diplomatic tool in South Africa faces several perceived challenges. Additionally, the concept of knowledge diplomacy challenges traditional perceptions of higher education, which was historically seen as a driver of nation-building and economic growth.

Teferra (2015) has critiqued the notion of higher education solely being seen as a tool of soft power, emphasising that it should be viewed from a diplomatic perspective, considering the numerous shared interests and benefits involved. This is visible in the advancement of exchanges among students, academics, sharing knowledge and research. Therefore, fostering an international tie through a national framework would be beneficial and potentially enable South Africa to strategically leverage the higher education sector for diplomatic purposes, thereby enhancing the country's global influence positively.

To optimise the influence of South Africa's higher education sector on foreign policy, South Africa must increase its investment in higher education giving it a prominent role in shaping the country's global engagements while establishing clear and comprehensive guidelines for international involvement in higher education. This would enable South Africa to leverage its educational power more effectively considering how the higher education system potentially contributes to national and geopolitical interests and subtly reinforces its soft power. However, it is crucial to be mindful of the potential for rivalry among competing governments, as pointed out by Ogunnubi and Shawa (2017:102). To engage successfully in higher education-based soft power diplomacy, South Africa requires a well-defined national policy that outlines how higher education will be used as a diplomatic tool to advance its objectives; thus addressing the inconsistencies within the policy framework is

essential to safeguard the future prospects of higher education in the republic. By actively addressing the abovementioned factors, South Africa can capitalise on the strength of its education system as a potent instrument for advancing its diplomatic agenda and enhancing its global influence..

The capacity for South Africa to promote knowledge diplomacy, including the generation, dissemination, and promotion of knowledge in Africa, plays a pivotal role in its soft power within higher education. It is evident that South Africa has emerged as a prominent leader in Africa, significantly attributable to its vigorous higher education system, enabling the country to shape the narrative on crucial African matters, utilising its platform effectively (Ogunnubi and Shawa 2017:103). South Africa's tertiary education system is strategically positioned to meet its comprehensive developmental needs through knowledge diplomacy. The internationalisation efforts in higher education, spearheaded by individual public universities, as well as initiatives by the IEASA, provide a good example of the importance of these institutions acting as a channel for Pretoria's soft power, as this strategic approach underscores the significance of higher education in South Africa's global engagement and highlights its commitment to promoting knowledge diplomacy in the international arena.

Sehoole (2016:10) views the active and serious engagement of South Africa within the higher education space as a positive and progressive development in the 21st century. Consequently, the country's education system is perceived to showcase excellent quality and high standards, contributing to the stability of the sector compared to other countries in the region. Moreover, Sehoole's (2016:11) research suggests that the country is utilising the attractive nature of its higher education sector to attract international students, positioning it as a form of soft power. This approach is facilitated through collaborative efforts by universities and organisations like the National Research Foundation (NRF).

According to Botha (2010:207), scholars in internationalisation argue that South Africa's internationalisation policy holds significant potential to boost the country's soft power in higher education. As a result, the education policy requirements of the country can be seen as a strategic initiative to attract international students and gain global recognition and credibility as the country's higher education system is widely regarded as one of the best in Africa, prompting numerous students from the region and continent to pursue educational opportunities, including work-related opportunities in South Africa (Botha 2010:208).

Furthermore, an important objective of South Africa's higher education institutions is the notion of "Africanisation" within the country's higher education sector and as outlined by Botha (2010:209), this reflects the positive impact of the country's educational offerings on the broader African region and signifies the growing influence and reach of the South African higher education sector.

It is important to note how the higher education sector in South Africa has played a big role as a soft power tool, aiming to strengthen its African identity and culture through research that highlights the nuances of the African people. South Africa's higher education system makes a distinct contribution not only to Africa but also to the global community at large by equipping professionals, expanding the opportunities of knowledge, and conducting research that addresses the unique development needs of Africa (Botha 2010:210). Scholars like Kishun (2007) and Nye (2002) emphasise the necessity of a national policy on internationalisation for South Africa to effectively organise itself and attract more international personnel and scholars and faculty through soft power, as this approach will enhance South Africa's attractiveness as a destination for higher education, fostering greater international engagement and collaboration within the academic community worldwide.

4.15 SUMMARY

In summary, this chapter presents a case study centred on HEI in South Africa, showcasing the dynamic transformation of diplomacy over time as an instrument of good governance. The chapter further conducts an extensive examination of the complex landscape surrounding HEI in South Africa, exploring a comprehensive analysis of the multifaceted dynamics of diplomacy's transformation. The study places universities at the forefront of diplomatic transformation, with a specific focus on their role in shaping diplomacy, examining the position of universities as non-state actors in South Africa's diplomacy and foreign policy, offering valuable insights into their influence and contributions in this domain.

The featured case study provides valuable insights regarding the important role and functions of HEI while navigating the introduction of new guidelines within the policy framework governing HEI. In addition, the case study actively serves as a lens through which

the reader can comprehend the transforming nature of diplomacy as it aligns and adjusts from traditional to modern diplomacy, while concurrently upholding principles of good governance. Moreover, this chapter also presents the HEI landscape in South Africa, identifying important players who have significant influence over and impact the internationalisation efforts in South Africa while emphasising government's role and responsibility in facilitating internationalisation to respond effectively to the global trends shaping the sector.

Furthermore, the chapter underpins the importance of integrating HEI strategies into university policies and strategic objectives to enhance the quality and relevance of education in South Africa, recognising universities as pivotal non-state actors in the diplomacy of HEI in the country. However, the efficiency of the policy framework on HEI is dependent upon active stakeholder engagement, particularly at the national government level to lead the implementation of the policy in the country in addition to the development of capacity to execute the policy initiative effectively.

The chapter proceeds to explore the importance of South Africa's HEI sector as it conducts an examination of the underlying reasons motivating universities' active participation, explores the important roles universities fulfil, conducts an analysis of the difficulties and challenges universities encounter, scrutinises the effects of global trends on the internationalisation process, investigates the functions performed by central international offices and reaffirms the enduring applicability of the selected theoretical framework in gaining insights into the essential dynamics of diplomacy's transformation. Moreover, the chapter also highlights the correlation between good governance and diplomacy and discusses a framework on diplomacy's transformation over time. The next chapter will focus on the research's limitations and provide conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The objective of this study is to contribute to a better understanding of how diplomacy has transformed as an instrument for promoting good governance from traditional to modern diplomacy, focusing on exploring the role and influence of non-state actors in South African diplomacy and foreign policy, with specific emphasis on universities as prominent non-state actors within the HEI context. This chapter further provides an overview of the primary research problem, key research questions and the findings derived from the study, summarising the fundamental outcomes from all four chapters presented in the study. Additionally, the chapter presents the conclusions drawn from the research investigation, offering practical recommendations. Notably acknowledged are the limitations of this study, followed by recommendations for future research directions. The intention is to contribute to a deeper understanding of diplomacy's transformation in the realm of good governance, facilitated by the involvement of non-state actors such as universities, and to stimulate further enquiry in this domain.

5.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM, RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

5.2.1 Research Problem

This study's research problem centres on investigating and identifying reasons for the transformation of diplomacy in South Africa, underscoring the noteworthy role assumed by universities as non-state actors within the realm of HEI. The dynamic shifts in diplomatic practices are increasingly evident in the international arena, marked by the increasing participation of non-state entities in modern diplomacy in areas that were traditionally the domain of states and diplomats. Chapters two and three of this study delve into the examination of the theoretical framework and fundamental concepts, alongside the presentation of an analytical framework that facilitates the identification of these influential non-state actors. Throughout this research, the outlined research questions have been effectively addressed, with a structured approach designed to provide comprehensive insights into the overarching research question. The rationale presented in each chapter underscores the adept alignment of research questions with the study's responses,

highlighting a coherent and effective use of research questions and the study's responses to these questions.

5.2.2 Research Rationale

The rationale underlying this study aimed at examining the transforming nature of diplomacy as an instrument for good governance, coupled with an exploration of the involvement of non-state actors in diplomacy as a response to the transformative changes. The study's investigation delved into the definition of diplomacy as overseeing the creation and management of international relationships, along with an examination of its transformation within the context of South Africa. The central focus of this research is to address and respond to the primary research question; namely, how diplomacy has transformed over time within South African as an instrument of good governance (Barston 2006: 36). Scholars have notably observed that the landscape of diplomacy is currently undergoing a global transformation, stemming from the transition from traditional to modern diplomacy. Diplomatic practices have therefore transformed by encompassing and embracing multilateral diplomacy as a supplementary approach to the once-prevalent bilateral diplomacy.

It is noteworthy that while the concept of multilateral diplomacy has historical roots, it has not always been formally acknowledged within diplomacy studies. This observation leads us to the secondary research question, which seeks to explore South Africa's reactions and adaptations to how diplomacy has rapidly transformed over time within South African (Barston 2006: 36). Throughout the 20th century, South Africa has experienced profound and critical shifts encompassing its domestic political landscape, social structures and global role. These transformative changes have had a profound impact on the country's diplomatic approach and its engagements on the international stage. South Africa's progression has transformed from a historically isolated country to a fully integrated member of the international community, demonstrating the country's universal foreign policy as referred to by its foreign policy officials. (Muller 2008: n.p).

5.2.3 Studies Research Objectives

In response to the study's research objectives, the first objective examined is the transformation of diplomacy in South Africa. The study provides a comprehensive

understanding of how diplomacy has undergone a significant shift from its traditional roots to embrace a more contemporary form, adapting to the forces of globalisation, technological advancements, and the changing global landscape, as extensively discussed in Chapter Two of the study. The studies investigation also delves into the historical progression of this transformation and highlights distinctive features associated with this transformation. As an intentional analysis, the study examines the traditional roles occupied by state actors and modern roles occupied by international organisations, and non-state entities within the realm of IR.

The study's second research objective explores South Africa's responses to the transforming landscape of diplomacy. The countries response involves diversifying diplomatic relationships, expanding the countries global presence and influence. The study also points out South Africa's active engagement in multilateral forums, emphasizing its role as a significant global player adjusting to evolving diplomatic norms while harnessing technological advancements. Furthermore, the study sheds light on the growing recognition of non-state actors, with a specific focus on universities involved in internationalisation efforts. This recognition highlights the importance of acknowledging the role that universities play in diplomacy further depicting the need to incorporate universities in diplomatic initiatives as experts in the sector of HEI, this approach enables South Africa to expanded its international reach and influence globally.

The above objective aligns seamlessly with the third research objective, which aimed to identify the primary non-state actors influencing South Africa's diplomatic initiatives. While the study uncovers a multitude of influential non-state actors in chapter three, the most significant one within the scope of this research is closely associated with the researches case study on HEI, where universities emerge as pivotal non-state actors with a substantial role in the realm of IR as articulated in the study. Moreover, the study outlines how the diplomacy of HEI in South Africa involves the strategic efforts to foster global partnerships and collaborations in the academia space. Accordingly, the study clearly indicates how South African universities actively engage in internationalisation initiatives, such as research partnerships, student exchanges, and academic programs. This diplomatic approach aims to strengthen academic ties with other institutions and universities worldwide to promote cultural exchange, and attract international students and faculty recognising the importance

of higher education in diplomacy, leveraging it as a soft power tool to enhance its global reputation and contribute to international development and cooperation.

Another significant research objective is the fourth one, which focuses on the influence of diplomacy on shaping the principles and practices of good governance in South Africa. principles and practices of good governance accordingly is mapped out in this study as instrumental in fostering diplomacy in South Africa's foreign policy, both domestically and on the international stage. The study illustrates how through diplomatic efforts, South Africa has engaged with the international community to gain support and guidance in adopting democratic governance systems and upholding the rule of law. The study further outlines the manner in which diplomacy has also facilitated partnerships and cooperation, contributing to the development of accountable and transparent state institutions. International diplomatic initiatives have also influenced South Africa's policies for instance on human rights and social justice, aligning the nation with global standards of good governance principals

The fifth objective of the study examines the role and function of HEI in diplomatic transformation and the implications thereof, this closely pertains to the research inquiry and the researches chosen case study, which serves as a crucial pathway for examining universities as non-state actors within modern diplomacy. As highlighted in the study the role of HEI in the transformation of diplomacy includes academic collaborations, joint research initiatives, and reciprocal student and staff exchange programmes ultimately influencing and supporting the foundation on the transformation of diplomacy presented from chapter one to four of the study. HEI contributes also to diplomacy by promoting soft power. The implications include a more interconnected and culturally diverse diplomatic landscape, improved IR, and increased opportunities for knowledge exchange and cooperation.

The sixth objective of this study is focused on gaining a comprehensive understanding of the government's involvement in HEI. The research highlights that the government's role in HEI has been notably limited, with universities and IEASA primarily driving internationalisation efforts in South Africa. Over several years, there was a lobbying effort to encourage the government to establish a policy framework for HEI, as universities operated without clear guidelines until November 2020. The study also emphasises that the policy

framework, when established, offers guidance rather than strict prescriptions, allowing universities a considerable degree of autonomy in their internationalisation endeavors.

The seventh objective of this study sought to examine the challenges that modern diplomacy presents to its traditional counterpart. In particular, the research explored the manner in which diplomacy has adapted to the swift transformation of the world of information technology and social media, driven by globalization. The study highlights the shift from traditional diplomacy, which often took place behind closed doors, to the current era of rapid information dissemination and transparency. The study also emphasizes the growing influence of non-state actors and public opinion in shaping IR, underscoring the importance of engaging beyond traditional state-to-state interactions. Additionally, the preceding chapters also explore the evolving role of economic and soft power diplomacy further complicating the landscape, necessitating adaptive responses to the dynamic nature of modern diplomacy.

The eighth research objective, as indicated in this study, provides insights into the impact of global trends on HEI also identifies these trends. The impact of global trends on higher education internationalisation as articulated in this study is profound and multifaceted. In the context of an increasingly globalized world, HEIs experience a significant impact from globalization, which serves as a central trend. Alongside globalization, there are several other noteworthy trends influencing HEIs, including the internationalisation of research and academic collaboration, the rising demand for higher education among international students, the high demand for online and digital learning platforms, and the emergence of transnational education partnerships. The study places particular emphasis on globalization due to its widespread prevalence, highlighting its role in addressing global challenges like the recent COVID-19 pandemic. Globalization plays a pivotal role in shaping the direction for IR in some instances prompting states to adapt to the evolving needs and expectations of an increasingly interconnected and diverse global landscape.

5.3 HIGHLIGHTING THE MAIN STRUCTURE, PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF EACH CHAPTER

In Chapter one, the study's scientific orientation is presented, including the research problem statement, aim, objectives, and motivation for and significance of the study.

Subsequent to the dissolution of apartheid in the 1990s, South Africa experienced substantial shifts in both its diplomatic landscape and foreign policy direction. This research endeavoured to investigate how the concept of diplomacy has evolved in the 21st century as an instrument of good governance in South Africa. As a result, the government recognised the need to redefine its position in the international community and establish new relationships with other countries. Following the conclusion of the apartheid era, South Africa embarked on a journey of redefining its international standing by establishing new international relationships. An important factor of this transformation relates to the reconfiguration of diplomacy's role, especially considering its historical connection to the interests of apartheid-era South Africa.

The post-apartheid administration recognised that diplomacy extended beyond traditional government-to-government interactions, acknowledging that non-state actors, such as universities in HEI, play an important role in shaping the country's diplomacy and foreign policy. This recognition resonated with the democratic values and principles of good governance that the new administration instilled. The key findings extracted from this chapter illustrate that diplomacy has, indeed, undergone a profound transformation in the 21st century, mainly driven by shifts and changes within the global international arena. The increasing participation of non-state actors in IR, including world issues and the interconnected nature of the world advanced by technological advancements, have adopted new challenges and opportunities that diplomacy must adeptly navigate.

Chapter One dives deeper into the significance, rationale, nature and consequences of the higher education sector in South Africa. It begins by exploring the landscape of higher education in the country, shedding light on the number of universities and the policies that regulate them. This foundational understanding sets the stage for a comprehensive exploration of the sector's role in contemporary diplomacy. Furthermore, Chapter one includes a thorough literature review that advocates for the transformation of diplomacy from its traditional roots to a modernised version fit for the 21st century. This transformation is underpinned by the principles of good governance and is supported by a multitude of scholarly contributions that emphasise the evolving nature of diplomacy in the modern world.

By examining scholarly perspectives, this chapter prepares the reader for the insights to come in subsequent chapters. It lays the groundwork for understanding the meaning,

rationale, nature and implications of HEI in South Africa, a concept that lies at the intersection of education and diplomacy. In the South African context, HEI refers to the active engagement with global networks, partnerships and collaborations within the higher education sector. This engagement encompasses various facets, including promoting international mobility, attracting foreign students and faculty, facilitating joint research projects and infusing global perspectives into the curriculum. The ultimate goal is to cultivate a more inclusive and globally competitive higher education system that benefits not only the students and faculty but also the entire nation.

De Wit (2002) outlines how South African universities have taken proactive steps to enhance their institutional prestige and global exposure. This includes improving the quality of teaching and learning, fostering cross-border collaborations, facilitating faculty and student mobility and forging strategic alliances with international research organisations. To further facilitate a smooth transition into the subsequent chapters, this section of the text also provides conceptual clarification by defining key terms and laying out important definitions. This approach sets the tone for the chapters that follow and establishes a coherent research structure that will guide the reader through the comprehensive exploration of the subject matter.

Chapter Two of this study serves as a critical foundation for an exploration into the transformation of diplomacy in the 21st century. It begins by examining the definitions of key concepts, providing a clear and comprehensive understanding of the terminologies that shape this research. Specifically, the chapter thoroughly looks into the definition of diplomacy, establishing a working definition that guided the study throughout. Furthermore, two other important definitions were given, related to internationalisation and what it means from the perspectives of two very influential scholars in the field, Jane Knight and Hans de Wit. The study's theoretical framework is extensively outlined to fully comprehend that the transformation of diplomacy centres around the historical dominance of traditional diplomacy. Traditionally, diplomatic theory was largely shaped by classical writings, fostering a distinctive mindset and approach to diplomacy. This traditional diplomacy was chiefly concerned with interactions between sovereign states, particularly in political and economic realms. However, as Stanzel (2018) aptly argues, conventional diplomacy is undergoing profound changes that are redefining its very essence.

The transformation from traditional diplomacy to modern diplomacy theory is marked by a fundamental change in perspective. While the former primarily revolved around state-to-state interactions, the latter recognises the involvement of a multitude of non-state actors, such as multinational corporations, non-governmental organisations, and international institutions, in global affairs. Modern diplomacy theory emphasises the necessity of engaging and collaborating with these diverse actors to effectively address the complex global challenges of our time. This transformation encompasses new issues like human rights transcending traditional approaches. Ewert (2018), however, reiterates how modern diplomacy should remain grounded in democratic principles, rather than relying solely on power balances in military or trade disputes. Despite this emphasis on democratic control, the dynamics of modern state diplomacy are continuously transforming due to changing states' interests and their interactions.

The chapter also turns its attention to HEI as an illustrative measure of diplomacy's transformation. It employs a constructivist analytical perspective, shedding light on how diplomacy theory aligns with the transformation of diplomacy in the contemporary world. Additionally, the chapter scrutinises critiques regarding the theoretical framework applied to study diplomacy's transformation within the context of IR and good governance. Intriguingly, this chapter explores the intricate relationships between diplomacy and related concepts like good governance and internationalisation, demonstrating how these elements are interconnected in the realm of diplomacy. It juxtaposes traditional diplomacy against its modern counterpart, highlighting the rapid transformation in the very nature of diplomacy. The rise of multilateral diplomacy takes centre stage, revealing the challenges it poses to traditional and bilateral diplomacy.

The chapter brings to the forefront the idea that diplomacy in the 21st century is no longer the exclusive domain of diplomats; it now incorporates non-state and expert role players highlighting the role and function of diplomacy, explaining the principles and tenets that guide its activities within the purview of IR and foreign policy. Moreover, this chapter solidifies the scientific character by building upon the theoretical frameworks integrated into diplomacy theory. The overarching objective is to illustrate the trajectory of diplomacy's transformation, showcasing its journey from traditional constructs to the contemporary sphere of modern diplomacy. One of the key themes explored in this chapter is the challenges modern diplomacy poses to its traditional counterpart. Traditional diplomacy was

often confined to interactions between officials of two countries, excluding the general public. In contrast, modern diplomacy is viewed as a powerful instrument for understanding policy decisions, shaping a nation's direction and implementing national interests in its relations with other nations.

To further support understanding, the chapter introduces five principles or tenets characterising the duties of diplomacy within the framework of IR and foreign policy. It also presents criticisms leveled against diplomacy theory, emphasising the need for plural diplomatic theories to grasp the complexities of contemporary diplomacy, fully highlighting the limited attention given to diplomacy by philosophers, sociologists and psychologists, which underscores the significance of the study.

Chapter Three provides a comprehensive examination of the transformation of South Africa's diplomacy as an instrument of foreign policy. In this reflection, key insights and implications of this transformation, consider various aspects such as the transforming nature of diplomacy, South Africa's response to these transformations, universities and the influence of diplomacy on good governance. First and foremost, this chapter reflects on the remarkable evolution of South Africa's diplomacy. Muller (1998) draws attention to the shift from a once-fascinating case study of "pariah diplomacy" to a more traditional diplomatic approach. This transformation is particularly intriguing, given the increasing involvement of non-state actors and entities within South Africa. This transformation signifies a diplomacy environment in flux, generating heightened interest in how South Africa navigates these changes.

In response to the transforming diplomatic landscape, South Africa has embarked on a strategic journey to adapt its diplomatic practices and policies. As noted by Lipton (2009), South Africa's approach to diplomatic transformation is intricately intertwined with its historical and geopolitical context. The legacy of apartheid and colonialism has left an indelible mark on South Africa's diplomatic ethos. The nation's commitment to equity, fairness and human rights has shaped its diplomatic efforts. A significant marker of South Africa's response to this transformation is its active participation in internationalisation activities within its higher education sector. A visual representation is presented to demonstrate that all 26 universities have been members of IEASA, indicating their dedication to international engagement and collaboration. This graphic illustration (Figure

3.1) portrays whether these universities are actively involved in internationalisation, possess and internationalisation strategy and indicates whether each of them maintains a central international office. Universities' commitment extends to various aspects, including research, innovation, collaboration, partnerships and the facilitation of staff and student mobility, including joint programmes and online learning initiatives. South Africa's embracing of comprehensive internationalisation reflects its recognition of the importance of global connectivity and knowledge exchange in today's interconnected world.

Within the transforming landscape, key stakeholders play pivotal roles and this chapter explores the positions and reactions of significant stakeholders closely associated with South Africa's higher education sector, including DIRCO, IEASA, the DHET, CHE, USAf and UNESCO. These stakeholders shape and influence both diplomacy and internationalisation in South Africa, underlining their importance in the country's foreign policy. The chapter further provides a brief overview of non-state actors, such as public opinion, media, civil society, non-governmental organisations and academia having a significant impact on South Africa's diplomatic agenda. Among these actors, academia serves as the primary non-state actor in HEI for the purposes of this study. The principal discovery of this chapter illustrates how diplomacy, IR and foreign policy are carried out between various state and non-state actors, exemplifying the transforming nature of diplomacy due to the evolution of the international system and its role as a mechanism of global governance and how universities perform expert role players in diplomacy.

Furthermore, this chapter illuminates the role of diplomacy in influencing good governance, both domestically and, to some extent, internationally. Diplomacy is a critical instrument in fostering cooperation and joint efforts to address governance issues. The contemporary diplomatic landscape underscores the growing role of non-state actors in enhancing diplomatic endeavors, emphasising the need for inclusive and dynamic diplomatic strategies. Finally, the chapter explores global trends in diplomacy and higher education transformation. South Africa's response to these trends highlights its commitment to remaining at the forefront of higher education and diplomatic innovation. As the world grapples with evolving challenges and opportunities, South Africa continues to adapt and position itself strategically in the realm of diplomacy and internationalisation.

Chapter four presents the study's case study on HEI as an example of diplomatic transformation and highlights how universities through HEI have presented as dynamic participants in diplomacy, showcasing universities as influential in diplomacy. The chapter demonstrates how universities operating as non-state actors within HEI, have adopted roles traditionally reserved for diplomats, revealing the evolution of modern diplomacy. Through a detailed examination the chapter explores the motivations driving universities to engage in HEI activities. Chapter Four further provides a comprehensive overview of the landscape of higher education internationalisation in South Africa, offering valuable insights into the dynamics of this critical process. South Africa's distinctive position as one of the few African countries with a comprehensive higher education system is highlighted.

The chapter emphasises that internationalisation has become globally accepted as a pivotal driver of university activities and underlines the need for continuous re-evaluation and adaptation in this realm. In the chapter's examination of South Africa's HEI sector, the challenges the sector encounters, are examined. This examination provides a deeper understanding of the complexities and challenges universities encounter as they engage in internationalisation efforts. A number of crucial functions related to HEI in South Africa, as identified by Ogunnubi and Shawa (2017), are identified and discussed, as these functions offer a roadmap for universities to navigate the intricate landscape of internationalisation, ensuring a holistic approach to their endeavours.

Also explored in this chapter is the introduction of the main actors involved in higher education internationalisation, outlining their roles and contributions in this section, as this understanding is important to comprehend the advancement of internationalisation, a multifaceted process that transcends mere participation and encompasses deep engagement. The chapter then examines the strategic relationships within higher education internationalisation, notably examining the relationship between DIRCO, the DHET and the broader context of internationalisation within the framework of diplomatic transformation. The government's role in internationalisation is explored, shedding light on the implications of government support and alignment of university policies with government policies, as articulated by Mbizela (2018).

Global trends, as discussed by Louw and Mayer (2008), exert a significant influence on internationalisation in South Africa. These trends create both opportunities and challenges,

shaping the direction and pace of internationalisation efforts within the country. In terms of theoretical implications, this section explores the relationship between the transformation of diplomacy in the contemporary global landscape and the acceleration of higher education internationalisation, as observed by Knight (2001). This acceleration is attributed to globalisation's impact on diplomacy and knowledge exchange worldwide. This chapter moreover showcases how HEI play a crucial role in diplomatic transformation particularly in the South African context, highlighting how HEI influences diplomatic dynamics, fosters good governance and enhances the country's global engagement. In South Africa, universities serve as influential stakeholders that boost diplomatic interactions, positioning South Africa as a prominent regional and ultimately global knowledge hub.

The study's theoretical framework assists is tabled to comprehend the multifaceted nature of internationalisation revealing synergies with principles of good governance. This alignment enables the exchange of perspectives and practices, harmonising with good governance's core principles. The chapter finally explores the country's internationalisation Policy Framework, emphasising the government's pivotal role in diplomacy and the strategic importance of internationalisation. The policy aims to establish South African universities as strong global participants guiding international collaborations and promoting academic excellence worldwide.

5.4 SELECTED THEORY AND CONCEPTS

The theoretical framework employed in this study served to explore how diplomacy has transformed, a significant transformation that has profound implications in relation to the transition from traditional to modern diplomacy practices. This transformation directly influences the fundamental aspects of diplomatic political power within institutions, notably the important roles of diplomats and diplomatic establishments. However, it is important to note that the modern state system is inherently subject to change, stemming from the ongoing transformations experienced by states themselves, as well as the evolving nature of interstate interactions and diplomatic engagements. Central to this study are the key concepts which include globalisation, universities, good governance, knowledge diplomacy and internationalisation. These concepts were crucial in establishing a foundation and thus grounding the research. It is worth mentioning that the operationalised concepts were

carefully selected to align with real-world applicability, ensuring their appropriateness within the context of this study, guided by linguistic principles.

5.5 RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

This research study exclusively concentrates on the transformation of diplomacy within the HEI domain. Consequently, the outcomes of this study cannot be generalised to encompass other sectors responsible for and involved in internationalisation. This is due to the distinctive nature and scope of such sectors, rendering the findings less applicable to them. It is important to note, however, that this limitation does not impact the study's outcomes and their subsequent interpretation and findings. While the study's primary focus remained on HEI in general, it did not focus on the specifics of any particular university's internationalisation agenda; thus, although examples from certain universities were cited, the study remained broad in its approach.

The study's subsidiary questions consider the following:

In light of this study's insights, the government's involvement and role in facilitating the internationalisation of higher education and its associated implications has traditionally been perceived as one of support, given that universities have been for decades at the forefront of HEI and have proactively taken the initiative. Notably, with the policy framework, more than ever before, government assistance and intervention has become more important to ensure efficient and fully accountable practices through internationalisation. Through a collaborative effort between universities and IEASA, the government was urged to establish a policy framework on internationalisation. Notably, universities assumed a proactive role in its development, highlighting their active involvement. The aforementioned policy framework is primarily shaped by universities considering the potential for the policy framework to yield ultimate benefits for universities. Moving forward, the onus now lies on the government to heed the call for policy implementation and to strategise the practical execution of the policy framework on internationalisation in partnership with universities.

It is noteworthy to highlight the challenges that traditional diplomacy presents to its modern diplomacy counterpart; for example the transformation in diplomatic approaches as a result of modern diplomacy, while simultaneously retaining certain important features of traditional diplomatic practices. With the emergence of non-state actors and the shift in diplomatic

careers away from the traditional highest ranked diplomats modern diplomacy has introduced theoretical shifts in the methodologies of traditional diplomacy. This transformation is particularly evident due to the influential presence of knowledgeable expert non-state actors, where universities are an excellent example of this significantly modifying the diplomacy landscape. In addition, the process of globalisation presents challenges to traditional diplomacy, necessitating adaptations to accommodate the demands of modern diplomatic interactions. Unlike its traditional counterpart, modern diplomacy embraces a more flexible approach, enabling collaboration without the strict requirement. This flexibility allows actors to engage in diplomatic endeavours more dynamically than in the rigid framework of traditional diplomacy, which is more negotiable to the concept of sovereignty.

5.6 THE STUDY'S KEY FINDINGS

This section presents the primary findings of the research and their implications. The study clearly make it know that diplomacy in South Africa has undergone a transformation, transitioning from traditional to modern diplomatic practices. Notably, this transformation is prominently manifested in the collaboration with non-state actors in areas that were previously diplomatic contested spaces. The transformation of diplomacy is highly intricately linked with the changing global landscape the transforming nature of the international arena has required essential modifications necessitating significant adjustments in the manner and content of diplomatic engagements, this essential for ensuring the alignment of diplomatic efforts with evolving global dynamics and maintaining its effectiveness.

Another pivotal finding arising from this research is the recognition that, in light of the study's observation of the evolution of diplomacy non-state actors now assume a vital role in diplomatic affairs in modern diplomacy. This perspective becomes evident as articulated through the study's various chapters, with chapter three highlighting several non-state actors that assume a significant role in diplomacy. This importance is further emphasized in chapter four, where the researches case study is presented, shedding light on the noteworthy role of universities as non-state actors in 21s century diplomacy, particularly within the higher education internationalisation context.

This studies research findings also acknowledge the important role and function of diplomacy to ensure good governance principles, specifically within the HEI space. In diplomacy, these principles underpin accountability, transparency, and efficiency, which are

fundamental for building trust among countries, managing IR effectively, and resolving global challenges. For higher education internationalisation, good governance ensures equitable access to quality education, fostering international collaboration and academic integrity. For both diplomacy as an instrument of foreign policy and HEI plays a pivotal role in maintaining transparency in decision-making processes, upholding academic standards, and enabling fair and ethical practices, which are vital for the success of both sectors in the global arena. In both contexts, good governance principles contribute to building robust, sustainable, and credible systems that promote cooperation, excellence, and the pursuit of common goals on the international stage.

A significant finding of the study lies in the limited involvement of the South African government in regulating, supporting, and funding HEI for instance how the European Union supports and funds European universities to intentionally engage in internationalisation activities. For a considerable period, the government remained relatively silent on its stance regarding the role of HEI, which led universities to independently forge partnerships and collaborations to advance HEI diplomacy. This continued despite the sector's lack of clear regulatory guidelines. This role undertaken by universities has emerged in a context where government regulations were notably absent, highlighting the expertise and proactive involvement of universities as influential contributors in contemporary diplomacy.

As a final finding for the context of this study, is the rise in multilateral diplomacy partnerships in the 21st century diplomacy and the concurrent decline of bilateral traditional diplomacy can be attributed to several interrelated factors closely tied to the evolving nature of diplomacy. Although it is important to note that bilateral agreements are still important in the international arena. Multilateral partnerships provide a platform for sharing expertise, resources, and responsibilities, which is crucial for developing effective solutions to these global problems. Additionally, they promote inclusivity and equity in international decision-making, ensuring that a diverse range of voices and perspectives are considered. This fosters a sense of ownership among participating states and enhances the legitimacy of the outcomes. Furthermore, multilateral diplomacy can foster peace and stability by promoting dialogue and conflict resolution, thus contributing to a more secure and cooperative world. In essence, multilateral diplomacy partnerships are favourable in the 21st century as they are well-suited to the complex, interconnected, and interdependent nature of the modern global landscape.

In conclusion, this study's findings really aim to provide comprehensive insights into how diplomacy acts as a tool for maintaining good governance, especially in the context of HEI. Assessing the shifts from traditional to modern diplomatic approaches, the study's findings present insights into the ways in which diplomacy has played a transformative role in shaping effective governance strategies within the realm of higher education on the global stage.

5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following set of recommendations is put forth concerning the transformation of diplomacy:

The transformative nature of diplomacy is without doubt driven by globalisation and technology, emphasising the recommendation for universities to adopt an internationalisation perspective that analyses and explores innovative global technologies being introduced and implemented globally. Accordingly, it is also recommended that national government recognises the significant role South African universities play in internationalisation, with educational exchanges as an important part of the country's diplomatic relations worldwide and actively embraces internationalisation as a vehicle to project a positive global image, especially in collaboration with targeted partner universities and institution.

In relation to promoting good governance, it is recommended that government is tasked with guiding and informing universities, including IEASA as a prominent none-state entity in HEI regarding policy framework implementation coupled with effective engagement with stakeholders, as this is essential for government as a policy maker, and a practical national implementation strategy must be developed. As a vital goal to ensure the new policy's success, it is crucial for the government to set realistic expectations, involve stakeholders effectively and draw inspiration from successful internationalisation policy implementations globally. This entails creating impactful strategies, providing guidelines, and organising training workshops, considering that universities are obligated under the new HEI policy framework to comprehensively internationalise, which will eventually permeate all aspects of university core business, without a doubt.

As a recurring factor influencing the transforming nature of contemporary diplomacy such as globalisation and technological advancement, a proactive response is advised. To this end, it is recommended that South African universities should establish a centralised international office, as this strategic move will optimise the allocation of scarce resources and facilitate comprehensive internationalisation efforts. South Africa's ambition of becoming a regional and African superpower necessitates intentional and comprehensive internationalisation.

Another recommendation to enhance the effectiveness of diplomacy efforts is close collaboration between universities, diplomatic academies and DIRCO, as this partnership aims to develop adaptable training programmes that equip diplomats with a diverse skill set, extending beyond traditional techniques and emphasising proactive measures, while leveraging from digital platforms, understanding non-state actors and embracing cultural exchange programmes can amplify diplomacy's soft power and contribute to cross-cultural dialogue between non-state actors. Close cooperation between diplomats and academic experts ensures coherent internationalisation efforts, aligning diplomatic goals with academic objectives.

Embracing digital diplomacy through social media, online platforms and virtual engagement enables swift communication and broader outreach, enhancing governance effectiveness in response to global events. Establishing structured student exchange programmes and collaborative research projects with international partners fosters soft power diplomacy, nurturing global citizenship and understanding among the younger generation. Governments should consider establishing a more flexible policy framework on HEI internationalisation, accommodating the transforming nature of diplomacy and internationalisation, regularly reviewing and updating the policy framework to ensure their relevance in addressing contemporary challenges. Furthermore, as a vital recommendation there should be monitoring and evaluating of the outcomes of internationalisation efforts, utilising the policy framework as a basis offer valuable insights for assessing the efficacy of diplomatic strategies in promoting good governance within higher education.

The South African government should proactively acknowledge and engage with non-state actors, appreciating their substantial contributions that extend well beyond a mere formality. Non-state actors, particularly in the realm of IR and diplomacy, offer distinctive viewpoints,

specialized knowledge, and valuable resources. They serve as conduits for novel ideas and problem-solving, effectively bridging the divide between state interests and the broader global community. Through active collaboration with these non-state entities, the government can leverage their networks, expertise, and capacity to instigate positive change. Furthermore, these actors represent diverse constituencies and act as essential channels for public participation, ensuring that diplomatic endeavors are all-encompassing, transparent, and attuned to the requirements of various stakeholders. Recognizing the multifaceted roles played by non-state actors is indispensable in harnessing their potential and cultivating a more efficient and dynamic approach to diplomacy within South Africa.

5.8 SUGGESTED FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research could examine the soft power potential of South Africa and countries in the SADC region through HEI diplomacy. In addition, scholars in the field could consider conducting a comparative analysis on South Africa's role as a dominant player in the diplomacy on HEI in the SADC region, with universities working tirelessly to internationalise their campuses, investing resources, human resources and expertise. Also, very little research has been conducted on how higher education internationalisation contributes to the projection of soft power in South Africa. However, trends in HEI in the country do indicate attempts by various actors that could be implicitly associated with soft power, which could provide research opportunities.

5.9 CONCLUSION

In summary, the transformation of diplomatic practices within the scope of HEI in South Africa has led to a notable shift from traditional to modern diplomacy. This shift has had a significant impact on maintaining good governance. This research primary objective was to investigate the transformation of diplomacy's role in promoting good governance within South Africa, particularly focusing on the influence of universities as non-state actors in diplomatic activities. The absence of many years of a governing policy framework on internationalisation has encouraged universities to play a big role in shaping foreign policy within traditional diplomatic spaces.

This case study demonstrates how diplomatic interactions have changed beyond state to non-state approaches to accommodate a wider range of stakeholders, noticeably

universities engaged in internationalisation. This transformation highlights the linkage between diplomacy and good governance, where universities actively contribute to new strategic policy formulation and continue to leverage on international engagement initiatives and the inclusion of innovative technologies, while digital diplomacy initiatives within modern diplomacy have also impacted good governance.

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