

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Research Background

South Africa, a country that suffered the atrocities of colonialism perpetrated by two colonial powers, the Dutch and British empires, leaves a colonial legacy that is rooted to the present day. With colonialism and racial segregation predates 1948, when the apartheid regime as a formal system of constitutional laws was passed and established by the ruling National Party in 1948 under the orders of Prime Minister Daniël François Malan (John Selby, 2022). Following the election victory, the National Party legitimately got to power and enforced the apartheid system, a legal framework aimed at racial segregation in politics, the economy, and society. This marked the end of black people's basic rights and strengthened the white minority's political and economic dominance over South Africa (Roger Southall, 2019).

With the white supremacist ideology that flourished under the apartheid regime, the political behaviors adopted during this dark period also reflected the British Empire's position in the South African government, which can be seen in its international relations with Israel. The two countries ostracized by the international community eventually found their way to develop a relationship built on pragmatic considerations and mutual interdependence. The era witnessed extensive cooperation between the two countries, which included military exchanges, technology transfer, and diplomatic support (McGreal, 2010). South Africa's

support of the 1947 United Nations Partition Plan, which favored the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine, solidified the two nations' alliance (Bishku, 2010).

However, the collapse of South Africa's apartheid regime in 1994 marked a major change in its political landscape, especially with the victory of the African National Congress (ANC) ascending to the throne of government. This ushered in a new era for the country characterized by a commitment to dismantling systems of oppression, upholding human rights, and increasing international solidarity (US Department of State, 2001). The rise of Nelson Mandela and the post-apartheid African National Congress gave birth to a political ideology that is closely related to social and political developments in South Africa, namely African nationalism. The democratic transition of South Africa at the end of apartheid was mainly driven by the pursuit of self-determination and freedom from colonial rule. The struggle against the apartheid regime was not only a fight for racial equality, but also to reject external domination, which emphasizes the right of its people to govern themselves. This is in line with the concept of self-determination contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Moses et al., 2020). Similarly, the resistance against Israeli occupation by Palestine reflects a parallel struggle for sovereignty and national identity, as both circling around the fight against oppressive systems that deny their territorial rights. With an emphasis on national liberation, solidarity began to form on the basis of the anti-colonial struggle, which later became the initial foundation for South Africa's relations with foreign-occupied countries, one of which was Palestine.

Israel's reputation as one of the countries occupying Palestine and committing various atrocities against the Palestinian people began to concern South Africa after apartheid. Nelson Mandela said there were numerous parallels between the struggle for statehood in South Africa and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) when he met with Yasser Arafat, the former president of the State of Palestine, in 1990 (Dall, 2023). Nelson Mandela stated on the eve of the UN International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People in 1997 that freedom from the Palestinian people was a prerequisite for South Africa's independence (Nelson Mandela, 1997). The strengthening of relations between South Africa and Palestine marked the gradual breakdown of the South African-Israeli partnership established during the apartheid era.

The post-apartheid government of South Africa, especially under Cyril Ramaphosa as the president, was partly to blame for the decline in ties with Israel. In the Israeli-Palestinian dispute that entered the International Court of Justice, South Africa, represented by Deputy Foreign Minister Aziz Pahad, declared its support for Palestine prior to the end of 2004 (Rapanyane et al., 2022). In order to voice its displeasure with Israel's policies and behavior, in 2018, South Africa downsized its Tel Aviv embassy to a liaison office (Benjamin & Gruzd, 2018). A statement highlighting the dangerous state of circumstances was made by the Department of International Relations in South Africa in 2022. It claimed that diplomatic and political contacts between South Africa and Israel had been hampered by Israel's animosity toward the Middle East Peace Process (MEPP) and

disdain for international law pertaining to Palestinian rights, particularly those on the Palestinian lands (Belder & Coolegem, 2016).

The prolonged conflict between Palestine and Israel has resulted in a developing relationship that occurred between Israel and South Africa, which culminated in 2023 with South Africa playing a prominent part in the resolving of the two warring governments' differences. Precisely on December 2023, South Africa filed a case to the International Court of Justice, they accused Israel of several crimes committed against Palestinians in Gaza territory, especially during the conflict between Hamas and Israel, such as crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide (Chao-Feng et al., 2023). South Africa also claims in the application that Israel is committing genocide because its actions aim to exterminate a significant portion of the Palestinian nation, race, and ethnic group, which is in accordance with the meaning of genocide in the 1948 UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (International Court of Justice, 2023). This ongoing case is also supported by a remark made by President Cyril Ramaphosa from South Africa, who compared the actions and atrocities committed by Israel to the South African apartheid regime (Carl, 2023).

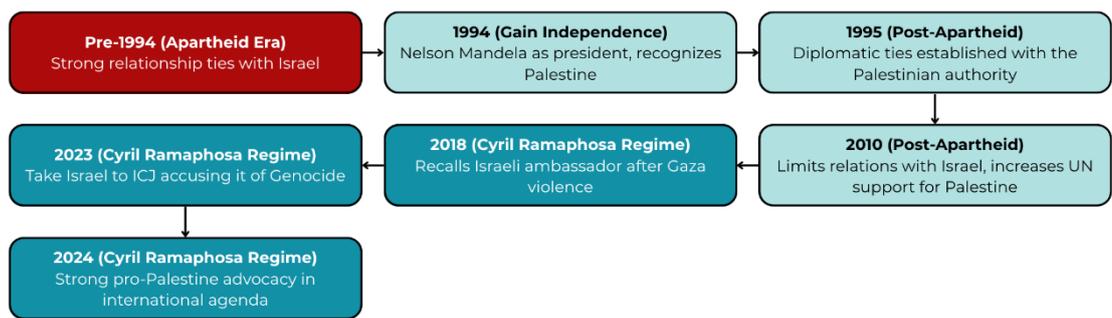
With the downfall of the apartheid regime, South Africa's foreign policy rose under President Cyril Ramaphosa. During this period, foreign policy embedded by South Africa tended to emphasize more on showing solidarity with emerging nations and other African nations (Nganje & Ayodele, 2021). Many African nations compare their own anti-colonial struggles to the Palestinian quest for worldwide recognition as an independent state. South Africa understands the Palestinian

people's longing for independence because it has also battled racial injustice (Isilow, 2019). South Africa's criticism of Israel's activities in the occupied territories is one more way that the idea of African nationalism that fuels tensions reinforces this. One of the main tenets of its political ideology is Palestinian self-determination, which is allegedly violated by Israel's use of force and settlement growth. This is consistent with the African Union's position, which calls for a two-state solution and denounces Israel's actions (African Union, 2024). The fact that South Africa has spoken out against Israel's activities is a clear indication of its support based on African nationalist ideals.

Fundamentally, not only did South Africa's domestic factors completely change the scope of its position between the Israel-Palestine conflict but also its position in the global south and, therefore, the international stage. As a notable emerging voice in the Global South, South Africa has proactively positioned itself to promote a multipolar world, in which developing countries will have more influence. Building relationships with countries such as China and Russia is part of the strategy to counterbalance Western domination (Chivvis et al., 2023). South Africa's foreign policy, particularly its strong pro-Palestine stance, has also been greatly impacted by its membership in South Africa's participation in the international organization, one of it being BRICS+. This stance of support by the South African party and the advocacy given is immaculate, considering the stage they perform on is the global stage. Cyril Ramaphosa once told the Palestinian counterpart present in the BRICS summit (2024) that South Africa and Palestine "will always be together" (Middle East Monitor, 2024). Given the shifting policy,

this research focuses on analyzing the micro and macro level determinants that caused the increase of foreign policy support of South Africa positively towards Palestine, espoused by the Cyril Ramaphosa’s post-Apartheid era and the legacy of colonialism that underlies the changes in political behavior and ideology.

Figure 1. 1 South Africa's Relationship Timeline with Palestine



Source: (Writer, 2025)

1.2. Research Question

The author will attempt to respond to the following research questions using all of the case studies and the background information provided above: **Why has South Africa’s support for Palestine increased in the post-apartheid era under the Cyril Ramaphosa’s Presidential regime?**

1.3. Research Objective

This study attempts to comprehend and examine the underlying factors of why South Africa’s foreign policy has increased toward Palestine in the post-apartheid era. It explores the ideological, historical, and geopolitical factors in

framing this increase, particularly the domestic narratives and international dynamics.

1.4. Research Purpose

This literature is anticipated to yield both direct and indirect research advantages based on the background and study aims. Consequently, the following are the advantages of this research:

1.4.1. Practical Benefit

This research is expected to be a reference and consideration for policymakers, especially in South Africa, developing countries, and furthermore, Indonesia, especially in the realm of foreign policy to be able to consider the influence and role of determinant factors, both domestic and international, in determining a specific policy or political action in the international world.

1.4.2. Academic Benefit

From an academic point of view, this research is expected to enrich the literature of the international relations discipline. It will provide a deeper understanding of how internal and external determinants shape a country's foreign policy, using South Africa's increasing diplomatic relation toward Palestine as a case study. By analyzing the post-apartheid era, this research highlights how domestic political changes, global diplomatic pressures, and historical identity influence foreign policy decisions. This research is expected to help academics and

students to best understand the role of both micro and macro level determinants in building the relations and foreign policy of a particular country.

1.5. Theoretical Thinking Framework

1.5.1. State of the Art

The current research certainly refers to previous research that has been carried out and can be used as a reference and comparison material for the latest research, which includes the research topic on the micro (internal) and macro (external) factors of the shifting of South Africa's foreign policy positively towards Palestine post-apartheid.

The first research that is taken into consideration and reference for this research is research conducted by Michael B. Bishku (2023) entitled South Africa's Anti-Israel Obsession. This research, which looks at the strained relationship between South Africa and Israel, explains in detail the roots of the relationship between the two countries and details how South Africa's position after apartheid, which began to be occupied by the African National Congress party, changed the paradigm that led to the shifting stance of South Africa, particularly on the pro-Palestine. It also explains that it was the African National Congress party that actually brought about the dialogue and began to echo its disagreement with Israel, due to its close ties with the Palestine Liberation Organization. However, while this study has detailed the pattern of the relationship between the two countries, a gap can still be found in the lack of explanation of the political ideologies or beliefs embedded in South African society that led to the shifting policy.

To enrich further literature, Andy Clarno's book on Neoliberal Apartheid: Palestine/Israel and South Africa after 1994 (2017) looks at how neoliberal economic policies and security affected South Africa after apartheid and occupied Palestine. He argues that even though both scopes went through political changes—South Africa ending apartheid and Palestine gaining limited self-government—structural inequality and racialized economic disparities have stayed the same. This is mostly because of neoliberal restructuring and stricter security measures. In this book, Clarno focuses on two key areas, the first will be economic liberalism and structural inequality. In both situations, economic liberalization emphasizes on privatization and market-driven growth, which aggravates social and economic disparities. In South Africa itself, it means that white economic domination continued on exist even after apartheid was officially abolished. With Palestine, it resulted in economic dependence on Israel due to trade and mobility restrictions. The second area pivots on security and militarization. Under the pretext of crime prevention and counterterrorism, securitization is increased in both South Africa and Palestine. This is justified because in the context of Palestine, Israel expanded military control under the form of “security”, while in South Africa, the high crime rates justified intensive policing. Clarno's work effectively addresses the analogies between South Africa and Palestine, however, it still lacks a comprehensive examination of South Africa's changing foreign policy toward Palestine post-apartheid. This book's analysis emphasized the internal economic and security structures of South Africa rather than the ways in which its political identity and historical experiences influence its international positioning.

The third literature will be discussing about the external factor, particularly international sphere, affected South Africa's position in their foreign policy stance. "The BRICS+ Takes All? Not Yet, but Maybe Soon" (2024) is a journal that mainly discuss about the expansion of the BRICS coalition, which consists of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, to include additional nations, therefore establishing BRICS+. This expansion represents a strategic initiative to challenge the current Western-dominated global order by increasing the influence of nations with emergent economies. Pointing on expansion and influence, the bloc's economic and demographic significance is conspicuously increased by the incorporation of countries such as Iran, Egypt, Ethiopia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in BRICS+. Shoulder to shoulder, these countries account for a large portion of the global economy and population. While this bloc gains heavily from defying the dominance of the Western order, individual member states' policies are still the biggest factor. Several member states like South Africa, Brazil, Iran, and additionally the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt have backed Palestine and show their support through their policy. This shows that, to some extent, some member states are still in favor with the Western or even choose to ignore the whole situation. Despite the journal's thorough coverage of BRICS+ strategic objectives and expansion, it lacks a detailed analysis of the internal dynamics among member states, particularly in relation to their own individual foreign policies and potential divergences in geopolitical interests.

This research will be unfulfilled without the discussion of South Africa's current state of foreign policy, hence, the journal published by Mzukisi Qobo (2017)

titled “Africa’s Foreign Policy and National Branding: Regional Leadership and Its Discontents”. This journal further examines South Africa’s foreign policy in the context of nation branding. He contends that South Africa has attempted to establish its international identity by projecting their own domestic values such as democracy, human rights, and regional leadership in the post-apartheid era. Nonetheless, this exact strategy has encountered obstacles as a result of the intricacies of maintaining influence in Africa, domestic political pressures, and inconsistencies in foreign policy decisions. This journal highlights that neighboring states have frequently expressed skepticism toward South Africa’s aspiration for regional leadership, as they doubt that it is the dedication to pan-Africanism and its capacity to serve as a dependable and stable partner. Moreover, this journal investigates the disparities between South Africa’s diplomatic engagements and its branding initiatives. The nation’s foreign policy has every so often been criticized for being selective and contradictory, despite its contention that it is a defender of human rights. South Africa’s capacity to sustain a consistent foreign policy direction has been obstructed by economic interests, political alliances, and also internal governance issues. Lastly, this also examines the impact of these dynamics on South Africa’s engagement in regional and international organizations, which has shaped its credibility and potency as a global player. While this research offers compact context regarding foreign policy that is motivated by identity, however, it is necessary to explore additional factors such as post-apartheid foreign policy realignment and international diplomatic positioning to understand more about the research.

With that in mind, we arrive at the identity construction that shapes nations' foreign policy. According to the article titled *The Social Self in International Relations: Identity, Power, and the Symbolic Interactionist Roots of Constructivism* by Rebecca Adler-Nissen (2016), it examines the fundamental link between identity production and international politics. Adler-Nissen reviews early constructivist theory, contending that its roots are in the social psychology theories of symbolic interactionism, which underline the ways people and groups build and preserve identities by social interactions. This specific journal spotlights the power dynamics in international relations as well as inclusive and exclusive processes that affect identities in those fields. Furthermore, it underlines the need to perceive the self as a social construct shaped by outside factors, including position, power, and convention in world politics. While the journal delivers valuable insights into the correlation between identity and power in IR, it does have some limitations in conveying real-world applications of these theories in contemporary foreign policy. This means it focuses mainly on the conceptual and theoretical aspects of identity construction without giving extensive examination on how identity shifts in response to changing geopolitical contexts or the roles played by domestic politics. Therefore, my research can complement this article by applying its theoretical framework to a concrete example, examining how South Africa's identity construction has evolved in response to both internal and external factors.

Each of those books has its own stance related to this thesis, whether it is about its foreign policy towards Palestine or both the micro and macro level factors contributing to the political support. Thus, the author aims to highlight the those

determinants post-apartheid that caused the increasing South Africa's foreign policy support and behavior toward Palestine.

1.5.2. Constructivism

In the IR sphere, the constructivism theory states that there is no concrete power or even inherent anarchy behind the international system, as previously suggested by the predecessors of IR theory, realism, and liberalism. In contrast, constructivists emphasize the importance of values that influence state behavior, specifically both internally and externally. This means that they believe the states' international politics or foreign policy are shaped by social forces. Therefore, this theory strongly proposes that states are shaped by their own social environment, historical events, and even collective understandings rather than simply striving to achieve national interests based on materialistic attributes. Thus, when the social norms are evolving, both state behavior and international systems are subjects that are considered dynamic and prone to change. In this matter, constructivists also believe that transnational movements, non-governmental actors, and international organizations are the key factor that influences global governance (Wendt, 1999).

To understand more about constructivism, the most popular book that attempts to explain more about the origin of constructivism is *World of Our Making: Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations* by Nicholas Onuf (1989). This book is considered a foundational work in constructivist IR theory that argues the international system is socially constructed through human interactions, languages, and rules. While realism and liberalism see that global

politics are shaped by material power or even institutional frameworks, constructivism, especially from the point of view of Nicholas Onuf, urges that states, norms, and identities unfold from continuous social practices. Onuf's constructivism relies heavily on linguistic and social theory, specifically speech-act theory, and emphasizes how rules and words can create—even sustain—the structures of international relations. This book categorizes rules into three types which are instruction, directive, and commitment. In this context, instruction rules explain facts or social realities, while directive rules inflict obligations or permissions, and commitment rules initiate shared responsibilities among international actors. Therefore, these rules shape the foundation of interactions between international actors, determining how states and other non-governmental actors behave and perceive their roles (Onuf, 1989).

In order to enhance a deep understanding of constructivism, Alexander Wendt provides an enhanced explanation in his book titled *Social Theory of International Politics* (1999). As per the previous reading, Wendt's constructivism theory also challenges the dominant realist and liberalist paradigms and argues that the international system is not fundamentally anarchic, but it is socially constructed through shared identities, ideas, and norms. "*Anarchy is what states make of it*", meaning that the way states interact relies on their collective understanding rather than fixed structural forces. By encompassing the elements of both sociology and philosophy, Wendt bridges the gap between structure and agency, emphasizing the social interaction that shaped states' identities and not focusing on just material power. Other than that, there are three cultures of anarchy that contributes to this

book: *Hobbesian* (where states see each other as enemies), *Lockean* (where states are rivals but recognize each sovereignty), and *Kantian* (where states see each other as friends and or partners). These traditions appear from historical interactions that shape international behavior over time. Wendt's constructivism theory is not like any other classical constructivists; he adopts a scientific realist approach, which argues that social constructions exist objectively, even though they are created through social processes. This further means that it provides a powerful constructivism theoretical foundation, highlighting that because international politics is considered as dynamic, then changes in norms and identities can turn to global relations shifts (Wendt, 1999).

One of the notable scholars who also contributes to the development of constructivism is Peter J. Katzenstein. His book "The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics" (1996) mainly challenges traditional security studies that focus on material and power factors by underlining the crucial role of identity, norms, and cultures in shaping national security policies. Not only that, this book illustrates how shared understanding, evolving identities, and historical legacies influence state action and behavior in military doctrine areas, arms control, and humanitarian intervention. This means that cultural and normative contexts affect heavily on states' perception of threats and its responses to threats. Moreover, it also presents a captivating example to understand national security as a social practice, where identities and norms are not static but are continuously being negotiated and redefined. With various case studies, it bestows how cultural

complexes, both domestic and international, shape the ways states interpret their security interests and interact with one another (Katzenstein, 1996).

To conclude all of the narratives that have been provided through all the past literature, Mohammad Rosyidin in his book “*Teori Hubungan Internasional*” (2022) discusses how this political world is considered as bias, which is proven by how the concept of international relations such as ‘sovereignty’, ‘national interests’, ‘human rights’, or even ‘democracy’ is smuggled in by leaning towards Western views and Eurocentrism. This makes an assumption that the things associated with this context are a perception of European superiority, which results in expansionism. Therefore, Eurocentrism is a prejudice that distorts social ideas by denying the 'other' in order to uphold Western ideology, producing two international actors representing two different civilizations, namely the ‘West’ and ‘non-West’. With this, post-colonialism does not look at which actor does or moves something but rather looks at which civilization is represented by a party, and how they see things. Regarding the concept of national interests, post-colonialists see that because there are only two actors involved; 'West' and 'non-West', then there are only two outcomes that can be produced, namely to disseminate a Eurocentric Western perspective or to counter the hegemony of Eurocentrism (Rosyidin, 2022).

Consequently, to contextualize the terms of post-colonialism in South Africa, it is visible that South Africa’s colonial experience was multifaceted, namely because of Dutch, British, and, paradoxically, the internal Afrikaner colonialism shaped the country’s political, social, and economic landscape (Quayson, 2012). Differently from other states whose independence signals a

complete severing of ties between its colonizers, South Africa's 'independence' in 1910 remains under the white minority rule. This resulted in the implementation of apartheid, which is a brutal manifestation of the colonial legacy and enforced racial segregation and economic dispossession of the Black majority (Piotrowski, 2019). Due to that, South Africa's post-colonial journey involves a sustained process of decolonization, which includes an effort for social justice, namely economic transformation and rewriting the narrative to reflect the experiences of the previously marginalized societies. This research will further look at how South Africa's post-colonial regime strives for self-determination and human rights for fellow sufferers of colonialism and apartheid (in this case Palestine), remembering that previously they were not given the right to voice and determine their own rights. To eradicate all the roots of the apartheid regime, South Africa then saw that Israel implemented what their colonizers had previously implemented. Therefore, they strive to help eliminate all forms of colonialism, especially in Palestine.

1.5.3. James N. Rosenau Micro and Macro Level Thinking Framework

James N. Rosenau is a pioneering scholar in the field of Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA), widely recognized for his contribution to understanding the complexity of foreign policy decision-making through a multi-level analytical framework. Rosenau's seminal work, *Turbulence in World Politics: A Theory of Change and Continuity* (1990), introduces a nuanced approach that integrates both micro and macro levels of analysis to explain how foreign policy is formulated and evolves over time (Rosenau, 1990). He argues that foreign policy cannot be fully understood by focusing solely on either individual decision-makers or the

international system; instead, it emerges from the continuous interaction between micro-level factors-such as individual beliefs, roles, and domestic political structures-and macro-level factors, including systemic international pressures and global power distributions (Amir Hossein Askari & Mohammad Zarei, 2020). This relational perspective underscores the dynamic and reciprocal influence between internal and external environments in shaping state behavior.

James N. Rosenau conceptualizes the micro level in foreign policy analysis as the skill parameter, which focuses on the capacities, orientations, and analytical abilities of individuals and small groups within a political system (Rosenau, 1990). This level emphasizes how decision-makers' perceptions, knowledge, and cognitive skills shape their understanding of international events and influence their foreign policy choices. It includes not only political leaders but also citizens and non-state actors who contribute to the domestic political environment. The skill parameter reflects the capacity of individuals to learn, adapt, and question existing authority structures, thereby affecting how they interpret external stimuli and formulate responses. For example, a leader's ability to process complex information and anticipate international consequences can significantly shape a country's diplomatic posture. However, this focus on individual and small-group skills also highlights inherent variability and subjectivity, as different actors may interpret the same external circumstances differently, which complicates the prediction of foreign policy outcomes (Snyder, 2017).

At the micro level, Rosenau's framework emphasizes the internal variables that influence foreign policy decisions, including the personality and values of

decision-makers, their formal roles within government, social themes, and the structure of government institutions. These factors highlight the importance of individual agency and domestic political contexts in shaping foreign policy orientations (Gül, 2011). For example, the personal beliefs and leadership style of a head of state can significantly impact diplomatic priorities and strategies. However, the micro-level analysis has limitations. It tends to focus predominantly on internal political and psychological factors, which can be subjective and difficult to quantify. Moreover, an overemphasis on individual leaders risks neglecting the broader structural constraints that limit or enable their choices. Additionally, micro-level variables alone cannot fully explain foreign policy outcomes without accounting for the influence of external systemic pressures, thus limiting their explanatory scope when analyzed in isolation.

In contrast, the macro level is understood as the structural parameter, which refers to the overarching systemic constraints and power distributions that define the international environment in which states operate (Rosenau, 1990). This level encompasses the global architecture of authority, including the distribution of military, economic, and political power among states, as well as the normative frameworks and institutional arrangements that govern international relations. The structural parameter shapes the range of options available to states and imposes limitations on their behavior through mechanisms such as alliances, sanctions, and the balance of power. For instance, a unipolar or bipolar international system creates different strategic imperatives for states compared to a multipolar system. While the structural parameter provides a stable context for understanding state behavior,

it tends to emphasize constraints over agency, potentially underestimating how domestic actors reinterpret or resist systemic pressures (Hudson & Vore, 1995).

Conversely, the macro level in Rosenau's theory concentrates on the external environment, particularly the structure of the international system and the distribution of power among states (Rosenau, 1990). This level accounts for systemic constraints such as the logic of anarchy, the actions of major powers, and international norms that condition state behavior. Macro-level analysis helps explain why states may adopt certain foreign policy positions due to external pressures or opportunities. However, this approach also faces significant limitations. It often adopts a deterministic view that downplays the agency of individual states and policymakers. Furthermore, macro-level analysis can overlook the complex domestic factors that influence how states perceive and respond to international pressures. The relative stability of systemic structures also makes it less effective in explaining rapid or unexpected changes in foreign policy (Kaarbo, 2015). Therefore, relying solely on macro-level factors can lead to an incomplete understanding of foreign policy dynamics.

Bridging these two levels, Rosenau introduces the relational parameter, which captures the dynamic interaction between the micro-level skill parameter and the macro-level structural parameter (Rosenau, 1990). This relational level focuses on the authority relationships that link individuals and small groups within states to the larger international system. It examines how micro actors exercise, negotiate, or challenge authority within the constraints imposed by macro structures. The relational parameter is crucial for understanding how foreign policy is not simply

the product of either internal preferences or external pressures but emerges from their continuous interplay. For example, a state's foreign policy shift may result from domestic leaders' reinterpretation of international norms or from changes in how global power structures interact with domestic political coalitions. This concept highlights the fluidity and complexity of foreign policy decision-making, emphasizing that authority and influence flow in multiple directions across levels of analysis.

Rosenau's micro-macro framework aligns closely with constructivist approaches in international relations, which emphasize the role of ideas, identities, and social norms in shaping state behavior. Constructivism challenges the materialist assumptions of realism and liberalism by focusing on how shared beliefs and social constructions influence both domestic actors and the international system. Rosenau's attention to individual orientations and social themes at the micro level, alongside systemic norms and power structures at the macro level, reflects constructivist insights into the socially constructed nature of international politics (Guzzini, 2000). His framework recognizes that foreign policy is not merely a response to material conditions but is deeply influenced by the identities and perceptions of actors, making it a dynamic process of meaning-making and interaction.

The utility of Rosenau's micro-macro analysis can be illustrated by examining South Africa's post-apartheid foreign policy shift toward Palestine. During the apartheid era, South Africa's government maintained a pro-Israel stance, shaped by domestic political ideology and leadership preferences at the micro level,

as well as strategic alignments within the international system at the macro level. After apartheid ended, changes in domestic political leadership, societal values, and ideological orientations-such as the African National Congress's solidarity with liberation movements-altered the micro-level factors influencing foreign policy. Simultaneously, evolving international norms regarding human rights and decolonization, as well as shifts in global power dynamics, impacted the macro-level environment (Morin & Paquin, 2018). The interaction of these micro and macro changes facilitated South Africa's reorientation toward supporting Palestinian self-determination. Rosenau's framework thus provides a comprehensive lens to understand how internal transformations and external systemic pressures jointly drive foreign policy shifts.

In summary, James N. Rosenau's micro-macro level framework offers a robust tool for analyzing foreign policy by bridging individual, domestic, and systemic factors. The micro level sheds light on the internal decision-making processes and political contexts, though it faces challenges related to subjectivity and limited scope when isolated. The macro level highlights the international structural constraints but may overlook domestic complexities and rapid policy changes. By integrating these levels, Rosenau's approach captures the dynamic interplay between internal and external influences, aligning with constructivist perspectives that emphasize the role of ideas and identities. This framework is particularly valuable for explaining significant foreign policy transformations, such as South Africa's post-apartheid shift toward Palestine, illustrating the mutual and

continuous interaction between micro and macro variables in shaping state behavior.

1.6. Concept Operationalization

1.6.1. Conceptual Definition

The concepts to be used in the research concern three essential concepts, namely foreign policy, post-apartheid, and identity construction. These three concepts have a correlation and relationship with each other, given that the political trajectory of South Africa and the foreign policy began to develop under the post-apartheid era with a touch of identity construction. In addition, post-apartheid serves to explain the continuation of the application of the identity construction, especially in the narratives and actions stated directly by the South African government towards the current conflict between Israel and Palestine. Therefore, the identity construction also has a role in linking the two concepts towards a sense of togetherness and 'equally colonized', given that South Africa is currently one of the key players in resolving the conflict between the two countries.

1.6.1.1. Foreign Policy

In the world of international relations, foreign policy is one of the key aspects to shape how states interact with one another in pursuit of the interest of oneself or global stability. To nail the perfect foreign policy, it should consist of strategies, decisions, and actions taken by governmental actors to engage with other nations and international institutions, influencing the flow of trade, diplomacy, security, and also humanitarian efforts. In accordance with the thoughts of Nye

(2011), foreign policy can be presumed with the lens of both hard power, including military efforts, and soft power which includes the influence of nations' culture, diplomatic negotiations, and foreign aid. For instance, many countries have adopted hard and soft power to be their strategy on foreign policy making, take example the United States. While on the surface the US seems to be focusing on military alliances, they also build their economic agreements and diplomatic interventions to maintain its global influence (Mead, 2011). This proves how states leverage different efforts and tools to assert their existence on the international stage.

The progression of foreign policy is mainly influenced by both national and international factors. In the domestic scope the shape of foreign relations can be determined by political ideologies, public opinion, and economic conditions. We can take the connotations by taking the United States as an example, where their foreign policy shifts from isolationism to interventionism in the 20th century were influenced by domestic debates over economic expansion and national security (Kissinger, 1994). Internationally, alliances, economic interdependencies and conflicts can shape foreign policy. This is proven by the European Union's collective foreign policy that emphasizes economic cooperation and diplomatic engagement resulting in regional stability reinforcement (Smith, 2014). Other than that, emerging powers like India and China are progressively trying to influence global foreign policy through economic partnerships and strategic diplomacy that demonstrates the evolving nature of international relations (Shambaugh, 2013).

One of the notable literature regarding foreign policy consists in Steve Smith, Amelia Hadfield, and Tim Dunne's book titled *Foreign Policy: Theories,*

Actors, Cases (2016). While using several key theories such as realism, liberalism, constructivism, and also critical approaches, it highlights how divergent schools of thought explain the state behavior in the international relations sphere. This book stated that in order to shape a foreign policy decision, it needs the role of both state and non-state actors, including international organizations, multinational corporations, and transnational advocacy groups. The approach used underlines how diplomatic strategies evolve based on changing perceptions and relationships among states. In addition to theoretical discussions and focusing on constructivism in action, we can see how international norms can influence humanitarian interventions or how states' identity can shape the foreign policies of post-colonial states. Considering relevant, constructivist perspectives analyze the shifts in global politics, such as the changing role of soft power and the impact of global movements on state behavior. By articulating constructivism with other major IR theories, it can provide a refined understanding of foreign policy-making, presenting that it is a dynamic process shaped by both material and ideational factors.

1.6.1.2. Post-Apartheid

The freedom of South Africa from the cruelty of the apartheid regime which occurred in 1994 symbolizes a life-changing historical moment that began to bring tremendous change and hope throughout the nation, this is why post-apartheid itself represents the ongoing effort to create a society free of racial segregation and its enduring consequences. The first black-elected president of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, marked the beginning of the post-apartheid era, bringing the black majority onto the throne to govern the nation's rules themselves under no racial

segregation and ethnic separation. Nonetheless, the concept of post-apartheid does not stop until the black ruling majority, but it continues and goes beyond the process of social, political, and economic transformation aimed at demolishing the deep-rooted legacies of discrimination (Harris, 2004). Therefore, the term "post-apartheid" initially referred to a distinct social and political trajectory that differed from the traditional African colonial and postcolonial experiences (Greffrath, 2006). To understand the complexity of post-apartheid, scholars often use this concept to explain and analyze the shifting event from apartheid to democracy, particularly in the context of politics, law, and social justice. Because understanding the impact of apartheid is one of the key aspects of understanding the concept of post-apartheid, scholars reckon that the jurisprudence that occurred during the post-apartheid era may be in vain due to the perseverance of racial and economic inequalities that happened until now (Modiri, 2012).

One of the dominant aspects of understanding the post-apartheid is the critical race theory (CRT) which highlights the role of racism and race in shaping the nations' lives and legislation. A crucial argumentation that is provided by this theory is how the racial oppression of black South Africans was used as a tool to analyze the effects of institutionalized racism and racial ideology (Modiri, 2016). By understanding the foundation, approaches that are considered or carried by 'race-neutral' or 'color-blind' were opposed by this viewpoint, which advocates a more wide-variety understanding of race that is not white-centric and its role in shaping the legal and political realm. Moreover, the post-apartheid concept examines deeply about the economic conditions and further chances for democracy

in South Africa. Many considered the post-apartheid concept as a framework that is both interdisciplinary and multifaceted, hence perfect for understanding the intricacy of behavior from the apartheid to the democratic regime in South Africa. Furthermore, the concept underlines the influence of the apartheid regime that is linked to the need for a critical race theory approach and the assessment of economic conditions and democratic prospects to understand how it became the legacy that was brought to the post-apartheid regime. An understanding of the problems and opportunities that occurred in South Africa while in the pursuit of equality and social justice, continuity is also provided by this viewpoint, making it more comprehensive and delving into the grassroots (Christian, 2019).

1.6.1.3. Identity Construction

International relations aside, in a general context, identity construction means a dynamic and continuous process through which both individuals and groups develop a sense of self-based on personal experiences, cultural influences, and social interactions. Identity formation is a crucial aspect of psychological development, influenced by the emergence of social relationships and life transitions (Erikson, 1968). On top of that, to understand how individuals perceive themselves and how they are perceived by others can be seen in their own social structures, such as family, media, education, and most importantly, environment (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Additionally, identity is dynamic and evolves over time as individuals or groups adapt to new environments, relationships, and challenges (Giddens, 1991). To some extent, collective identities, such as cultural or national identities and norms can emerge from traditions, political influences, and shared

histories. This, later on, can reinforce a sense of belonging within a community (Hall, 1996). Eventually, identity construction is considered as a complex interplay between internal self-perception and external societal expectations, making this a crucial aspect of human development and social dynamics.

Moving on to the realm of IR, identity construction can play a major role in shaping global relations, because states and political actors tend to develop their identities based on cultural portrayal, geopolitical contexts, and historical experiences. Based on the thought of Wendt (1999), state identity is socially constructed through interactivity with other states, which can influence the development of foreign policy and global alliances. In this case, how nations perceive themselves and others in the global system is often caused by national identity, which is shaped by language, shared history, and collective memory (Anderson, 1983). Additionally, postcolonial scholars believe that identity construction is intricately connected to historical power dynamics, wherein former colonies often navigate their national identities in connection to their colonial history and global power structures (Said, 1978). According to constructivism, it emphasizes that identities that occur, in both states or groups, are not entirely fixed but rather evolve through diplomatic engagements, cooperations, and even conflicts (Hopf, 2002). This so-called “evolving” nature of identity construction can affect global governance, international norms, and diplomatic relations, emphasizing its significance in understanding world politics.

To grasp an understanding of identity construction, Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities* (1983) examines the beginning and development of

nationalism, stating that nations are socially constructed entities rather than natural or “fixed” ancient formations. The citizens’ sense of belonging, as stated by Anderson, was historically accelerated by the emergence of print capitalism, which played a significant role in standardizing languages and disseminating shared thoughts and narratives through novels, newspapers, and other kinds of mass media. As religious authority declined and dynastic empires lost their dominance, print culture allowed people to conceptualize themselves as part of a broader, sovereign political entity with a common destiny. Anderson examines how nationalism emerged in different global contexts, from the Americas to Europe and Southeast Asia, demonstrating that national identities are fluid and shaped by historical, political, and technological developments. His work is particularly relevant to international relations as it underscores the constructed nature of national identity and its implications for state formation, political legitimacy, and global conflicts. By highlighting how nationalism is not an inevitable or universal phenomenon but rather the result of historical processes, Anderson challenges deterministic views of national identity and offers a framework for understanding how nations continue to be reshaped in the modern world.

1.6.2. Operational Definition

1.6.2.1. Foreign Policy

In the context of this research, the strategies and actions that a state employs to interact with other international actors, reflect both domestic and international influences, are referred to as foreign policy. South Africa’s foreign policy

development and transition that leans more toward Palestine in the post-apartheid era represents a significant change in its global engagement. Foreign policy, as defined by Charles Hermann (1990), is “the discrete purposive actions taken by governmental representatives directed toward external entities with the objective of influencing their behavior” (Hermann, 1990). This particular definition highlights intentionality, agency, and goal-oriented decision-making. In the case of South Africa, foreign policy is distinguished as the collection of diplomatic, economic, and ideological strategies appointed by the post-apartheid government to establish its international identity, construct allies, and promote its national ideas globally. This incorporates formal government acts, such as voting in international organizations, publishing official statements, and ratifying bilateral agreements, alongside informal diplomatic engagements through advocacy and public diplomacy (Alden & Schoemann, 2015).

Attaching the issue to constructivism, this theory offers an impeccable theoretical framework for analyzing South Africa’s foreign policy in transition to Palestine. In contrast to both realism and liberalism, which often prioritize material and power capabilities, constructivism highlights the influence of identity, historical narratives, and normative convictions on state conduct (Wendt, 1992). From this viewpoint, South Africa’s foreign policy is not solely a response to external influences but is profoundly rooted in its historical experience of apartheid. The ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC) has contextualized its foreign relations within a moral and ideological framework, aligning itself with movements and nations that have endured colonialism, racial injustice, or even

structural marginalization (Nathan, 2005). Constructivism makes it clear of how South Africa's historical circumstance of racial segregation and its liberation struggle influenced its sympathy with Palestine, seeing the Palestinian situation through the perspective of its own anti-apartheid struggle (Grovoqui, 2002). South Africa itself established full diplomatic relations with the State of Palestine on February 15, 1995, shortly after the end of apartheid, and also has a representative office in Palestine. This concluded the strong foreign policy that leans more towards the pro-Palestine because formal diplomatic relations are enforced.

Furthermore, the diplomatic stance of the South African government regarding Palestine embodies its foreign policy's fundamental values of human rights, justice, and self-determination. Since the erasure of apartheid in 1994, the government has repeatedly expressed support for Palestinian statehood, denouncing the Israeli scheme as parallel to apartheid-era segregation (Pillay, 2019). By fabricating the foreign policy stance as a constructivist-driven and value-oriented strategy, South Africa's stance under President Cyril Ramaphosa on Palestine can be interpreted as a calculated expansion of its post-apartheid identity. Instead of being entirely motivated by self-interest, it embodies a comprehensive ideological dedication to global justice, shaped by its historical battle against racial injustice and colonialism itself. South Africa's approach to Palestine, analyzed through the prism of justice and solidarity, illustrates how foreign policy can serve as both a pragmatic instrument and a manifestation of national identity.

1.6.2.2. Post-Apartheid

Post-Apartheid was one of the biggest concerns about South Africa's policy towards Israel. Prior to 1994, South Africa was a country that had good relations with Israel, even being one of the countries that agreed to the UN Partition Plan in 1947 which aimed to establish Israel as an independent state by dividing the two territories, namely Israel and Palestine. The apartheid regime in South Africa left deep wounds for its people, due to racial segregation carried out by multifaceted colonialism, with the most dominant country implementing apartheid legislation being Britain. With a dark past, South Africa is against all forms of violence and domination over things, especially those dealing with apartheid. Since becoming an independent country without colonizers, the post-apartheid regime in South Africa with its democratically elected black president, Nelson Mandela, South Africa began to engage in humanitarian issues and began to establish close ties with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), as evidenced by the statement given by Nelson Mandela in 1997 in commemoration of the UN International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, that freedom from the Palestinian people was a prerequisite for South Africa's independence (Nelson Mandela, 1997).

The end of 1994 marked the end of apartheid and it certainly influenced the shifting relationship between South Africa and Israel because of the racial segregation and discrimination that the South African bore for more than a century. Due to the abuses that the apartheid regime has brought to South Africa, they know what it feels like to be fighting for their life begging for mercy. The independence and liberty of the South African state also came a long way, hence the conflict of

Israel-Palestine somehow attached closer to their heart. One of the first nations to demand that Israel be formally designated as an apartheid state was South Africa, which led them to bring the Israel case to the International Criminal Court in 2017, accusing them of a war crime regarding its conduct in Gaza that killed over 18,000 Palestinians (Rawoot, 2023). The post-apartheid event has significantly changed the South African perspective towards Israel, knowing that Israel committed an unbearable crime against the Palestinians the same way that they experienced the apartheid regime that the colonizers implemented before 1994. The mutual understanding of how apartheid and colonialism are a way to abuse a nation has brought South Africa to pay more attention and condemn Israel for the atrocities they have committed. The post-apartheid era stated here focus more on the President Cyril Ramaphosa's political regime, stated effectively from 2018 until 2025.

1.6.2.3. Identity Construction

In international relations, identity significantly influences state conduct, diplomatic alignments, and foreign policy decisions. The transformation of South Africa's foreign policy on Palestine post-apartheid exemplifies the role of identity formation in shaping international relations and thus, foreign policy. By identifying and connecting with the Palestinian cause, South Africa strengthens its identity as a proponent of human rights, anti-colonialism, and global justice. National identity is neither fixed nor inherent; it is socially formed through past historical experiences, political discourse, and collective memory (Mengibar, 2018). Following apartheid, South Africa had a significant development, re-establishing

itself as a nation dedicated to democracy, reconciliation, and human rights. When we look, this is a 180-degree turn from what was practiced before 1994 when the white apartheid regime occupied the government. This particular identity was formed in contrast to its apartheid history, emphasizing solidarity with oppressed populations globally.

The African National Congress (ANC), pivotal in dismantling apartheid prior, has significantly influenced this identity. The ANC's historical connections with liberation movements, such as the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in regards to the Palestinian struggle, established South Africa as a prominent proponent of decolonization and self-determination (African National Congress, 2024). The post-apartheid government articulated its international role through diplomatic discourse and policy measures, solidifying its identity as a moral leader in world affairs. South Africa's foreign policy toward Palestine demonstrates its dedication to an identity focused on anti-imperialism and the promotion of human rights. The apartheid regime historically maintained strong connections with Israel, primarily because of its strategic and military collaboration. Nevertheless, post-1994, South Africa endeavored to dissociate itself from its repressive history by redefining its diplomatic goals (Amnesty International Netherlands, 2016). Palestine serves as a symbolic parallel to South Africa's own historical struggle against racial segregation and state-sanctioned oppression. South Africa establishes an identity that not only rejects its previous alignment with Israel but also actively advocates for Palestinian statehood by drawing analogies between the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories and apartheid-era South Africa (Fayyad, 2020).

The establishment of a national identity undoubtedly has tangible policy implications. South Africa's foreign policy decisions regarding Palestine act as an illustration of the three primary ways in which identity construction influences diplomatic behavior:

1. Normative Framing

South Africa reinforces its identity as a defender of global justice by employing the 'language' of human rights and anti-apartheid resistance to justify its stance on Palestine.

2. Diplomatic Alliances

Aligning with the Palestinian cause strengthens South Africa's ties with other Global South countries, particularly those within the African Union and the Non-Aligned Movement, thereby solidifying its post-apartheid identity.

3. Domestic Legitimacy

Supporting Palestine appeals to domestic political parties, particularly those with historical ties to the anti-apartheid struggle, strengthening the ANC's ideological roots and maintaining continuity in national identity projection.

South Africa's foreign policy support toward Palestine is fundamentally anchored in its post-apartheid identity construction. By positioning itself as an advocate for human rights and anti-colonial struggle, South Africa strengthens its

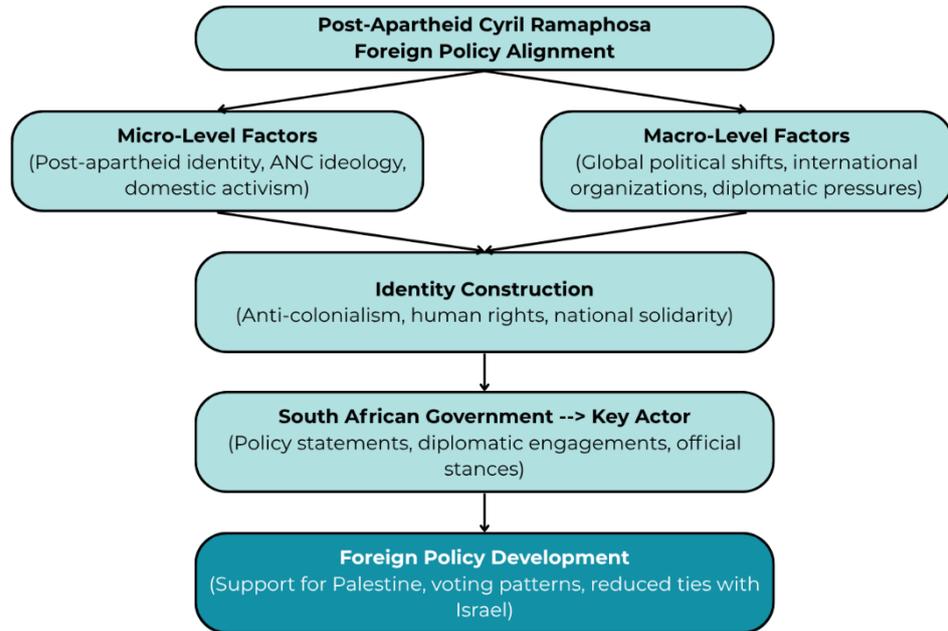
dedication to a global moral framework influenced by historical experiences and political narratives. South Africa's decision to file a case against Israel at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), accusing it of genocide in Gaza, is a powerful manifestation of this identity-driven foreign policy. This action goes beyond simply condemning specific policies; it frames Israel's actions within the most severe category of international crimes, directly echoing the historical experience of systemic violence and dehumanization that defined apartheid. This identity-centric approach delineates its position on Palestine while highlighting the significant effect of created identities on foreign policy decisions (Hamill & Lee, 2001).

1.7. Research Argument

This research recapitulates that both micro and macro level factors mainly drove South Africa's advancement foreign policy toward Palestine in the post-apartheid era under the President Cyril Ramaphosa's regime. From the micro level, the country's historical identity and political ideology that is rooted in anti-colonial solidarity and human rights advocacy values have shaped its diplomatic stance, as South Africa somehow understands the similarity and parallels between its own anti-apartheid struggle and the Palestinian cause. Unlike micro, the macro level, focus onshifting global dynamics, increasing international criticism of Israel's policies, and South Africa's role in multilateral organizations have reinforced this stance. South Africa has leveraged its diplomatic influence to advocate for Palestine to align with broader international movements that challenge Western domination in global affairs, as the emerging voice of the Global South. Therefore, the advance

policy towards Palestine reflects a convergence of ideological commitments, historical experiences, and diplomatic trends in the post-apartheid era.

Figure 1. 2 Research Scheme



Source: (Writer, 2025)

1.8. Research Methods

1.8.1. Research Type

This research used a methodical examination of prior research, including books and journals, and is considered as a part of descriptive qualitative research that aims to pinpoint and explain the major ideas that occur in the data. The literature review method used in this research requires a deep analysis of the body of the research that has already been conducted on a specific subject in order to spot the gaps and patterns of agreement or disagreement. Descriptive qualitative

research offers a thorough summary of the present state of knowledge on a topic by combining the results from several studies in the past that highlight significant findings and outline the implications for further research (Hart, 2018).

1.8.2. Research Site

In a contextual definition, research sites are physical locations and actual places where research activities occur. Hence, research-related data, information, and variables are gathered from physical and electronic sources, including text, videos of speech, and images using online search engines.

1.8.3. Research Subject

The subject that occurs in this research is predominantly South Africa, especially its government that occur in Cyril Ramaphosa's presidential regime, which are the ones that maintain and perform a relationship and foreign policy towards other countries, namely Palestine and Israel. Alongside, the researchers gather not only political leaders' stances regarding their support of Palestine but also the majority of South African civilians' reactions prior to their government's foreign policy advancement.

1.8.4. Data Type

The data that would be acquired for this research would be qualitative data, which would comprise narrative and description from a variety of online sources. Data reduction, data presentation, and verification techniques would then be used to examine the data to enable the author to gain additional data and a deep

understanding concerning prior research to provide factual and accurate data (Mertens, 2017).

1.8.5. Data Source

To examine the research thoroughly, the source of data used in this particular research is both primary and secondary data sources. In order to collect the primary sources, the author would acquire the statements and speeches uploaded on the internet, notably interviews that are conducted by or with the research subjects. Books, academic journals, newspapers, internet papers, and press releases that are available online would be the secondary data sources that the author would use to examine profound information to complete this research.

1.8.6. Data Collection Technique

The data collection technique that is used for this research is library research which aims to gather knowledge and information both from electronic (online) and non-electronic (offline) media. Through the library research technique, the author can analyze and obtain information on the event with ease from a distance without having to physically be there at the site where it is occurring. To complete the research, the author assembled reliable, knowledgeable, and factual resources coming from scientific journals, official speech or declaration videos, policy papers, books, government websites, and other types of resources that are available both online or offline.

1.8.7. Data Analysis Technique

In order to analyze this research entirely, the author utilized archival studies that can enhance the influence of micro and macro determinants on post-apartheid societies that caused the development of South African foreign policy. With this data analysis technique being used, archival studies can achieve accurate and comprehensive information about past events, and policies, including the interactions between the two countries by utilizing the archived data that is stored online or offline. Hence, this study can help the author examine past literature and records to identify the patterns in how the two countries' relationships have developed. In addition, this technique can pinpoint the findings and increase the reliability of the research, therefore policymakers and other stakeholders can avail themselves of this research (Luo, 2019).

1.8.8. Data Quality

The data that the author has used are credible and factual primary and secondary data that do not contain any false information. Ranging from all of the reliable sources stated in the data source section, the author guarantees the authenticity and credibility of the data taken, making this research free from any fallacious data. Hence, the author provides all of the resources taken into consideration for the creation of this research at the end of the study.