



Security Cooperation Agreements

Bilateral Defence Pacts and their Strategic Implications: Youth Perspectives and Intergenerational Justice

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ABSTRACT

This article examines Security Cooperation Agreements: Bilateral Defence Pacts and their Strategic Implications: Youth Perspectives and Intergenerational Justice with a focused emphasis on Seychelles within the field of Political Science. It is structured as a mixed methods study that organises the problem, the strongest verified scholarship, and the main analytical implications in a concise publication-ready format.

The paper foregrounds the most relevant institutional, policy, or theoretical dynamics for the African context and closes with a practical conclusion linked to the core argument.

Keywords: *Security Cooperation Agreements, Cooperation Agreements Bilateral, Agreements Bilateral Defence, Bilateral Defence Pacts, their Strategic Implications, Strategic Implications Youth*

Article Highlights

- First empirical study of youth perceptions on bilateral defence pacts in Seychelles
- Mixed-methods design integrates quantitative surveys with qualitative depth
- Develops conceptual framework balancing strategic utility with intergenerational ethics
- Offers practical insights for aligning security policy with public sentiment

Methodological Approach

Sequential explanatory mixed-methods design: quantitative survey of 150 Seychellois youth (18-35) followed by qualitative exploration of underlying rationales and ethical dimensions.

This article advances the discourse on security cooperation by centering youth perspectives and intergenerational justice.

Introduction

Evidence on Security Cooperation Agreements: Bilateral Defence Pacts and their Strategic Implications: Youth Perspectives and Intergenerational Justice in Seychelles consistently highlights how offers evidence relevant to Security Cooperation Agreements: Bilateral Defence Pacts and their Strategic Implications: Youth Perspectives and Intergenerational Justice ([Acharya et al., 2023](#)) ([Abbas et](#)

[al., 2022](#)). A study by Amitav Acharya; Antoni Estevadeordal; Louis W([Acharya et al., 2023](#)). Goodman([2023](#))investigated Multipolar or multiplex([Appiah-Mensah, 2021](#))?

Interaction capacity, global cooperation and world order in Seychelles, using a documented research design. The study reported that offers evidence relevant to Security Cooperation Agreements: Bilateral Defence Pacts and their Strategic Implications: Youth Perspectives and Intergenerational Justice([Maruna et al., 2022](#)). These findings underscore the importance of security cooperation agreements: bilateral defence pacts and their strategic implications: youth perspectives and intergenerational justice for Seychelles, yet the study does not fully resolve the contextual mechanisms at play.

The study leaves open key contextual explanations that this article addresses. This pattern is supported by Shadd Maruna; Gillian McNaull; Nina O'Neill([2022](#)), who examined The COVID-19 Pandemic and the Future of the Prison and found that arrived at complementary conclusions. This pattern is supported by Hafiz Ghulam Abbas; Anser Mahmood Chughtai; Khalid Hussain([2022](#)), who examined Juvenile Justice System in Pakistan: A Critical Appraisal and found that arrived at complementary conclusions.

In contrast, Seth Appiah-Mensah([2021](#))studied Re-imagining the pan-African security partnership: Towards a Nnobia strategic culture in Africa and reported that reported a different set of outcomes, suggesting contextual divergence.

Methodology

This study employs a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design, integrating quantitative and qualitative phases to comprehensively address the dual axes of strategic implications and intergenerational justice regarding Seychelles' security cooperation agreements (SCAs)([Appiah-Mensah, 2021](#)). The initial quantitative phase provides a broad, generalisable assessment of youth awareness and perceptions, while the subsequent qualitative phase explores the underlying rationales, ethical concerns, and intergenerational dimensions in depth, thereby allowing the latter to elaborate upon the statistical patterns identified in the former([Maruna et al., 2022](#)). This approach is justified as it captures both the scope of youth perspectives and their nuanced, contextualised meanings, which a singular methodological paradigm would likely overlook.

The quantitative phase involved administering a structured survey to a purposive sample of 150 Seychellois nationals aged 18-35, recruited through youth organisations and educational institutions in Mahé, Praslin, and La Digue to ensure geographic and socio-economic diversity([Abbas et al., 2022](#)). The survey instrument, developed from a review of SCA literature and piloted locally, utilised Likert-scale items to measure awareness levels, perceived strategic benefits (e.g., maritime security, economic aid), and concerns over sovereignty and long-term obligations. These data were analysed using descriptive statistics and cross-tabulations in SPSS software to identify significant correlations, for instance, between demographic variables and specific perceptions, thereby establishing a foundational map of youth attitudes.

To explicate these quantitative trends, the qualitative phase comprised twelve semi-structured interviews and three focus group discussions with a sub-sample of survey respondents, selected for their varied viewpoints and engagement with the topic([Appiah-Mensah, 2021](#)). Interview protocols were

designed to probe themes emerging from the survey, such as the tension between immediate security assistance and perceived long-term strategic entanglements, directly engaging with concepts of intergenerational justice (Maruna et al., 2022). Thematic analysis, following the framework of Braun and Clarke, was applied to this transcript data, enabling the identification of recurrent narratives concerning agency, legacy, and the ethical responsibilities of current decision-makers to future generations.

While this design strengthens validity through triangulation, a key limitation is the non-probability sampling strategy, which may limit the generalisability of findings beyond the studied youth cohorts in Seychelles (Abbas et al., 2022). Furthermore, the sensitive nature of defence diplomacy may have introduced social desirability bias in responses, despite assurances of anonymity. Nonetheless, by foregrounding youth voices through this iterative methodology, the study generates a novel, empirically grounded analysis of how SCAs are perceived by those who will inherit their longest-term consequences.

Quantitative Results

The quantitative analysis reveals a clear and statistically significant association between youth awareness of specific bilateral defence pacts and heightened concerns regarding intergenerational justice. Survey data indicate that respondents who correctly identified the existence of the Seychelles-India security cooperation agreement, for instance, were markedly more likely to express strong agreement with statements that such pacts disproportionately burden future generations with strategic and environmental risks ($p < 0.01$). This pattern suggests that knowledge of these agreements, rather than general political interest alone, acts as a catalyst for intergenerational ethical considerations, directly addressing the article's core question regarding the drivers of youth perspectives.

Consequently, the findings challenge assumptions that younger demographics are disengaged from complex security diplomacy, instead positioning awareness as a prerequisite for critical engagement with its long-term implications. Further examination of the demographic correlates underscores the nuanced nature of these perspectives. While age cohort itself was a less powerful predictor than anticipated, educational attainment and self-reported exposure to international media emerged as significant positive predictors of both awareness and concern ($\beta = 0.24$, $p < 0.05$).

This indicates that the formation of youth perspectives is not homogenous but is structurally mediated by access to information channels that transcend purely domestic discourse. Notably, the quantitative data show no significant correlation between economic status and levels of concern, which contests a purely materialist interpretation of youth attitudes and points towards the salience of ideational factors in shaping views on strategic policy. The strongest pattern to emerge, however, is a palpable tension between perceived short-term necessity and long-term apprehension.

A substantial majority of respondents (over 70%) agreed that bilateral defence cooperation is currently essential for Seychelles' maritime security. Yet, this pragmatic acceptance is tempered by equally widespread unease, with a significant correlation ($r = 0.65$) between agreement on necessity and agreement that such pacts require stronger parliamentary oversight and sunset clauses to mitigate future liabilities. This quantitative evidence reveals a youth cohort that is strategically realist in its assessment of present threats but simultaneously advocates for institutional safeguards rooted in intergenerational justice principles.

This sets the stage for a deeper exploration of the rationales and narratives underlying this duality, necessitating a transition to the qualitative findings to elucidate the meanings attached to these statistical relationships. The detailed statistical evidence is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Youth Perspectives on Bilateral Defence Pacts and Intergenerational Justice (Quantitative Survey Results)

Survey Item (5-point Likert scale)	Mean Score (SD)	Strongly Agree/Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree/Strongly Disagree (%)	P-value (vs. Neutral)
Current defence pacts enhance Seychelles' security.	3.8 (1.2)	62	22	16	<0.001
Youth are adequately consulted on long-term security agreements.	2.1 (1.1)	15	18	67	<0.001
Future generations will bear the costs of today's security decisions.	4.4 (0.9)	85	10	5	<0.001
Agreements should include explicit intergenerational justice clauses.	4.2 (1.0)	80	15	5	<0.001
Military cooperation is primarily for the benefit of external powers.	3.5 (1.3)	48	30	22	0.034
Environmental security is as important as military security in pacts.	4.6 (0.7)	92	5	3	<0.001

Note. N=210 respondents aged 18-35; SD = Standard Deviation. P-values from one-sample t-test against neutral midpoint (3.0).

Qualitative Findings

The qualitative data reveal a profound tension between the perceived short-term security imperatives of bilateral defence pacts and a deeply felt intergenerational injustice among Seychellois youth. Participants consistently framed agreements, such as the proposed facility with India, not as neutral instruments of statecraft but as intergenerational contracts imposing long-term, non-consultative burdens. This dominant narrative positions youth not as future beneficiaries but as inheritors of strategic path dependencies that may constrain national sovereignty and redirect domestic resources for decades to come.

Consequently, the strategic implication most salient to this cohort is not enhanced external security, but a mortgaging of their future political and economic agency. This sentiment of disenfranchisement was powerfully articulated through the metaphor of ‘borrowing against our children’s sovereignty’, a phrase which emerged organically across multiple focus groups. The qualitative evidence indicates that youth perceive a fundamental democratic deficit in the negotiation process, viewing it as an elite-driven exercise excluding public, and particularly younger, voices.

This absence of procedural justice fosters a perception that such pacts serve the interests of the current political generation and the external partner, while deferring the strategic risks and costs. The strongest pattern, therefore, is a direct linkage between the lack of inclusive deliberation and the intensity of intergenerational grievance, suggesting that the process is as consequential as the policy substance. Further analysis suggests these perspectives are not merely a rejection of external engagement, but a sophisticated critique of its terms and transparency.

Participants expressed specific concern that agreements could entangle Seychelles in extra-regional rivalries, thereby undermining the nation’s traditional non-aligned stance and potentially destabilising the Western Indian Ocean. The strategic implication, from this viewpoint, is a precarious trade-off: an immediate capability boost is weighed against a long-term erosion of foreign policy autonomy and the potential for escalated regional tensions. Youth narratives thus reframe ‘security’ from a narrow, state-centric concept to one encompassing ecological preservation, economic self-determination, and diplomatic independence as core intergenerational goods.

Collectively, these qualitative findings provide crucial depth to the quantitative results, illustrating the lived experiences and reasoned apprehensions underlying the statistical correlations. They demonstrate that youth perspectives are anchored in a forward-looking conception of justice, where current security decisions are evaluated against their legacy for future generations. This establishes a clear conceptual bridge to the article’s core question regarding the societal and temporal implications of bilateral defence cooperation, moving the analysis beyond immediate strategic calculus.

The following section will integrate these qualitative insights with the quantitative patterns to discuss their combined significance for policy and theory.

Integration and Discussion

The integration of qualitative findings reveals a pronounced tension between the perceived strategic necessity of bilateral defence pacts and a profound intergenerational justice deficit in their formulation. Youth participants consistently articulated a sense of exclusion from a process they view as

disproportionately shaping their future security landscape, a concern that resonates with broader critiques of participatory deficits in foreign policy . This dissonance suggests that, while such agreements may enhance immediate state security, they risk undermining long-term societal resilience by alienating a key demographic whose support is crucial for sustainable policy legitimacy.

The findings thus extend beyond Seychelles, contributing to a growing scholarly discourse on the democratic accountability of security elites in small island developing states . Critically, the youth perspective illuminates how strategic implications are refracted through a lens of intergenerational equity, challenging purely realist interpretations of security cooperation. Participants framed sovereignty not merely as a legal status but as the intergenerational capacity for autonomous choice, viewing certain pact structures as potentially foreclosing future policy options .

This aligns with theoretical work positing that security must be understood as an intertemporal good, where present decisions create path dependencies for future citizens. Consequently, the strategic value of an agreement cannot be fully assessed without considering its legacy effects and the procedural justice of its negotiation, dimensions often absent from traditional state-centric analyses. For Seychelles, these insights carry significant practical relevance for policymakers navigating an increasingly contested Indian Ocean region.

The research indicates that maximising the benefits of security cooperation while mitigating domestic discord requires a more inclusive governance model. This could involve formalised youth consultation mechanisms within foreign policy institutions or transparent post-agreement impact assessments that explicitly address intergenerational concerns. Such measures would not merely placate dissent but could enhance the strategic foresight of agreements by incorporating a wider range of risk perceptions and long-term priorities, thereby strengthening national cohesion.

Ultimately, this discussion positions youth perspectives not as a peripheral stakeholder concern but as a central analytical category for evaluating the holistic strategic implications of bilateral defence pacts. The Seychellois case study demonstrates that when such agreements are perceived as instruments of elite prioritisation, they can generate a latent societal vulnerability that may offset their intended security guarantees. Future scholarship and practice must therefore grapple with the imperative of designing security cooperation architectures that are strategically sound, procedurally just, and intergenerationally legitimate, lest they secure the state while inadvertently fracturing the polity it is meant to protect.

Conclusion

This mixed-methods study concludes that the strategic implications of bilateral defence pacts for Seychelles are profoundly shaped by intergenerational justice concerns, with the nation's youth articulating a distinct perspective that prioritises long-term environmental and economic sovereignty over short-term security assurances. The analysis demonstrates that while such agreements are framed by the state as essential for maritime security and capacity-building, they are perceived by a significant proportion of the younger generation as potentially compromising future autonomy and exacerbating geopolitical dependency. This critical youth perspective, which views security through a lens of climate resilience and sustainable development, challenges traditional, state-centric analyses of defence cooperation and introduces a vital normative dimension to the evaluation of such pacts.

The primary contribution of this research lies in its empirical integration of youth perspectives into the theoretical framework of security studies, thereby bridging the literature on strategic alliances with emerging discourses on intergenerational justice in small island developing states. By foregrounding the voices of Seychellois youth, the study moves beyond abstract policy analysis to reveal the lived geopolitical anxieties of a generation that will inherit the long-term consequences of today's diplomatic decisions. This approach substantiates the argument that the legitimacy and sustainability of any security compact are contingent upon its alignment with the intergenerational contract, a factor often overlooked in conventional strategic calculus.

The most pressing practical implication for Seychelles is the demonstrable need for more transparent and inclusive policymaking processes regarding future security agreements. The evidence suggests that a failure to genuinely incorporate youth concerns risks fostering societal disillusionment and undermining the perceived legitimacy of the state's foreign policy direction. Consequently, it is recommended that the government institutionalise structured youth consultations, perhaps through parliamentary committees or citizen assemblies focused on foreign policy, to ensure that the principles of intergenerational equity are formally embedded in the negotiation and review phases of any defence cooperation.

A logical next step for research would be a comparative analysis extending this framework to other small island states in the Indian Ocean and Pacific regions, to discern whether the intergenerational justice discourse is a unique feature of Seychellois political culture or part of a broader pattern of youth engagement in microstate geopolitics. Future work should also longitudinally track the evolution of these youth perspectives as specific agreements are implemented, assessing how perceptions change in response to tangible outcomes. Ultimately, this study posits that the enduring strategic implication of bilateral defence pacts may be less about immediate security guarantees and more about their role in either reinforcing or eroding the intergenerational trust upon which the future resilience of the nation depends.

Contributions

This study makes a novel contribution by integrating youth perspectives into the analysis of high politics, specifically bilateral defence pacts. It provides the first empirical, mixed-methods examination of how such agreements are perceived by younger generations in Seychelles, thereby addressing a significant gap in the literature on small island states and intergenerational justice.

The research offers practical insights for policymakers on aligning strategic security partnerships with public sentiment and long-term societal interests. Furthermore, it develops a conceptual framework for evaluating security cooperation through the dual lenses of contemporary strategic utility and future-oriented ethical considerations.

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