

Examining the Effectiveness of Indonesia's Independent and Active Foreign Policy: A Systematic Literature Review and Thematic Synthesis

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the effectiveness of Indonesia's foreign policy within the framework of free and active principles through a systematic literature review (SLR) approach. Unlike previous studies that tended to be partial and case-based, this study specifically conducted a thematic synthesis of empirical findings to identify patterns, indicators, and linkages between dimensions of foreign policy effectiveness. Using the PRISMA framework, this study analyzed 22 Scopus indexed scientific articles for the period 2014–2026. The results of the study show that the effectiveness of Indonesia's foreign policy is multidimensional and contextual, which is formed through the interaction between policy orientation, diplomacy instruments, and domestic factors. The main findings reveal that the lack of consistency of effectiveness indicators and institutional fragmentation are the main obstacles in policy implementation. This study contributes through conceptual aggregation that integrates empirical findings into a structured analytical framework, thus offering a clear differentiator compared to previous SLRs that are still descriptive. These findings provide implications for the development of a more systematic and evidence-based foreign policy evaluation.

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1. Introduction

In recent decades, the international relations system has undergone a transformation marked by the increasing complexity of global issues, such as great power rivalries, climate change, and global economic dynamics (Juned & Saripudin, 2025; Margiansyah, 2020). This condition requires the state to not only maintain national interests, but also to be able to adapt strategically in response to global uncertainties (Karim, 2026). In this context, foreign policy becomes an important instrument that reflects how a country positions itself in the international order (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022).

Indonesia responds to this dynamic through the principle of "free and active" foreign policy, which emphasizes independence as well as active involvement in maintaining global stability (Agastia, 2020; Juned & Saripudin, 2025). However, in the midst of increasingly complex global changes, questions arise about the extent to which these principles are still relevant and effective in contemporary policy practice (Karim, 2026; Son, 2025).

Although free and active foreign policy has been widely studied in the literature (Juned & Saripudin, 2025; Wicaksana & Karim, 2022), most of the research still focuses on specific case studies, such as Indonesia's role in ASEAN or specific bilateral issues. This approach produces findings that are partial and contextual, so they are not able to provide a comprehensive picture of the effectiveness of Indonesia's foreign policy as a whole (Putra, 2025; Wicaksana & Karim, 2022).

Furthermore, although there are various studies on Indonesia's foreign policy, there has been no systematic literature review that specifically integrates empirical findings related to policy effectiveness within the framework of free and active principles. The existing literature tends to be fragmented and conceptually unorganized, making it difficult to understand the patterns and relationships between empirical findings (Cannizzaro & Quarchioni, 2026). In addition, there are inconsistencies in the use of effectiveness indicators, where each study uses a different measure without any synthesis attempt in a single integrated analytical framework (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022).

Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by conducting a systematic literature review based on thematic analysis that not only maps the literature, but also integrates empirical findings and effectiveness indicators into a structured conceptual framework. With this approach, this study provides a clear differentiator compared to previous studies that are still partial and not yet integrated.

Research on the effectiveness of Indonesia's foreign policy is important because it provides an empirical basis for understanding how the principle of free and active is implemented in practice and the extent to which it is able to respond to global dynamics (Juned & Saripudin, 2025; Wicaksana & Karim, 2022). In an increasingly complex global context, evidence-based evaluation is crucial to ensure that foreign policy is not only normative, but also operationally effective (Agastia, 2020).

To answer this need, this study uses a systematic literature review (SLR) approach that allows the systematic and transparent identification, evaluation, and synthesis of literature (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009; Wicaksana & Karim, 2022). This approach is important to address the fragmentation of the literature and to produce a more integrated understanding of foreign policy effectiveness. In addition to academic contributions, this research also has practical implications for policymakers. By understanding the patterns and factors that affect the effectiveness of foreign policy, governments can formulate more adaptive and evidence-based strategies in the face of global dynamics ((Juned & Saripudin, 2025).

This study aims to systematically analyze the literature on Indonesia's foreign policy, especially related to the effectiveness of the implementation of the free and active principle. Through the systematic literature review (SLR) approach, this study identifies the characteristics of the study, synthesizes the main themes, and integrates findings scattered in the literature (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009; Sauer & Seuring, 2023). In addition, this study aims to identify empirical gaps in the literature, especially related to the limitations of effectiveness indicators and the fragmentation of research approaches. Thus, this study does not focus on the development of new theories, but on the grouping and conceptual aggregation of existing findings

to produce a more structured understanding. Based on these objectives, this study is designed to answer the following questions:

RQ1: What are the main characteristics of existing studies on Indonesia's independent and active foreign policy?

RQ2: What themes and patterns emerge in the literature regarding the effectiveness of Indonesia's foreign policy?

RQ3: What research gaps exist in the literature on the effectiveness of Indonesia's foreign policy?

2. Method

This study uses the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach with reference to the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) framework to ensure that the process of identification, selection, and synthesis of literature is carried out in a systematic, transparent, and replicable manner (Sauer & Seuring, 2023). The use of this method allows researchers to conduct extensive study searches, evaluate the contributions of each article, and synthesize data to produce clear conclusions about what is and is not yet known in a field (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009). The SLR approach was chosen because of its ability to integrate findings from various scattered studies into a comprehensive and structured understanding (Sauer & Seuring, 2023). This is very useful in collecting and combining existing evidence across the social science spectrum (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009).

In addition, the use of PRISMA allows researchers to document each stage of the literature selection clearly, thereby increasing the credibility and validity of the research (Sauer & Seuring, 2023). Researchers are required to set predetermined relevance and quality criteria so that the entire process becomes transparent to readers (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009). As such, this method is particularly relevant for examining topics that have fragmented literature such as Indonesia's foreign policy as SLRs are designed to address the lack of detail and inconsistencies in existing literature guides (Sauer & Seuring, 2023). Strict SLR characteristics are needed to face the challenges of reviewing fields of science that are fragmented and have a diversity of methodologies (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009).

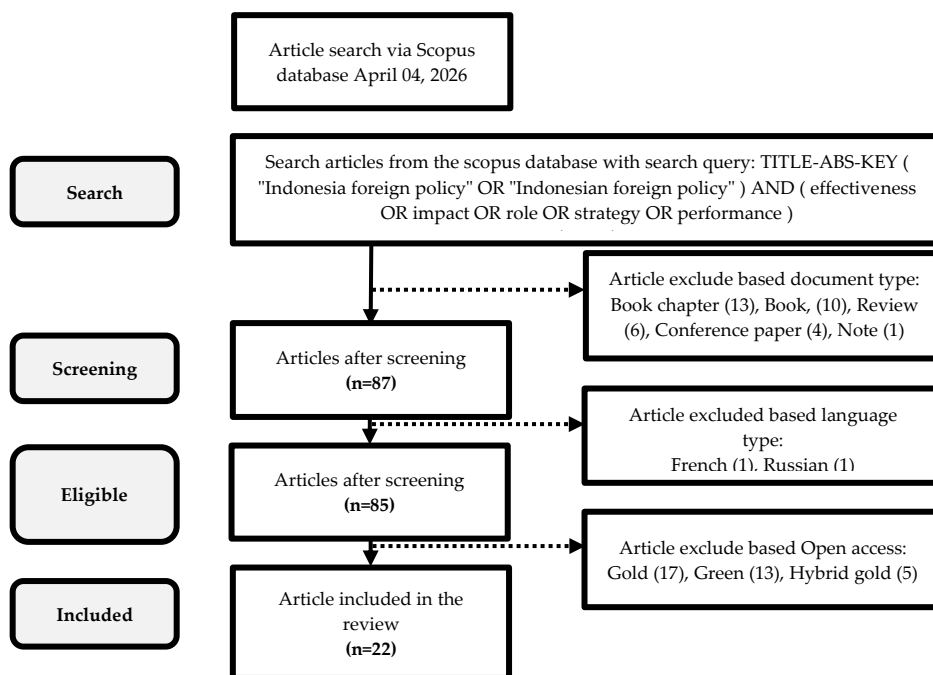


Figure 1 : Systematic Literature Review Information Flow Using PRISMA

The literature identification process is carried out through the Scopus database, which was chosen for its wide scope as well as its reputation as one of the largest scientific databases that includes highly reputable journals. Scopus also provides a search feature that allows the use of complex Boolean operators, thus improving accuracy in finding relevant articles as this database has a strict quality assurance mechanism (Sauer & Seuring, 2023). The search was conducted on April 4, 2026 using the keywords: TITLE-ABS-KEY ("Indonesia foreign policy" OR "Indonesian foreign policy") AND (effectiveness OR impact OR role OR strategy OR performance). The initial search results resulted in a total of 121 articles, which then became the basis for further selection processes according to the search term determination procedure and the creation of a systematic search string (Sauer & Seuring, 2023).

The next stage is the initial screening process based on the type of document to ensure the quality and relevance of the sources used. At this stage, documents other than scientific journal articles are

issued, including book chapter (13), book (10), review (6), conference paper (4), and note (1). This restriction is carried out to maintain the consistency of data quality by only using articles that have gone through a peer-review process to ensure the quality of the evidence to be reviewed because researchers are required to set predetermined relevance and quality criteria (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009). After this process, the number of articles remaining is 87 articles that meet the initial criteria according to the inclusion and exclusion criteria that have been set (Sauer & Seuring, 2023).

Furthermore, screening by language is carried out by excluding non-English articles, namely French (1) and Russian (1) articles. This language restriction aims to avoid interpretation bias and ensure consistency in the process of analysis and synthesis of literature. In addition, the use of English as a lingua franca in international scientific publications increases the likelihood that the selected article has wider academic visibility and impact because the selection of primary study characteristics greatly determines the direction of subsequent research decisions (Sauer & Seuring, 2023). It also supports the creation of a transparent and scientific approach to minimize bias in the review process (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009). After this stage, the number of articles left is 85 articles.

The eligibility stage is carried out by assessing the feasibility of the article based on accessibility and suitability with the research objectives. At this stage, articles that do not meet the open access criteria are issued, including the gold (17), green (13), and hybrid gold (5) categories. This process aims to ensure that all articles analyzed are fully accessible so as to allow an in-depth evaluation of the research content because the assessment of the relevance of the publication to the unit of analysis and the theoretical framework is very important to avoid bias (Sauer & Seuring, 2023). In addition, justification for each study selection decision is indispensable to mitigate previously formed opinions that may interfere with the validity of the assessment (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009). Restrictions on open access articles do have the potential to cause bias against literature that is not publicly available (Pavlyuk & Alomar, 2025). Nonetheless, this approach was chosen to ensure transparency and repeatability of the study selection process, thus allowing for clearer verification of the sources used

(Pavlyuk & Alomar, 2025). After going through all stages of selection, 22 articles were obtained that met the inclusion criteria and were used in the final analysis.

Overall, the application of the PRISMA framework in this study allows the literature selection process to be carried out systematically and well documented at each stage (Sauer & Seuring, 2023). This not only increases the transparency of the methodology, but also strengthens the reliability of the results of the resulting research by minimizing expectation bias as every step in the review must be reported strictly (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009). By strictly filtering the literature, this study is able to produce a collection of articles that are relevant, quality, and in accordance with the focus of the study to support the replicability of the research (Sauer & Seuring, 2023). Therefore, the design of this study provides a solid basis for conducting a further analysis of the effectiveness of Indonesia's foreign policy.

To ensure the quality, relevance, and consistency of the literature used, this study applies predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria (Sauer & Seuring, 2023). The inclusion criteria include articles published in reputable (peer-reviewed) scientific journals, written in English, and explicitly discussing Indonesia's foreign policy, particularly those related to aspects of effectiveness, impact, role, strategy, or performance (Sauer & Seuring, 2023). The application of these criteria aims to ensure that the studies analyzed are of high academic quality and relevant to the research objectives because the limitations of the field of review allow for a more contextualized analysis as well as make the criteria transparent to the reader (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009).

In contrast, some types of documents are excluded from the selection process to maintain the consistency and quality of the data analyzed. Excluded documents include book chapters, books, review articles, conference papers, and notes, as they do not always go through a rigorous peer-review process like journal articles (Sauer & Seuring, 2023). This restriction is done to increase the reliability and validity of research findings resulting from the literature synthesis process to avoid the inclusion of low-quality evidence that can reduce the quality of review findings.

In addition, language restrictions are also implemented by excluding non-English articles, such as articles in French and Russian. This decision was taken to minimize potential interpretation bias as well as ensure consistency in the literature analysis process (Sauer & Seuring, 2023). Given that English is the main language in international scientific publications, the use of this language also increases the likelihood that the selected article has high academic quality and visibility because the selection of primary study characteristics greatly determines the direction of subsequent research decisions.

Furthermore, accessibility criteria are also considered in the selection process, where only fully accessible articles are included in the final sample (Sauer & Seuring, 2023). This is so that each article can be analyzed in depth and comprehensively. The entire process of applying these inclusion and exclusion criteria is carried out systematically through several stages of screening as shown in the PRISMA diagram, thereby increasing transparency and replication of research (Sauer & Seuring, 2023).

After the literature selection process is carried out, articles that meet the inclusion criteria are systematically analyzed using a structured analytical framework (Sauer & Seuring, 2023). This framework aims to extract important information from each article consistently, thus allowing for a comprehensive comparison and synthesis of findings (Sauer & Seuring, 2023). This approach also helps identify patterns, trends, and gaps in the literature related to Indonesia's foreign policy in order to make follow-up research more efficient and productive.

The analytical framework used in this study includes several main categories, namely authors and year of publication, publisher journals, research methods, theoretical approaches, context or focus of the study, as well as main findings (Sauer & Seuring, 2023). In addition, to support thematic analysis, this study also identifies indicators or dimensions used in assessing the effectiveness of foreign policy, such as the role of diplomacy, regional influence, international cooperation, and strategic achievements (Harijanto, 2024). Then the inclusion and exclusion criteria, this study also considers the methodological quality of the articles analyzed. Quality assessment is

carried out implicitly through an evaluation of the clarity of the research objectives, the suitability of the methods, and the contribution of findings to the topic of foreign policy effectiveness. This approach ensures that the analyzed studies are not only topically relevant, but also have adequate academic quality to be synthesized in this study. By using this analytical framework, this study ensures transparency, consistency, and accuracy in the literature analysis process in accordance with various theory-based inquiry procedures. The following is the table of the Analytical Framework processed in Table 1 Appendix.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1. Result

3.3.3. Descriptive Analysis

The descriptive analysis part of this study directly answers RQ1, which identifies the main characteristics of existing studies on Indonesia's free and active foreign policy (Sauer & Seuring, 2023). Through an analysis of the distribution of publications by year, author, field of science, and geographical area, this study shows that the literature that develops is dynamic, multidisciplinary (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022), and tends to be fragmented (Karim, 2026). In addition, the findings also indicate that the research is dominated by social science approaches with relatively scattered author contributions (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022), as well as the geographical concentration that is still focused on Indonesia (Umar, 2016). Thus, descriptive analysis not only provides an overview of the development of the literature, but also confirms the main patterns and characteristics of research that are the basis for subsequent thematic analysis (Sauer & Seuring, 2023)

This study notes a significant shift from the dominance of realist approaches to more diverse theory-based inquiry in the study of international relations in Indonesia (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022). This fragmented characteristic of literature often reflects the layered incoherence between ideological heritage, institutional logic, and informal governance practices within the country (Karim, 2026). Although the study of Indonesia's foreign policy continues to develop extensively, the focus of the study remains firmly rooted in national identity and efforts to build a non-Western knowledge base (Umar,

2016). Therefore, the incorporation of these categories of descriptive analysis is very important to provide an in-depth insight into the maturity of this field of research before conducting a more complex thematic synthesis (Sauer & Seuring, 2023).

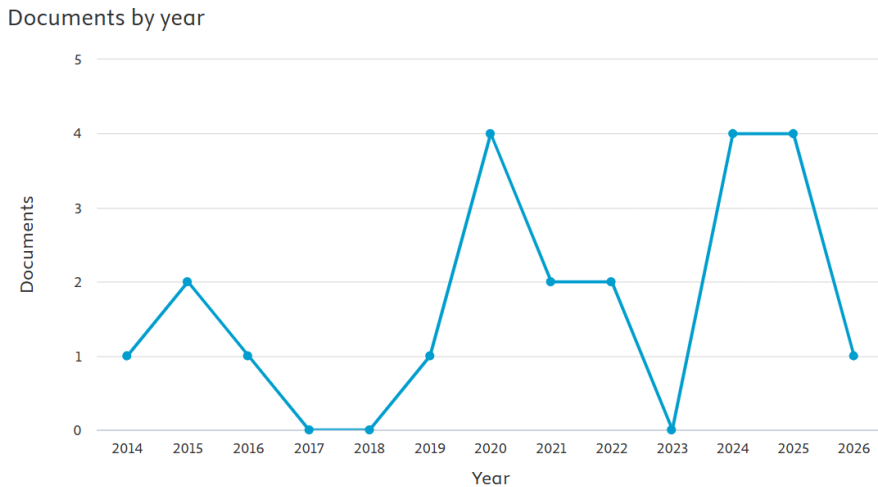


Figure 2. Graph of *Documents by year*

The following are the paragraphs that have been updated with citation integration using APA Style 7 format (without quotation marks and without page numbers), based on the year of publication distribution data from the 22 journals you provided as well as the associated methodological sources:

Based on the documents by year chart, it can be seen that the distribution of research publications on the topic studied shows a fluctuating pattern throughout the period 2014–2026 (Sauer & Seuring, 2023). At the beginning of the period, the number of publications was relatively low, with only 1 article in 2014 (Yazid, 2014) and increased to 2 articles in 2015 (Fogg, 2015; Wiratraman, 2015), before declining again in 2016 (Umar, 2016). The classification of publications by year helps identify the phase of development and maturity of a research field (Sauer & Seuring, 2023).

Interestingly, there were no publications in 2017 and 2018 in this sample, indicating that attention to this specific topic had stagnated. However, since 2019, the number of publications has started to increase again (Huong & Khoo, 2019) and reached its peak

in 2020 with a total of 4 articles (Agastia, 2020; Grzywacz, 2020; Margiansyah, 2020; Warsito et al., 2020). This kind of descriptive analysis is important to show research trends that are relevant to other researchers in the same field (Sauer & Seuring, 2023).

After experiencing a slight decline in the 2021–2022 period (Fitriani, 2021; Rachman, 2022; Safei et al., 2022; Wicaksana & Karim, 2022), the trend of republication shows a significant increase in 2024 and 2025, which recorded 4 (Harijanto, 2024; Juned & Saripudin, 2025; Pedrason et al., 2024; Putra, 2025; Rastuti & Khoirudin, 2025; Wicaksana & Karim, 2022; Jeremiah & Raditio, 2025). This shows that in recent years, the topic of research on the effectiveness of Indonesia's foreign policy has again received greater attention in the academic literature (Sauer & Seuring, 2023).

Overall, this pattern indicates that research developments are dynamic, with a tendency to increase interest in recent periods reflecting the rising relevance of the topic (Sauer & Seuring, 2023) This can reflect the increasing relevance of the issue, especially in the context of technological developments and the digital economy (Margiansyah, 2020), more inclusive public policy (Juned & Saripudin, 2025), or governance dynamics and bureaucratic incoherence that continue to grow in the face of great power rivalry (Karim, 2026).

Documents by author

Compare the document counts for up to 15 authors.

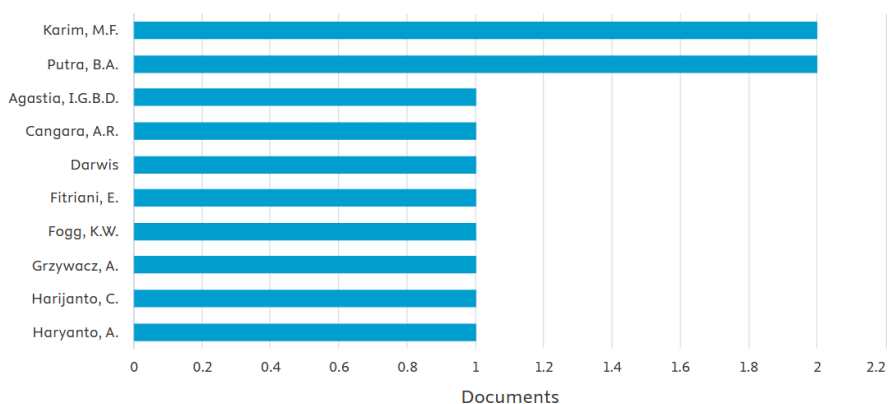


Figure 3. Graph of *Documents by author*

Based on the diagram of documents by author, it can be seen that the author's contribution in the analyzed literature is relatively

scattered and is not strongly dominated by one particular author (Sauer & Seuring, 2023). Of the total authors identified, only two authors, namely Karim, M. F. and Putra, B. A., each have the highest number of publications with two articles (Karim, 2026; Son, 2025; Son & Cangara, 2024; Wicaksana & Karim, 2022).

Meanwhile, most of the other authors have contributed only one publication, such as Agastia, I. G. B. D., Cangara, A. R., Darwis, Fitriani, E., Fogg, K. W., Grzywacz, A., Harijanto, C., and Haryanto, A. (Agastia, 2020; Fitriani, 2021; Fogg, 2015; Grzywacz, 2020; Harijanto, 2024; Pedrason et al., 2024; Son & Cangara, 2024). This pattern shows that research on this topic is still fragmented (Karim, 2026) and has not been centered on a specific group of researchers in accordance with the characteristics of diverse theory-based inquiry in the study of international relations in Indonesia (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022).

In addition, this relatively even distribution indicates that studies related to research topics are still developing and attracting the attention of various researchers with diverse backgrounds (Sauer & Seuring, 2023). This also reflects that this field of study does not yet have leading scholars who dominantly shape the direction of research, but is filled by discourses influenced by the ideological foundations of each political regime and international hegemonic discourse (Umar, 2016).

Overall, it can be concluded that the contribution of literature in this field is still scattered and exploratory (Sauer & Seuring, 2023), which opens up opportunities for further research to strengthen scientific consolidation and theory development to mitigate bureaucratic incoherence in the face of great power competition (Karim, 2026).

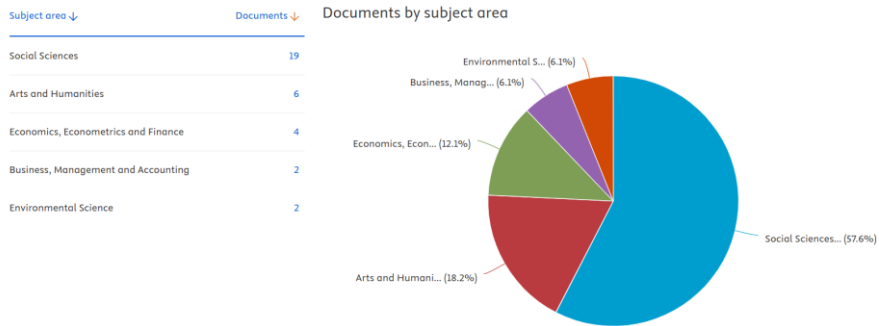


Figure 4. Graph of *Documents by subject area*

Based on the diagram of documents by subject area, it can be seen that the research analyzed in this study is dominated by the field of Social Sciences, with a total of 19 articles or around 57.6% of the total publications. This dominance shows that the topics studied have a strong relationship with social issues, public policy, and governance in accordance with the development of international relations studies that increasingly prioritize theory-based inquiry (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022). In addition, this grouping within social science disciplines reflects a focus on domestic structures and institutional fragmentation in response to global dynamics (Karim, 2026) and follow methodological standards in management and social literature reviews (Sauer & Seuring, 2023).

In addition, the Arts and Humanities field occupies the second position with 6 articles (18.2%), which indicates that studies are also associated with conceptual perspectives, values, and interpretive approaches in understanding the phenomenon being studied. This can be seen from the use of genealogical approaches to dissect identity discourse (Umar, 2016), a historical analysis of the role of religious instruments in early diplomacy (Fogg, 2015), as well as efforts to promote religious moderation as an instrument of cultural influence in the global arena (Safei, 2021).

The field of Economics, Econometrics and Finance accounted for 4 articles (12.1%), indicating that some of the research also looked at this topic from the perspective of economics and quantitative analysis. Research in this category included an analysis of the economic consequences of peace diplomacy (Rachman, 2022) as well

as reconceptualization of economic diplomacy to face the era of digital disruption (Margiansyah, 2020). Meanwhile, the fields of Business, Management and Accounting and Environmental Science each contributed 2 articles (6.1%), represented by studies on international trade policy and protectionism (Rastuti & Khoirudin, 2025) and management of the maritime environment and conflicts in strategic waters (Pedrason et al., 2024).

Overall, this distribution suggests that research on this topic is multidisciplinary, although it remains dominated by social science approaches (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022). This indicates that the issues studied are not only relevant in the context of governance and public policy, but also have links to economic aspects and multilateral bargaining power (Juned & Saripudin, 2025), incoherent bureaucratic managerial (Karim, 2026), as well as the sustainability of the maritime environment within the framework of regional diplomacy (Pedrason et al., 2024).

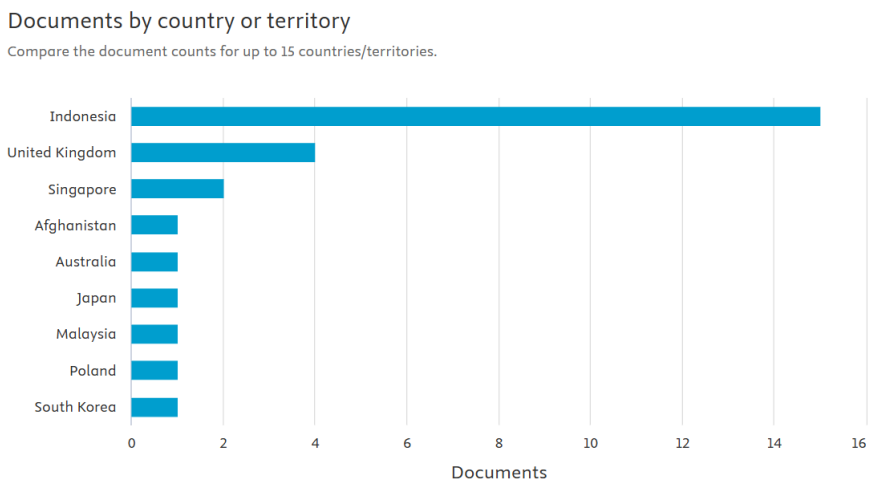


Figure 5. Graph of Documents by country or territory

Based on the diagram of documents by country or territory, it can be seen that the contribution of publications is significantly dominated by Indonesia with a total of around 15 articles (Sauer & Seuring, 2023). This dominance shows that the topics studied have high relevance in the Indonesian national context, as well as being the main focus in academic studies in the region in order to build an inclusive and unique foreign policy study identity (Sauer & Seuring,

2023). This strong focus on the domestic level reflects that the effectiveness of "active free" policies is often tested through responses to pressing national issues (Rastuti & Khoirudin, 2025; Jeremiah & Raditio, 2025)s.

Outside Indonesia, the contribution of publications is relatively smaller and scattered. The United Kingdom occupies the second position with about 4 articles (Fogg, 2015; Son, 2025). Followed by Singapore with 2 articles (Karim, 2026; Wicaksana & Karim, 2022). Meanwhile, other countries such as Afghanistan (Rachman, 2022), Australia (Harijanto, 2024), Japan (Agastia, 2020), Malaysia (Yazid, 2014), Poland (Grzywacz, 2020), and South Korea (Motin, 2024) each only contributed about 1 article. This distribution shows that there is an international collaborative effort in dissecting Indonesia's role as a middle power in the region (Harijanto, 2024).

This distribution pattern indicates that research on this topic is still geographically concentrated, with a strong dominance of one country. This may indicate the existence of a strong local context in the development of studies, where scholars seek to translate systemic theoretical features into knowledge development with local nuances or "Indonesianism" (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022). Nonetheless, this pattern also indicates that the generalization of findings to the global context is still limited because policy is often influenced by the psychology of national leadership (Son, 2025) and internal institutional fragmentation (Karim, 2026). The involvement of other countries, albeit in limited numbers, suggests that this topic is beginning to gain international attention within the framework of the Global IR debate (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022)

Overall, this geographic distribution reflects that research is still contextual and opens up opportunities for cross-border studies to enrich perspectives in the future (Sauer & Seuring, 2023). Integration of perspectives from abroad, such as analysis of the behavior of middle powers (Harijanto, 2024) or Indonesia's position as an offshore balancer (Motin, 2024), is indispensable to improve the generalization of findings. This is in line with the goal of a systematic literature review to identify research gaps and provide direction for the development of a more comprehensive theory (Sauer & Seuring, 2023).

3.3.1. Thematic Analysis

This section discusses RQ2 by identifying key themes that emerge from the literature on the effectiveness of independent and active Indonesian foreign policy (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022). Systematic efforts to map this academic discourse are essential to uncover the growth patterns of publications and identify research gaps that require further investigation (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022). This approach allows researchers to understand how foreign policy is conceptualized and implemented in a variety of dynamic global and regional contexts.

Thematic analysis is carried out through the process of coding the main findings of the analyzed articles to identify essential components such as the most influential works and the main discussion themes (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022). Each article is reviewed based on the indicators of effectiveness, theoretical approach, and context of the study used, as summarized in the analytical framework table (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022). The coding results are then grouped into main themes through an iterative process that considers similarities in patterns and relationships between concepts to produce a comprehensive literature synthesis.

The results of the synthesis show that the literature on Indonesia's foreign policy can be classified into three main themes, namely: (1) the role of Indonesian diplomacy in the regional and global order, especially its strategic position as a middle power and bridge-builder (Agastia, 2020; Juned & Saripudin, 2025; Wicaksana & Karim, 2022), (2) a foreign policy orientation based on free and active principles that remains the main foundation despite the challenges of economic pragmatism (Juned & Saripudin, 2025; Karim, 2026; Wicaksana & Karim, 2022), and (3) the effectiveness and limitations of policy implementation which are often hampered by role conflicts and institutional fragmentation (Agastia, 2020; Karim, 2026; Wicaksana & Karim, 2022).

1) The Role of Indonesian Diplomacy (Diplomatic Role)

The first theme highlights how the effectiveness of Indonesia's foreign policy is often measured through the capacity of diplomacy in

shaping regional stability and influencing the international order (Pedrason et al., 2024; Putra & Cangara, 2024). A number of studies show that Indonesia plays a strategic role as a bridge-builder and norm entrepreneur in the Indo-Pacific regional context (Agastia, 2020; Son & Cangara, 2024). For example, Indonesia has successfully articulated the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) as an inclusive framework that can be accepted by major actors such as the United States and China (Agastia, 2020; Son & Cangara, 2024).

This role is also reflected in maritime diplomacy and conflict resolution, where Indonesia has consistently initiated peaceful dialogue and promoted regional stability, particularly in the context of the South China Sea (Pedrason et al., 2024). In addition, a soft power-based diplomacy approach is also seen in the case of Afghanistan, where Indonesia uses cleric diplomacy and a religious approach to encourage peace while opening up opportunities for economic cooperation (Rachman, 2022).

Furthermore, several studies highlight the use of economic diplomacy and other strategic instruments in maintaining national stability amid global pressures, such as in the context of great power competition between the US and China (Juned & Saripudin, 2025; Margiansyah, 2020). These findings show that the effectiveness of Indonesia's foreign policy is not only determined by active engagement, but also by the ability to produce concrete outcomes recognized by international actors (Juned & Saripudin, 2025; Rachman, 2022).

2) Policy Orientation

The second theme relates to how the principle of free and active is operationalized in Indonesia's foreign policy practice. The literature shows that this principle is translated into a strategy of strategic autonomy, which allows Indonesia to maintain independence without reducing its involvement in international cooperation (Juned & Saripudin, 2025; Karim, 2026). For example, studies show that Indonesia uses membership in forums such as BRICS as a tool to increase bargaining power in global negotiations, while maintaining a balance between Western and Eastern powers (Juned & Saripudin, 2025). This approach is in line with the concept of offshore balancing, where Indonesia avoids direct involvement in

major power conflicts while maintaining regional stability (Motin, 2024).

In addition to external factors, policy orientation is also influenced by domestic dynamics. Study by (Jeremiah & Raditio, 2025) shows that attitudes towards foreign policy, particularly regarding China, are strongly influenced by the distribution of domestic power and the involvement of certain political groups. This is reinforced by research (Fitriani, 2021) which shows that elite perceptions and domestic economic factors have a significant influence on the stability of Indonesia's bilateral relations. Thus, the effectiveness of foreign policy is not only determined by normative principles, but also by the state's ability to manage the interaction between global pressures and domestic dynamics in an adaptive manner (Fitriani, 2021; Karim, 2026).

3) Policy Effectiveness and Constraints

The third theme highlights the gap between Indonesia's normative foreign policy goals and their implementation on the ground (Grzywacz, 2020; Karim, 2026). Some studies show that although Indonesia has an active role in international diplomacy, its effectiveness is often limited by structural and institutional factors (Karim, 2026). This phenomenon reflects systemic barriers in translating global aspirations into tangible practical results at the domestic level.

One of the key findings is the existence of policy incoherence, where there is a mismatch between policy rhetoric and implementation practice (Karim, 2026). Study by (Karim, 2026) suggests that this incoherence is due to institutional fragmentation and reliance on elite informal networks in decision-making processes that often ignore formal coordination. In addition, research (Grzywacz, 2020) also found that Indonesia's strategic narrative, particularly in the promotion of democracy, is often inconsistent between the level of diplomatic rhetoric and pragmatic policy implementation (Grzywacz, 2020).

Another limitation can be seen in the dilemma between national sovereignty and commitment to international norms. In the case of the Bali Nine death penalty, for example, Indonesia prioritized

the sovereignty of national law over international pressure related to human rights (Huong & Khoo, 2019). This shows that national interests driven by security motives often trump commitment to international legal norms (Huong & Khoo, 2019). In addition, in the context of territorial disputes such as Ambalat, the effectiveness of Indonesian diplomacy is considered not optimal due to the lack of strong scientific evidence support and inter-agency coordination that still needs to be strengthened in the negotiation process (Warsito et al., 2020). These findings show that the effectiveness of Indonesia's foreign policy depends not only on the strategies designed, but also on implementation capacity, institutional coordination, and consistency between policies and practices on the ground (Grzywacz, 2020; Karim, 2026; Warsito et al., 2020).

3.3.4. Research Gaps and Future Research Directions

This section discusses RQ3 by identifying research gaps based on the findings of the thematic analysis and proposing directions for future research (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022). Efforts to systematically identify research gaps are essential to align future research agendas with practical needs and emerging global frameworks. This approach allows researchers to offer new, more critical and visionary perspectives in mapping the future direction of international relations studies in Indonesia (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022)

Based on the results of the thematic analysis of the articles analyzed, this study identifies a number of important gaps in the literature on the effectiveness of Indonesia's foreign policy (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022). Most of the existing literature is considered to be fragmented and tends to ignore the evolution of foreign policy studies specifically, so this study contributes to closing the knowledge gap through a comprehensive literature review (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022). In addition, a deeper understanding of how certain concepts are implemented in dynamic diplomacy practices is needed.

This gap is not only methodological, but also conceptual and empirical, which directly relates to the three main themes that have been identified earlier (Karim, 2026; Wicaksana & Karim, 2022). Recent analyses show that policy inconsistencies are often inherent features of the structure of the state itself—such as institutional fragmentation and the influence of informal elite networks—that have

received little attention in traditional realism-based analysis (Karim, 2026). Therefore, the integration of domestic variables and new methodologies is key in strengthening the academic foundation of foreign policy in the future (Karim, 2026; Wicaksana & Karim, 2022).

1) Dominance of Qualitative Approaches and Limitations of Generalization

Analysis of the analytical framework table shows that most studies use a qualitative approach based on case studies, such as narrative analysis (Agastia, 2020), qualitative interviews (Pedrason et al., 2024), as well as document and conceptual analysis (Grzywacz, 2020; Karim, 2026). This approach does provide a deep understanding of specific contexts, but it often results in findings that are fragmented, focus on isolated case studies, and difficult to generalize in broader research trends (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022).

These limitations indicate that the current literature has not developed much quantitative approaches or mixed-methods to test the effectiveness of foreign policy in a more systematic manner (Juned & Saripudin, 2025; Wicaksana & Karim, 2022). Most of the research is still descriptive and has not touched much in the realm of evaluating the effectiveness of policies that run using measurable standards. In fact, more standardized effectiveness measurement requires a combination of depth of qualitative analysis and quantitative validation to close the existing knowledge gap (Juned & Saripudin, 2025; Wicaksana & Karim, 2022).

Further research needs to develop a mixed-methods approach that integrates qualitative analysis with quantitative measurement to provide a more holistic and systematic understanding (Juned & Saripudin, 2025). One of the proposed strategic efforts is the development of a measurable performance indicator-based foreign policy effectiveness index to produce evidence-based policy recommendations that are more adaptive to local and global contexts (Margiansyah, 2020).

2) Fragmentation of Effectiveness Indicators

The findings of the analysis show that there is no consensus on indicators of foreign policy effectiveness (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022). Each study uses different indicators, such as:

- 1 regional influence and acceptance of other actors (Agastia, 2020)
- 2 The Success of Peace Diplomacy and Economic Impact (Rachman, 2022)
- 3 Stability of bilateral relations (Fitriani, 2021)
- 4 Compliance with international law and global norms (Juned & Saripudin, 2025; Warsito et al., 2020)

This fragmentation shows that the effectiveness of foreign policy is still partially understood and depends on the context of the individual study (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022). As a result, it is difficult to conduct cross-study comparisons or build strong theoretical generalizations. Future research will require the development of a more standardized evaluation framework by integrating various dimensions, such as diplomatic outcomes, strategic alignment, and institutional coherence, so as to allow for a more comprehensive and comparative analysis (Juned & Saripudin, 2025; Karim, 2026).

3) Limitations of Integration Between Themes (Fragmentation of Literature)

In line with the findings of the thematic analysis, the literature on Indonesia's foreign policy tends to be fragmented into specific issues (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022), such as maritime diplomacy (Pedrason et al., 2024), bilateral relations (Fitriani, 2021), or policies towards China (Jeremiah & Raditio, 2025). However, very few studies have integrated these dimensions into a single complete analytical framework to close the knowledge gap (Karim, 2026; Wicaksana & Karim, 2022).

For example, studies on regional diplomacy often do not relate their findings to domestic factors or strategic policy orientations in depth (Karim, 2026). In fact, these two aspects have proven to have a significant influence on the effectiveness and consistency of foreign policy (Fitriani, 2021; Karim, 2026; Jeremiah & Raditio, 2025). Future research will need to develop an integrative approach that connects the dimensions of diplomacy, policy orientation, and domestic factors into a single comprehensive analytical model, as proposed in the conceptual framework of this research, to produce a more holistic and

evidence-based understanding (Karim, 2026; Wicaksana & Karim, 2022).

4) Lack of Systematic Analysis of Domestic Factors

Although some studies have highlighted the role of domestic factors, such as the distribution of political power (Jeremiah & Raditio, 2025) and elite perceptions (Fitriani, 2021), the analysis of this factor is still considered to be partial and has not been systematically developed in the international relations literature in Indonesia (Karim, 2026; Wicaksana & Karim, 2022). In fact, the findings in the thematic analysis show that domestic factors have a significant influence on the consistency and effectiveness of foreign policy, especially in the context of bilateral relations and strategic decision-making (Fitriani, 2021; Karim, 2026; Wicaksana & Karim, 2022).

Future research requires an approach that explicitly integrates domestic variables, such as institutional structure, political dynamics, and leadership, into the analysis of foreign policy effectiveness to close existing knowledge gaps (Karim, 2026). This can be achieved through the development of new frameworks such as the concept of layered incoherence which dissects how policy incoherence is rooted in institutional fragmentation and informal governance, both through comparative and longitudinal approaches (Karim, 2026; Wicaksana & Karim, 2022)

5) Limitations of Comparative and Longitudinal Studies

Most of the studies analyzed focused on a single case or a specific period of time, such as a specific conflict or policy within a single government (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022). This condition causes the existing body of literature to tend to be fragmented and focus on region-specific implementation issues, resulting in a limited understanding of broader research trends. This limits the ability to understand foreign policy changes dynamically and across contexts because researchers are often more interested in applying concepts to empirical cases than in building theories that are able to explain policy evolution as a whole (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022).

For example, the change in policy orientation from the previous era to the current government (Son, 2025) has not been widely studied longitudinally in a single consistent analytical

framework (Motin, 2024; Son, 2025). Systematic analyses that discuss the consequences of state structure on long-term policy continuity are still very limited, with most research focusing more on contemporary post-1945 affairs (Motin, 2024). Therefore, a more grounded framework—such as an analysis of domestic structures or layered incoherences—is needed to understand how external pressures are mediated and how foreign policy changes systemically, not just episodically based on leadership changes (Karim, 2026; Wicaksana & Karim, 2022).

3.3.5. Conceptual Framework

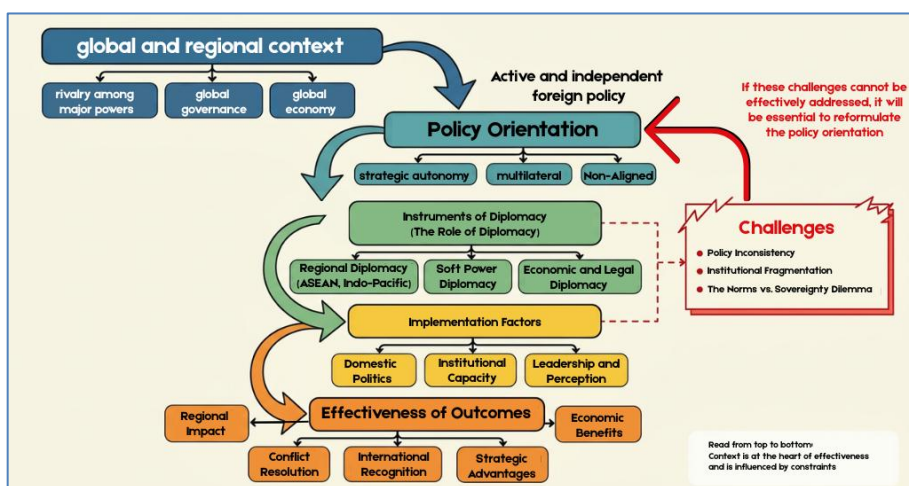


Figure 6. Graph of Conceptual Framework

Based on the results of thematic analysis, this study proposes a conceptual framework that explains the relationship between the global context, policy orientation, diplomacy instruments, and outcomes produced in Indonesia's foreign policy (Juned & Saripudin, 2025; Wicaksana & Karim, 2022). This framework was built to provide a more systematic understanding of how foreign policy effectiveness is shaped and measured in the existing literature (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022). In the early stages, the global and regional contexts played a role as external factors influencing the direction of foreign policy, including the great power rivalry between the United States and China, the geopolitical dynamics of the Indo-Pacific, and pressures in global governance (Juned & Saripudin, 2025; Karim, 2026). In response to this context, Indonesia has adopted a policy

orientation based on free and active principles, which is manifested in the form of strategic autonomy, multilateral engagement, and non-alignment positions that remain relevant in the multipolar era (Juned & Saripudin, 2025; Karim, 2026).

This policy orientation is then operationalized through various foreign policy instruments, especially in the form of the role of diplomacy (Agastia, 2020; Wicaksana & Karim, 2022). The literature shows that Indonesia uses a combination of regional diplomacy through ASEAN, soft power, and economic diplomacy and international law to achieve its strategic goals (Agastia, 2020; Margiansyah, 2020; Pedrason et al., 2024; Rachman, 2022). These instruments are the main means of translating normative principles into concrete policy practice (Putra & Cangara, 2024). However, the effectiveness of policy implementation is not only determined by external strategies, but also greatly influenced by domestic factors, such as political dynamics, institutional capacity, and elite perceptions and leadership (Fitriani, 2021; Karim, 2026). These factors play a role in determining the consistency, coordination, and direction of foreign policy implementation in the field (Karim, 2026).

The results of the interaction between policy orientation, diplomacy instruments, and domestic factors have resulted in various effectiveness outcomes, such as increased regional influence as a middle power, success in conflict resolution, international recognition of initiatives such as AOIP, and strategic economic achievements (Agastia, 2020; Pedrason et al., 2024; Putra & Cangara, 2024). However, this study also identifies various constraints, such as policy incoherence, institutional fragmentation, and the dilemma between national sovereignty and international norms, which can limit the achievement of overall policy effectiveness (Grzywacz, 2020; Huong & Khoo, 2019; Karim, 2026). In conditions where these constraints cannot be effectively overcome, the findings of this study show that a process of adjustment and even reformulation of foreign policy orientation is needed, as a form of adaptive response to structural pressures and suboptimal implementation results. Thus, policy orientation is not static, but undergoes recalibration through a feedback loop mechanism that is influenced by the outcome and dynamics of the obstacles faced.

Thus, this conceptual framework shows that Indonesia's foreign policy effectiveness is the result of a complex interaction between external factors, strategic orientation, implementation capacity, and domestic dynamics (Karim, 2026; Wicaksana & Karim, 2022). This model not only helps explain findings in the existing literature, but also confirms that foreign policy processes are dynamic and iterative, where evaluations of outcomes and constraints can drive strategic adjustments to policy orientation. In addition, this framework provides an analytical basis for further research in developing more comprehensive, evidence-based measures of effectiveness (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022).

3.2. Discussion

This section interprets the findings of the research by relating the results of the thematic analysis to the existing literature as well as the proposed conceptual framework. In contrast to the section on the results which focuses on pattern identification, this discussion emphasizes on the deeper meaning of the findings in a theoretical and practical framework to draw conclusions about what is and is not yet known from the synthesized literature (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009). In this context, this study shows that the effectiveness of Indonesia's foreign policy cannot be explained through a single theoretical approach, but rather requires a perspective that is able to capture the interaction between global structures, ideas and norms, and domestic dynamics (Karim, 2026; Wicaksana & Karim, 2022).

From the perspective of realism, the effectiveness of foreign policy tends to be understood as the ability of the state to maximize national interests in the midst of the pressures of the international system, especially in the context of great power rivalry (Karim, 2026). However, the findings of this study show that this approach is not fully able to explain Indonesia's role as a middle power that prioritizes regional cooperation and stability (Agastia, 2020; Harijanto, 2024). On the contrary, the constructivism perspective highlights the importance of Indonesia's norms, identity, and role as an entrepreneurial norm in shaping the regional order (Putra & Cangara, 2024). However, this approach also has limitations because it does not pay attention to material factors and policy implementation capacity.

In this regard, the Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) approach provides a more comprehensive framework by integrating external and domestic factors, including the role of institutions, actors, and decision-making processes (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022; Jeremiah & Raditio, 2025). By combining these three perspectives, this study shows that the effectiveness of Indonesia's foreign policy is multidimensional and cannot be reduced to a single theoretical logic. This integrative approach is also in line with the need to address the fragmentation of literature through a more systematic and structured synthesis (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009; Sauer & Seuring, 2023).

3.2.1. Reinterpretation of Foreign Policy Effectiveness

The findings of this study show that the concept of the effectiveness of Indonesia's foreign policy needs to be understood as a multidimensional construct that includes outcomes, processes, and adaptation capacity (Karim, 2026). In a realist perspective, effectiveness is often measured through strategic achievements such as regional influence or success in conflict. However, this approach does not adequately explain the variation in Indonesia's policy outcomes that often depend on specific contexts (Pedrason et al., 2024). In contrast, the constructivist approach emphasizes the role of identity and norms, such as Indonesia's position as a bridge-builder in the region (Agastia, 2020; Harijanto, 2024).

Nevertheless, both approaches have not fully explained how policies are implemented and why there is a gap between rhetoric and practice. In this context, FPA provides a stronger explanation by placing domestic factors as key variables in determining policy effectiveness (Fitriani, 2021; Wicaksana & Karim, 2022). This shows that effectiveness is determined not only by Indonesia's position in the international system or its normative role, but also by its institutional capabilities and policy consistency.

Furthermore, this study shows that the incoherence between free and active principles and policy practice is one of the main factors limiting effectiveness (Grzywacz, 2020; Karim, 2026). Such incoherence is often rooted in bureaucratic fragmentation and domestic political pressures (Karim, 2026; Jeremiah & Raditio, 2025). Therefore, the effectiveness of foreign policy needs to be understood as the result of the interaction between international structures,

norms, and domestic capacities in a complex system (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009).

3.2.2. Contributions to Foreign Policy Theory

Theoretically, this research contributes by bridging the gap between realist, constructivist, and FPA approaches in foreign policy studies (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022). Realism provides an explanation of structural pressures in the international system, constructivism explains the role of norms and identities, while FPA integrates domestic factors and decision-making processes. The findings of this study suggest that the three approaches complement each other, not replace each other.

Through the proposed conceptual framework, this research offers an integrative approach that combines external and internal dimensions in a single analytical model (Karim, 2026). This approach broadens the scope of FPA by emphasizing the importance of interaction between levels of analysis in explaining the effectiveness of foreign policy (Jeremiah & Raditio, 2025). Thus, this research does not develop new theories, but conducts conceptual aggregation that strengthens the understanding of complex phenomena (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009).

In addition, this study also clarifies the concept of effectiveness which has been ambiguous in the literature by identifying various indicators used in previous studies (Harijanto, 2024; Karim, 2026). This is important to improve consistency and comparability in foreign policy research and provide a stronger evidence base for decision-making (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009).

3.2.3. The Role of Domestic Factors as Key Determinants

The findings of this study show that domestic factors play a key role in determining the effectiveness of Indonesia's foreign policy (Jeremiah & Raditio, 2025). From a realist perspective, domestic factors are often overlooked, but the results of this study show that domestic structures actually mediate external pressures (Karim, 2026). This is in line with the FPA approach which places domestic actors and institutions as important variables in foreign policy analysis (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022).

Factors such as the distribution of political power, institutional capacity, and leadership have been shown to influence policy

direction and consistency (Fitriani, 2021; Son, 2025). This dynamic is also seen in the role of domestic interest groups that can influence attitudes towards foreign policy (Jeremiah & Raditio, 2025). Thus, foreign policy cannot be understood only as a response to the international system, but also as a result of domestic political processes.

These findings confirm that the effectiveness of Indonesia's foreign policy is more accurately understood as the result of the interaction between external and domestic factors (Fitriani, 2021). Therefore, foreign policy analysis needs to adopt a cross-level approach that integrates international relations theory with specific local contexts (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009; Wicaksana & Karim, 2022).

3.2.4. Practical Implications for Policymakers

From a practical perspective, the findings of this study show that the effectiveness of Indonesia's foreign policy is greatly influenced by institutional coordination and implementation capacity (Karim, 2026). Institutional fragmentation is one of the main obstacles that hinder policy consistency (Karim, 2026; Margiansyah, 2020). Therefore, institutional reforms are needed to improve integration between actors in the policy process.

In addition, strengthening institutional capacity is an important factor in ensuring effective policy implementation (Margiansyah, 2020). Reliance on informal networks and elite diplomacy can reduce long-term strategic coherence (Karim, 2026). Therefore, a formal coordination mechanism is needed that is able to align foreign policy with economic and security interests.

Furthermore, this study emphasizes the importance of developing more systematic policy evaluation indicators (Harijanto, 2024). With clear indicators, policymakers can conduct data-driven evaluations and avoid the dominance of rhetoric without tangible strategic results (Karim, 2026). This is important to ensure that Indonesia's foreign policy remains adaptive and responsive to global dynamics (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009).

4. Conclusion

This study analyzes the effectiveness of Indonesia's foreign policy within the framework of free and active principles through the

systematic literature review (SLR) approach. Based on the analysis of 22 articles systematically selected using the PRISMA method, this study not only identifies the characteristics of the literature and the main themes, but also shows that the existing literature is still fragmented both conceptually and methodologically (Sauer & Seuring, 2023). These findings confirm that the understanding of the effectiveness of Indonesia's foreign policy has not been built in a consistent analytical framework.

The results show that the effectiveness of Indonesia's foreign policy is more appropriately understood as a relational and contextual construction, which is formed through the interaction between policy orientation, diplomacy instruments, and domestic implementation factors (Karim, 2026). Within this framework, diplomacy plays a key operational mechanism, but its effectiveness depends largely on the level of policy coherence and institutional capacity (Agastia, 2020; Karim, 2026). Moreover, the dilemma between national sovereignty and international norms suggests that effectiveness does not always produce optimal outcomes, but rather often lies in the inevitable trade-offs (Huong & Khoo, 2019).

The main contribution of this research lies in the effort to consolidate conceptual aggregation of the scattered literature by integrating various dimensions of analysis into one more structured framework (Wicaksana & Karim, 2022). In contrast to previous studies that were partial, this study shows that the effectiveness of Indonesia's foreign policy cannot be adequately explained by a single approach, but rather requires integration between global factors, strategic orientation, and domestic dynamics (Karim, 2026). Thus, this research provides a more systematic analytical basis to understand the variation in foreign policy outcomes and strengthen the accumulation of knowledge in Foreign Policy Analysis (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009).

From a practical point of view, the findings of this study show that the main challenge in improving the effectiveness of foreign policy lies not only in external strategies, but also in internal capacity to maintain policy consistency and coordination (Karim, 2026; Margiansyah, 2020). In conditions where institutional fragmentation and policy incoherence cannot be adequately addressed, foreign policy orientations tend to undergo adjustments or even

reformulations in response to external pressures and suboptimal implementation outcomes (Rastuti & Khoirudin, 2025). This shows that the effectiveness of foreign policy is dynamic and depends on adaptability to changing global and domestic contexts (Jeremiah & Raditio, 2025).

However, this study has several limitations that need to be critically examined. First, the use of the Scopus database as the main source of literature has the potential to limit the scope of the study, especially for publications that are not indexed or in non-English languages, so that it can affect the representation of local perspectives. Second, the number of articles analyzed is relatively limited (22 articles), which reflects the limited empirical basis in this field as well as limiting the generalization of findings. Third, the thematic analysis approach used is interpretive, so the synthesis results are highly dependent on the researcher's categorization and interpretation process, which has the potential to cause analytical bias. Fourth, this study did not conduct a quantitative evaluation of the relationship between variables, so it has not been able to test the strength of the causal relationship between the identified factors.

Taking these limitations into account, this study shows that the study of the effectiveness of Indonesia's foreign policy still needs further development, especially through an approach that integrates stronger empirical analysis, more standardized indicators, and research designs that are able to test the relationships between variables more systematically (Sauer & Seuring, 2023).

Declaration of Conflicting Interest

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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Appendix

Table 1. Analytical Framework processed by the researcher

Author & Year	Article Title	Journal	Research Methods	Theory/Approach	Study Focus	Effectiveness Indicators	Key Findings	Linkage	Initial Themes
Rastuti & Khoirudin (2025)	Indonesia's Legal Politics in the Face of China's Trade War Retaliation...	<i>Journal of Litigation</i>	Normative Juridical	<i>Strategic Hedging / Pragmatic Engagement</i>	The US-China trade war and the WTO's response	Economic stability & compliance with international law (WTO)	Free activity functions as <i>strategic hedging</i> to maintain economic stability in the midst of the US-China trade war.	compliance with international law (WTO) with the protection of national economic interests through a neutral position.	Economic & Legal Diplomacy
Wicaksana & Karim (2022)	Approaches to Indonesia's Foreign Policy: Area Studies, FPA Theory, and Global IR	<i>Journal of ASEAN Studies</i>	Literature Review	<i>Non-Western FPA / Global IR</i>	The evolution of Indonesian foreign policy studies	Diversity of theory and production of local knowledge	There has been an evolution from the dominance of realism to a more diverse theoretical inquiry (<i>Global IR</i>) in Indonesian foreign policy studies.	the production of local knowledge with an understanding of Indonesia's unique identity that does not simply imitate the West.	Theoretical Evolution
Agastia (2020)	Understanding Indonesia's role in the 'ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific'...	<i>Asia Pacific Policy Studies</i>	Narrative Analysis & Literature Study	<i>Role Theory (Role Location)</i>	Indonesia's role in the AOIP	Acceptance of dominant actors (US, China, etc.) to the concept of Indonesia	Indonesia has succeeded in carrying out the role of <i>bridge-builder</i> through the articulation of AOIP received by major actors.	role theory with Indonesia's effectiveness in directing an inclusive regional architecture.	Regional Leadership
Juned & Saripudin (2025)	Dancing with Giants: Indonesia and its Inclusive	<i>JANUS.NET</i>	Qualitative (Data Triangulation)	<i>Offensive Neorealism</i>	BRICS membership and OECD	Bargaining <i>power</i> and strategic	BRICS membership is used as <i>leverage</i>	strategic multilateralism with efforts to	Strategic Multilateralism

Author & Year	Article Title	Journal	Research Methods	Theory/Approach	Study Focus	Effectiveness Indicators	Key Findings	Linkage	Initial Themes
	Approach... after BRICS Acceptance				proposals	autonomy	to accelerate accession to the OECD.	balance the influence of the West (OECD) and the East (BRICS).	
Rachman (2022)	Economic consequences of keeping peace in Afghanistan...	<i>Economic Annals-XXI</i>	Descriptive Qualitative (Borda Analysis)	<i>Soft Power</i>	Peace in Afghanistan	The success of the high-level meeting and the economic impact	The <i>soft power approach</i> through cleric diplomacy has effectively promoted peace and economic opportunities in Afghanistan.	religious identity with the effectiveness of peace diplomacy that provides concrete economic benefits.	Peace & Soft Power
Jeremiah & Raditio (2023/2025)	Getting our piece of the "national cake": the Islamists' attitude...	<i>Int. Journal of Asian Studies</i>	Comparative Qualitative	Domestic Politics (<i>Power Sharing</i>)	China's policy in the era of SBY & Jokowi	The level of resistance of domestic Islamist groups	The Islamist group's attitude toward Chinese policy is largely determined by the extent to which they are involved in power.	domestic political stability with consistency in the implementation of foreign policy against the major powers.	Domestic Politics
Karim (2025)	Layered Incoherence in Middle Power Foreign Policy...	<i>Global Policy</i>	Qualitative (Secondary Source)	<i>Layered Incoherence / Middle Power</i>	U.S.-China Rivalry (LTS & AOIP)	Coherence between policy rhetoric and field practice	Policy incoherence occurs due to institutional fragmentation and reliance on elite informal networks.	domestic bureaucratic structure with limited achievement of strategic coherence at the international level.	Strategic Incoherence
Center for Research (2015)	Human Rights Constitutionalism in Indonesia's Foreign Policy	<i>Constitutional Review</i>	Policy Document Analysis	Constitutionalism / Human Rights	Human Rights in Foreign Policy	Ratification of international treaties & global image	Human rights are often used as an instrument of " <i>image politics</i> "	constitutionalism with the effectiveness of human rights	Human Rights Diplomacy

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							rather than substantial improvements at home.	diplomacy in building international legitimacy.	
Huong & Khoo (2019)	Human Rights, State Sovereignty, and the Death Penalty... Bali Nine	<i>Journal of Int. Studies</i>	Qualitative Interview	Realism & Statism (Jack Donnelly)	Bali Nine Death Penalty Case	Prioritizing national interests over human rights commitments	In the case of the Bali Nine <i>death penalty</i> , the sovereignty of national law takes precedence over global human rights commitments.	state sovereignty with the dilemma of applying international human rights standards in foreign policy.	Sovereignty vs human rights
Warsito et al. (2020)	Indonesia's foreign policy towards Malaysia... Ambalat dispute	<i>UNISCI Journal</i>	Descriptive Analysis	International Law (UNCLOS 1982)	Ambalat Block Dispute	Dispute resolution without military escalation	The diplomacy of the Ambalat dispute has not been optimal due to the lack of use of strong scientific and historical evidence in negotiations.	the use of the law of the sea (UNCLOS) with the effectiveness of peaceful settlement of territorial disputes.	Territorial Disputes
Fogg (2015)	Islam in Indonesia's foreign policy, 1945-1949	<i>Al-Jāmi'ah</i>	Archival History & Research	Islam Instrumental	Revolution of Independence (Arab World)	Recognition of <i>de jure</i> sovereignty of Arab countries	Islam was used effectively as an instrument of diplomacy to gain early recognition of sovereignty from the Arab world.	Cross-border (religious) solidarity with the effectiveness of the independence struggle on the stage of global diplomacy.	Religious Identity & History
Fitriani (2021)	Linking the impacts of	<i>Journal of Contempt.</i>	Qualitative (<i>Four Factors</i>)	Perception, Domestic Politics,	Indonesia-China	Relationship stability amid	Bilateral relations with	elite and public perceptions with	Bilateral Relations

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	perception, domestic politics...	<i>East Asian Studies</i>	<i>Model</i>	Economy, Environment Int.	Bilateral Relations	domestic pressures	China are influenced more by domestic factors (sentiment and economy) than by international pressures.	the stability of strategic cooperation relations with major partner countries.	
Harijanto (2024)	Middle-power behaviours: Australia's status-quoist... and Indonesia's reformist...	<i>Australian Journal of Int. Affairs</i>	Document Analysis (NVivo)	<i>Outcome-Process Framework</i> (Lockean/Kantian)	Indo-Pacific Concept (Defense White Paper)	Alignment of the strategy with the vision of the regional order	Indonesia shows a <i>reformist</i> approach that prioritizes multilateralism rather than Australia's <i>status-quo</i> approach .	the behavior of the middle powers with the vision of establishing a more just and cooperative regional order.	Regional Architecture
Pedrason et al. (2024)	Navigating Around Conflict: The Indonesia Way... SCS Dispute	<i>Journal of Social and Environmental Management</i>	Descriptive Qualitative (Interview)	<i>Doughnut Theory</i> (Hasyim Djalal)	South China Sea Dispute (LTS)	Initiation of peace dialogue and <i>Zero Draft</i> CoC	Indonesia has consistently taken peace initiatives in the South China Sea through ASEAN forums and informal channels.	maritime diplomacy with Indonesia's role as an informal leader in maintaining regional stability.	Maritime Diplomacy
Son (2025)	Prabowo and the shifts in Indonesia's contemporary foreign policy...	<i>Cogent Social Sciences</i>	Qualitative Explanatory	<i>Operational Code Approach</i>	Prabowo's initial policy (LTS & BRICS)	Leader's subjective interpretation of the Independent Active principle	Prabowo's policies (BRICS & LTS) are influenced by the leader's personal beliefs (<i>Operational Code</i>) to secure	leadership psychology with a shift or continuity of the principle of Free Active in the contemporary era.	Leadership & Change

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							the economy.		
Safei (2021)	Promoting moderate Islam... English for Ulama programme	<i>HTS Theological Studies</i>	Qualitative Descriptive	Moderate Islam / <i>Soft Power</i>	English for Ulama (EFU) Program	Spread of moderate Islamic ideas and values globally	The <i>English for Ulama</i> (EFU) program is a <i>soft power</i> tool to promote Islamic moderation to the West.	Education/Da'wah programs with the effectiveness of building a positive image of the nation in the global community.	Soft Power Islam
Margiansyah (2020)	Revisiting Indonesia's economic diplomacy in the age of disruption...	<i>Journal of ASEAN Studies</i>	Qualitative (Grounded Theory)	<i>Integrative Diplomacy Innovation Diplomacy</i>	Digital Economy	New economic integration into the foreign agenda	Economic diplomacy needs to shift towards "innovation diplomacy" to deal with the disruption of the digital economy.	technological changes with the adaptation of diplomatic instruments to maintain national welfare.	Digital Diplomacy
Yazid (2014)	The Indonesian Coup September 1965: A Discussion...	<i>Asian Social Science</i>	Historical Discussion	Structure of Bipolarity (Cold War)	The 1965 Indonesia-Malaysia relations	Shift in foreign policy ideology	The 1965 coup drastically changed the direction of Indonesia's foreign policy from the Eastern bloc to the West.	domestic ideology with changes in alliance structure and political stability in Southeast Asia.	Historical Ideological Changes
Riot (2024)	Indonesia, an offshore balancer in Southeast Asia?	<i>World Affairs</i>	Historical Survey	<i>Offshore Balancing (Realism)</i>	Regional power politics	Avoiding unnecessary continental commitments	Indonesia acts as an <i>offshore balancer</i> that <i>buck-passes</i> to China's balancing coalition.	geographical position (insularity) with a strategy of avoiding direct involvement in major power conflicts.	Realist Geopolitics
Umar (2016)	A Genealogy of	<i>Studia</i>	Qualitative	<i>Governmentality</i>	Islam in	Reproduction	Moderate	The genealogy of	Islamic and

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	Moderate Islam: Governmentality and Discourses...	<i>Islamika</i>	Genealogy	(Foucault)	foreign policy	of the discourse "Muslims are good/bad"	Islamic discourse is produced as part of the regime's interests and global counterterrorism projects.	power with the effectiveness of the use of religious identity in navigating international pressures.	Political Discourse
Grzywacz (2020)	Democracy in Indonesian Strategic Narratives...	<i>Journal of Current Asian Affairs</i>	Narrative Coherence Analysis	<i>Strategic Narratives</i>	Promotion of Democracy	Intra-narrative and inter-narrative coherence	The narrative of promoting Indonesian democracy is often incoherent between official strategies and political speeches of leaders.	narrative coherence with Indonesia's effectiveness and credibility as a model of Muslim democracy.	Promotion of Democracy
Putra et al. (2024)	Middle Power Norm Entrepreneur: Indonesia's Advocacy of the AOIP	<i>SAGE Open</i>	Qualitative Deductive	<i>Norm Life Cycle</i> (Finnemore & Sikkink)	AOIP Advocacy	Internalization of friendship norms (<i>amity</i>) in the region	Indonesia acts as an <i>entrepreneur norm</i> that introduces cooperation norms through the AOIP platform.	the life cycle of norms with Indonesia's ability to influence the behavior of other countries in the Indo-Pacific region.	Norm Entrepreneurship

Sources: (Systematic review data analyzed by the author 2026)