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Leadership Personality and Foreign Policy Behavior: An Analysis of Tanzania's President John Pombe Magufuli

Godwin Gonde Amani[1]& Audax Butamanya Kweyamba[2]

Abstract

This study analyzed the influence of the leadership personality of His Excellency President John Magufuli in relation to the foreign policy behavior of Tanzania during his tenure as president (2015-2021. It was guided by two theories; Leadership personality theory and Rational Choice theory. The study employed a qualitative research approach with a case study design based on an individual, and informed by the interpretivism philosophy. It was found that the leadership personality of President Magufuli adhered to the existing foreign policy behavior through influencing more cooperation, good neighborliness, African unity and self-reliance. Also, the study found that President Magufuli had a power-based approach as well as the delegation approach in carrying the country's foreign policy. Diversion from the principle of collective efforts in addressing the global challenges the study found that during Magufuli Tanzania took its own stance in some matters that were contrary to international protocols. President Magufuli was a decision maker, hard worker, disciplined, time manager and results-based leader who would do whatever it takes to achieve his interests and those of the government he was leading. It is concluded that Magufuli was a religious and moral conservative who believed on the principles of Christianity and African traditions since his childhood, his school life, his service in the National Service and his years in the government administration.

Key Words: John Magufuli, Foreign Policy, Leadership Personality, Human Behavior

[1] **Godwin Gonde Amani** is a Tanzanian political analyst and lecturer at the Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim Centre for Foreign Relations in Dar es Salaam. His email contact is g.gamani@yahoo.com

[2] **Dr. Audax Butamanya Kweyamba** is a Tanzanian academic and lecturer in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration at the University of Dar es Salaam, His emails contact is audax.kweyamba@udsm.ac.tz

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Influence of Foreign Policy Behavior

The personality factor of a leader has a great contribution in directing the foreign policy of any state in such a way that, the policy behavior can determine the nature of the relationship that a state can have with the international community (Mark et al., 2013). The processes towards the formation of that policy and the internal and external influences including the role of the top diplomat in shaping the foreign policy behavior are of a paramount concern (Shivji, 2020).

The foreign policy behavior of Tanzania since independence was much affected by the role of the president who was also the party chairman. The foreign policy followed the Westminster model and the president was considered as the top diplomat whose leadership personality had a lot to do with foreign policy behavior (Mathew & Mushi, 1981). For instance, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere –the first President of the United Republic of Tanzania insisted on nationalism while his successor President Ali Hassan Mwinyi wanted a liberalized economy. As for President Benjamin Mkapa's approach was on privatization while President Jakaya Kikwete's personality on foreign policy embraced multilateralism (Kelly et al., 2024).

The leadership personality in the foreign policy behavior of Tanzania has been changing from time to time. With the total shift of the focus of the foreign policy from political liberation to economic development, diplomats who worked abroad and within the state had to work within the parameters of that shift (URT, 2001). With these foreign policy shifts, presidents were expected to act in a manner that would attract more investors and strengthening diplomatic ties between Tanzania and other states. The success of the foreign policy and the contribution of the leaders were now measured through the number of tourists, level of investments, industrial development, and establishment of the new ties (URT, 2021).

Mwalimu Julius Nyerere influenced the liberation of the African continent and due to his background as a son of Chief Wanzagi and a beneficiary of missionary colonial education; Mwalimu Nyerere used peaceful means in conducting his liberation movements including the attainment of Tanganyika's independence (Dunheved, 1961). His successor Ali Hassan Mwinyi ensured that Tanzania embraces a friendly relation with its neighbors due to his personal trait. The late President Ally Mwinyi secured a conducive diplomatic environment for Tanzania and its allies (Mukandala, 2022). It was during the leadership of PresidentBenjamin William Mkapa when foreign investors were highly favored in the country and that happened due to the fact that the late Benjamin Mkapa had been a minister before and a state's envoy who believed in privatization and the role of investors in strengthening the country's economy (Rwekaza, 2020). As for President Jakaya Kikwete, he grew within the ruling party's philosophies and served in the government for years. As a leader he had liberal approaches in influencing the country's foreign policy behavior. It was during his time when

the new foreign policy of the country was written with the clear view of economic diplomacy (Omari, 2003).

During the presidency of the late Magufuli the behavior of the foreign policy of Tanzania changed in its approaches. It was during his time Tanzania had new friends while at the same time lost others (Hennry, 2022; Shaw, 2016). The personal characteristic of a leader must have an impact in the foreign policy practices (Hudson, 2005). The personality trait of Magufuli received some critics from the developed countries including the United States of America on issues related to the rule of law, political freedom and liberties (Amnesty International, 2019). However, Magufuli was hailed by China, Russia and African Union as a leader of example and committed in bring about the positive change to his people.[3] It is with these mixed feelings about the leadership personality of the President that this study aimed to comprehensively analyze his leadership personality dimension in the foreign policy behavior of Tanzania.

1.2 Magufuli's Mixed Approaches

During the 5th government under President John Magufuli, there was a shift in tone and approach in as far as the foreign policy behavior is concerned, (Anja & Bruhn, 2024). This is exemplified by revising the terms of the mining contracts that Tanzania had entered with foreign companies; issues related to human rights and liberties; the Tanzanian stance during COVID-19 and vaccine and; on state's visits and international summits attendance. President Magufuli was considered by his supporters as a patriot and a person who rejected all forms of exploitation from the Western countries while his opponents perceived his leadership personality as the one undermining the free market economy and risking the country relations with the international community (Akpan, 2022; Anudo et al., 2021; Paget, 2017). President Magufuli was considered as a person who concentrated more on home affairs and favored the delegation approach when dealing with international issues, an act which places him as a nationalist for sure than a statesman (Kashumba & James, 2021).

When dealing with the issue of COVID – 19 for example, President Magufuli took a hard stance and refused to lockdown the country as other countries did at that time but instead, he encouraged people to continue working and put faith in God[4]. As a devoted catholic, Magufuli believed that through prayers people will be free from fear and perhaps being saved from the pandemic (Ndaluka, 2023). President Magufuli could not understand why people wear masks in church while at the same time believe that God would save them from any harm. On one hand, he managed to reduce the public fear but in the other hand Tanzania's relations with the

[3] The Citizen Report Wednesday, December 02, 2015 — updated on March 31, 2021. 'Magufuli Styles earns international praise"

[4] Basillioh Mutahi, BBC News Report, 2nd November 2020. Nairobi Kenya

international community was criticized for not adhering to international health protocols and standards (Munyaradzi, 2021).

Again, having a background from the poor family that struggled even to pay for his schooling, John Magufuli experienced exploitation and inequalities among the people of his community, (Anudo et al., 2021). Magufuli viewed such exploitation and inequalities as a result of few Tanzanians who were supposed to act for the interests of the community but choose to collaborate with the imperialists for their personal gain (Kashumba & James, 2021). President Magufuli ordered the revising of mineral contracts that Tanzania had entered with foreign companies to ensure that the Tanzanians benefit. The contracts that Tanzania had signed with the American and Canadian companies were considered as exploitative and one sided hence he demanded an immediate revision of the terms of the contracts to ensure mutual gain between Tanzania and the foreign companies (Anudo et al., 2021). His leadership behavior was considered by his supporters as the one focusing on the emotional healing of his people while in the capitalist world he was considered as a constraint to the free market economy (Kashumba & James, 2021).

During his presidency, President Magufuli was a hands-on leader in decision making including foreign policy behavior (Amani et al., 2026). President Magufuli was quoted in several occasions blaming the West on their propaganda against African states in the name of democracy, human rights and rule of law (Amnesty International, 2019). For instance, the president refused the COVID- 19 vaccine and instead he sent a plane and a delegation to Antananarivo Madagascar to study and get the locally made medicine. According to him, the virus needed God's intervention instead of the vaccine, hence ordered the reopening of the schools and declared Tanzania to be a COVID-19 free state (Munyaradzi 2021). Such act not only threatened the Tanzania's interactions with the international community but also made it difficult for travelers carrying Tanzania's passport to have an easy entry in other countries, (Amani et al., 2026).

Furthermore, President Magufuli had no fear to direct his officials to take tough decisions even under the threat of being taken to international courts (Amnesty International, 2019). The tough decisions that Magufuli insisted included the decisions to issue public statements and government stances that might sound contradicting with the principles of good neighborliness, international norms and diplomatic standards (Nyamsenda & Kamata, 2025). The breach of the mineral contracts, the burning of tons of chicks from the neighboring Kenya, the enactment of the Cyber laws and other decisions influenced by Magufuli antagonized the relations that Tanzania had with outsiders **(**Jacob, 2018**).** In retaliation against some of the decisions, Tanzania's assets including the plane model Bombardier Q400 were seized in South Africa and Canada following the cases filed by a Namibian citizen named Hermanus Steyn who demanded to be compensated a total of thirty-three million dollar (33M USD) by the

government of Tanzania upon the nationalization of his property in 1980 while he was living in Tanzania.[5]

Regarding foreign visits, President Magufuli was a leader whose approach on paying foreign visits was peculiar. As a former secondary school teacher who also happened to attend the National Service training President Magufuli believed in self-reliance and wanted his country to have a self-sustaining economy without foreign dependence (Akpan, 2022). President Magufuli never made any state visit outside Africa in all years of his presidency and instead he directed the ambassadors and high commissioners abroad to work on his behalf. His intention was to cut down the costs of visits and concentrate on home economic projects but he was criticized for limiting the country towards international exposure and state interaction with other actors.[6]

President Magufuli's leadership behavior made him to be nicknamed by his supporters as "Bulldozer" and they considered Magufuli as a nationalist, a reformer and a hero who wanted to deliver his people out of neo colonialism7. Those who opposed his leadership personality alleged Magufuli to be a conservative leader who violated the rules of diplomacy and affected the country's foreign policy which directs interdependence and diplomatic engagement with the international community (Amnesty International, 2019). It is evident from these cited examples that the personality of President Magufuli in foreign policy behavior is coupled with different views and approaches hence attracting a comprehensive analysis.

The study was mainly interested in interrogating the personality factor of President Magufuli and his adherence to the existing foreign policy of the country. Again, the study analyzed the influence of President Magufuli's leadership personality on foreign policy approaches and tools. President Magufuli's personality as the president had attracted attention of this study because a number of his actions and reforms impacted the country's direction towards foreign policy behavior, (Shivji, 2021). In dealing with country's foreign policy, President Magufuli was seen as a nationalist whose personal stance on country's relations with the international community followed the isolationism policy (Kell et al., 2024). In other way, president Magufuli was considered a hero and a true African leader who wanted his country's to be respected and self-sustained without external dependence and that was to be portrayed by its foreign policy behavior (Akpan, 2022).

[5] BBC News: BBC Swahili, Dira ya Dunia, 23rd November, 2019, 21:07 hrs
[6] The Citizen: Thursday, October 4, 2018, Updated on April 14, 2021 " I Skip foreign trips to Save Money"
[7] BBC News Report, Online report, March 18, 2021 ttled; John Magufuli: Tanzania's Bulldozer' President

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Research Approach, Philosophy and Design

This study employed a qualitative research approach with a case study design informed by the interpretivism research philosophy (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The qualitative approach and interpretivism philosophy were necessary to be used because of its naturalistic methods and interpretive nature which informed the methodology behind the whole study (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). A single case design was opted for an individual-John Pombe Magufuli to be considered as the focused unit of study. This enabled the researchers to concentrate on obtaining an in-depth understanding of the inquired information (Bhattacherjee, 2012).

Data collection was guided by the type of variables, the accuracy required, and the collection point. Data was collected from both primary and secondary sources. Secondary data was collected from published and unpublished sources available in the library of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and East Africa Cooperation, the library of the university and on the internet such as books, journals, journal articles, research reports, and national policies. Primary data was collected using interviews and group discussion. A pilot study was done to test the validity and reliability of data collection tools specifically to test the clarity of questions and instructions (Bhattacherjee, 2012). The interviews were piloted at the Centre for Foreign Relations in Dar es Salaam to test the reliability and validity, time used for interview and to determine if there were any misconceptions of words. The pilot test helped correct data collection tools and refine research objectives and questions.

2.2 The Study Unit Biography, Population and Sampling

2.2.1 The Study Unit Biography

John Pombe Magufuli was born on 29th October 1959 in a poor family of Joseph Magufuli and his wife Suzana who were both the well devoted Christians and leaders within the Catholic Small Community, (Anudo et al., 2021). After his schoolings; President Magufuli got married to Janeth (a primary school teacher) in a simple wedding which according to himself, he wore no suit and had no money to afford the wedding rings and that the priest who ministered their wedding bought them the rings and the soda afterward. [8]

Magufuli's life in politics started in 1990 when he run for a parliamentary sit of then Biharamulo constituency and lost to Phares Kabuye. Magufuli never gave up after his first attempt but instead he contested again in 1995 for Biharamulo East seat and won. In his first

[8] David Muli, The Standard Newspaper, November 2, 2018. "I married without a suit or a ring – President Magufuli reveals".

term as the Member of Parliament he was appointed the Deputy Minister for Works and rose through the ranks of the cabinet for the following 20 years. His behavior as smart and a hands-on leader who rejected any form of laziness and fraud; Magufuli earned trust in the eyes of his superiors that he was elevated to be a full minister in all cabinets thereafter (Ndaluka, 2023).

President Magufuli was elected to presidency in 2015 in one among the competitive elections that Tanzania had faced since independence. Among other factors that led to his victory, his leadership personality as a hard worker and a trustworthy person made voters to elect him to the first office of the republic with a narrow victory of 58.5% of the total votes (Joseph, 2017). He was again re-elected for the second term in 2020 this time having secured over (84%) of the votes but only served for few months and suddenly passed away on 17th March, 2021 (*Ibid*).

2.2.2 The Study Population and Sampling

The study used a purposive and snowballing sampling technique and the sample was 20 participants among them, 6 females. The population for this study included 6 retired diplomats who served before, during and after the fifth government, 5 residents of Magufuli's home town 3 among them were members from his family. Another group included 4 officers from the ministries where Magufuli served before his presidency and 3 Foreign Service Officers working within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation. The other 2 participants were the political analysts from the higher learning institutions in Dar es Salaam and Dodoma.

2.3 Data Collection, Analysis and Trustworthiness

The study used interview guide with closed and open-ended questions to facilitate one-on-one responses. Documents and literature review related to Magufuli personality and foreign policy behavior were also used in data collection. The data were analyzed thematically by using coding scheme which categorized themes according to the two objectives of the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). Regarding the trustworthiness of the data and research ethical considerations were also adhered by re-checking the analyzed report and maintaining confidentiality as well as anonymity in the whole research process (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

3.0 Theoretical Framework

This study employed two theories in examining the influence of leadership personality on foreign policy behavior. The first theory was the Leadership Personality Theory as developed by Thomas Carlyle (Olson,1965) while the second theory was the Rational Choice Theory as first explained by Adam Smith (Becker, 2011) and later being modified by other scholars within the field of political science. On the leadership personality theory, the argument is that individuals have a great influence in directing the foreign policies of their states (Kanodia &

Sacher, 2016). In a leadership model, other models were associated including autocratic model, democratic model, lesser fair model, bureaucratic model and authoritarian model. The individual leaders in this study were the top diplomats in which to this study the president is the key figure. Individual behavior, individual's talents and individual's attitudes could influence their decisions, actions and even their vital moves in the behavior of the country's foreign policy (Smith, 2002).

On the second theory the argument is that a rational actor's model in foreign policy insists on ranking preferences, goals and interests, as well as seeing which one is the best that deserves priority over the others (Heywood, 2004). It takes the issue of foreign policy so seriously since it considers the facts and findings and that for an individual to make decisions on which way should a policy looks like then that is the best for the policy implementation (Elster, 1989). Rational Choice Theory is an approach that could be used by social scientists to understand human behavior (Green, 2012).

This study used both theories (The Leadership Personality Theory and the Rational Choice Theory) since both theories have a direct link to the study in testing the personality of the decision maker and the influence of such actor in foreign policy behavior. Since an individual is the unit of analysis for this study, the two theories are relevant in explaining the personality factor of President Magufuli in adhering to the existing foreign policy of Tanzania and his influence on foreign policy approaches and tools.

4.0 Findings and Discussion

4.1 Magufuli's Adherence to the Country's Foreign Policy

In examining the manner in which President Magufuli adhered to the existing foreign policy 15 participants noted that President Magufuli maintained good relations with foreign diplomats locally, and abroad. One participant who was the senior official (ambassador) within the government of Magufuli said

> …we witnessed the role of diplomacy under Magufuli when the Kenyan president Uhuru Kenyatta visited Tanzania and was gifted with live animals and birds as a token of appreciation for his role in strengthening the bilateral tie between Tanzania and Kenya. Kenya too reciprocated by bringing back and handled to Tanzania a larger number of minerals (Gold) that were confiscated by their government… Interview13[9].

The President (Magufuli) offered state gifts to Uhuru Kenyatta, the former president of the Republic of Kenya who paid the state visit to Tanzania. During his visit to Tanzania the two

[9] Interview on 14th April,2024 from 1400 hrs to 1500hrs

leaders had a long talk which resulted to the promise of giving His Excellency Uhuru Kenyatta a special gift as a token of good friendship and good neighborliness. On the 2nd of August 2019, the then High Commissioner of Tanzania to Nairobi Ambassador Dr Pindi Hamza Chana delivered four Peacocks to president Uhuru alongside the goodwill message from the president on behalf of the people of Tanzania as a token of appreciation and fulfilling the promise of President Magufuli to his Kenyan counterpart. In responding to the gift granted to him on behalf of the people of Kenya, President Kenyatta said that the birds offered signified the values of love, unity and brotherhood that exist between the people of the two nations.[10] That act showed the adherence to the existing foreign policy that insists on good neighborliness and it portrays Magufuli' childhood personal characters as a host who would do whatever it takes to entertain his visitors/ guests. The New Foreign Policy of Tanzania is made under the foundation principles of good neighborliness and in doing so a top diplomat is expected to maintain the relationship with our neighbors on behalf of the people (URT, 2001).

Also, the president proposed the development of the performance assessment indicators for evaluating the performance of the Tanzanian diplomats abroad. The study found that the aim was to measure how the diplomats managed to implement the Tanzania foreign policy abroad since the current foreign policy of Tanzania assesses the diplomats' performance through the result's-based approach. The president always insisted on results and encouraged the leaders under his leadership not to fear making decisions. A study participant who was a former ambassador of Tanzania to Moroni-Comoros explained that, even though Magufuli appointed both career and non-career diplomats he said clearly that he will assess their performances basing on the contribution they make in foreign policy of the country and the results of their performance. The ambassador used his own example saying that he had no background in diplomacy but he was appointed and managed to represent the country because of the directives of the president. Magufuli made it clear that the diplomats should not just dine and wine but sell the country's foreign policy abroad. Magufuli instructed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to develop the key performance indicators that would measure the effectiveness of the appointed ambassadors in performing their duties for the benefit of the country they represent. Interview13. [11]

Furthermore, Magufuli's directives to the government officials to establish their offices in Dodoma the Capital City- extended to the foreign diplomats residing in Tanzania. The president allocated land for the construction of embassies in Dodoma and assured the ambassadors and other diplomatic representatives that the government would have constructed all required infrastructures in the allocated areas to ease their works. A study participant witnessed the allocation of the larger piece of land in Mtumba area in Dodoma that was to be distributed among the foreign representatives for the sole purpose of constructing their

[10] Correspondent , The Citizen August 02, 2019

[11] nterview on 11th May,2025 from 1235 hrs to 1255hrs

Embassies, High Commissions and the Apostolic Nunciature. Six participants who work within the diplomatic corps witnessed the intention of the president to strengthen diplomatic ties with the international community by freely offering land for them to construct their official offices and residences.

Moreover, President Magufuli was a statesman and was trusted as an adviser with wisdom to exchange views with other presidents from African countries. A study participant who was his close friend working in his private office narrates said that "…people had wrong perceptions *about how Magufuli outside Tanzania but the truth is, he was leading among other presidents by being called and asked for his opinions by other leaders within Africa and outside,"* Interview 20.[12]. Also, President Magufuli received a lot of calls from other African presidents who wanted to get his views and opinions on various issues in their respective countries. To most of the African countries Magufuli was considered as a leader whose stance to international exploitation was attracting their desires to seek advice.

Further, Tanzania witnessed no major conflicts among the neighboring states that required urgent international innervations. This implicitly suggests that, President Magufuli adhered to the existing foreign policy that insists on the need of strengthening the good relationship with our neighbors since a general theory of good neighborliness directs a country to have a good relationship with its neighbors as you can choose a friend but not a neighbor[13]. A study participant who was the diplomat during Magufuli's time said that, Tanzania (during Magufuli) continued strengthening the good neighborliness with its neighbors and people within the region enjoyed times of peace and harmony. There were no serious confrontations that arose between Tanzania and other countries within its borders that needed international intervention.

Furthermore, the multilateral and bilateral cooperation were strengthened during Magufuli's presidency mostly in areas of trade, business and diplomacy. The study found out that, the country hosted various international events because of the good cooperation that Tanzania had with the neighboring countries and other international organizations. For example, another study participant said that "*regional and international cooperation had been strengthened more than before during the presidency of Magufuli*". The participant was of the further view that, "*Tanzania has been a leading state in regional dialogues and was hailed by many African leaders as a state that has smooth leadership*". Most participants positively acknowledged that Tanzania has been a host of African Court of Justice among many other institutions. During Magufuli's presidency Tanzania been a host of anticorruption board meetings and all that was due to the clean sheet history of the president.

[12] Interview on 18th June, 2025 from 0930 hrs to 1030 hrs,

[13] URT New Foreign Policy, 2001

In addition, the president expanded diplomatic relations to six new embassies including that in Tel Aviv and Kuala lumper. President Magufuli insisted on the doctrine of self-reliance among the people. Magufuli insisted on pan Africanism and wanted a country to be independent with no foreign aid as a means for survival. All these are advocated in the new foreign policy of Tanzania that insists on economic diplomacy as a collective strategy as the responded pointed,

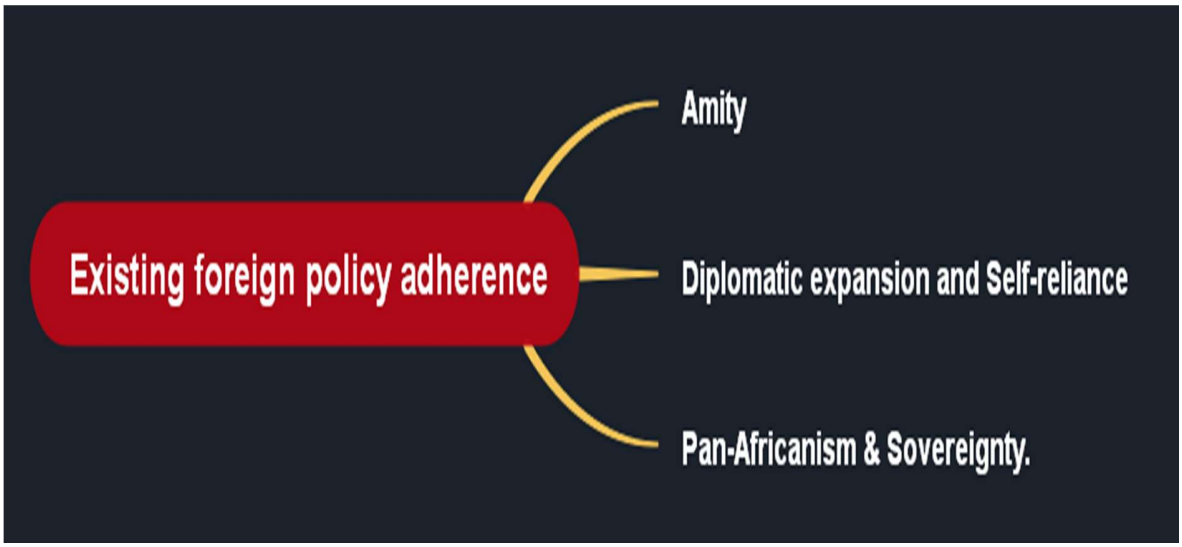
> … we witnessed the launching of new diplomatic missions during his time. Between 3 –6 new diplomatic missions were opened with the vast interests in different areas. During his time Magufuli increased Tanzania's representation abroad by adding more embassies like that of Israel and Indonesia. Interview7.[14]

Few participants especially the political analysts criticized Magufuli's approaches citing some diplomatic scandals that Tanzania engaged with the neighboring states during the presidency of Magufuli. The ***tit for tat*** decisions done by diplomats who worked under Magufuli made Tanzania have some diplomatic confrontation with its allies and neighbors. One participant recalled the Tanzania – Kenya diplomatic dispute over the denial of Tanzania to transport food products to Kenya reciprocated by closing its borders with Tanzania on the basis of COVID-19 threats.

Generally, the findings cement on the relevance of the leadership personality model that argues on the influence of the individual behavior in directing matters. The theory explained on the role of the personality factor of an individual in shaping the behavior of those around him. President Magufuli directed the implementation of the foreign policy in a manner that was accommodative to the strengthening of bilateral and multilateral relations that Tanzania had with the outside world. Being a hard worker, hands-on leader and a trustworthy individual, President Magufuli managed to adhere to the country's foreign policy and stabilized the diplomatic relation that Tanzania had with the international community. Again, as argued by (Heywood, 2004) when he drew the rational choice model as a theory in politics, the President made decisions basing on what he thought was the best for the country at that time. The decisions to handle the peacock to his Kenyan counterpart had a significant importance to the neighborliness and his stances during the COVID-19 pandemic managed to wipe away the fear among the people. Since the theory insists on individuals decisions made under preferences, goals and interests; what President Magufuli did in relation to the country's foreign policy behavior had impacts to the country's engagement in foreign relation.

[14] Interview on 05th May, 2025 from 1330 hrs to 1430 hrs,

Figure 4.1 Magufuli's Adherence to the Country's Foreign Policy



Source: Field Data 2025

Figure 4.1 above explains on the areas that President Magufuli adhered to the country's foreign policy through his leadership personality.

The figure pointed the three key areas of adherence one being amity which stands for the strengthening of good neighborliness that Tanzania had with its neighbors as advocated by the country's foreign policy. The figure presents another area which explains on how the leadership personality of President Magufuli managed the expansion of diplomatic relations as well as self-reliance of Tanzania. Lastly, the figure presents the influence of Magufuli's leadership in safeguarding the sovereignty of the country and himself being championed as a Pan- Africanist who wanted the continent to stand strong.

4.2 Magufuli's Traits, Approaches and Tools on Foreign Policy

The study found out that President Magufuli had different approaches and tools that he used during his presidency. Such approaches and tools affected the general behavior of the country's foreign policy both negatively and positively. Magufuli was associated with authoritarian decision-making style during his time as well as the country witnessed diplomatic isolation and withdrawal from some countries that were not pleased by the late president's approach in diplomacy.

Similarly, the country experienced a shift from traditional soft diplomacy to aggressive nature of foreign relations. The study found that prior to his presidency, the country engaged more in negotiations, meetings and agreements in engaging with foreign countries and the country had to use the career diplomats groomed in those areas so as to defend the position of the country on the round table. However, immediately after the election of Magufuli to presidency and became the top diplomat, there were several changes that left international investors and

stakeholders speechless since they were viewed as contradicting to the country's long stance and engagement in international affairs which used more of the soft skills and historical influence. One of the study participants said,

> It was a bit different in tone and practice in doing things because it was very hard to predict the next move… With Bernard Membe as the foreign minister it was a bit relaxing to see him talking or conducting negotiations on behalf of the country but when it came to a person like Palamagamaba Kabudi and his caliber it was different. Interview 15[15].

During the presidency of Magufuli there was a quick and surprise change in the way Tanzania involved in international relations mostly in the approach and the foreign policy tool. Traditionally the foreign policy of Tanzania aimed at creating conducive environment for the peaceful political environment that would attract more investors and through that it was needed for a soft approach that would make investors feel safe. Acting strongly and aggressively meant that, he was creating unfavorable environment for investors and implicitly telling the investors to leave the country. Making investors feel like they had been exploiting the natives and that the restructuring of terms was now in favor of the new approach under Magufuli's rule which was not welcomed by the foreign companies. Such approach was seen as a means of Magufuli to acquire public support under the cost of trading with international cooperation through investment. In response, participants said his childhood development caused the president tone being aggressive; implicitly, the president thought aggressive spirit could bring good results in foreign relations than being soft that would delay matters and soften your position in the negotiation table. Participants who happened to study and grow with him in his Chato hometown recalled how Magufuli considered toughness as being straight forward, standing firm against anyone oppressing the other and be truthful to yourself and to those around you. His youth responsibility in herding his father's cattle transformed him and made him a leader who would use all his capabilities to manage and control his group. A study participant who was a senior academician in one of the universities of Tanzania and served in the political post during Magufuli said;

> ….Magufuli being a person from a pastoral family he learned the harsh environment in taking care of the cattle. The hardships he faced when herding cattle made him strong enough not to fear any resistances in hisworks and we see that when he instructed the completion of the construction of Kijazi interchange during the COVID 19 with the statement that he doesn't fear the disease what he wants is for the project to complete no matter what. Interview 216

The childhood development of Magufuli caused his tone being aggressive and impolite although to him it meant being straight and truthful. A study participant who was his aide said

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15 Interview on 03rd April,2025 from 1330 hrs to 1420hrs

16 Interview on 10th April,2025 from 1700 hrs to 1830hrs

that, President Magufuli thought aggressive spirit could bring good and immediate results in foreign relations than being soft that would delay matters and soften your position in the negotiation table. Magufuli's tone was seen as impolite and the impolite language that the president used created diplomatic deadlock with foreign countries, investors and stakeholders.

Furthermore, President Magufuli was a quick decisions and solutions maker person and indeed he had a great influence in that approach. The study found that Magufuli was a person who wanted immediate solutions to complex issues such as issues related to diplomacy and foreign relations that required enough time to get their solutions. To please the president, subordinates had to come with solutions without doing deeper analysis of the problem at hand. People did not want to lose their positions hence they had to do exactly as they were directed to do by the top diplomat. Diplomats under his administration feared him and with such personality it made some difficulties even for the foreign diplomats seeking audience with him even to matters that would be beneficial to the country. The president could sometimes violate international norms and practices without fear therefore those diplomats working under him would only report, present or advise those matters which will be in favor of the president and hide the realities. One of the participants noted,

> There were sometimes when we were happy with how he (Magufuli) adhered with the foreign policy but in reality, there were also some moments when we felt the absence of our peaceful coexistence in the international system. We were violating international norms and principles at any time without any reason or fear of being isolated or destroying the relationship. Magufuli was unpredictable indeed and could not sugar coat matters which in diplomacy that's the essential key to relations. Interview 11.[17]

In discussing the above narration, the president was not reliable in terms of abiding to foreign relations and putting to risk the relations that Tanzania had with the international partners was not a thing for him to fear of. President Magufuli only focused on what was the needs of his people and their happiness even if such needs and happiness would mean to contradict with the country's traditional diplomatic tools and approaches towards international relations.

Nevertheless, President Magufuli had little foreign visits since he preferred delegation approach in international invitations than attending in person. President Magufuli considered not travelling abroad as a cost reduction mechanism. It was argued that presidential visits were expensive because a huge delegation team was required to accompany the president and there were no means to reduce the number due to protocol and security reasons. Those in rejection of the delegation approach believed that attending in person (by the president) was important for the president who is the number one diplomat

[17] Interview on 2nd August ,2025 from 1100 hrs to 1200 hrs

During the formal visits in or attendance of the international conferences there are side meetings which can be conducted before or after the intended conferences that are better done when the president attends in person. The ***small talks*** done by leaders before attending the main event have a great contribution in forming alliances or having a common stance of the agenda of the conferences. Repeated answers from the respondents of this study found that there is a negative diplomatic message when sending a delegate to a conference in which the president was supposed to attend. For this reason, President Magufuli deliberately refused to attend the conferences and instead emphasized on the need of utilizing our diplomats serving in our missions abroad. The inward-looking approach reflected both Magufuli's power-based personality and belief that Tanzania can solve its problems without depending on outside interference.

As argued by the two theories under the study, Magufuli's traits, approaches and tools in foreign policy behavior had a relevant connection to what the leadership personality theory and the rational choice theory tell. As the president, his life experiences since childhood, in school, in the National Service and in the government reflect his commitment in making decisions basing on preferences, goals and national interests. Since the leadership theory insists on the individual's role in influencing others to do things, it was the place of Magufuli to influence diplomats and other actors within the field of foreign policy to act in accordance to the speed of his government. With love to his country and the continent of Africa, most of the decisions done by Magufuli were assessed in line with the genuine patriotism and desire to see that Tanzania and Africa stand strong and avoid total dependence from the West.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

Generally, the study revealed that President Magufuli adhered to the foreign policy of the country and his leadership personality was of a top diplomat who wanted to place his country on top within the region. On the leadership traits that influenced Magufuli's leadership personality and his adherence to the foreign policy behavior the study concluded that most of the diplomats working under the president feared him hence could not make decisions in many occasions. Apart from being a feared person Magufuli was also associated with decisiveness trait as well as patriotism trait which he learnt that through his youth experiences. The study concluded that President Magufuli was a goal-oriented person, time manager and self-confident person who wanted the country to be self-sufficient. Again, through his service in the National Service President Magufuli was equipped with discipline and hardworking spirit that were observed at all times when engaging with in the country's foreign policy. As a devoted catholic with the first vocation of becoming a priest President Magufuli was associated with moral and religious conservatism that managed to hold the country steadily during the CORONA pandemic.

Magufuli adhered to the principles of good neighborliness through strengthening good relations with Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda and that there were no serious conflicts between Tanzania and its neighbors during his time. President Magufuli adhered to the principle of African Unity by calling the African solutions to African problems as well as adherence to the long traditional principle of self-reliance by making the country depend on the domestic sources rather than the external loans and grants that came with a lot of conditionalities. The shifting of the government from Dar es Salaam to Dodoma and the arrangement of the plot for the foreign representatives to construct their embassies and high commissions adhered to the foreign policy strategy of enhancing bilateral and multilateral cooperation that Tanzania had with the outside world.

Similarly, the study revealed that there were some changes in the foreign policy approaches and tools which included the power-based approach from the top diplomat to his deputes which was contrary to a long traditional soft approach which involved a long discussion and mutual agreements. Also, the change in personnel and the favor of the civil servants with military background to serve in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was at the peak. Orders and commands were associated with the decisions done within the diplomatic carder and that the tone of the president has sometimes jeopardized the relations mostly when he publicly labeled the investors as exploiters.

President Magufuli was also was in favor of delegation approach rather than attending the international conferences or responding to the state's visits. The study revealed that the president did that under the grounds of cost reductions, empowering the Tanzania diplomats abroad with the power to make decisions on his behalf but also, he was so much concerned with his personal security and safety since the hosts invited him were affected by the new terms of their mineral companies operating in Tanzania.

The study findings summarized that the leadership personality of President Magufuli was much influenced by a number of factors since his childhood experiences to the top office of the Republic. Being raised from the strict family of Mr and Mrs Joseph Pombe Magufuli the devoted Catholics and leaders within his village, Magufuli's behavior was shaped from his home. His leadership experiences as schools from being the timekeeper to the class prefect and the leader of the school brass band President Magufuli managed to understand how it means to lead by examples. His job at the laboratory, National Service and his early times in politics earned him much respect from the public an made him rising through the ranks for the 20 years of his public service before elected president.

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