

**IDIOSYNCRATIC VARIABLES AS DETERMINANTS OF KENYA'S FOREIGN  
POLICY: A CASE STUDY OF MWAI KIBAKI, 2002-2013**

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**AUGUST, 2020**

**DECLARATION**

This project is my original work and has not been presented for any other academic award at any other institution of learning.



**Signed**.....

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**Date.** 21<sup>st</sup> AUGUST, 2020

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## **DEDICATION**

This project is dedicated to my maternal uncle, the late Joseph Wamaya K'nyamkur, who adopted me at an early age after the demise of my biological father, and sponsored my education from lower primary through advanced level. Were it not for his care and generosity, I probably could not have gone through the formal education system at all!

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## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>APA</b>	American Psychological Association
<b>AU</b>	African Union
<b>BRICS</b>	Brazil, Russia, India, China & South Africa
<b>CDF</b>	Constituencies Development Fund
<b>CFPG</b>	Comparative Foreign Policy Group
<b>COMESA</b>	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
<b>EAC</b>	East African Community
<b>EI</b>	Emotional Intelligence
<b>FPA</b>	Foreign Policy Analysis
<b>FPE</b>	Free Primary Education
<b>GEMA</b>	Gikuyu Embu Meru Association
<b>HIV/AIDS</b>	Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus /Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
<b>ICC</b>	International Criminal Court
<b>IDF</b>	Israeli Defence Forces
<b>IFES</b>	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
<b>IGAD</b>	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
<b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund
<b>KACC</b>	Kenya Anticorruption Commission
<b>KANU</b>	Kenya African National Union
<b>KDF</b>	Kenya Defence Force
<b>KNBS</b>	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
<b>LTA</b>	Leadership Traits Analysis
<b>MOU</b>	Memorandum of Understanding
<b>MRC</b>	Mombasa Republican Council
<b>NARC</b>	National Rainbow Coalition
<b>NGOs</b>	Non-Governmental Organizations
<b>OAU</b>	Organization of African Unity
<b>PEV</b>	Post Election Violence
<b>PLO</b>	Palestinian Liberation Army
<b>PM</b>	Prime Minister



<b>PTA</b>	Preferential Trade Area
<b>SAPs</b>	Structural Adjustment Programs
<b>SLDF</b>	Sabaot Land Defence Force
<b>UAE</b>	United Arab Emirates
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNCTAD</b>	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
<b>USA</b>	United States of America

## **ABSTRACT**

This study examines the impact of idiosyncratic traits of President Mwai Kibaki on Kenya's foreign policy during his administration, 2002 - 2013. The main research question that guided the study was; in what ways did Kibaki's idiosyncrasies impact on Kenya's foreign policy formulation and conduct during his administration? The major hypothesis guiding the study was that individual personality traits of a leader often impacts formulation and conduct of a country's foreign policy. The study employed longitudinal case study research design. Non-probabilistic sampling methods were used to collect primary data whilst secondary data was gathered from the existing literature. The collected data was analysed largely through qualitative approaches. The main finding of the study was that Kibaki's idiosyncratic traits influenced Kenya's foreign policy behaviour in the period stated. The study made the following specific findings: Kibaki's social/ academic background shaped his individual worldview; Kibaki's belief system influenced him to pursue national interest; Kibaki's age endowed him with superior judgment, analytical capabilities, calculative, strategic and non-emotive in decision making; and fears about Kibaki's health status proved to be a weak link in Kenya's foreign policy. Based on these findings, the study concludes that taken collectively, the idiosyncratic traits of a leader influences the foreign policy of a state. The study, therefore, recommends that foreign policy practitioners endeavour to understand the idiosyncratic traits of leaders, especially from developing states, so as to be able to forge meaningful foreign policy engagements. Further, academic inquiry on personal traits of potential future leaders be conducted to allow for better understanding on the possible influence of their idiosyncrasies on a country's foreign policy.

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the Study

Foreign policy behaviour of a state is a function of both domestic and external variables. A dominant variable at the domestic level is the idiosyncrasies of the leader heading the executive arm of government. Idiosyncrasy is generally defined as an observable mode of behaviour or way of thought, unique to an individual, which is heavily influenced by the individual's personal traits such as education, age, health status, temperament, beliefs, intellectual abilities, social background and history. All these traits collectively build an individual's operational code. These variables have a bearing on an individual's cognitive processes, emotional intelligence and how they interpret the environment in which they are to make and implement foreign policy decisions. Hudson (2005), Bandura (1989), Nagin (2007) and Jensen (1982) have argued that 'human agency' is an important factor in decision-making, for it is individuals, not states, per se, who make policy decisions.

Individually, Presidents, Prime Ministers, Cabinet Members in charge of Foreign Affairs and even National Security Advisors have had immense influence on the formulation and conduct of foreign policy. An appreciation of the idiosyncrasies of those involved in foreign policy decision making is critical in understanding why and how critical decisions are made. Leaders influence their governments towards aggressive or conciliatory relations with nations. Ariel Sharon, who served as Defense Minister and later as the Prime Minister of Israel, is a classic example in this regard. From his early career in the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF), Sharon was seen as an ambitious and controversial risk taker whose actions often resulted into damaging strategic consequences that rendered the problem(s) trivial. Sharon carried his abrasive approach of the military days to politics with his decision for instance to

engulf the Israeli military into political intervention in Lebanon, a move that would eventually keep the Israeli military in Lebanon for over eighteen months. Further, he has been cited to have presided over the construction of a record number of settlements in the West Bank more than any other leader in modern Israeli history (Dan, 2006; Shlaim, 2014; Landau, 2014).

In most states, including the United States and Israel, leaders often avoid bureaucracy and make decisions either solely or with advisors. As such, Rosati (1995) argues that the assumption that decisions and policies could be made without influence of the decision maker's idiosyncrasies and perceptions about the world, is erroneous. Decision-making in foreign policy is an outcome of leaders' perceptions and analysis of events. Such leaders are obviously influenced by human traits including biases, assumptions and prejudices. Further to this, their beliefs and motivations have a bearing on their decisions. The perception and interpretation about the outside world arise out of many variables including the idiosyncratic variables. These variables tend to play a dominant role in external policy decision-making process when the legitimacy of a leader is reinforced by a broad public support (Rourke, 2005).

In states where decision making is more personalized than institutionalized, as is common in authoritarian regimes and transitional democracies, including Kenya, the impact of a leader's idiosyncrasies on foreign policy decision making has optimal effects. The personal whims of the leader are manifestly evident in decision making without much opposition. However, in established democracies, where there are institutional checks and balances, the influence of personality is mostly felt in the charisma and or the bargaining skills of the President in the

policy making processes. This is what will make a big difference as to whether a foreign policy proposal will be acceptable or not. (Jensen, 1982).

Foreign Policy Analysis as a discipline usually entails the study of foreign policy actors, their motivations and how foreign policy decisions are made. Different variables operate at different levels; both domestic and systemic. In order to classify variables, their influences and the levels at which they intervene in a state's foreign policy process, the concept of Levels-of-Analysis associated with J. David Singer (1961), Kenneth Waltz (1959) and James Rosenau (1966) is normally applied by scholars and students of foreign policy analysis. Individual idiosyncrasies constitute one of the levels of analysis. The variables at this level of analysis are usually referred to as idiosyncratic variables, and shape how leaders respond to foreign policy issues that confront them while in office (Irving, 1982).

It is against this background that the study examined how the idiosyncrasies of President Mwai Kibaki (2002-2013) shaped Kenya's foreign policy behaviour during his term in office.

## **1.2 Statement of the Research Problem**

Kenya's current foreign policy is organized around five inter-linked pillars (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, 2014). These are; peace diplomacy, economic diplomacy, diaspora diplomacy, environmental diplomacy and cultural diplomacy. Different administrations to have ruled Kenya have prioritized pursuit of different pillars. The ascent of Mwai Kibaki to presidency in 2002 signalled an immediate turn-around in Kenya's foreign policy posture. Kenya's foreign policy became more diversified, and even more assertive in approach. This stood in stark contrast from Kenya's foreign policy under his predecessor, Daniel Moi whose last decade in office had been marked by average annual economic growth

rate that stood at 2.2% (Kimenyi, Njuguna & Mwega 2016). The modest economic growth rates was partly attributed to poor governance and high levels of systemic corruption that characterized Moi regime. Indeed, it is little wonder that Kenya during most of Moi administration was isolated from its traditional development partners in the West.

Against this backdrop, Mwai Kibaki from the onset signalled his intention to reorient Kenya's foreign policy by pledging good governance, democracy, and making economic recovery the centre-piece of his Presidency (Kibaki Presidential Inaugural Address, 2002). On economy for instance, his administration embarked on an ambitious national economic recovery plan (ERS, 2003) which involved reforming the economy by identifying and investing in the key productive sectors, sealing tax loopholes, expanding the tax base, attracting foreign investment and diversifying Kenya's foreign trading partners (Nyong'o, 2007). The effect of these on the foreign policy behaviour of Kenya can be seen in more diversified and assertive foreign policy posture that not only prioritized economy, but was also strong on the other aforementioned foreign policy pillars, especially peace, diaspora and cultural pillars respectively.

While Kibaki administration exercised a higher level of openness than his predecessors, particularly Daniel Moi, policy decisions remained largely unconstrained by other institutional mechanisms. This created room for the President's idiosyncrasies to project themselves prominently in the conduct of foreign policy. Mwai Kibaki's idiosyncrasies can be said to be a function of his family roots, his formal education as an economist, his age, his intellectual capabilities, health status and his personal beliefs. These factors collectively conspired to build his personality. As a political leader, he was known to be a laidback, sociable, humorous and gifted with above average intellectual ability (Sunday Nation, 2017).

His ideas on how to position the post-independence Kenyan economy within the cold war international economic order, for instance, were prominently captured in the Sessional Paper 10 of 1965.

As Jensen (1982) notes, a leader's idiosyncrasies have optimum impact upon foreign policy decisions when the leader has a high level of interest in foreign affairs and possesses high decisional latitude. Upon examination of these conditions, it is immediately clear that the personal traits of Mwai Kibaki would have had a significant influence on his interpretation of the international political environment and how Kenya responded to the opportunities and constraints in the international system. This study therefore examines the ways in which Kibaki's idiosyncrasies shaped Kenya's foreign policy behaviour during his tenure, that is, 2002 – 2013.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

#### **1.3.1 Main Question**

In what ways did Kibaki's idiosyncrasies impact on Kenya's foreign policy formulation and conduct during his administration?

#### **1.3.2 Specific Questions**

1. In what ways did Kibaki's social/ academic background affect Kenya's foreign policy formulation and conduct?
2. In what ways did Kibaki's personal belief system affect Kenya's foreign policy formulation and conduct?
3. In what ways did Kibaki's age affect Kenya's foreign policy formulation and conduct?

4. In what ways did Kibaki's physical/ mental health affect Kenya's foreign policy formulation and conduct?

## **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

### **1.4.1 Main Objective**

The study's main objective was to examine the ways in which Kibaki's idiosyncrasies impacted on Kenya's foreign policy formulation and conduct during his administration?

### **1.4.2 Specific Objectives**

1. To examine how Kibaki's social/ academic background affect Kenya's foreign policy formulation and conduct.
2. To examine how Kibaki's personal belief system impacted on Kenya's foreign policy formulation and conduct.
3. To examine how Kenya's foreign policy formulation and conduct was a function of Kibaki's age.
4. To examine how Kibaki's physical/ mental health influenced Kenya's foreign policy formulation and conduct.

## **1.5 Justification of the Study**

### **1.5.1 Policy Justification**

The President is the most important actor in the foreign policies of the states they lead. The idiosyncrasies of the president do influence the shape and direction of foreign policy, especially in states where institutionalization of politics and governance is still low. This study provides government officials, policy makers and other relevant stakeholders with a nuanced understanding and appreciation of how variables that are unique to the person of the



president influence his worldview and how he synthesises the mass of information he is confronted with on a daily basis. This is useful to policy makers in helping them devise innovative strategies that take cognizance of the idiosyncrasies of President they serve under as they formulate and implement foreign policy.

In the same vein, it is important for external actors, who are stakeholders in Kenya's foreign policy to appreciate that foreign policy orientation of a state is likely to undergo some changes when there is a change in leadership of the executive arm of the government. Political transitions not only result in a change of guard, but also a change in leadership style, which is partly a function of the idiosyncrasies of a leader. To this end, this study proves very relevant.

### **1.5.2 Academic Justification**

As has already been observed, most studies on foreign policies of African states have tended to emphasize the influence of global forces on the external behaviour of those states (Olatunde, Orwa and Utete, 1986; Khadiagala and Lyons, 2001). There has been less emphasis on the role that idiosyncrasies of African leaders have played in shaping their countries foreign policies. In recent times, there has been a growing trend of personality politics dominating headlines around the globe. This "emergent" phenomenon has in turn attracted a wave of scholarship focusing on the influence of personality in different aspects of life, in this case the formulation of foreign-policy and its conduct in states. This growing trend has partly been a function of the paucity in theoretical writings on the impact of idiosyncrasies on foreign-policy especially within the Africa continent.

Additionally, scholarship on how foreign policy is influenced by the personal traits of presidents has mainly paid attention to USA and other Western European leaders (Hermann,

1980; 1984). The literature that exists on third world leaders largely focus on ‘rogue’ presidents like Idi Amin and Saddam Hussein. The scarcity of literature on third world leaders especially that focussing on presidents with fairly rich positive legacy on economy and governance renders analysis of Mwai Kibaki very timely. This study is also, undoubtedly, useful to scholars who may wish to pursue research on the role leaders’ idiosyncratic variables play in foreign policy, especially in the African context.

## **1.6 Scope of the Study**

The study examines how Mwai Kibaki’s idiosyncrasies influenced the conduct of Kenya’s foreign policy between 2002 and 2013. The focus of the study is narrowed down to how Mwai Kibaki’s social and academic background, his personal beliefs, age, and physical and mental health status influenced Kenya’s foreign policy during his tenure as president. The study covers 2003 to 2013; this being the period under which Mwai Kibaki served as the president of Kenya. The study was conducted between September 2019 and March 2020.

## **1.7 Research Methodology**

### **1.7.1 Research Design**

The study employed longitudinal case study research design covering the period 2002 – 2013. According to Bryman (2008), case study approach involves an in-depth and detailed examination of a particular case to establish causal relationships between different variables under study. In the context of this study, longitudinal case study approach was used to give deep understanding of how Mwai Kibaki’s idiosyncratic traits influenced Kenya’s foreign policy behaviour in the period covered by the study. The retrospective analysis of how Kibaki’s idiosyncrasies played out on Kenya’s foreign policy over time, gives the case approach a longitudinal touch.

### 1.7.2 Sampling Techniques

The study employed non-probabilistic sampling techniques to collect data. In particular, *Purposive Sampling* technique, also known as selective or subjective sampling, was employed to select relevant respondents for the study. This sampling technique allows the researcher to target respondents whose profile fits the specified needs of the research. The researcher relies on their own judgment to select a category of respondents who exhibit the needed profile into the study sample. The data collected is considered as statistically representative of the general interest of the population. This allows for generalization of the findings. Additionally, *Snow-ball Sampling*, also known as Chain-referral technique, was used to complement purposive sampling technique. In this case, referral technique was used to reach other respondent relevant to the study.

### 1.7.3 Study Sample

The study sample comprised Mwai Kibaki's aides, political allies, his cabinet ministers, political competitors, ambassadors and advisers [See Appendix II].

Table 1: **Distribution of Respondents**

Serial Number	Designation/Organization	Frequency
1.	Kibaki era Cabinet Ministers	6
2.	Aides/advisors	2
3.	Political allies	3
4.	Political Parties/Competitors	12
5.	Government Departments	3
TOTAL		26

**Source:** Researcher (2019)

#### **1.7.4 Data Collection and Administration of Instruments**

Both primary and secondary data were collected. For primary data, the researcher used semi-structured interviews [See Appendix I] to gather information for the study's objectives. All interviews were conducted through face to face meetings except in one case where telephone was used. For secondary data, the researcher employed document analysis technique to collect data for the study's objectives. Information sources namely; Memoranda of understanding (MoUs), treaties, protocols, memoirs of leaders, policy documents, speeches, Parliamentary Hansard, newspaper articles, peer reviewed journals and internet sources, were used.

#### **1.7.5 Data Analysis and Presentation**

The study employed qualitative research and analysis methods. Qualitative methods involve the use of narrative techniques to draw out main themes thus in the process revealing the meanings to phenomena that can have multiple interpretations (Yang & Miller, 2008). Central to these methods is the appreciation that there may be of multiple "truths" that are socially constructed (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Content analysis was also employed to reinforce the emergent narratives for purposes of generalization. The findings of the study are presented in descriptive form.

#### **1.7.6 Limitations of the Study**

Data collection for this study involved seeking information from: 1) governmental and supranational institutions which are very bureaucratic and secretive; and 2) officers serving under oaths of secrecy. Privacy and confidentiality proved an obstacle to obtaining

information from some respondents. In other instances, non-responsiveness or unwillingness on the part of the respondents curtailed data collection process.

On the same note, it is important to point out that Mwai Kibaki left office in 2013, which is only six years before this research. Access to some information proved challenging since some information still remains classified. In fact one of the respondents refused to divulge some information which he considered private and feared that since Mwai Kibaki is still alive, there's possibility that some responses could be refuted thus making nonsense of the whole research.<sup>1</sup>

### **1.7.7 Ethical Issues**

When conducting any research, certain ethical issues arose that my study to address. These ethical issues include informed consent, anonymity, privacy and confidentiality and researcher's responsibility among others. The study adhered to these standard ethical practices that guide the conduct of social research. Specifically, the researcher sought a formal introductory letter from the University of Nairobi's Department of Political Science and Public Administration which is not only a standard procedure, but also offered assurances to the respondents that their responses would be solely used for purposes of this study. Further, the researcher did not allow personal biases interfere with gathering of sound data – this was achieved through adhering to the sampling frame to pick out respondents as well as conducting the interviews through the prepared interview guide.

### **1.8 Definition and Operationalization of Key Concepts**

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<sup>1</sup>Respondent 2 (Interview with a senior Kibaki era State House official, at Lord Erroll Restaurant, Nairobi on 12<sup>th</sup> September, 2019).

## **Foreign Policy**

It has been defined as the sum of external relations conducted by an independent actor, but not exclusively a state, in international relations (Hill, 2003). It has also been defined as government activity conducted between a state and other actors, particularly other states, in the international system. In this study, foreign policy means broad trends of behaviour and actions undertaken by a state or other actor and directed towards an actor or collective actors within the international system. These policy actions are met through instruments/ tools that include culture, economy, diplomacy and military force.

## **Idiosyncratic variables**

Idiosyncratic variables implies the totality of an individual's physical and mental health, social background, age, education, emotions, personality of a leader, leadership style, personal experiences and perceptions. Similarly, American Psychological Association (APA) (2011) conceives idiosyncrasies as individual differences in characteristic patterns of thinking, feeling and behaving. Rosenau (1966) defines idiosyncratic variables to include all those aspects of a decision maker – his values, talents and prior experience that distinguish his foreign policy choices and behaviour from those of every other decision maker. One can go on and on with the various definitions, but for the purpose of this paper, Ryckman (2004) definition of idiosyncrasies as a “dynamic and organized set of characteristics possessed by a person that uniquely influences his or her cognitions, motivations, and behaviours in various situations” is relevant, same as Rosenau's. This study thus adopts both Rosenau's and Ryckman's definitions of idiosyncratic variables.

## **National Interest**

The concept national interest is a contested term. It is a foreign policy goal, objective and preference of a state that supposedly benefit the society. According to Hans Morgenthau, national interest is the survival of a state in the international system. It is the protection of physical, political and cultural identity of a state against encroachment by other nation-states (Morgenthau, 1950). According to Dyke (1966) national interest means the values, desires and interests which states seek to protect or achieve in relation to each other. These goals are economic, security, cultural and political. Dyke's definition simply expounds Morgenthau's position in an operational sense. Therefore for the purpose of this study, both Hans Morgenthau's and Dyke's definitions are adopted as the working definitions as they both focus on the state as the dominant actor and emphasize the principles of survival and prosperity of a state in the international system which is the domain of the regional integration.

## **Operational Code**

According to George (1969), operational code as a 'prism that influences the actor's perceptions and diagnoses of the flow of political events ... that [in turn] influence the actor's choice of strategy and tactics, his structuring and weighing of alternative courses of action'. The operational code contains two clusters of beliefs. First, philosophical beliefs are diagnostic of the nature of the political world in which the actor operates, most fundamentally the degree to which the political universe is friendly or hostile and the degree of control the actor perceives themselves to have over it. Second, instrumental beliefs concern the characteristic approach of the actor toward politics: the 'norms, standards, and guidelines that influence the actor's choice of strategy and tactics, his structuring and

weighing of alternative courses of action. This study adopted the two clusters of beliefs to explain how personality influences foreign policy.

### **Sovereignty**

This remains a contested concept in international relations. The concept has been defined in a myriad of ways in different disciplines or by different scholars. Jean Bodin is credited for giving the concept of sovereignty coherence and content. To him, sovereign authority lies with the individual and, is natural and inalienable. Bodin linked sovereignty to the idea absolute. The absolute power rested with the monarchy.

As a type of authority relationship, sovereignty possesses both an internal and an external face. Internally, sovereignty defines the ultimate or highest authority within a state. This could be a monarch or the sovereign who delegated authority as was the case in France when Bodin lived. Externally, sovereignty entails the recognition by other similarly recognized states that this entity is “one of them” and, thus, is an inherently social concept (Bull, 1977). This study employs a combination of both Bodin’s view and that of Bull. Therefore, in line with this study, sovereignty refers to the attributes the state the freedom to make its own decisions on how to organize itself internally and how to behave externally without interference.

### **Personality**

Personality is conceptualised as a combination of seven traits: belief in ability to control events, conceptual complexity, need for power, distrust of others, in-group bias, self-confidence, and task orientation (Hermann 1980, 1984, 1987, 2003). These traits play out differently in an individual, and combine to create an individual’s worldview thereby



influencing policy choices and operational code. This study adopts this understanding of personality.

### **1.9 Organization of the Study**

This study is organised into four chapters. Chapter One introduces the study. It covers the Background of the Study, Statement of the Research Problem, Research Objectives, Research Questions, Significance of the Study and the Methodology. Chapter Two puts into perspective, the effect of individual leader's idiosyncrasy on foreign policy. The Chapter covers Literature Review, the Conceptual Framework adopted for the study and Research Hypotheses. Chapter Three presents the findings of the study. Chapter Four gives a Summary of findings, conclusion and recommendation.

## **CHAPTER 2: LEADERS' IDIOSYNCRACIES AND FOREIGN POLICY: AN EMPIRICAL AND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE**

### **2.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, selected scholarly works focusing on how leaders' idiosyncrasies influence foreign policy are reviewed. The scholarly works reviewed cover global, continental (Africa) and local (Kenya) analysis of the subject of idiosyncratic variables and foreign policy. The issues covered in the literature criss-cross different themes, mainly focussed around idiosyncratic variables.

### **2.2 Literature Review**

Kegley and Wittkopf (1999) focus on personality, as an aspect of idiosyncrasy, and foreign policy. They argue that the actions of states are simply a reflection of the predilections, activities and initiatives of the holder of the top political office. The authors also mention that this explains the reason why the names of leaders are used to describe policies initiated and implemented by them. This further by extension also explains why foreign-policy outcomes, both successes and failures, are associated with the time and leader who held the top office. They conclude that leader-prioritised policies are in most instances illogical and driven by temptation. They are also informed by the leader's predispositions such as self-control, fear of getting hurt, anger and religion. Kegley and Wittkopf's analysis is very useful however, it fails to recognise that leaders are sometimes fully in charge of certain situations because they have comprehensive knowledge on it. This study thus sheds light on how specific events of the Mwai Kibaki presidency demonstrated his administrations complete understanding on the different situations, including the challenges that confronted his presidency. The study also

seeks to prove or disapprove the above notion that Kibaki's decision making was largely driven by irrationality.

Jervis (2017) focus on how a leader's strive for cognitive consistency can result into a negative effect on the foreign-policy decision-making processes. He argues that once a leader forms these images of reality, "cognitive map of information", it is difficult to change and that any new information that contradicts with the decision maker's image tends to either to be dismissed, disregarded or interpreted in such a fashion so as to buttress a specific policy predilection or course of action. Cognitive consistency means that decision makers tone down information that contradicts with prior beliefs or pay excessive attention to information coherent with those beliefs. Jervis further argues that the confusing international environment can result into a poor decision even if the decision maker is relatively unemotional and intelligent as he or she can evaluate the alternatives available to them. Furthermore, Jervis takes into account how the anarchic nature of international system encourages cognitive processes that make decision making more difficult. This argument is further reinforced by Hans Morgenthau (1947) who argues that despite a diversity of background or temperaments (emotional behaviour), the structure of the international system influences decision makers to respond in a similar manner. Whilst Jervis' study is refreshing and a useful addition to the field of political psychology, it is largely focused on Western leaders. This study examined how the aforementioned might have shaped the foreign decision making considerations of Mwai Kibaki, who led Kenya, a state in the Sub-Saharan Africa.

Rourke (2007) looks at the impact of a leader's particular whims on foreign-policy and state that the attitude of the executive leader, president or prime minister, about himself/ herself, others and authority are critical in understanding their foreign policy decisions. The author

identifies categories of personality based on scales that include active-passive attributes and positive-negative attributes. Rourke found out that, active leaders, as opposed to passive leaders, are more innovative with policies but on the other hand passive leaders seem more reactionary. Also in the findings is the idea that leaders with positive personalities are tolerant to any criticisms while on the other hand negative ones are upset by criticism to their foreign policy decisions. In foreign policy making and leadership in general there is a high preference for a personality that is active-positive than the active-negative personality. However, it should be noted that these personality types are determined by physical and mental health, political history and personal experience, ego and ambition, and lastly, the perception and operational reality (Rourke, 2007). Rourke's analysis is useful to this study especially his dichotomy of active-positive versus active-negative. This study uncovers the dichotomy Mwai Kibaki belonged and how that possibly affected his foreign policy decision making.

Bova (2012) writes on levels of analysis framework and the making of foreign-policy. He argues that in as much as the systemic and also the state-level factors are critical in shaping and constraining what leaders do, the individual level is also prevalent in decision making. Leaders as human beings have agency and through their belief system, ideology and operational code they are capable of influencing decision making which will be summed as state behaviour towards international affairs. Again like many other scholars, Bova does not address the relationship between personality traits and foreign policy, which are the focus of this study.

A number of foreign policy scholars have laid focus on how stress, which is psychological in nature, arising out of challenging, emotion-laden situations impacts on rational calculations.

An example of this perspective is found in the works of Irving Janis (1990). He posits that the tendency of individuals to strive for the enforcement of group consensus among their members is predominantly evident in crisis conditions characterized by stress, surprise, gruelling around the clock schedules which result in general erosion of cognitive capabilities. Janis (1990) labels this tendency, groupthink – which is a method of thinking that persons engage in when they are intensely involved in a cohesive, collective, in-group, when the participants angling for unanimity override their drive to realistically assess alternative course(s) of action. Janis argues further that the pressure to conform to group norms interfere with critical rational thinking.

Schoen (2007) studied personality traits and foreign policy attitudes of the German public. The article argues, personality attributes shape an individual's motivation, goals-end results, and values thereby affecting foreign policy opinions they may hold. The author confirms that personality traits of any individual play a key role and attitudes towards foreign policy. Further to this, the article notes that personality influences foreign-policy opinions just as sturdily as traditional factors like social background, political party-affiliation, and ideology, affect the opinions. To this extent it is noted that agreeableness and openness makes a person's supportive of global cooperation and on the other end, sceptical of use of military force. Lastly conscientiousness is associated with the reverse effect. Schoen's work is useful, but concerns with foreign policy attitudes of the German public, which is well beyond the scope of this paper. This study concerns itself with the personality of President Mwai Kibaki and its subsequent influence of Kenya's foreign policy.

Brown (2014) investigates the influence of presidential idiosyncratic predispositions on decisions relating to military disengagement. The author notes that the behavioural science

school of thought that argues that psychological factors including the personality of a leader is instrumental in terms of decision-making has experienced resurgence. The thesis argues that the decision to commit military forces towards any interventions and to also disengage the military forces remain presidential decisions. The study uses the Five Factor model as postulated by a personality based model called Myer-Briggs type index to look into four American presidents George H. W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George Bush and Barack Obama; and their military operations in Somali, Bosnia, Kosovo and Iraq. The study concludes that the president's core personalities have had a systematic effect on their decision making with regards to disengagement. The study shows that a dominant personality predisposition exerts strong influence on risk propensity. In addition presidents have different ways of perceiving risks; they evaluate options through judging the risks against their aspiration levels; are predisposed to risk acceptance; and they frame decision options bases on these predispositions. Personality traits of the presidents can predict these differences and how it affects decision making. The study concludes that the personality traits of a president influences risk dispositions that lead may lead them to frame disengagement positively or negatively in order to support their aspirations. On the other hand, it may influence setting of aspirations that favourably supports framing of any disengagement options. Again like many other scholars, Brown's analysis is focussed on the United States which has an institutionalized decision making process. This study is specific to Kenya, a sub-Saharan African states in which institutions most of the times are subsumed by dominant individual decision makers.

According to Janis (1972) personality is crucial in the understanding of foreign policy. However, its relevance depends on the political structures of the domestic and international

system. Maoz and Shayer (1987) on the other hand posit that the role of personality in foreign-policy is clear and attributable at least or partially, to thoughts and personal actions of a leader. Jensen (1982) contends that in decision-making, personality has to meet specific conditions for optimal impact on decisions. For instance a country's leader should have immense level of interest in matters of external affairs such as Henry Alfred Kissinger in his dual roles both as National Security Advisor in the National Security Council and, later, Secretary of State (1969-1977), under President Richard Nixon (1969-1974) and President Gerald Ford (1974-1977), though he became secretary of state in 1973. Other considerations include having high decisional latitude, non-routine situations, and ambiguous information on the situation. Most of the above concerns are a rich addition to the literature on personality, except that this study is specific to Kenya.

Henry Kissinger, regarded as one of the most effectual US Foreign Policy practitioners of the twentieth century, displayed a leadership style which is said to have been heavily influenced by his childhood experiences. According to Stoessinger (1976), Kissinger's philosophical belief that the world is a place where there are forces of chaos that constantly battle the forces of order was shaped by the fact that he witnessed the horrors of Nazi brutality at a tender age. Kissinger's fixation with stability, balance and order is apparently informed from his first-hand experience with the tragedy of upheaval and the desire to prevent it from recurring (Blumenfeld et al., 1974). These traits are evident in the détente policy he helped broker with the Chinese in 1972 which marked a resumption of harmonious relations between the United States and China. Détente was regarded as a foreign policy success for then US President Richard Milhouse Nixon though, in reality, it demonstrated Kissinger's prodigious acumen as a foreign policy tactician and strategist. Kissinger's success is

attributed to his “presidential character”, an active-passive trait which he had acquired earlier in his political life. Active-passive trait is defined by investing high amounts of energy and dedication to job performance and success (Barber, 1977). While this study appreciates the contribution of these works, they are not focussed on Kenya and therefore fills the gap in the literature.

Adolf Hitler held expansionist tendencies, which were viewed to have stemmed from his idiosyncratic variables. Hitler is said to have had a troubled childhood due to the fact that his parents were separated and only lived with his father who is said to have been abusive and overly aggressive toward him. Mayo & Craigie (2015) have argued that Hitler suffered from hypospadias which made his marriages dysfunctional, and which in turn, had the psychological impact of making him overly aggressive. This aggressive trait reflected on the foreign policy behaviour of Nazi Germany, which encompassed invading sovereign territories in Eastern Europe to make “living space” for “authentic Germans”. His aggressive foreign policy is believed to have contributed to the outbreak of World War II. Klaus Hildebrand (1973) noted that Hitler treated foreign policy as almost entirely his own preserve. These studies focused on Hitler and made rich addition to literature on how leader’s personal background shape their choice and conduct of foreign policy. However, this particular research focuses on Mwai Kibaki.

Dyson (2007) writes on how the idiosyncrasies of Tony Blair redefined the British foreign policy orientation especially in regards to taking decision on a key national security issue as going to war. Dyson argues that Blair could not have kept Britain, or the United Kingdom, out of Iraq due to his personality attributes, which shaped his worldview. His leadership style and world view were distinctive and this shaped the State’s foreign policy between 1997 and



2007 particularly on Kosovo and Iraq. Blair possessed a high self-belief in his ability to take charge of and control events which informed the pursuit for proactive and ambitious foreign policies; and low conceptual complexity which informed his absolutist policy worldview. Tony Blair had a proactive as opposed to reactive, self-confident style in approach to international matters and this was superimposed black and white cognitive style that shaped policy responses to the issues faced such as Kosovo, 9/11 and the war in Iraq. As a strong willed person with distinctive beliefs on international matters, his personality helped shape events during his tenure in office. Dyson's work is restricted to decision making on security matters in Britain. This study goes beyond that, and focuses on other additional issues like economic policy and even regional peace engagement as other imperatives that shaped Kenya's foreign policy orientation under Mwai Kibaki administration.

Kaarbo (2017) examines how Trump's idiosyncratic characteristics may impact America's foreign policy. The article posits that Trump's personality including his low self-confidence will lead to him having a defensive image and also being sensitive to criticisms. The personal characteristics will inform foreign policy and most of it may be unilateral, hostile and erratic. His distrust of others and insensitivity to the information chain may prevent better decision making. Further to this, his views on loyalty, secrecy, emotional tirades and self-serving interpretations will dominate the foreign policy making process. In addition, his isolationist method and inexperience will lead to bureaucratic infighting and information leaks. By focussing on a serving leader, Kaarbo's work is pretty an exploratory study that contrasts with this study whose focus is on the personality traits of a retired president.

Johannesson (2016) writes on the power of personality in decision making during the Obama administration. He examines Barack Obama through McAdams and Pals Five-Level Model

of personality, as postulated in 2006, in order to understand his personal characteristics and thus his behaviour. The model identifies the following five big traits: an individual's unique variation on the general evolutionary design for human nature, expressed as a developing pattern of; dispositional traits or differences between individuals; characteristic adaptations, that is, how personality adapts to a leader's role; and self-defining life narratives or the psychological construction of self, complexly and differentially situated; in culture and social context. Johannesson concludes that Obama's personality explained his decision to use airstrikes in Syria. Obama's conscientious personality restrained him from employing harder means namely military intervention and his confidence was crucial in helping him uphold his strategy. This approach was reinforced by his sense of morality, which explains his tactical change and decision to attack the terrorist groups that opposed liberal values and maimed civilians. Obama's approach was also helped by his agreeableness, which informed his preference for deliberation during conflict resolution. The study concludes that a leader's personality is integral in the process of foreign policy making. For Obama his traits that include extraversion open to experience, conscientious, neurotic, and agreeable are a reflection of his leadership style. Johannesson's study contrasts with this proposed study which adopts the use of Hermann's Leadership Traits Analysis (LTA) and not the Five-Level Model of Personality employed by Johannesson. This study uses the LTA approach to describe the relationship between Kibaki's personality and Kenya's foreign policy.

Hermann (2003) defines leadership style as the way in which leaders deal with other people in the political environment e.g. constituencies, advisors, and other key personalities, and "how they structure interactions and the norms, rules, and principles they use to guide such interactions." These leadership styles are constructed on the basis of the answers derived

from the following questions: (1) Do leaders challenge or respect the constraints in the environment? (2) Are leaders open or closed to information coming from their environment? (3) What reasons motivate leaders to seek political office? Are they driven by a cause, ideology, the desire for power and status or by an interest in building relationships? Based on the answers to these questions, leaders can be divided into one of eight general leadership styles: expansionistic, evangelistic, actively independent, directive, incremental, influential, opportunistic and collegial (Hermann, 2003). Earlier Hermann conducted a study of 45 heads of government whose six personal characteristics were evaluated. The six characteristics included; the need for power, the need for affiliation, the degree of trust in others, nationalism and the belief that one has some control over events. The study showed that the personal characteristics of the heads of government form two orientations of foreign affairs. The independent orientation of a head of government had the largest effect on the direction of foreign policy variables. The participatory orientation had also a significant influence on foreign policy of states. The study notes that low interests and the lack of training on foreign policy issues has left heads of government with the option of tapping into their personal predispositions in order to make foreign policy decisions. This makes use of Hermann's leadership style approach to explain how Kibaki's personality shaped Kenya's foreign policy during his administration.

Kaarbo (2018) explores the differences in leadership styles of Prime Ministers of Turkey and United Kingdom affects parliaments influence on security policy. The study proposes leadership trait analysis in capturing the orientation of the PM's orientation towards their involvement in the parliament. The study advances specific ideas of how personality traits such as openness inform the PM's active participation in managing the process and how

effectively they manage the process. The paper suggests that the PM's personality may inhibit or encourage the normalization of making security policy by the parliament. Kaarbo's work is beyond the scope of my investigation with its focus on the role of parliament on security policy. The proposed study focuses on the influence of personality traits of Mwai Kibaki on Kenya's foreign policy. However, both Kaarbo's paper and this study converge in their approach; the application of Hermann's LTA in both cases.

Kesgin (2011) studies political leadership and foreign policy in post-cold war Israel (Yitzhak Shamir, 1986-1992; Yitzhak Rabin, 1992-1995; Shimon Peres, 1995-1996; Benjamin Netanyahu, 1996-1999; Ehud Barak, 1999-2001; Ariel Sharon, 2001-2006; Ehud Olmert, 2006-2009; Benjamin Netanyahu 2009 to Present) and Turkey (Suleyman Demirel, Erdal Inonu (acting), Tansu Ciller, Mesut Yilmaz, Necmettin Erbakan, Mesut Yilmaz, Bulent Ecevit, Abdullah Gul, and Recep Tayyip Erdogan). The study notes that the use of terms hawkish vs. dovish in Israel and secular vs. religious for Turkey is simplistic in defining the personalities of the leadership. The study uses the at-a-distance measure of personality assessment and draws the leadership of these countries in relation to foreign policy making. At-a-distance method utilizes a leader's publicly accessible verbal records, that is, speeches, interviews, and letters to profile them. The study notes that the leaderships distrust for others is a prerequisite for conflictual behaviour and by that fact, aggressive foreign policies. The study concludes that the leaders, and their leadership styles (operation code) and also their beliefs make a difference in foreign policy behaviour of states, both Israel and Turkey in this case. This is a comparative analysis whilst this study is a case study based on a single leader. However, Kesgin's analysis is useful addition to the literature on this research area especially on its approach; "at-a-distance measure of personality".

Hehir (1990) writes on how leaders' belief system influences the foreign policy choices they pursue. Pope John Paul II's dislike of communism, partly a function of his idiosyncrasies, played a role in helping shape the Catholic Church's stance on "hot" international political issues. He led a crusade against the spread of communism in Latin America and his native Poland among other countries of the world. The Pope is also known for making the former Soviet Union change its stance on religious freedom among other issues. The Rome summit of 1989 signalled an important shift in Soviet policy. Mikhail Gorbachev, the leader of the USSR, in the Rome speech acknowledged an important role for the religious and moral values in society derided by his predecessors. He also pledged a new law securing freedom of conscience for believers of every trait in a style unknown in Soviet history. This study focuses on how Mwai Kibaki's personal beliefs influenced his foreign policy choices.

Neely (1982) writes on presidential idiosyncrasies and foreign policy making. The author argues that in the process of foreign-policy decision-making, the personal characteristic of an individual is arguably the most influential factor. Using Fred Greenstein's framework the author looks into characteristics such as; emotional intelligence (EI), cognitive style (approach) and political skill to capture both the internal and external aspects of decision-making. The study notes that the president's personality exists within his innermost ring and informs the president's personality. This contributes to a president's personality and by extension his decisions which are unique to each president. However, this is also informed by external influences. In one of the examples President Bush's weak emotional intelligence (EI), cognitive style (approach) and also his organizational capability contributed the non-deliberative (no group synergy) decision-making displayed by him. This demonstrates how personality traits influence the making of foreign policy by individuals. The study concludes

that Harry Truman, Lyndon Johnson and George Bush suffered dissimilar degrees of cognitive style, weak emotional intelligence (EI) and organizational capability which influenced their foreign policy decisions. Neely's work is useful but differs with the approach that this study takes. Neely employs Fred Greenstein's framework as opposed to Hermann's LTA which is the conceptual model chosen for this proposed study.

Jensen (1982) writes on foreign policy and notes that the personality of individuals involved in foreign policy process encompasses internal and also personal characteristics. These characteristics include cognitive processes, history, education and personal beliefs. Scholars in this field of study make the assumption that decision making is a factor of 'human agency' and it is individuals not states who make decisions. The author further contends that in decision making, personality must meet specific conditions to ensure optimal impact on decisions. For instance a country's leader must have a high level of interest in matters of external affairs. Other conditions include possessing high decisional latitude, non-routine situations; and ambiguous information on the situation.

Rosati (1995) writes on the power of human cognition on foreign policy and notes that ideology and personal characteristics influence the information processing in individuals and therefore, affect decisional outputs. A person's cognitive consistency informs decision making and ensures situational developments match the belief system of the individual. This aspect is critical as it informs cognitive dissonance where information will be accepted or declined based on their previous perception of the situation. An illustrative example is Ariel Sharon's interpretation of the attempted assassination of an Israeli Ambassador in 1982 by Abu Nidal. Sharon's perception of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) made him ignore new information and he interpreted reports on assassination wrongly blaming the

PLO. Rosati (1995) further opines that Sharon's attitude was hostile towards Palestine due to his early (nascent) and consistent participation (engagement) in paramilitary Zionist movements. He had a negative and malevolent picture of the enemy and a positive and benevolent image of Israeli's. These aspects influenced his personality from a young age and his military days and this informed his policies towards the Palestinians. Again like many other foreign policy scholars, Rosati does not address directly the correlation between personality traits and foreign policy. But the work is useful in its explanation of the power of human cognition on decision making by leaders.

Nofal (2006) analyses foreign policies of Sharon and Arafat by comparing their personality types. The study observes that the leaders' policies reflect the backgrounds, ideologies and traits of these two leaders. Arafat headed the PLO for four decades, during which he decided the foreign affairs of the group according to his personal whims. These hold to power and the centralized system of the group show are evident of the projection of personal ambitions through foreign-policy decisions as there are no checks from other oversight agencies. Schulze (1998) on the other hand states that cognitive dissonance can be present in group thinking as decision-making elite such as in the lead up to the 1982 Lebanon War where Menachem Begin, Rafael Eitan and Yitzhak Shamir suffered from cognitive dissonance and also group cohesiveness. Nofal's paper does concern leaders of a state and an organized group (PLO). This study on the other hand deals with the foreign policy of a state, and in particular how it is shaped by the personality of a single leader.

Ziv (2007) writes on the transformation of Shimon Peres's foreign policies from hawkish to dovish foreign policies. He argues that an important aspect of personality attributes which provides valuable insights into decision-making is a leader's ability to experience attitudinal

(fluctuations in attitude) and policy orientation changes. This capacity to transform from aggression to conciliatory behaviour has been observed in Israeli leadership under Shimon Peres. Equally, Yitzhak Rabin started from hawkish foreign policy approach but transformed to dovish. Rabin on one hand transformed from an aggressive individual to signing the Oslo peace accord with Palestine in 1993 while Peres softened and tried to find allies unlike what his prior personality behaviour informed. All these mentioned transformations have everything to do with personality of the leader in question. Ziv's analysis is a useful addition to literature on this area, except that it focuses on Israeli leaders, which is a different context from this study that is specific to Kenya given that Israeli politics is more institutionally based thus predictable as compared to Kenyan politics.

Gallagher (2010) writes on personality traits and risky foreign policy. The study indicates that leaders do vary in their risk propensities. This can be measured by their risk-related traits and that these traits influence foreign policy outcomes, in particular the use of force abroad. Excitement Seeking is the most consistent predictor of foreign policy risk-taking; leaders with high Excitement Seeking scores are most predisposed to use force to execute their foreign policy objectives and initiate militarized disputes. The more altruistic leaders are less likely to use force to carry out their foreign policies. Truman's low Deliberation tendency manifested in his policy making; even with deliberative institutional bodies in place. John F. Kennedy's decision making, in response to the Soviet ultimatum on Berlin in the summer of 1961, illustrates the president engaging in very intense deliberation and weighing his options with care.

Gallagher and Allen (2014) write on presidential personality in the U.S and the variation that surround decision making. They note that the steadiness of a leader's foreign policy actions/



decisions has strategic repercussions on conflict. Using five presidential personality trait, the study found out that leaders with a high propensity for excitement are more likely to conduct forceful foreign policies while the leaders open (characterized by openness) to action have a greater indifference to the decisions they make. The authors conclude that personality traits of individual presidents impact the choices they make and also the consistency of these choices. This in the long run impacts on the states foreign policy.

Birt (1993) studies the case of personality and foreign policy in Stalin's era. The study links internal personality to the political outcomes of decisions made. Stalin's paranoia and aggressive tendencies can closely be identified in the state behaviour such as the reaction to the German invasion of 1941. Stalin as an embodiment of power translated his personality impulses into official state actions. Stalin's personal drive for absolute control could be seen in state hunting and termination of enemies abroad. Stalin's narcissistic personality was also seen in his reaction to German advancement and the decisions he took such as giving himself titles. Stalin's behaviour was greatly manifested in state organs of power and the state policies wavered with the personality driven behaviour of the leader. Birt's study is a rich addition to the literature on the subject of personality. Except that, it concerns with a totalitarian system of governance that is far beyond the scope of the proposed study. Kenya is classified as a transitional democracy, and thus the foreign policy decision making process should be reflective of democratic traditions.

Jackson and Roseberg (1982) study personal rule in Africa and note that in the process of foreign policy making, the presidency is the most important policy formulation institution. It is however, supported by the department of foreign relations or affairs. This means the conduct of foreign affairs remains a prerogative of the head of state in many countries. The

head of state is known to be the initiator, articulator and director of foreign policy. Jackson and Roseberg's thesis is very useful in far as understanding of African politics is concerned. However, it fails to address the specifics, which is the influence of personality on decision making. This latter issue forms the core of this study.

Other scholars such as Khadiagala and Lyons (2001) argue that African foreign policy decision making is the privilege of top personalities such as the president and prime minister who took over the post-colonial states. This shifted the patterns of domestic power projection as weak bureaucratic structures became common in many states. There was a general absence of effective representative institutions which contributed to affording opportunities to leaders who took charge of the countries' internal and external affairs. Khadiagala and Lyons compares role of personality versus the institutions. This is contrasts to this study that focus specifically on personality and its effect on foreign policy.

Ngara, Esebonu and Ayabam (2013) examine the influence of personality in Nigeria's foreign-policy. The study compares Olusegun Obasanjo's tenure as a military ruler to his tenure as a civilian head of state. They note that there is a growing complexity and dynamism in the international system which has inevitably been aided by the growing interrelationships, interconnectedness and interdependency among states. The need to interact among states has given impetus to the imperative for states to formulate and conduct foreign policy in order to achieve national interests. The study concludes that Obasanjo's personality traits developed from his military service had an overbearing effect on foreign-policy making in Nigeria. Further to this, it acknowledged that the personality of Obasanjo had more sway on foreign policy during his civilian rule than when he was the military head of state. Obasanjo displayed self-confidence and self-belief in controlling events; his quest for power and

intolerant to any criticisms made him monopolize foreign policy at the expense of institutions (charged with formulation and conduct of external policy) and the general public. Also, the personalization of external policy in both the military (militaristic) and civilian rule inhibited the articulation of any feasible and coherent external policy as the foreign policy arena was a one man show. This study does a comparative analysis of Obasanjo's tenure as a military president and as a civilian president, which is in contrast to the proposed study that focuses on Mwai Kibaki as a civilian head of state. Military and civilian heads of states pursue different operational codes. This point thus forms the point of divergence between the two regime types.

Adeolu (2014) in his comparative analysis compares the two regimes of Obasanjo against his personality. He found out that the introduction of democracy in Nigeria did not influence the formulation and implementation of foreign policy but President Obasanjo's personality was largely influential. Obasanjo's credentials and exposure played a key role in the continuity of external policy of the two periods he was in power. Obasanjo showed a high self-belief in his ability to control (influence) events and also preferred proactive policy solutions. Further to this, it is notable that there was a preference for a less deliberative decision process and he had the need for power which informed the impulse to not only gain but maintain and restore control over other people and the foreign policy process. Again, Adeolu also studies Obasanjo as a military president and as a civilian head of state. This contrasts this study that entirely focuses on a civilian head of state.

Abiwu (2016) writes on leadership traits of Jerry Rawlings and Ghana's economic foreign policy. Rawlings validated that the personal traits of a leader especially the need of power, influence and also the ability to control (influence) events informs personal decisions. His

belief that he could control events informed and shaped his proactive behaviour in terms of his policy calculus. This was particularly exhibited when he discerned economic aid from the East had become remote and impossible. Here Rawlings belief that he could control events led to him using his cognitive map to find quick fixes to the country's economy through shifting allegiance from East to the West. In addition to the aforementioned, Rawlings high conceptual complexity shows his flexibility in terms of thoughts, decisions and policy (priority) issues. He was willing to change these positions in order to tune with uncertainties in the political milieu. Rawlings worldview was not only shaped by his black/white perception of the world but by his constrained calculus of factors including the risky decision of provoking the West using anti-imperialist rhetoric. These personality traits contributed to his decisions and his constrained calculus of dismissing the West (America and its allies) and favoured the East. Abiwu's study is a useful addition to the literature on personality, except that it covers mainly Ghana's economic policy. This study covers other pillars of foreign policy like political, peace and security.

Ojieh (2016) studied the extraneous considerations to personality variables in the process of foreign policy in Nigeria. The study shows how presidents leverage on elements extraneous to their personalities and use their personality variables to dominate foreign policy decision making. This even happens when collective decision-making structures are present and there are institutional checks and balances in place. The author concludes that idiosyncratic effects of leaders in Nigeria's can be seen in the country's foreign policies. The article concludes that personality elements are critical in explaining foreign policy analysis. However, this article does not solely explain the variations in decision outcomes as other factors are involved in determining foreign policy decisions.

Joffe and Paoletti (2010) focus on the drivers and objectives of Libya's foreign policy. They state that foreign policy had a personalized dimension in Libya under the rule of Gaddafi. Foreign policy processes which are known to be complex were intensely personalized around the figure of the leader. The colonel played a dominant role in policy formulation both domestically and internationally. However, the process was also governed by a structured environment that effected the development and articulation of any foreign policies. An extraordinary and unique dynamic in the Libyan case is the way in which Gaddafi established control over the political scene through his charisma. He embodied the political process and his ideological stand and his worldview dominated and personalized the foreign policy process.

Youness (2011) writes on Libya's foreign policy towards Africa and notes that Libya's external policy decision-making was shaped and made in the personalized thoughts of the leader. Gaddafi's personality determined the states relations to the world and Africa by that fact. The leader's characteristics and their ability to control the domestic conditions influenced how foreign policy decisions were made. In Libya-Arab relations economic interests proved insignificant in decision making as his perception of issues influenced the policies of the day. Gaddafi's radical perspectives and his personality were critical in informing the aggressive and controversial policies made during his era. This study, unlike this research, compares other imperatives like economy on foreign policy vis-a-vis personality. The proposed study is specific to personality.

Sagawa (2011) studied idiosyncrasies of Kamuzu Banda and the conception of foreign policy and note that personality and cognitive approaches are critical in the comprehension of state relations. The author notes that the leader's perception shaped the foreign policy of Malawi

in Banda's regime. Conceptualization and orientation of foreign policy was directed and overseen personally by Banda. This led to a reflection of his personality in the external policy of the state during this era. Banda's humble background and experiences in his childhood and early adulthood shaped his worldview. His authoritarian tendencies can be associated with his humble roots. Banda's foreign policy was openly pro-West in during Cold War, a choice that is linked to his education in US and Britain, and his exposure to capitalism as a labourer in South Africa. However, it is also noted that the foreign policy making environment is complex and several interdependent variables interact in the process of making decisions. This fact makes the leaders personality just one of the many variables that influences the policies of a state. This study focuses solely on personality and state relations. The dissertation, however, encompasses other key issues not included such as economy and even regional peace.

The experiences of South African freedom icon, Nelson Mandela, particularly his torture and incarceration at the hands of the white apartheid regime of South Africa, made him seek racial reconciliation possibly so that more lives, especially of the poor black South Africans, could be saved and additional property rights also extended to them. But as it turned out, the black protesters in South Africa didn't threaten the stranglehold of the security agencies, and as a result the final bargain, in terms of economic gain, did not favour the protesters. As President of South Africa, Mandela's public image as a selfless leader coupled with his firm belief in the virtues of not being vengeful and the ideals of an open, democratic society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities, helped transform South Africa's global identity from a pariah state to an esteemed international player (Naidu,

2017). This study, however, looks at how Mwai Kibaki's individual experiences shaped his worldview and, in turn, the foreign policy choices of his administration.

Murray-Brown (1973) in his study of Kenyatta argues that after independence, Kenyatta took over as head of government and his leadership style was reflected in the state foreign policy. Kenyatta took over the presidency after achieving a hero's status among Kenyans. His personality was projected into the foreign policy realm and this became a trend in subsequent governments. Murray-Brown study contributes very richly to the literature on personality, but is beyond the scope of this study, which focuses on Mwai Kibaki.

Hoskyns (1969) studied the Ethiopia-Somali-Kenya dispute and asserts that foreign policy in the Jomo Kenyatta administration was a presidential prerogative. It was aggressive and consequently became controversial. The government of Kenyatta made it a prerogative for foreign-policy decision-making to be consolidated in the hands of the strong personal ruler. Foreign policy became largely influenced by the head of state. President Kenyatta's pragmatism in his personality is exemplified by some of the foreign policy decisions he took such as the unprecedented visit to Mogadishu for purposes of negotiating border claims and to promote trade cooperation. President Kenyatta's pragmatic approach to foreign policy can be linked to his advanced age which gave him superior judgment and a conservativist approach to foreign policy making. Further to this, the Somali conflict epitomizes a case where Kenyatta played a key role in driving external policy of conflict management. Again, like is the case with the previous study, Hoskyns's study focus on Jomo Kenyatta, and the proposed study is about Mwai Kibaki. This research thus updates the literature on this area.

From the foregoing review, it is clear that there exists a number of works by different scholars touching on the subject of idiosyncratic variables and foreign policy. From the

literature there are gaps, which this study seeks to fill through an in-depth and systematic analysis.

### **2.3 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework**

The idiosyncrasies of a leader are important in order to understand the leader's foreign policy decisions and to foretell what decisions the leader will make in the future. Contingent on the idiosyncrasies, the leader will either align with the environment or try to influence it. To better understand, describe and explain the influence of idiosyncratic variables in foreign policy, a conceptual framework that links a leader's idiosyncrasies to foreign policy is adopted. In particular, this study will use James Rosenau's level of analysis framework to explain the effect of a leader's idiosyncrasies on external policy.

#### **James Rosenau's Levels of Analysis Framework**

The concept, levels of analysis in foreign policy analysis (FPA), was popularized by James N. Rosenau in his 1966 influential article, *Pre-theories and Theories of Foreign Policy*. The adoption of this framework was to give the study of foreign policy a scientific flavour. This is because levels of analysis systematised the study of foreign-policy. Rosenau and the legion of other Comparative Foreign Policy-Group (CFPG) scholars' endeavoured to construct a general theory that could be used to explain foreign policy phenomena. Early before Rosenau, J. D. Singer (1961) and later, Kenneth Waltz (1979) employed the concept to explain formulation of foreign-policy and its conduct at different levels.

Levels of analysis is found in all sciences; both natural and physical sciences. Operationally defined, level of analysis implies a unit to which scholars, researchers or students of foreign policy attach variables for the purpose of comprehensive explanation and understanding of a



foreign policy phenomenon like decisions and actions. This study adopts the first level of analysis – idiosyncratic/ individual level of analysis. The first level focus on variables such as: mental and physical health, prejudice, beliefs, social background, education, age among other variables. The other levels of analysis encompassed by Rosenau include: Role level of analysis; Governmental-Politics level; Societal level, and lastly, the International System level.

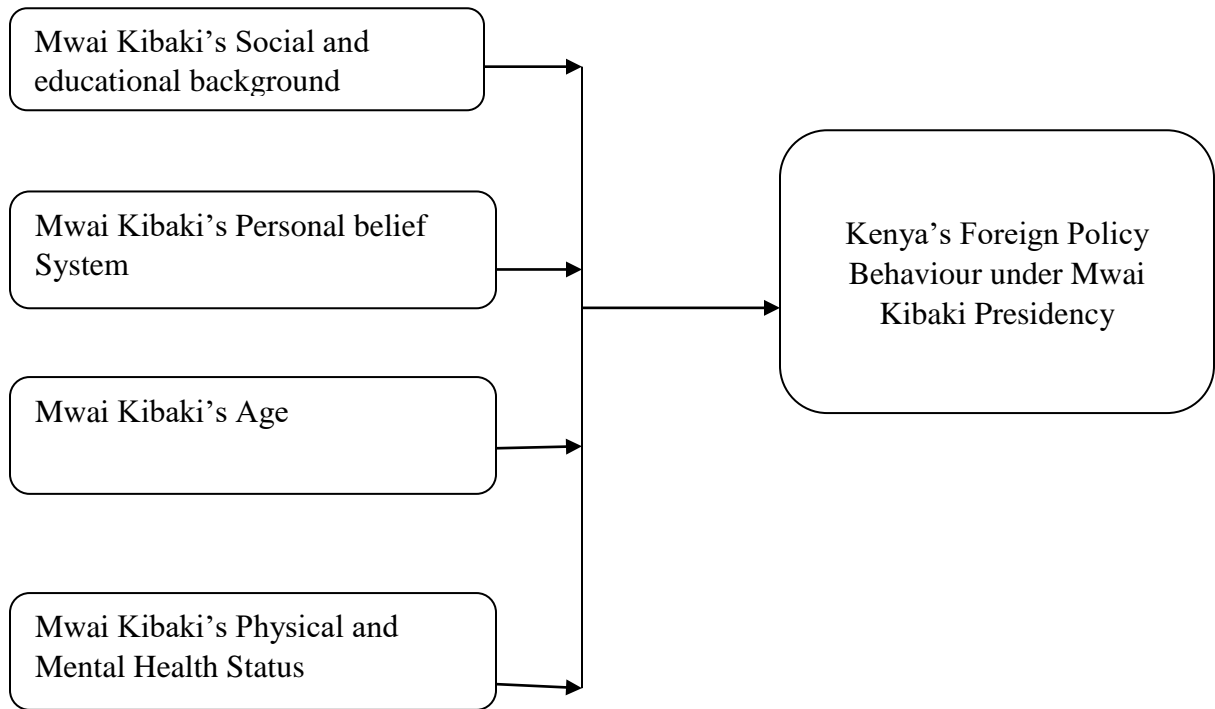
The focus of the first level of analysis is the idiosyncratic features of a leader. These are variables that are unique to individuals/leaders. This individuals must be directly involved in formulation of foreign-policy and its conduct of a state like foreign ministers, diplomats, high commissioners, presidents. In this case the study's focus is President Mwai Kibaki. The assertion that the idiosyncratic traits of leaders - their beliefs, preferences, personality and prejudices- influence their behaviour while in office is ostensibly uncontroversial and deserves to be studied.

It is important to note that a leaders' worldview is shaped by a combination of factors. A factor like the leaders' beliefs is shaped by the milieu they find themselves in. All the way from childhood, to during periods of learning and development, to adulthood, the environment plays an important role in shaping one's personality. Equally, physical and mental health during the period of learning and physical growth, and physical and mental health while in office play an important role in moulding one's worldview.

This study employs Rosenau's levels of analysis framework to explain how Mwai Kibaki's idiosyncrasies such as age, social and academic background, physical and mental health influenced the formulation and conduct of Kenya's foreign policy between 2002 and 2013.

The study is guided by the assumption that Kibaki's idiosyncrasies shaped his perceptions of the world and thus by extension Kenya's foreign policy.

**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**



*Source:* Researcher (2019)

## 2.4 Research Hypothesis

The study was guided by the following hypotheses:

1. Kenya's foreign policy from 2002 to 2013 was impacted by the social/ academic background of Kibaki.
2. Kenya's foreign policy from 2002 to 2013 was influenced by personal beliefs of Kibaki.
3. Kenya's foreign policy from 2002 to 2013 was influenced by Kibaki's age during his administration.
4. Kenya's foreign policy from 2002 to 2013 was impacted by Kibaki's physical/ mental health.

## **CHAPTER 3: MWAI KIBAKI'S IDIOSYNCRASIES AND THE FORMULATION AND CONDUCT OF KENYA'S FOREIGN POLICY, 2002 - 2013**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This study set to find out how Mwai Kibaki's idiosyncrasies influenced Kenya's foreign policy between 2002 and 2013. This chapter looks at the meaning of the notion of idiosyncrasy from varied constructions, that is, age, social and academic background, personal beliefs, and physical and mental health of Mwai Kibaki. These aspects are discussed in line with the four specific objectives of the study in order to establish if they have any causal relationship to the formulation and conduct of Kenya's foreign policy during Kibaki's tenure as the president. The chapter is organized into four main sections; introduction, analytical framework for understanding Kibaki's idiosyncrasies, research findings and analysis of how Kibaki's idiosyncrasies influenced Kenya's foreign policy behaviour in the period under study.

### **3.2 Understanding Mwai Kibaki's Operational Code: A Biographical Note**

Emilio Stanley Mwai Kibaki was born in on November 15<sup>th</sup> 1931 in Gituyaini village in Othaya, Nyeri County. He was the last born of the eight children of peasant farmers, Kibaki Githinji and Teresia Wanjiku. As a boy, Kibaki was expected to look after his father's livestock, but a brother-in-law impressed it on his father to take him to school, where he turned out to be an exceptionally brilliant student. He was later on admitted to Nyeri High and later Mangu High School, one of Kenya's best high schools, between 1947 and 1950. During school holidays, Kibaki worked as a conductor for the Othaya African Bus Union to earn pocket money. In his final year at Mangu, Kibaki had considered joining the army but

his ambition was nipped in the bud following an order by the Colonial Secretary, Walter Coutts, who prohibited the recruitment of the populous ethnic Kikuyus into the army. The desire to join the army was influenced by soldiers returning home from the Second World War in 1945 (Kenya Year Book, 2018).

Outstanding academic achievement in High School earned him a scholarship to study BA Economics, Political Science and History at then Makerere College, University of East Africa in Uganda, later renamed Makerere University. At Makerere, he was elected Chairman of the Kenya Students Association, a leading position in the Makerere University Students Guild. He graduated with First Class Honours in 1955, and soon afterwards served briefly as Assistant Sales Manager for Uganda Shell Company. He thereafter received a scholarship to study Master of Science in Public Finance at the London School of Economics. From 1958, Kibaki served as an Assistant Lecturer of Economics at Makerere University, a position from which he resigned in December 1960 to serve as the first Executive Director for Kenyan African National Union (KANU), the dominant political party in struggle for Kenya's independence from British colonial rule.

In 1963, he was elected as Member of the Kenyan Parliament for Donholm Constituency in Nairobi. In Jomo Kenyatta's administration, Kibaki was appointed Assistant Minister for Finance and Economic Planning (1963), Minister for Commerce and Industry (1966) and the Minister for Finance and Economic Planning (1969). After Kenyatta's death in 1978, Kibaki was appointed Vice President and was retained Minister for Finance and Economic Planning until 1988 when he was dropped from Vice Presidency, but retained in Moi's cabinet as Minister for Health. In 1991, at the height of the clamour for multipartyism, Kibaki formed the Democratic Party (DP) on whose ticket he unsuccessfully ran for president in 1992 and

1997 general elections. Between 1997 and 2002, Kibaki served as Kenya's official opposition leader. In the 2002 general elections, the opposition united under National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) and Kibaki was elected president as a joint opposition candidate after garnering 62.2% of the total votes cast (IFES, n.d).<sup>2</sup> Just before the polls, Mwai Kibaki was involved in a near fatal accident and he was sworn in while on a wheelchair. In his initial days in office, there were huge concerns over Kibaki's health for he was severally admitted into hospital having suffered stroke (New York Times, 2003).

Mwai Kibaki is Kenya's longest serving Member of Parliament, having served between 1963 and 2013. He was regarded as a brilliant debater who eschewed pettiness and controversy, and has been described as the gentleman of Kenyan politics. In deed one of his former lecturers at Makerere, Kenneth Ingham, is quoted in Kenya Year Book (2013) describing Kibaki as "...a good man who does not crave prominence nor like to push himself forward." He allowed his cabinet members and senior bureaucrats to run their ministries without undue interference. He also gave adequate room for political debate in government and opposition leading to greater press freedom and an expanded room for civil liberties. His critics, however, interpret his laid-back style as indifference (Kenya Year Book, 2018).

### **3.3 Mwai Kibaki's Idiosyncrasy and Kenya's National Interest**

This study asserts ostensibly that the idiosyncratic traits of Mwai Kibaki informed both the domestic and foreign policy. In line with the operational attributes informing the study objectives, there exists a strong relationship between Kibaki's idiosyncrasies and formulation of the Kenya's foreign policy. As a question of national interest, his social and education background, and belief system helped in the formulation of clearly defined domestic policy

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<sup>2</sup>IFES Election Guide <http://www.electionguide.org/elections/id/1883/> accessed on 3<sup>rd</sup> January, 2020

that directly shaped Kenya's foreign policy. As a leader the personal identity of Mwai Kibaki correlated and influenced his motive and performance while serving as the President.

Mwai Kibaki was the joint opposition parties' candidate in the 2002 general elections. Under the loose coalition of opposition political parties, National Rainbow Coalition (NARC), he garnered 62.2% of the presidential votes cast (IFES, *ibid*). This high level of legitimacy that Kibaki's NARC administration enjoyed in its first term had serious implications for both domestic and foreign policy initiatives his administration pursued. As argued by one of the respondents for this study:

NARC administration had overwhelming domestic legitimacy. It did not need approvals from foreign capitals in order to be acceptable. This made this administration a lot more independent as it was not beholden to any foreign interests. This made it easy for the administration to pursue its goal of self-reliance by ending dependence on foreign aid to fund national budget. After the failure on the part of the donors in 2004 to plug in a budget deficit, the administration focussed on generating enough resources domestically by sealing tax loopholes, broadening tax base and diversifying trading partners. By 2005, Kenya had a balanced budget and this enabled the administration to meaningfully focus on pursuing Kenya's national interest in its foreign relations (Respondent 1)<sup>3</sup>

This view was corroborated by another respondent who argued that:

"Kibaki's guiding North in foreign relations was Kenya's national interest. His foreign policy was geared toward driving, serving and ensuring that national interest is always scored. He never allowed anybody to interfere with the sovereignty of Kenya. This is what drove Kibaki into sending the Kenya Defence Forces into Somalia in 2011 to combat Al Shabaab terrorist group whose activities were increasingly hurting Kenya's economy and undermining the sovereignty of the state" (Respondent 2, *ibid*).

Mwai Kibaki had had a long running experience in management of public affairs. Since independence, Kibaki had at one point or another served in a senior public office which offered him front row experience in policy making and implementation. His rich resume in public service; as Executive Director of ruling party KANU (1960-63), Member of Parliament (1963-2013), Assistant Minister for Economic Planning (1963-1966), Cabinet

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<sup>3</sup>Respondent 1 (Interview with Mwai Kibaki's Economic Advisor on 10 September, 2019 at Rosslyn Riviera Mall, Nairobi).

Minister Commerce and Industry (1966-69), Minister for Finance and Economic Planning (1969-1988) and Minister for Health (1988-1991), Vice President (1978-1988), and the Leader of the Official Opposition (1997-2002); had adequately prepared him for presidency. This rich experience meant that as an individual, he carried institutional memory running from Kenya's independence up to the time he assumed the office of president. According to a respondent:

“Kibaki understood the statecraft well; he knew the policy making processes and compromises involved. He was an intellectual who understood the interplay between Kenya's national interests and foreign influence. As early as 1970s, he had been touted as a possible future president. This meant that he must have given it much thought and was intellectually prepared. He had a lot of reflection. He knew everyone in government and had interacted with those in opposition where he spent ten years” (Respondent 1, *ibid*).

Mwai Kibaki's personal trait as a laid back character is an idiosyncratic variable that influenced the conduct of Kenya's foreign policy. While this character could easily be seen as a weakness, it jelled well with his intellectual capabilities and long experience in public service to build in him a lot of confidence. As noted another respondent:

“Kibaki did not suffer from any form of inferiority complexes. His long years in public service enabled him not to harbour any feelings of marginalization coupled with the fact that his native Kikuyu ethnic group is the biggest in Kenya. He had acquired confidence. He was not suffering from paranoia. He knew and had confidence in the senior public servants to which he delegated roles” (Respondent 3).<sup>4</sup>

As president, Kibaki was very tactful in how he handled sticky issues especially those that had the potential of hurting Kenya's national interests. He skilfully negotiated on behalf of

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<sup>4</sup>Respondent 3 (Interview with Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs under Kibaki administration at Gymkhana Club, Nairobi on 17<sup>th</sup> September, 2019).



Kenya and strategically delegated roles to members of his cabinet or bureaucrats. In other instances, he strategically chose to keep quiet. Contrary to the general belief, Kibaki was not a fence-sitter, but a pragmatist who exercised superior judgment by playing safe and wisely. He did not approach issues with emotions so as to promote national interest. As notes another respondent:

“In 2008, Sudan’s President Omar al Bashir wanted to host AU in Khartoum and subsequently become its Chairman. Bashir’s administration had been accused by international human rights groups of commission of war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity in Darfur. Bashir’s offer was aggressively opposed by Thabo Mbeki, Olusegun Obasanjo and Jakaya Kikwete among other African Heads of States. They had argued that if Sudan hosted African Heads of States, it would appear as an endorsement, by AU member states, of the atrocities in Darfur. Since Kenya was involved in the Sudan Peace Process at that time, Kibaki chose not to make Kenya’s position on the matter known, but instead approached Jakaya Kikwete to give a joint EAC member states’ position. Kibaki understood that Kenya shared a common border with Sudan. He also was careful not to jeopardize Kenya’s position as mediator in the Sudan Peace Process. Kenya later succeeded in mid-wiving the Sudan Peace Accord which gave birth to the state of South Sudan through a referendum in 2011” (Respondent 4).

Mwai Kibaki understood the dynamics of the international system. He appreciated Kenya’s weaknesses and carefully engaged international actors without injuring national interests. His age and experience in public affairs made his judgment superior. He also understood that Kenya’s economy was highly reliant on the West, especially Britain, and therefore carefully navigated the international system without endangering Kenya’s survival. As notes Respondent 4:

In 2004, the UK High Commissioner to Kenya, Edward Clay, criticised the Kibaki administration for failing to end high level corruption. He accused Kibaki administration of ‘eating like gluttons and vomiting all over their shoes’. Following this scathing attack, a number of cabinet members publicly confronted the High Commissioner and even called for his replacement. President Kibaki disagreed with this approach and instead asked the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Chirau Mwakwere, to positively engage the envoy by hosting a number of breakfast meetings and luncheons for the High Commissioner. Kibaki argued that sustained public attacks on the envoy would prick the Pride of UK government and could possibly injure Kenya’s relations with the IMF and World Bank as had happened to Zimbabwe. He instead advised that Kenya could instead engage their friends in London and have little to do with the Ambassador. This worked magic for Kenya’s relations with London as the High Commissioner’s continued attack on Kenya’s government when London felt the Ambassador was not right and instead withdrew him. This favoured Kenya’s interests and relations with foreign countries. Kibaki did not approach issues with emotions, but was very calculative and strategic, putting Kenya’s national interests first (Respondent 4, *ibid.*).

In explaining the influence of Mwai Kibaki's idiosyncrasies on foreign policy, it is important to acknowledge the linkage between his idiosyncratic traits and the historical development of Kenya's political systems. These linkages tend to focus on a biographical genre while focusing of the Kibaki's physical and his mental health. This study notes that at various levels, Kibaki was able to significantly influence a number of both domestic and foreign policies. Kibaki's option and prioritization of certain policies did not emanate from factors such as ethnic or elite interest. This was attributed to his education background and vision of creating a "working nation" through the revitalization of the economy for the greater good of all Kenyans. Kibaki's social and academic background created and, indeed, informed years of learning about the political choices and institutional process that had led to the weakening of the country's foreign policy under previous regime. As one respondent observed;

"Kibaki came into office "not to pursue narrow, regional or ethnic agenda, but national agenda of revitalizing the Kenyan economy, creating jobs, increasing household incomes and revamping public institutions" (Respondent 2, *ibid*).

Kibaki understood how critical these issues were in making Kenya a stronger state. For Mwai Kibaki, the bottom-line in every foreign engagement was the value that Kenya would earn.

"He was driven by the bigger picture not sectarian interests. He had been brought up in humble beginnings and understood what damage a leadership driven by fear and narrow interests could do. He appointed career diplomats to champion Kenya's foreign policy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and he did not meddle in the work of technocrats. His confidence in abilities of career civil servants helped stabilize his administration in its nascent days when his health was not stable due to injuries suffered in accident in December 2002" (Respondent 3, *ibid*).

In addition to his nationalist view, Mwai Kibaki understood that foreign policy should always be geared towards improving the welfare of the citizens. His education background had

capacitated him with conceptual ability to understand the interplay between the domestic and foreign policies of a state. For him, “national prestige without tangible socio-economic benefits to the people” (Respondent 1, *ibid.*) would be meaningless. It is instructive to note that his signature domestic social policies were Free Primary Education (FPE) and combating the spread of HIV/AIDS (NARC Manifesto, 2002). As he proudly alluded and reported in the Sunday Nation newspaper interview on 25<sup>th</sup> July, 2010, “...seeing children from humble backgrounds smile on their way to school gives a lot of pride...”

Given his humble roots, Kibaki always sought to engage in foreign relations only when it added value to Kenya, and bargained with the public interest in mind. He was never mesmerised by meeting the political leaders from powerful states unless such meetings brought benefits for Kenya. As noted a respondent:

“When US President George Bush chose not to visit Nairobi, but Kampala in his 2004 East African trip, Kibaki deliberately avoided travelling to Kampala as he saw no value in it. Instead he travelled to a COMESA meeting in Zambia” (Respondent 1, *ibid.*).

Mwai Kibaki always pushed for cost-cutting measures in government and advised that the money be spent on social services where it benefitted the people most, as notes Respondent 3:

“Mwai Kibaki never believed in spending resources on unnecessary foreign trips, entertainment, and other overhead costs in Foreign Missions including abolishing non-essential staff e.g. drivers, cooks, security wardens and press attachés among others,. He believed in cutting costs and instead spent the monies to give subsidised fertilizers to farmers or to open up new embassies in states where it made more economic sense to Kenya like in Angola and Botswana, and a consulate in Cuba among others. Kenya did not have property in Japan, Abuja and China. Kibaki managed to buy the property in three years without seeking any adjustments in budgetary allocation from the national treasury” (Respondent 3, *ibid.*).

Indeed Mwai Kibaki’s foreign engagements as president were always geared towards the promotion of the public welfare. At the inception of his administration in 2003,

infrastructural development was identified a crucial driver of economic growth in Kenya (Economic Recovery Strategy Paper, 2004). In order to fulfil this, Kibaki's administration identified the most important projects that would anchor Kenya on a path to economic prosperity. It is during this time that the Kenyan government sought a more constructive engagement with both bilateral and multilateral donors in the improvement of road network. However, Kibaki consciously avoided borrowing funds from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) given its unfriendly terms and conditionality toward African states. For him, Kenya had the ability to chart its international agenda without seeking the intervention of intermediaries in the international system. During his tenure, he diversified Kenya's bilateral partnerships and aggressively pursued a "Look-East" policy. Kenya began borrowing more funds from China than from its traditional allies in the West for its infrastructural development. As argues Respondent 1:

"Mwai Kibaki understood that the Western donors borrowed money from China on concessionary terms or lower interest rates and then lent this money to African states at higher rates with tougher conditionality. Kibaki argued that it made more sense going directly to China and getting the loans instead of borrowing the same money from the West who were merely acting as intermediaries" (Respondent 1).<sup>5</sup>

This view is confirmed by Respondent 2:

"Kibaki saw no logic in taking loans from the West. He always questioned the logic in borrowing money from the West who were equally borrowing from China at low rates and giving to African states at a higher rate. Kibaki therefore decided to negotiate for funding directly with China in order to get a better deal of fifty percent grant and fifty percent loan at two percent" (Respondent 2, *ibid.*).

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<sup>5</sup>Respondent 1 (Interview with Mwai Kibaki's Economic Advisor on 10 September, 2019 at Rosslyn Riviera Mall, Nairobi).

The “Look-East” policy was informed by the need to diversify Kenya’s international trading partners in order to reduce Kenya’s vulnerabilities in the international system. Central to this policy was the understanding that Kenya needed to become more assertive in its international engagement and reaffirm its legal rights as a sovereign state. Kenya understood that China and Japan were rising economic players in the increasingly globalising international system. He also identified the Asian Tigers, and states in the Middle East as crucial partners in Kenya’s economic development.

Under Mwai Kibaki, Kenya aggressively intensified trade links and partnerships with states that it erstwhile did very little trading with like Libya and Islamic Republic of Iran. Some of these states had been labelled *pariah* states by the West. By making a state visit to Libya in June 2007, Kibaki gave one of the strongest signals of his administration’s intention of pursuing new international trade partners. In 2009, Kenya hosted President of Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad on a three day state visit in which a number of bilateral trade pacts were signed. As notes a respondent:

“Kibaki hosted Ahmadinejad with the aim of boosting Kenya’s national interests. The bilateral pacts signed between the two states enabled trade to blossom. Mwai Kibaki believed that establishing new bilateral ties does not mean Kenya is stalling its relations with its traditional allies. In his briefs to newly appointed envoys, Mwai Kibaki always gave clear instructions that their (envoys) primary duty was to establish and ensure that Kenya enjoyed socioeconomic relations with the host countries to the benefit of the Kenyan economy” (Interview with Respondent 6).<sup>6</sup>

Mwai Kibaki implemented a radical diaspora policy by sending Kenyans to work in other states and international organizations. For instance, the Kibaki administration negotiated bilateral labour agreements with states in the Middle East with the aim of finding gainful employment for Kenya’s growing human resource. During Kibaki era, more and more Kenyans moved to Middle East states like United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain and Jordan amongst others for work. This increased the diaspora remittances to Kenya that kept Kenya’s foreign exchange stable for years. Mwai Kibaki administration also lobbied for employment for outstanding Kenyan nationals in a number of international

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<sup>6</sup>Respondent 6 (Interview with Mwai Kibaki’s Foreign Affairs Minister 2008-2010 at Wilson Airport on 25<sup>th</sup> October, 2019).

organizations. For instance, in 2009, renowned Kenyan legal practitioner Joyce Aluoch was appointed as one of the presiding judges at the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the Hague. Similarly, Kenya's Mukhisa Kituyi was appointed Secretary General of United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in 2014 following the earlier interventions of Mwai Kibaki before he left office in 2013 (The Standard, 2013).

Mwai Kibaki neither signed new defence and security pacts as president nor did he renew existing ones signed by his predecessors, case in point; the defence pact between Kenya and Britain. His administration insisted on open tendering for off-road police vehicles and medicinal supplies.<sup>7</sup> In Kibaki's view, the Kenya-Britain defence agreement that was initially entered in 1963 and renewed in 1980 did not serve Kenya's national interest, but instead was more beneficial to Britain. The decision not to renew the pact when Kibaki came into office resulted in hostile verbal altercations between senior officials in Kibaki administration and then UK High Commissioner to Kenya, Edward Clay. Britain responded by leaking the Kroll report in 2007 which detailed systemic corruption in Kenya, and would subsequently slap senior government officials with travel bans. Britain's actions were seen as a response by Kibaki administration to award security tenders to non-British firms. However, Kibaki insisted that, "new friendships with others did not in any way diminish Kenya's existing friendships" (Interview with Respondent 6, *ibid.*).

Mwai Kibaki's political leadership presents an idiosyncratic trait of age, education and personal belief system in informing the paradox between the high incompatible interests

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<sup>7</sup>From 1963 until Kibaki came into office, British manufacturer of Landrover was the sole supplier of off-road vehicles for Kenya's security agencies. Kibaki administration changed this in 2004 by insisting on open tendering driven by value for money and reliability when they bought off-road Landcruisers manufactured by Japanese carmaker, Toyota. The same monopoly also existed in medical supplies where SmithKline Beecham (later on Glaxo SmithKline) who had been the sole supplier was subjected to open tendering processes.

within the countries long history of democratic political system and processes. The foreign policy during Kibaki's administration was inherently dependent on the dynamics and demands of the international system. His personal belief system and education background facilitated the pursuit and alignment of Kenya foreign policy with the demands and conditionality for global economic partnership (Oyugi, 2004). This view was confirmed by one of Kibaki's closest confidants as follows:

“Kibaki understood that national interest is the main determinant of foreign policy. For Kibaki, national interest meant an improvement in Kenya's economic outlook. As a consequence, everything started and ended with national interest - it was his mind, body and soul” (Respondent 2, *ibid*).

### **3.4 Kibaki's Idiosyncrasies and Kenya's Foreign Policy, 2002 to 2013: A Discussion**

The study suggests that Kibaki's idiosyncrasy informed his leadership motivations that largely resulted to his broad-based appeal at the international stage. This appeal was crucial to the realization of Kenya's national interests. In particular his 'rally-round-the-flag' effects, received a lot of attentions during the Kibaki's reign due to his idiosyncrasy of education background, age and belief system. In his inaugural address in 2002, as was the case in a number of his speeches, Mwai Kibaki strongly made rallying call for a “working nation” and emphasised why it is important for all individuals to be accountable for their own actions. The content of these speeches reveals Mwai Kibaki's strong belief in individual contributions toward the greater good, while at the same time emphasizing strict adherence to the rule of law. This contributed greatly to the strengthening of democracy, good governance, accountability and respect for human rights. Kibaki followed the laid down legal procedures and always engaged the relevant institutions in the making and implementation of policies.

This led to institutional competency at various levels. The implication for foreign policy making and implementation cannot be gainsaid.

In the field of foreign policy decision-making, the critical role of individual personality in impacting nature and trends in policy formulation and conduct cannot be overemphasised. In the context of this study, Kibaki's idiosyncrasy as informed by his social and educational background, age, health and personal beliefs informed his own human agency. At the individual level of analysis, Kibaki's idiosyncrasies lie at the core in the understanding of particular foreign policies and behaviours and actions. This is supported by the national variables that greatly influenced the sum total of the state's intentions against its intention at the regional and national levels. As argued Oyugi (2004), the traditional variables that dictated the Kenya's foreign policy since independence remained unchanged even when Kibaki administration came to power in 2003. And indeed lasted till the end of his regime.

In the foregoing circumstances, Mwai Kibaki's idiosyncratic traits, namely social and educational background, age, health status and belief system, tend to reinforce and inform the foreign policy choices that were made during his regime as influenced by domestic and systemic variables. To a larger extent this study established the nature and type of foreign policies during Kibaki's administration did not exist in isolation but were heavily influenced by president Kibaki's cognitive abilities. In comparison to Graham Allison's Bureaucratic Politics model of analysing foreign policy, Mwai Kibaki's idiosyncrasies featured prominently in the foreign policy decisions of Kenya during his tenure since Kenya's institutional make-up is still weak. The open bias toward economic issues in Kenya's foreign policy during Kibaki's tenure underscores the pre-eminence of President Kibaki's



idiosyncrasy in Kenya's foreign policy, more so membership and active participation in regional economic trading blocs.

Mwai Kibaki's ability to balance and sustain the logic of the foreign policies adopted by his administration was linked to his education background. To emphasise this, his education informed the success of all the foreign policies that were adopted during his tenure by being determinative enough not to allow their failure. This portrays that Kibaki's idiosyncrasy helped in fostering good relations between Kenya and other international actors. It is this educational background and Kibaki's own intellectual capabilities that endowed him with the capacity to understand the nature of the international system, actors involved, interests at play, and to be able to pursue a foreign policy agenda that promoted Kenya's own national interests.

In addition, Kibaki's belief system was portrayed during his young age when he decided to drop and reject Emilio Stanley to Mwai Kibaki as a sign of anti-colonial gesture. It's noted that he was handed over by his father to the missionaries since he was considered lazy to undertake farm related activities. Having worked as a tout in his earlier years, this exposed him to the harsh lives of the local *mwananchi* (ordinary citizen) and thus his priority for economic change. In addition, his desire to join the army was cut short by the British colonial government by banning the conscription of GEMA communities into the Army since they were not loyal like the Kamba. This led to his pursuit of further education in Makerere University after being persuaded by the then colonial secretary Walter Coutts. At Makerere he majored in Economics, History and Political Science graduating with first class honours. He taught at the Makerere University after his Master's in Economics from London School

of Economics. In 1962 he was fished from Makerere and appointed the first KANU executive officer with no pay (New African, May 2013).

Further, Kibaki's belief system can be linked to his resignation from KANU and government as a Minister of Health to form his own party the Democratic Party of Kenya in 1991. He believed in democracy, liberalism and accountability as an individual. As noted a respondent, "Kibaki was a team player and believed in according individuals the freedom and opportunity to do the assigned work. He never behaved like a know-it-all totalitarian type."<sup>8</sup>

Mwai Kibaki's "Look East" foreign policy was largely informed and influenced by dynamics at both domestic and global levels. Domestically, Kibaki got into office against the backdrop of popular legitimacy, an occurrence that offered him room to take decisions without a lot of domestic political pressures or risking the wrath of voters. Consequently, this set in motion the bold decision of his government to go to China to look for development assistance. However, the entry of China in to the global market, and Kenya by extension dented the relations between the Kibaki administration and the West. Kibaki, however, believed that the solution to Africa's development challenges, and even Kenya's own economic challenges, lay strongly in strengthening intra-African trade. He believed in the strength of regional economic blocs as a platform for sustainable peace, security and economic development. It is for this reason that he personally pushed for a stronger EAC and COMESA, and even paid membership fees for Burundi to join EAC. It can be argued that this belief in regional economic integration is a Pan-Africanist approach to offering solutions to Africa's challenges. This partly explains why Kibaki never made a state visit to any European state, but made several state visits to Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania and Turkey. In these countries,

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<sup>8</sup>Respondent 5 (Interview with Cabinet Minister in Mwai Kibaki administration, at Artcaffe Restaurant - Village Market, Nairobi on 5<sup>th</sup> October, 2019).

President Kibaki must have seen partners who would help in driving Kenya's national interest to fruition.

At the time he assumed office, Kibaki had had an accident and was confined to a wheelchair. In the early days of his presidency, there were several concerns about the health status of the President who was admitted to the hospital on several occasions. In some instances, speculations were carried in the news media that he had suffered stroke. Kibaki was absent from public events for extended periods of time and was prone to slurring his way through speeches (Branch, 2011). Matters were made worse by the failing health of Vice President, Wamalwa Kijana, who was also hospitalised and later passed on in August 2003. This affected the conduct of foreign policy during this period.

In the initial days of his presidency, because of his poor health status, it was not always clear who was running the country. Because of the president's absence, the NARC coalition on which he had been elected into office began to crumble. Lack of unity in Kibaki's ruling coalition weakened Kenya's foreign policy in his first term in office.

Mwai Kibaki had been forced to delegate functions to members of his cabinet and senior public officials. "He relied on experienced public servants. The delegation of roles was, perhaps, a blessing in disguise. The officials to whom roles were assigned had a free-hand on a number of policy issues" (Respondent 3, *ibid.*). But the influence on the conduct of foreign policy was twofold. First, the delegation made it possible for bureaucrats to infuse professionalism in the conduct of foreign affairs for there was minimal political interference. Posting of envoys to foreign missions was based on merit as opposed to political appointments as had become the norm in the previous regime. Cost cutting measures in

foreign missions were implemented. This professionalization of Foreign Service would eventually lead to establishment of a professionally run Foreign Service Institute which trained ambassadors and commercial attaches. It also led to development of a clear foreign policy blueprint which was later developed into Kenya Foreign Policy document in 2014.

On the flipside, “the delegation of roles in government gave room to conniving public officials to engage in corruption and other forms of misuse of public resources” (Respondent 1, *ibid.*). The Anglo-Leasing scandal that rocked Kibaki administration in its early days dented its reputation and raised questions about its determination to fight corruption. This was compounded by Kibaki administration’s refusal to make public and implement the findings of Ndung’u Commission report on illegal land acquisition which it had commissioned in 2003. In the same vein, Kibaki administration refused to make public the contents of a report by British firm Kroll consultancy group that the government had contracted to help in tracing resources looted and kept in offshore accounts or invested outside Kenya. The government also failed to show a firm commitment towards asset recovery or even trying those accused of sleaze. Even the judicial commission of inquiry into Goldenberg scandal that was established in 2003 had borne little fruit as no high profile individual was prosecuted nor assets recovered.

By 2006, relations between Kibaki administration and the West had been badly dented by its apparent lack of commitment toward fighting corruption. The Kenya Anti-Corruption Commission (KACC), which was the principal agency charged with investigating and prosecuting corruption cases suffered from massive systemic weaknesses. Matters were made worse when President’s adviser on governance and anticorruption, John Githongo, was forced out of office due to pressure from Kibaki’s close allies. Tapes from recorded

conversations between Githongo and one of Kibaki's closest allies who was Minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Kiraitu Murungi, had emerged. In the tapes, Kiraitu was heard issuing threats to Githongo and alluding to the possibility of the corruption cases bringing down Kibaki administration. Matters were not helped by the failure of Kibaki's administration to deliver on one of its key election promises in 2002, a new constitution that would create accountability mechanisms in Kenya's system of governance.

Doubts about health status of a President project weakness of the state in the international system. The leader's ability to engage in personal diplomacy or even lead delegations to a foreign mission is hampered. As the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, sickness of the president dents the morale of the military men, and thus negatively affects effective implementation of foreign policies that may call for the use of the military. In comparison to the agility of his predecessor Daniel Moi, Mwai Kibaki did not inspire any military action and his health status could explain why his administration did not send Kenyan Defence Forces (KDF) on peacekeeping missions abroad.

It can be argued that the limp in Kibaki's walking style and fears about his health, psychologically enamoured Kenya's potential enemies. It showed some weakness on the part of KDF and this could partly explain why under his reign, Kenya experienced an exponential rise in threats to sovereignty both domestically and externally. From within its borders, there emerged a number of militia groups such as Sabaot Lands Defence Force (SLDF) in Western Kenya and Mombasa Republican Council (MRC) in the Coastal areas which had secessionist/territorial claims on Kenya's soil. It is also important to note that terrorist attacks increased under Mwai Kibaki's reign. Kenya became a hotbed of international terrorism whose negative effects have been profound.

### **3.4.1 Rule of Law, Democracy and Good Governance, and Foreign Policy**

The fall of the Berlin Wall ushered in a wave of democratic transition across the continent of Africa. As a requirement of the “New World Order”, the new democracies were supposed to address and promote issues of rule of law, democracy through institutional reforms and good governance. In retrospect, Kenya was not immune to these new developments in the international system and had to acquiesce to these new demands. The failure by President Daniel Moi’s regime to implement the conditions set by its traditional development partners had resulted in the country’s isolation by its traditional allies in the West. Kibaki then carried the desire to promote Kenya’s image at the international levels with regard to the respect of rule of law and good governance (Kibaki Inauguration Speech, 2002). Promotion and establishment of strong democratic institutions and reforms help shape and resolve the negative relations between states and the foreign development partners.

This study shows that Kibaki’s idiosyncratic traits adopted for this study were informed by a number of factors that emanated from his very own perception of poor governance during the reign of his predecessor and earlier in his political career. As had noted Respondent 3:

“As opposition leader, Kibaki was informed of excessive abuse of human rights and issues of poor governance that he wanted to correct. He was equally influenced by political associates like Kiraitu Murungi and Respondent 5 who were considered hardcore human rights activists. He was in opposition when Kenya Commission on Human Rights was being established and played a crucial role.” (Respondent 3, *ibid*).

Kibaki gave priority to protection of human rights and must have perceived a strong correlation between human rights protection and good governance. Accordingly, good leadership for Kibaki meant governing with the consent of the governed, and applying the

principle of consultation in decision making. For him, national success could only be realized when each individual citizen is allowed to make their contribution to the national development agenda. Kibaki's belief in protection of individuality is an idiosyncratic trait which helps to define his nature as a leader. Mwai Kibaki is regarded as a successful leader who was, to some degree, able to build a more cohesive state irrespective of ethnic diversity and cultural differences by pursuing ethnically inclusive policies and informal power sharing arrangements. Enhancing the quality of government and its legitimacy through public service reforms directly had a positive impact on building the public confidence.

### **3.4.2 Economic Reforms, Partnership and Foreign Policy**

The weakening of the Kenya's economy in the 1990s diminished the state capacity to pursue a sound foreign policy in the last decade of Daniel Moi's rule. This situation influenced President Kibaki's idiosyncrasy in informing policies that would ultimately reverse the Kenya economic decline (Mbaya, 2019). First his education background coupled with age and belief system informed his commitment towards changing the status quo. Kibaki's urge to prioritize the need for Strengthening the weakened elements of Kenya's national interest was informed by his age, education background and belief system of moral good. Further, Kibaki believed in the merits of liberal economics as he had espoused in his campaign manifesto in 1992 presidential elections. The study affirms that there was a significant shift in economic policy following the rise of Kibaki to power. Kibaki's personal belief system, also informed the continuity of foreign policy that his administration pursued.

Mwai Kibaki's idiosyncratic traits were noted to have presented a leadership style that focused on reforming Kenya's national economy by consciously adopting liberalist policies.

His administration embarked on ambitious reforms of the national economy that included privatization of a number of parastatals and revitalizing them into profit making entities. Kibaki's personal belief system, for instance, impacted on how to manage and strike a balance between state and private interests. This entailed looking into the different dimensions on how international environment informed and shaped the national interests. The main concern was on restoring the cordial and the much needed economic partnership between the Kenya and its traditional development partners. Through his education and belief system, he was able to strengthen those elements of Kenya's national interest, which had been weakened during the previous regime.

Besides, Kibaki leadership witnessed the fast tracking and promotion of growth oriented policies aimed at poverty eradication, human capital development and wealth creation that propelled the country into an annual economic growth rate of 7% (KNBS, 2007). The question of leadership interest is held to refer to Kibaki's idiosyncrasy traits of education background and age in acquiring and redistributing political and economic resources.

The education background of Kibaki's can be linked further to his steady rise and appointments. In 1966 he was appointed the minister of commerce and industry after which he was appointed in the ministry of finance in 1969. He was noted to be the best Finance Minister in Africa and beyond attracting the attention of the World Bank President Robert McNamara who stated: "...the brightest economic brain to have emerged from Africa..." Indeed, Kibaki's credentials as an intelligent economist can be linked to the successful economic policies of the Jomo Kenyatta era which put Kenya on a sound economic footing. This won him recognition by the prestigious *Time* magazine in the 1974. Under President Daniel Moi, he served as Vice President, Finance Minister and later Health Minister. While



he was demoted from vice presidency and minister of finance to the health docket, he remained committed to his national duties, a fact that can be linked to his belief system.

Kibaki's education background and belief system led to the consolidation of more alliances at the regional level. These enhanced and built the confidence for both state and non-states actors whose significance and influence shaped Kenya's foreign policy. As a result he was able to avoid self-depleting situations that had earlier faced President Moi's administration. Like other foreign policy determinants, Kibaki's idiosyncrasy represented a dominant variable with the potential to impel Kenya towards the right and successful foreign policies. Instructively, Kibaki's interest in foreign affairs remains an important aspect in providing insight on to his idiosyncrasy in respect to decision making abilities. This was confirmed by his ability to accept attitudinal and policy orientation change. His capacity to adopt conciliatory behaviour and even play a role in peace processes was demonstrated by Kenya's prominent role in promotion of regional peace, such as the Sudan Peace Agreement and the signing of the National Reconciliation Accord after the 2007/08 Post Election Violence (PEV).

The study also established that Mwai Kibaki's years of perception and practice within the academics and corridors of power informed his decision-making. This was in the context of the changing nature of the larger international system towards informing the Kenya's foreign policy. For instance his decision to seek developmental aid in China was an idiosyncratic character anchored on to his education, age and belief system.

### **3.4.3 Foreign Policy in a Unipolar International System**

The shift in polarity from bipolarity to unipolarity and the subsequent emergence of the US as sole superpower meant that issues of good governance, democracy and the rule of law were going to be important in defining global relations. As a weak and dependent state, the shift in the systemic variables had implications for Kenya's foreign policy. Bearing in mind that Kenya's international reputation had taken a beating in the 1990s under Daniel Moi, Kibaki's popular election in 2002 presented an opportunity for a reset in Kenya's foreign policy.

The dynamics of contemporary international system to a large extent had a bearing on Mwai Kibaki's idiosyncratic traits for this study. Significant developments influenced the shaping of his leadership style, responsibilities and roles in the dynamic international political environments, both at the regional and international levels. In trying to analyse the Kenya's foreign policy in a unipolar international system, Kibaki's education background provides a critical entry point. Kibaki's education background endowed him with a unique understanding of how unipolarity would influence the conduct of Kenya's foreign policy.

At his inauguration in 2003, Mwai Kibaki was largely welcome by the West who promptly indicated that they would resume giving aid to Kenya since Mwai Kibaki had risen to power through a free and fair election. A number of bilateral donors and multilateral agencies had indicated their willingness to support Kibaki's signature program, Free Primary Education. Donor agencies also supported his administration's "zero-tolerance" toward corruption by funding a number of governance projects, including development of institutions.

Unipolarity shaped Kibaki's perceptions of the international system and in turn defined how Kenya projected its own foreign policy. As has been acknowledged by numerous scholars of

regional integration, the end of the Cold War ushered a new trend in regional integration in which the West ignored Africa and focused on former Soviet states, for examples Poland and Ukraine, in Eastern Europe. Trade imbalances between the Global North were on the rise as exports from African states were subjected to numerous barriers including discriminative rules of origin, punitive taxation and a general relegation of the continent to the periphery of international economic system. At the same time, Africa had witnessed a rise in civil conflicts and deterioration in standards of living as human development indicators worsened. Faced with ‘global marginalization’, there were deliberate efforts by African Heads of states to intensify intra-African trade. Regional integration was viewed as an important driver of Africa’s renewed growth.

Towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there were concerted efforts aimed at reviving Africa’s regional economic blocs that had collapsed during cold war. Regional blocs such as EAC and ECOWAS were revived. Preferential Trade Area (PTA) was re-launched and re-commissioned as COMESA with a focus on fostering economic exchange amongst their members as an alternative to the ‘closed’ markets in the Global North. At the continental level, the agenda of African Renaissance had led to the transformation of OAU into AU, whose mandate would be expanded to include finding African solutions to problems such as stalled economic development, poverty eradication, good governance and conflict resolution.

At the time he was assuming power, Mwai Kibaki understood these dynamics. The decision to make regional integration the centrepiece of his economic diplomacy can, therefore, be understood within this context. Mwai Kibaki’s Pan-Africanist focus, his education background, belief in pursuing Kenya’s national interest and longevity in public service played a crucial part in shaping Kenya’s foreign policy agenda toward the EAC region,

COMESA, African states, BRICS and the Global South in general. In addition to this, it can also be argued that the “Look-East” policy as pursued by Kibaki was influenced by the bully tactics of the US as the sole superpower, and the West in general.

#### **3.4.4 Mwai Kibaki Idiosyncrasies and Kenya’s Foreign Policy in the EAC**

The role of Kibaki’s idiosyncrasy in shaping Kenya’s foreign policy has been proven by the number of regional economic and development initiatives that his administration pursued. Driven by the pursuit of Kenya’s national interest, the regional initiatives were meant to provide an important platform for achieving trade growth and driving regional peace agenda. Mwai Kibaki was socialised at a young age into believing in the potential of East Africa. He was schooled at Makerere University, then an East African college where he later on worked as a lecturer. Kibaki also worked for Shell Uganda. This experience in his early adult life represents an important period in shaping his individual beliefs system and cognitive abilities, especially towards East Africa.

From this socialization, Mwai Kibaki emerged as an individual who strongly believed in the integration of East Africa states. As president, he openly showed this belief by making EAC integration the centrepiece of his administration’s economic diplomacy. He rarely missed EAC Heads of States meetings, and always sat through the meetings to the end. This demonstrated his personal belief and strong commitment to the integration of EAC as a regional trading bloc.

Mwai Kibaki’s age is equally important in understanding his foreign policy in EAC region. An important case to note is when Kenya and Uganda had a diplomatic tiff over Migingo Island in 2008. Provocative as the actions and statements from Ugandan public officials,

Kibaki chose not to give a verbal response despite mounting pressure from local politicians. Instead, Kibaki chose to pursue a diplomatic approach to settle the dispute through fact-finding by a joint inquiry.

Mwai Kibaki's education background is also critical in explaining his administration's commitment to EAC integration. As a Political Science and Economics Major, Mwai Kibaki conceptually understood the importance and benefits of regional integration in the economic growth and development of a state. During his time in office, the EAC made meaningful strides towards its integration and expansion. Indeed Kibaki is credited for having brought on board Burundi into EAC by personally paying its initial subscription fees. This action underscored how much he valued regional integration. It is instructive that Mwai Kibaki made state visits to all EAC member states and termed the state visit to Rwanda as "the best he ever had" (Respondent 2, *ibid*). Mwai Kibaki understood the factors that led to the collapse of the first EAC (1967-1977) and witnessed how much the economies of the member states suffered afterwards. He was therefore committed to ensure that EAC succeeded by giving the cooperation the attention that it deserved. His administration created a full-fledged ministry in charge of EAC affairs and funds were always allocated towards running the affairs of the EAC. Throughout his presidency, Kibaki never made any state visit to any European capital nor visit the Queen!

Mwai Kibaki also demonstrated a strong sense of Pan-Africanism. His administration was engaged in a number of peace initiatives on the continent, either as a mediator as was the case in Somalia's Transitional Federal Government in 2005 or as a signatory to a peace process as was the case in Sudan. Kibaki offered support for both the IGAD and AU passionately. His passion toward these regional bodies was demonstrated in the zeal with

which he discharged any responsibility bestowed on him. For instance, Kibaki was once tasked to chair a meeting of the AU whose commencement had delayed to 5PM. In order to ensure that all the agenda was discussed, he steered the meeting through the night until 7AM in the morning without showing any signs of fatigue.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

Despite the lack of adequate tools to systematically study idiosyncratic traits of President Kibaki, this study established that his idiosyncrasies as a leader had a first order effect on Kenya's foreign policy. The pattern based on his belief system and education has effectively been studied in this context. His passion and strong belief in liberal ideals, Pan-Africanism and the potentiality of the EAC economic bloc greatly shaped his foreign policy. Mwai Kibaki's passion for education is evident in his career progression and the successful implementation of Free Primary Education which formed a cornerstone of his administration's foreign policy engagements. The people centred policies of his administration can be linked to his social background. The chapter has also shown that Kibaki's education background also played a prominent role in shaping the foreign policies that his administration pursued.

## **CHAPTER 4: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter summarises the findings of the study by responding to three key issues (tasks). The first task is the recapitulation of the research objectives, evaluating the extent to which each objective has been met. Then, conclusions on the research findings are submitted. Recommendations are made on some of issues that need to be looked at to ensure that the foreign policy priorities and actions advance state interests.

### **4.2 Summary of the Findings**

#### **4.2.1 Mwai Kibaki's Social/ Academic Background as a Factor in Kenya's Foreign Policy 2002 - 2013**

This study established that Mwai Kibaki's social and academic background played an influential role in shaping both his administration's domestic and foreign policies. Specifically, the study found out that Kibaki was a smart, intellectual who excelled in his education both at bachelors and masters levels respectively. His excellent academic record led him being head-hunted to join the government as KANU's first Executive Director by the then Vice-President, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga.

Mwai Kibaki's education as an economist heavily influenced his administration's foreign policy whose key defining plank was economic diplomacy. Kibaki gave preference to reforms to facilitate economic growth. He implemented a number of reforms aimed at liberalizing the economy, and positioning Kenya as a favourite destination for foreign direct investments, tourism and conferencing. Kibaki, the economist understood the importance of

diversifying Kenya's trading partners, and always sought value for money in all Kenya's foreign engagements. For instance, in 2003, Kibaki's administration moved to break monopoly of British manufacturer of off-road vehicles, Landrover, which had been the sole supplier of vehicles to Kenya's security sector since independence at very high prices. Instead Kibaki sought cheaper options that would serve the same needs. In addition, his education experience made him understand the importance and benefits of regional integration in the economic growth and development of a state. He preferred nuanced policy approach to foreign affairs as opposed to adhocery or knee-jerk reactions to emerging issues.

Further, it is important to note that Kibaki's idiosyncratic variables made him appreciate diversity. Kibaki's educational background and intellectual capabilities represent an idiosyncratic trait that endowed him with a superior understanding of World Affairs in general, and how events at the global level impacted on policies of underdeveloped states like Kenya, in particular. Further, his appreciation of diversity was instrumental in his later efforts of building multiethnic and nationalist coalitions thus winning legitimacy for his government and its policies. Further, having come from a humble social background, this had a psychological impact on his personality by building in him a confident individual who did not suffer from any form of inferiority complex. Further, his humble social background made him empathise with the poor. This fact was reflected in his social policies and programs such as Free Primary Education (FPE) program, combating HIV/AIDS, creation of job opportunities and fighting corruption among others were focussed on improving the welfare of the people.



#### **4.2.2 Mwai Kibaki's Personal Belief System and Kenya's Foreign Policy 2002 - 2013**

The influence of Mwai Kibaki's personal belief system, as an idiosyncratic trait, in the conduct of Kenya's foreign policy has been proven through a number of policy measures his administration pursued. Kibaki's belief system can be seen in his ideological conviction as a Pan-Africanist and a person whose actions were driven by Kenya's national interest. Kibaki's strong belief in the capacity of Africans can be attributed to his socialization; he was educated in Kenya and Uganda which offered him an orientation that is East Africa. This belief also explains his strong Pan-Africanist credentials.

It is this belief system that must have made Kibaki to push for a strong EAC, as a mechanism of seeking local solutions to the collective challenges facing the population of the EAC. It is in keeping consistent with this belief that Kibaki sought to shore up the voice of Burundi, a weak power in the affairs of the EAC.

Further, Kibaki's childhood experiences, education and governmental experiences shaped his economic approach that aimed at not only building inclusive economic institutions that spreads the national cake to all but also building a strong foundation for Kenya's economy.

Kibaki had a strong conviction that a strong domestic economy would form the basis for Kenya's foreign interactions. To make Kenya's economy strong, Kibaki emphasised the need for a working, healthy nation free from ravages of diseases like HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

Mwai Kibaki also demonstrated a strong belief in national interest as the guiding compass in foreign relations. As a matter of principle, Kibaki always stressed the need to put Kenya's interests first in all engagements with foreign entities. For him, foreign engagements only

made sense if Kenya accrued benefits and not exposed Kenya to exploitation or ridicule on the international system. How he handled the British monopoly supplies of motor vehicles to security sector and monopoly medical supplies is a pointer. Kibaki also made international visits only to states where it would bring benefits to the country. He boycotted meeting with US President George Bush in 2003 and instead attended Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) meeting in Lusaka. It can also be argued that he projected national prestige in foreign relations for it is under Mwai Kibaki that Kenya received foreign delegations, even from developed states like New Zealand, to benchmark on the Constituencies Development Fund (CDF) as a model for decentralised approach to development.

#### **4.2.3 Mwai Kibaki's Age and Kenya's Foreign Policy 2002 - 2013**

This study has shown that Mwai Kibaki's age was an important idiosyncratic trait that defined his style in foreign policy. Age has been seen as a factor that brings out different styles of leadership. Advanced age is associated with foreign policies tend to be conservative, analytical, calculative, strategic, non-emotional and show superior judgment. Youthfulness on the other hand is associated with energy, erratism, high emotion and sometimes a lapse in judgement due to inexperience.

Mwai Kibaki became president of Kenya at the ripe age of 71 years. Before this, he had served in various senior positions in the public service since independence. This longevity in service enabled him to have a better understanding of the Kenyan statecraft. Having served as Member of Parliament, Assistant Minister, Cabinet Minister, Vice President and Opposition Leader, Kibaki understood the worldviews of politicians both in government and

opposition; had built a reliable network of political allies with whom he could lead as President. He also enjoyed a long running relationship with civil servants. This was helpful in enabling his administration to implement its policies with ease, since most of the senior civil servants are people Kibaki had personally worked with in the past.

Mwai Kibaki demonstrated a superior sense of judgment in his the manner he handled foreign issues. He was not carried away by emotions, but remained calm, calculative and strategic in his approach. Further, on a number of sticky EAC issues, Kibaki chose silence or appeared as a fence-sitter. In reality, this laid-back approach was an idiosyncratic trait that demonstrated a good sense of judgment in him.

#### **4.2.4 Mwai Kibaki's Physical/ Mental Health Status and Kenya's Foreign Policy 2002 – 2013**

The findings of this study reveal that the state of Mwai Kibaki's physical and mental health had a bearing on Kenya's foreign policy. The study has identified different instances where his health came up an issue that could impair his judgment, especially on the foreign policy front. In some instances, Kibaki continued absence from public events for extended periods of time and speech slurring during public events generated speculations that his health was frail. His frail health was compounded by the poor health of his Vice-President, Kijana Wamalwa, who unfortunately died while receiving treatment in a London hospital in August 2003. This kind of situation raised critical questions as to who was in charge of the day to day running of the government.

However, Kibaki's frail health produced latent consequences. First, it made delegation possible, thereby allowing bureaucrats to infuse professionalism into the conduct of foreign

affairs in the process minimizing political interference. On the flipside, the delegation of roles in government gave room to conniving public officials to engage in corruption and other forms of misuse of public resources like the Anglo-Leasing scandal that rocked Kibaki administration in its early days and dented its reputation and raised questions about its determination to fight corruption. Indeed, several individuals implicated in major scandals in the Kibaki administration were not held accountable.

Further, the study established that lack of commitment by the administration towards fighting corruption made it lose favour with the West. Matters were made worse when a key Kibaki advisor went to Britain on exile and spilled the beans on the rampant corruption that was the order of the day in the administration.

#### **4.2.5 Recapitulation of the Study Hypotheses**

This study has examined the influence of idiosyncrasies of Mwai Kibaki on the formulation and conduct of Kenya's foreign policy between 2002 and 2013. The study began by putting into perspective, the influence of idiosyncrasies on foreign policy decision making. The central thesis of the study was that idiosyncrasies of the president impact foreign policy of the state. The study was guided by the following hypotheses: 1) Mwai Kibaki's social and academic background influenced Kenya's foreign policy; 2) Mwai Kibaki's personal beliefs influenced Kenya's foreign policy; 3) Mwai Kibaki's age influenced Kenya's foreign policy; and 4) Mwai Kibaki's physical and mental health influenced Kenya's foreign policy. From the findings, the study hypotheses have been proven and therefore null hypotheses have been rejected.

### **4.3 Conclusion**

From the findings of the study, it can be concluded that in general the idiosyncrasies of individual leaders influence formulation and conduct of foreign policies of states. In particular, a leader's social and academic backgrounds contribute to their worldview and endow them with the ability to understand global events thus influencing their foreign policy choices and style. The study also concludes that the belief system of the president also plays an important role in shaping the foreign policy alternatives a state pursues and approaches employed. The study concludes that ability to engage in foreign relation or even lead delegations to a foreign mission is hampered or facilitated by his mental and physical health status. Kibaki's frail health, especially at the start of his administration diminished his ability to effectively take charge of foreign policy affairs. Even though, this was partly counteracted by his delegation of roles to seasoned professionals in various roles. The age of a leader is an important factor in shaping the kind of decisions leaders make. Kibaki had the advantage of governmental experience and political capital that proved invaluable in managing state affairs as well as foreign policy. In a nutshell, Kibaki's idiosyncratic traits combined to shape and influence Kenya's foreign policy behaviour.

### **4.4 Recommendation**

Based on the findings above, the study makes the following recommendations:

#### **a) Policy Recommendation.**

- i) It is important for foreign policy makers to understand the idiosyncrasies of the president so that policies can easily be implemented by the president. With this understanding, foreign policy will most likely reflect priorities, choices and operational styles of the president. When this is the case, chances that president will

grant political goodwill are high thus guaranteeing their successful implementation, especially in states with weak institutional frameworks. On the same note, implementation of foreign policy objectives becomes easier when bureaucrats posted in embassies and foreign missions understand the president's idiosyncrasies. When ambassadors, high commissioners and other diplomats understand and appreciate the idiosyncrasies of the president under whom they serve, they are likely to come up with innovative strategies in the course of implementation of foreign policy. This increases chances of success of foreign policy objectives for that particular government.

- iii) The study further recommends that foreign policy making process be more broad-based and inclusive so as to bring on board all relevant actors as possible. The international system is increasingly globalised and the subject matter of foreign policy is not limited to high politics, but also encompasses issues of low politics which are traditionally regarded as domestic affairs of a state. This blurring of the boundary between domestic and foreign policy environments, and multiplicity of actors means that foreign policy making must involve as many departments and actors as possible. This would make foreign policy more encompassing, and would build a synergy among the various departments of government that have a role to play in promoting a state's foreign policy agenda.

#### **b) Academic Recommendation**

There is a deficiency of literature on personal traits, experiences and life histories of political leaders in developing states in general, and Kenya in particular. This dearth in

literature could partly explain why foreign policies of these states have generally been weak as there could be a lack of understanding about the link between the foreign policies and presidents' personal traits. Available literature describes the general foreign policy posture of different administrations but does not make a direct link between a leader's idiosyncrasy and foreign policy (Branch, 2011; Mbaya, 2019). Further, available literature on the linkage between idiosyncrasy and foreign policy in regards to Kenya is a bit old (Howell, 1968) or not case specific (Khadiagala and Lyons, 2001). This study therefore recommends that academic research be conducted on idiosyncrasies of current leaders or potential political leaders so as to enable citizens and policy makers to adequately interrogate their personal traits and gain a more informed understanding of such leaders before they are elected into office.

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## **APPENDIX I - Interview Guide**

1. What (factors) influenced Kenya's foreign policy decision making during Kibaki's administration?
2. Are there any specific domestic and systemic factors you could mention?
3. Do you feel leadership (president) plays an important role in formulation and conduct of Kenya's foreign policy?
4. What is your understanding of the concept idiosyncrasy? In your opinion, is a leader's idiosyncrasy one of the most important factors that shape the formulation and conduct of Kenya's foreign policy?
5. Do you think MwaiKibaki's foreign policy was shaped by his idiosyncrasies?
6. What are the important aspects of Kibaki's idiosyncrasies which, in your view, can provide valuable insights into his foreign policy decision-making?
7. How would you rate the influence of these idiosyncrasies in explaining Foreign Policy Decision-making?
8. Do you think MwaiKibaki's (age, education, social background, health) had a bearing on his foreign policy decisions?
9. To what extent did Kibaki's idiosyncrasies (age, education, social background, health) shape his foreign policy priorities?
10. And could Kibaki's (age, education, social background, health) shape the implementation of Kenya's foreign policy?
11. Given that MwaiKibaki came into power when Kenya's standing was (probably) at its worst since independence, and the economy was faltering, how did his personality traits blend with these circumstances? (Give a lead towards Kibaki's intellectual abilities to understand the international system in which he had to project Kenya's foreign policy).
12. Would you say, Kibaki's Foreign policy, was significantly different from his predecessor? What could have been the reasons?
13. Kenya was (and still is) largely dependent on the West (global north) and China for its economic growth. How differently did Kibaki wade through the challenges given that he came into office after cold war, and in a highly globalised international system? Could you attribute a particular personality trait to this?

14. Kibaki was more aggressive in diversifying Kenya's economic partners and even seeking donor funding. Kenya even established meaningful diplomatic and trade relations with other African states (e.g. Libya, South Africa, Uganda), including focusing on intra-African trade, regionalism etc. Could you attribute this to his personality trait? Explain
15. Kibaki's administration is viewed to have been more liberal (economically and politically) than his predecessors. Could this have contributed to a change in the foreign policy of Kenya? Explain
16. Do you feel that institutions (parliament, opposition, media, civil society, and judiciary) made significant contributions or placed adequate constraints on Kibaki's idiosyncrasies especially with regard to foreign policy? Elaborate
17. Do you think the PNU-ODM coalition arrangement changed the conduct of Kenya's foreign policy under Kibaki? If yes, to what extent? (Elaborate).
18. What impressed you about Kibaki's foreign policy? Can you mention any foreign policy decisions which Kibaki made during his tenure that struck you most?
19. Every leader (indeed every individual) has their shortcomings. Are there any that you could point out with regards to MwaiKibaki's foreign policy? (Lead towards age, education, social background, health).
20. In your opinion, could something have been done to improve foreign policy conduct? (based on 17 above)
21. Lastly, do you feel MwaiKibaki's idiosyncrasies are inadequate in explaining Kenya's foreign policy decision making during his tenure? Explain.

## **APPENDIX II: Categories of Respondents**

1. Kibaki era Cabinet Ministers
2. Personal aides
3. Kibaki advisers
4. Political friends and competitors
5. Kibaki era top foreign policy bureaucrats