

# Presidents' Personalities Influenced Kenya-Somalia Foreign Policy On Territorial Integrity Between 1963 And 2013

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## Abstract:

This study investigated whether the personalities of Kenyan presidents Jomo Kenyatta, Daniel Moi, and Mwai Kibaki influenced the country's foreign policy shifts toward Somalia between 1963 to 2013. The paper focuses on territorial integrity as one of the key pillars defining the relations between the two states. Territorial integrity challenges between the two states originated during colonial times and continue to define the relations between the two states to date. By examining the strategies adopted by each president towards Somalia during their regimes, the study was able to identify foreign policy shifts associated with each president that could be mapped onto their personality traits. The study used qualitative content analysis of Madaraka Day speeches by the presidents to unearth their personality traits grounded in those speeches. In doing so the study adopted the seven personality traits (affiliation, achievement, power, distrust of others, conceptual complexity, control of events, and nationalism) associated with foreign policy decision-making. The analysis of presidents' foreign policies was guided by the poliheuristic theory. The study found that Jomo Kenyatta had near-aggressive personality could have influenced Kenya's aggressive foreign policies toward Somalia during his regime. Moi possessed near-conciliatory personality traits that could have influenced Kenya's foreign policies toward Somalia, especially during Said Barre's regime. Kibaki's personality traits fell between those associated with aggression and conciliatory and was expected to prefer a balanced foreign police behavior involving both aggressive and cooperative foreign policy postures towards Somalia during his regime. The study concluded that the presidents' personalities influenced Kenya's foreign policy behavior on territorial integrity with Somalia during the study period.

**Key Words:** President, personality, Territorial integrity Foreign Policy, Foreign Policy Shifts

## Introduction

Kenya's foreign policy has evolved significantly since independence in 1963, influenced by various factors including external, domestic, and individual idiosyncrasies. One of the critical aspects of Kenya's foreign policy has been its approach toward maintaining territorial integrity, particularly with Somalia. The relationship between Kenya and Somalia has been complex and fraught with challenges, ranging from territorial disputes to issues of insecurity and regional stability. The post-

independence era was marked by significant territorial disputes over the Northern Frontier District, currently the North Eastern province. The colonial boundaries drawn by European powers, delimiting the boundary between Somalia and Kenya did not consider the ethnic and cultural affiliations of the Somali people who had expressed their will to be enjoined with the Greater Republic of Somalia. Immediately after Kenya attained her independence, the Republic of Somalia laid claim to the North Eastern Province (formerly the

Northern Frontier District), inhabited predominantly by ethnic Somalis, leading to a prolonged and contentious relationship between the two states. During the colonial era, the Somali population and land area were divided among five countries: British Somaliland, presently Somalia; Italian Somaliland currently the Southern part of present-day Somalia; French Somaliland (Djibouti); Ethiopia, the area known as the Ogaden; Kenya in the Northern Frontier District. These divisions were formalized during the infamous Berlin Conference of 1884–1885, against the wishes of the people involved.

Upon the attainment of independence, the founding president, Jomo Kenyatta's administration (1963-1978) was characterized by a strong stance on national sovereignty and territorial integrity. His leadership style was assertive and often authoritarian, emphasizing the importance of unity and stability in the nascent state. Kenyatta's approach to foreign policy was influenced by Kenyatta's desire to consolidate power internally while projecting strength externally. This period saw the Shifta War (1963-1967), a secessionist conflict in the North Eastern Province fueled by Somali irredentism. From the external environment, Kenyatta feared that socialist states such as the Soviet Union, Iran, Egypt, and others were clandestinely supporting the Somalia dream of forming a greater Somalia which involved annexing the Northern Frontier District from Kenya through war. Consequently, Kenyatta feared that Somalia, supported by external actors was preparing to attack Kenya.

Daniel Moi, Kenyatta's successor, had a different leadership style, marked by a combination of authoritarianism and conciliatory politics. Moi's foreign policy was pragmatic, focusing on maintaining regional stability and securing Kenya's borders. The collapse of the Somali government in 1991 led to increased insecurity such as the influx of refugees, smuggling, money laundering, poaching, infiltration of small arms, and terrorism due to the porous border between the two states. Insecurity challenges along the Kenya-Somalia border prompted Moi to adopt a cautious yet firm stance on territorial integrity. Moi came to

power after the end of the Ogaden War, where Somalia attempted to annex part of Ethiopia to unite its people into one country. Moi's biggest fear was the turn of events following the Ogaden War where the US, Kenya's key ally began to arm Somalia to disassociate it from the social states who turned against the country during the war.

Mwai Kibaki's presidency (2002-2013) marked a shift towards economic diplomacy and a more technocratic approach to governance. Kibaki's foreign policy was characterized by efforts to enhance regional cooperation and economic integration within the East African Community (EAC). However, the persistent threat of Al-Shabaab and instability in Somalia necessitated a continued focus on security and territorial integrity. Kibaki's decision to deploy the Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) into Somalia in 2011 under Operation Linda Nchi highlighted a proactive and interventionist approach to securing Kenya's borders and countering terrorism.

The personalities of Kenya's presidents significantly influenced the country's foreign policy direction and responses to territorial integrity challenges. Kenyatta's aggressive, Moi's conciliatory, and Kibaki's technocratic approach each brought distinct strategies and priorities to Kenya's interactions with Somalia. Understanding these personalities provides insight into the broader patterns of Kenya's foreign policy and the factors driving shifts in its approach to maintaining territorial integrity. By examining presidential Madaraka Day speeches, policy decisions, and key historical events, the study seeks to analyze the foreign policy strategies employed by each president to understand the interplay between domestic and external forces in shaping Kenya's foreign policy outcomes. In doing so, this study contributes to the broader discourse on the role of individual leaders in shaping foreign policy, particularly in the context of African states. The study underscores the importance of personal characteristics in navigating complex regional issues and maintaining national sovereignty. Additionally, the study provides a historical perspective on Kenya-Somalia relations, offering insights into how the country has adopted different

strategies to maintain its foreign policy goal with Somalia.

The research employs a qualitative approach, utilizing primary and secondary sources such as archival materials, government documents, presidential speeches, and scholarly articles to reveal the strategies adopted by each president during their regimes. Comparative analysis of different presidential eras was conducted to identify patterns and shifts in foreign policy. Interviews with former government officials, diplomats, and experts on East African politics were done to supplement the documentary analysis, providing firsthand perspectives on the influence of presidential personalities on foreign policy. By examining the distinct approaches of Kenyatta, Moi, and Kibaki, this study illuminates how individual leadership can drive significant foreign policy shifts and contribute to our understanding of international relations in the African context.

Based on this understanding and recognizing that domestic and systemic forces can also influence foreign policy shifts, it is critical to understand whether presidents' personalities are among the factors influencing a country's selection of strategies for pursuing national foreign policy goals. Lack of knowledge about whether the president's personality has any influence on foreign policy strategies poses a challenge in understanding the dynamics between individual personality traits and national diplomatic strategies in the Kenyan context. Unfortunately, scholars analyzing Kenya's foreign policy shifts tend to focus on domestic and systemic factors while leaving the influence of presidential personalities on foreign policy shifts within the Kenyan context underexplored. This gap in research prevents scholars from gaining a comprehensive understanding of all drivers behind Kenya's foreign policy shifts towards other states and inhibits policymakers from developing an effective diplomatic strategy for pursuing the country's national interests in a competitive World

By focusing on the individual's role in shaping the relations between Kenya and Somalia the study contributes to the agent-structure debate in foreign policy by offering a deeper understanding of the

role of individual leaders' personalities in shaping state behavior and foreign policy outcomes. By empirically injecting psychological theories into international relations scholarship, the study enriches theoretical discussions on how leaders' personalities influence the relations between states. By understanding how presidents' personalities shape their preferences towards international relations, policymakers can develop more tailored and effective diplomatic strategies in areas like conflict resolution and mediation. Personality assessment offers an opportunity to those dealing with statecraft to understand the political behavior of other leaders in the international arena in terms of motives, intentions, policy preferences, decision-making, and most likely actions under various contingencies. This study's findings will be useful to international relations scholars wishing to predict the most likely foreign policy orientation new leaders are likely to adopt.

### **Background**

Central to this paper are five key concepts, personality, foreign policy, territorial integrity, foreign policy shifts, and the president. By focusing on the president, the study assumes that Kenya operated on rational choice theories during the study period, and the presidents discussed from the perspective of rational choice theory suggesting that the president is a rational actor in Kenya which is a unitary state (Allison, 1971). Rational Choice Theories assume that presidents always have clear, consistent, and coherent foreign policy goals that they can identify from the available options, weigh their potential costs and benefits, and choose the option that maximizes national objectives. In other words, the president acts rationally because they are mandated to commit the state in international relations. It is therefore assumed in the rational choice theories that if any of the three presidents chose a specific foreign policy strategy in dealing with territorial integrity challenges with Somalia then it was done for the good of the country. Besides the generally accepted notion that presidents are rational actors in unitary states like Kenya, many studies argue that many factors such as the social context in which the individuals were brought up, personality traits, beliefs, motivations,

and world views compel the individuals to act irrationally knowingly or unknowingly.

Considering the principles of rational choice theory as the point of departure, this paper argues that Kenyatta, Moi and Kibaki had their personalities shaped differently by different social factors, and they could not perceive and interpret the external and domestic forces influencing the Kenya-Somalia relations on territorial integrity the same way. Furthermore, Kenyatta, Moi, and Kibaki had different personality traits causing them to develop different worldviews concerning the maintenance of territorial integrity with Somalia. The three presidents were, therefore, predisposed to develop different worldviews due to differences in personalities. Personality is the dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine their unique adjustments to the environment (Allport, 1927). As a dynamic organization, personality involves active processes that constantly organize behavior and continuously evolve as one interacts with one's environment. This means that the three presidents' actions could not be as consistent and coherent as rational choice theories advocate. The psychophysical systems being organized by personality reflect both the mind and body of an individual and include traits that may be active or latent, habits, and attitudes. In other words, personality is something that organizes or disorganizes systems determining individual behavior. Personality is unique in the sense that individuals are unique in the way they adjust in time, space, and quality. Therefore, individuals with different personality traits are not expected to behave similarly when subjected to similar situations. The personalities of presidents, such as motivations, beliefs, perceptions, World views, and past experiences, largely influence their perceptions and interpretations of domestic and systemic factors. (Neack, 2008) observed that most presidents are motivated by the need for political survival which depends on different factors in different external and domestic factors in regimes. Based on the premise that individuals are unique, the three Kenyan presidents, Kenyatta, Moi, and

Kibaki, adopted strategies for Somalia that resonated well with their personality traits.

### ***Presidents Personalities and Why They Matter***

Several studies point to the significance of understanding leadership personality since it has the potential to make a rational actor to be irrational. For instance, Greenstein observed that states are political entities operated through human agencies and it would be remarkable if they were not influenced by the properties that distinguish one individual from another (Greenstein, 1992). Greenstein's statement insinuates that state behaviors can be influenced by the personalities of the presidents governing those states, and because individuals are unique, state behaviors differ with different regimes. Unfortunately, most studies pay little attention to individual personalities mandated to commit the state to international relations. Therefore, it would be important to understand the relations between Kenya and Somalia by focusing on the personalities of the leaders mandated by the citizens to make decisions on behalf of the state.

John Mearsheimer in his book "Why Leaders Lie: The Truth About Lying in International Politics published in 2012" argued that leaders go to the extent of lying to their citizens to support their unpopular foreign policy strategies when they cannot convince the public about the seriousness of the threats they perceive in their external or domestic environments (Mearsheimer, 2012). This statement suggests that besides domestic and external factors, other factors were motivating the three Kenyan presidents to prefer specific foreign policy strategies toward Somalia which are different from the national interests advocated by the realists in state relations with others. Margaret Herman identified seven personality traits that are associated with foreign policy decision-making: motivations (need for affiliation, achievement power), beliefs (nationalism, one's ability to control events), distrust of others, and conceptual complexity.

According to Hermann (1980), aggressive leaders like Jomo Kenyatta are high in need for power, low in conceptual complexity, distrustful of others, nationalistic, and likely to believe that they have some control over the events in which they are

involved. She associated these attributes with the need to manipulate and control others, low ability to consider a wide range of possible foreign policy alternatives, suspicion of others' intentions and motives, high interest in maintaining national identity and sovereignty, and a distinct willingness to initiate action. When the personality characteristics of aggressive leaders are mapped onto their foreign policy preferences, Hermann (1980) found that such leaders prefer a foreign policy that is independent in style and content. Aggressive leaders prefer to maintain their country's individuality by keeping their states apart from others in the international system due to fear that extensive contact with other states can lead to infiltration of foreign ideologies by other states. Jomo Kenyatta, while claiming to practice the non-aligned foreign policy feared that communists could infiltrate the country with socialist ideologies so he covertly aligned Kenya to Britain during the Cold War.

On the other hand, conciliatory leaders are high in need for affiliation, high in conceptual complexity, trusting of others, low in nationalism, and likely to exhibit little belief in their ability to control the events in which they are involved. The personality traits of a conciliatory leader suggest their need to establish and maintain friendly relationships with other states, an ability to consider a wide range of alternatives, little suspiciousness of others' motives, not worried about national identity and sovereignty, and less concerned with initiating action. These dynamics suggest a preference for a liberalist or more participatory foreign policy (Hermann, 1980). Such leaders are likely to be interested in having their nations interact with other nations as witnessed in Moi's role in the establishment of the East African Cooperation and Africa Union.

The significant role of personality in shaping the foreign policy trajectory of a state was also emphasized by Maria Nzomo and Winnie Rugutt when they observed that Kenya's foreign policies during the Kenyatta, Moi, and Kibaki regimes were mainly influenced by the President's perceptions and interpretations of world events. However, the presidents rationalize them using various

government policy documents (such as the Foreign Investment Protection Act of 1964, Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965, Sessional Paper No. 1 of 1986, and party manifesto) (Nzomo & Rugutt, 2022). The suggestion by Nzomo and Rugutt concur that other factors continue influencing Kenya's foreign policy decisions other than national interests. However, the foreign policy outcome has been rationalized to appear as if it reflects the national interest of the country.

Adar and Ajulu (2002) found that some African presidents personalize state institutions to the extent that state interests and the president's interests are intertwined. The president's personality (beliefs, motivations, and wishes) are used to define the national interests of the state. Decision-making institutions like the Parliaments, the National Security Council, and the Cabinet used rubber stamps. Before the promulgation of the Constitution 2010, Kenyan presidents had wide latitude in making foreign policy decisions single-handedly and other government institutions were controlled directly by the president (Adar & Ajulu, 2017). For instance, when the Kenyan foreign minister voted together with other African states supporting Britain after the Rhodesia coup, Kenyatta, decided to go against the decisions of the organization of African Unity and hosted British officials in the state house. This example suggests that a country's representative to such forums presents the president's views who nominates them to such forums. In most cases, the president can overrule them if they vote according to their intuitions. The case of the 1965 OAU summit illustrates this issue. The OAU member resolved that all African countries break diplomatic ties with Britain for failure to take military action against the white minority government in Rhodesia (Daily Nation, November 15, 1965). Kenyan Minister for Foreign Affairs Joseph Murumbi had already committed Kenya to breaking off ties with Britain. However, Kenyatta opposed the plan, arguing that such a decision could only be made by individual member states, not the OAU. Kenyatta persuaded the cabinet to adopt his position, after which Kenyatta announced his intention not to break off ties with Britain for not acting on Rhodesia (Daily

Nation, December 11, 1965). This example indicates that Kenyatta had wide latitude in determining the country's foreign policies in a direction that resonated well with his beliefs.

Information about presidents' personalities can highlight how the president influences a country's diplomatic strategies while underscoring the importance of personalized diplomacy in shaping a state's foreign policy trajectory. It would also assist policymakers and practitioners in realizing the need for considering the personalities of individuals when analyzing and predicting other countries' foreign policy behavior. Understanding how presidents' personalities shape their preferences, attitudes, and approaches toward international relations is critical in developing effective diplomatic strategies, negotiations, mediation efforts, and conflict resolution. By empirically injecting psychological theories into the mainstream of international relations, this paper contributes to the ongoing debate within international relations theory regarding the relative importance of individual agency versus structural factors in shaping state behavior.

While many scholars provide compelling reasons for studying leadership personality to understand the relations between states, most scholars analyzing Kenya's foreign policies tend to concentrate on domestic and external factors while downplaying the role of presidents' personalities in charting the country's foreign policy trajectory. For instance, John Okumu observed that Kenyatta's regime maintained a low profile on many burning issues in Global politics (quiet diplomacy), especially in Africa (Okumu, 1973), but downplayed Kenyatta's ability to conceal his true intentions and distrust of others as the reason influencing the state behavior during Kenyatta's regime. While advocating for the non-aligned movement principles, Kenyatta did not wish others to focus on the fact that he aligned the country with Britain, an American ally during the Cold War which translated to taking sides while advocating a non-aligned foreign policy.

Makinda (1983) also noted that Kenya's foreign policy shift from quiet diplomacy to Cold War politics could be attributed to the hard economic

situation in the country and external factors such as the US requiring a strategic partner in dealing with challenges in the Persian Gulf. The study downplays Moi's personality, especially as a peace-maker, agreeableness, and high conceptual complexity causing him to evaluate many options before making decisions (Makinda, 1983).

Mumo Nzau, (2016) observed that Kenya's foreign relations outlook underwent a major paradigmatic shift during Kibaki's regime and portrayed a picture of having significantly drifted away from her traditional Western allies in favor of emergent global powers, such as China, and enhanced focus on regional integration (Nzau, 2016). The study could not associate this change in Kenya's foreign policy orientation to Kibaki's personality especially the high achievement economic motivation and openness to information that caused him to properly evaluate the shortcomings of existing policies.

Adar's (1986) thesis identified the quest for secession by Somalis in the NFD and Somalia's national government's claim on the NFD were the two domestic and external forces causing Kenya to maintain *uti possidetis juri* or respect for territorial integrity as the defining factors for Kenya's foreign policy towards Somalia. This study downplayed the role of Kenyatta's personality especially his fear that a united and powerful Somalia would attack Kenya, a fact that forced him to enter into a military agreement with Ethiopia with a similar problem. The literature suggests the importance of examining the personalities of the presidents to better understand why and how Kenya exhibits certain behaviors toward other states.

### ***The Genesis of Kenya's Territorial Integrity Challenges with Somalia***

The second concept discussed in this study is the principle of territorial integrity. Territorial integrity is a core principle in international law, asserting that nations should respect the borders and sovereignty of other states. This principle is particularly significant in the context of the Kenya-Somalia relationship, which has been marked by disputes over maritime boundaries and territorial integrity challenges. This principle is enshrined in various international treaties and documents,

including the Charter of the United Nations. Article 2(4) of the UN Charter specifically prohibits the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) Resolution AHG/Res. 16(I) 1964: This resolution, adopted during the OAU summit in Cairo in 1964, emphasized the importance of respecting borders existing at the time of African countries' independence. Overall, territorial integrity is a cornerstone of modern international relations, seeking to ensure that state borders are respected to maintain global stability and peace.

The territorial integrity challenges between Kenya and Somalia arose from the colonial borders drawn by European powers ignoring the ethnic and clan distributions, leading to Somalis agitating for self-determination. After Somalia gained independence in 1960, it pursued a policy of irredentism, aiming to unite all Somali-speaking regions, including parts of Kenya's North Eastern Province, under a Greater Somalia. The Northern Frontier District, now known as the North Eastern Province of Kenya, was a contentious region during the colonial era. The British colonial administration, which controlled Kenya, and the Italian and British administrations in Somalia, left a legacy of arbitrarily drawn borders that divided ethnic Somali communities (Lewis, 2002). When Somalia gained independence in 1960, it adopted a policy of irredentism, seeking to incorporate all Somali-inhabited regions, including the NFD, into a Greater Somalia (Brons, 2001).

The pursuit of this irredentist policy led to the Shifita War (1963-1967), where ethnic Somalis in the NFD, supported by the Somali government, waged an insurgency against the Kenyan government. The conflict was driven by desires for secession and unification with Somalia, challenging Kenya's territorial integrity (Whittaker, 2012). The war ended with the Nairobi Agreement in 1967, but the underlying issues remained unresolved. Following the Shifita War, the Kenyan government implemented policies to integrate the NFD into the broader Kenyan state. These policies included resettlement programs and military operations aimed at curbing secessionist sentiments

(Whittaker, 2012). However, the region remained marginalized and underdeveloped, contributing to ongoing grievances among the Somali population.

### ***Factors Shaping Kenya's Foreign Policy on Territorial Integrity***

The relations between Kenya and Somalia on territorial integrity can best be understood by isolating the individual, domestic, and external factors influencing foreign policy decisions at each level. Analyzing Kenya-Somalia relations from the individual, state, and systemic levels of analysis is important because it provides a comprehensive understanding of the complexities and dynamics at play including the domestic forces, external actors, and individual perceptions. Each level offers unique insights that contribute to a more nuanced and complete picture of the bilateral relationship on territorial integrity between the two states. Examining the roles and motivations of presidents can shed light on how personal relationships, leadership styles, and individual decisions influence diplomatic and conflict-resolution processes. For instance, the personal rapport or animosity between presidents and ministers can significantly impact diplomatic negotiations and outcomes (Hudson, 2005). For instance, the personal relations between Kenyatta and Haile Selassie leading to a military pact between Kenya and Ethiopia was one of the defining factors influencing Kenya's foreign policy towards Somalia. Similarly, Moi's agreeable personality led to negotiations between Kenya and Somalia leading to Said Bare denouncing any claim by Somalia on Kenyan territory.

The state level focuses on the internal dynamics of each country, including political structures, economic conditions, and public opinion, which shape foreign policy decisions. Understanding how domestic issues such as terrorism, economic needs, and internal conflicts influence Kenya-Somalia relations is crucial. The influence of governmental institutions, political parties, and interest groups can determine the direction of bilateral relations. For example, how Kenya's concerns over security and Somalia's struggles with governance and stability impact their interactions (Waltz, 1959). Domestic forces such as secessionist tendencies by

the Kenyan Somali people living in the NFD had a significant influence on shaping the country's foreign policy for Somalia during Kenyatta's regime. After the collapse of the Somalian government, insecurity in Kenya including the threat of terrorism and violent extremism, the influx of refugees, money laundering, kidnapping, and poaching could have influenced the country's foreign policy shifts during the regimes of Moi and Kibaki.

The systemic level of analysis examines how global structures and international norms shape Kenya-Somalia relations. Factors include the roles of international actors such as the African Union, and the United Nations, geopolitical rivalries, and the influence of external powers (e.g., the United States, and China). The broader regional context, such as the political and economic dynamics in the Horn of Africa, the influence of neighboring countries, and regional security arrangements, also plays a critical role in shaping bilateral relations. Rosenau (1997) found an interplay between different levels of analysis in foreign policy decision-making. According to him the interaction between domestic, systemic, and the individual results in foreign policy shifts reflecting the preference of leaders. Therefore, the relations between Kenya and Somalia can better be understood by analyzing their foreign policies at three levels: First is the individual level focusing on the role of individual decision-makers, considering their personalities, perceptions, and personal experiences. The second level of analysis focuses on the internal characteristics of states, including political systems, economic conditions, and societal influences. The third level of analysis focuses on the broader international system, including the distribution of power, international norms, and the actions of other states and non-state actors.

### ***Foreign Policy Shifts***

Foreign policy shifts can be defined as replacing a consistent pattern of state behavior towards external actors or the rules governing state actions with a new one. Besides domestic and external pressures, foreign policy shifts can result from the president's personality through the process of

learning. Hermann (1990) identified how foreign policy shifts may be categorized based on the level at which they occur. First are the adjustments or changes occurring at the level of effort (greater or lesser) or in the scope of recipients. At the level of effort, a country does not entirely shift the policy; instead, the intensity is reduced. For instance, Kenya has maintained a foreign policy emphasizing respect for territorial integrity with Somalia. However, different regimes adopt strategies reflecting their perception of the phenomena. When a state adjusts its foreign policy at the level of effort, the objective remains the same; for instance, it does not change what it has been doing or how it is done; instead, it adjusts the amount or the scope to enhance the program's effectiveness. Therefore, foreign policy shifts at the level of efforts are quantitative because they address the amount of assistance or the number of recipients is changed.

Second, a foreign policy shift occurs when a country changes the methods or means for achieving specific objectives (Hermann, 1990). For instance, Kenya shifted its foreign policy towards Somalia during Moi's regime by accepting to negotiate with Somalia mediated by the US instead of the military force used by the previous regime to deal with the issue of Somali irredentism. Program changes are qualitative because they involve a change in strategy and instrument used to pursue a specific foreign policy goal. In this sense, the foreign policy action and how it is executed changes, but the purposes for which it is done remain unchanged. For example, negotiations and using force address the same problem, except that they are different strategies. Hermann (1990) also argued that a country can change its foreign policy goals and replace them with new ones. Another example is a decision by Kenya to abandon the non-aligned foreign policy and instead become an actor in Global politics or directly support either the US or the Soviets during the Cold War. A change of orientation is considered the most extreme form of foreign policy change. A change of orientation does not only involve a change in one policy, but many other foreign policy aspects are more or less simultaneously changed.

Foreign policy changes are recognized through observation of state behavior. Some of the indicators suggesting that a country has experienced a shift in its foreign policies are (1) changes in official government statements, and speeches by political or policy documents. These often reflect the direction in which foreign policy is moving. For instance, Moi's strategies to involve the US in resolving the Kenya-Somalia territorial integrity disputes marked a significant foreign policy shift from the previous regime.

A country's actions in international organizations such as the African Union can also suggest that a country has shifted its foreign policy on specific issues. Observing a country's voting patterns or stances in international organizations like the United Nations can give clues about its foreign policy priorities and alliances. For instance, when Kenya voted at the Summit of Cairo in July 1964, for the adoption of the Resolution AHG/Res. 16 (1) proclaiming the preservation of existing borders at the time of the accession to independence it became clear that the country's foreign policy with Somalia would be defined according to these principles.

Crisis events, such as conflicts, natural disasters, terrorist attacks, or diplomatic incidents, can trigger foreign policy change. Governments may respond to crises by adopting new strategies, forging new alliances, or reassessing their priorities and commitments. For instance, the New York Times, on May 2, 1967, reported that Kenyatta feared that Somalia would attack Kenya causing him to send his vice president to Cairo to discuss with President Nasser about the Egyptian shipment of arms to Somalia and whether they supported the shifts. The same newspaper article stated that Kenyatta sent his defense minister to the Middle East on a similar mission after reports that Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Kuwait, and Iran were supplying Somalia with arms. These actions suggested that the foreign policy between the two states was changing from that of non-interference in neighbors' affairs to that of imminent conflict.

Shifts in the tone and content of media coverage, public statements by officials, and public opinion polls can reflect changing attitudes toward other

countries and international issues. Responses and reactions from other countries to a country's actions or statements can provide insights into how its foreign policy changes are perceived internationally. Understanding a country's historical foreign policy positions can help in identifying shifts. Comparing current policies with past practices can highlight deviations. Scholars, analysts, and think tanks often provide analysis and commentary on shifts in foreign policy, offering valuable insights and interpretations. By considering these factors and analyzing their interplay, observers can better understand when a country is undergoing a shift in its foreign policy.

### *Theoretical Grounding of the Analysis*

The study assumes that the president's decision to initiate foreign policy changes through the decision-making system was guided by the poliheuristic theory, which argues that foreign policy decision-making is a two-stage process (Mintz, 1997). In the first stage, the president screens the domestic and systemic forces on a non-compensatory principle. This means that domestic and systemic forces suggesting foreign policy changes perceived by the president as threatening his political objectives, such as survival, are eliminated during this initial screening. Elimination at the screening stage does not mean no foreign policy shift occurs; instead, the president can stop the relations between the two states by altering the country's orientation. On the other hand, if the president perceives and interprets the forces positively, he initiates a minor adjustment to the existing policy. At this initial screening stage, the president's personality traits may influence foreign policy options to be adopted depending on how they are perceived as either threatening their survival or feasible. The first stage determines the kind of foreign policy shift a country adopts, either a total break away from the past or minor adjustments and the president makes this decision.

In the second stage, those foreign policy options that survive the initial screening and are acceptable to the president will proceed to foreign policy decision-making, where they are considered based

on rationality principles, and the best option is selected. For this study, the foreign policy decision-making system includes the National Assembly, National Security Council, and the Cabinet, where foreign policy decisions are finalized. It is important to note that a foreign policy demand that is rejected because it is infeasible may not be thrown away; instead, it determines the type of change likely to be adopted, such as breaking the existing relations between two states in favor of a new one.

In the first stage, the three Kenyan presidents were predisposed to acquire different worldviews when making foreign policy choices. From their personality profiles, the presidents experienced different social backgrounds, causing them to adopt different foreign policy preferences. Kenyatta's long-standing distrust of others, low agreeableness, low conceptual complexity, firm belief that he was in control of events occurring in the country, and low openness to information may have influenced his foreign policy preferences in his relations with other regional leaders. On his part, Moi's high scores in nationalism, the need for affiliation, relatively high conceptual complexity, religiosity, low belief in his ability to control events around him, and high openness to information played a significant role in shaping his regional foreign policy preferences. While Kenyatta and Moi fall at the extreme ends, with the former reflecting the personality traits of an aggressive leader and the latter demonstrating the personality traits of a conciliatory leader, Kibaki's personality traits place him in the middle of the two. He had some aspects of an aggressive personality, such as a firm

belief that he controlled events occurring in the country, low conceptual complexity, and average scores in nationalism. On the other hand, he also possessed the personality traits of a conciliatory leader, such as low distrust of others, agreeableness, and openness to experience. Kibaki's foreign policy was expected to reflect aggressive and conciliatory foreign policy, depending on the situation. It is also likely to shape Moi's foreign policy decisions like achievement motivation shapes Kibaki's foreign policy. Kenyatta's high extraversion

A trait is a personality characteristic that is consistent, stable, and varies from person to person (Worthy, Lavigne, & Romero, Traits Theory, 2020) Trait theories are united in the belief that individual differences are based on the strength and intensity of a trait dimensions such as agreeableness. Three criteria characterize personality traits: (1) consistency, (2) stability, and (3) individual differences. A major challenge for trait theorists was how to identify traits.

### ***Methodology***

This study established the three presidents' personality profiles using Trait approaches. The first method involved Qualitative Content Analysis of presidential Madaraka Day speeches aimed at constructing a theoretically grounded personality profile derived from empirical analysis of prepared speeches. The seven personality traits Hermann (1980) identified were adopted for investigation: the need for achievement, affiliation, distrust of others, nationalism, belief in one's ability to control events around them, and conceptual complexity.

**Table 1: Operationalization of Personality Variables**

| Personal Characteristic                   | Operationalization  | The score used in the analysis                            |
|---|---|---|
| Nationalism                               | <p>The analysis focused on whether the president had strong emotional ties with the country.</p> <p>It was measured by counting the number of messages in a speech referring to the nation, people, strength, and importance of national honor or identity.</p> <p>Reference to another nation is modified by a hostile term denoting weakness or a phrase suggesting interference in the affairs of others.</p>  | % of references to own and other nations meeting criteria |
| Need for Achievement                      | <p>A president is concerned about a standard of excellence by using words evaluating performance quality or, indirectly, by actions suggesting a concern for excellence or success in competition. He uses negative emotions or counter-striving in response to failure.</p> <p>By carrying out some unique, unprecedented accomplishment.</p> <p>How many times does a speech contain words denoting the desire for excellence, doing good, carrying out some unique accomplishment or innovative action, seeking something new and better, or a feeling of doing better than others</p> |   |
| Belief in one's Ability to Control Events | <p>Focused on how the president views the World? Does he appear to be in control over situations, or does he attribute problems to other quarters, such as global conditions or other powerful states concerning issues involved in the state?</p> <p>Counting how many messages in a speech denotes that the president is responsible for the situation.</p> <p>How often does the message suggest that he influences what happens in or to the nation?</p> <p>How often does the message indicate the speaker accepts responsibility for initiating or planning the action?</p>         | % of verbs meeting criteria                               |
| Need for Power                            | <p>Is the president concerned about impacting, controlling, or influencing other people and the World by taking solid and forceful actions that inherently impact other people or the World?</p> <p>By controlling or regulating others. By attempting to influence, persuade, convince, make or prove a point, or argue by giving unsolicited help or advice.</p> <p>By impressing others or the World at large, prestige or reputation</p>  | Percentage of verbs meeting criteria                      |
| Need for Affiliation                      | <p>Is the president concerned about establishing, maintaining, or restoring friendship or friendly relations among persons, groups, etc., By the expression of warm, positive, friendly, or intimate feelings toward other people, nations, etc., by expression of sadness or other negative feelings about separation or disruption of a friendly relationship or wanting to restore it? The number of messages concerned with establishing, maintaining, or restoring warm and friendly relationships with other leaders. His feelings about regional events</p>                        | Percentage of verbs meeting criteria                      |

|                       |  |  |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| Conceptual Complexity | A person's degree of differentiation in describing or discussing other leaders, countries, policies, ideas, or things.<br>Count the number of high-complexity words such as may, possibly, sometimes, and tends and a set of low-complexity words such as always, only, without a doubt. | The ratio of high-complexity words to low-complexity words |
| Distrust of Others    | Count the number of messages suggesting the president has a general feeling of doubt, uneasiness, and misgiving about others.<br>An inclination to suspect and doubt others' intentions  | Percentage of nouns meeting criteria                       |

Source: Hermann (1980). *Explaining Foreign Policy Behavior Using the Personal Characteristics of Political Leaders*, *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 24, No.1

The procedure involved (1) identifying the relevant speeches, (2) Reading the speech, and identifying coded personality traits. (3) Apply traits theories to establish the meaning of high, moderate, or low scores and their implication on foreign policy decision-making. The data used were the presidential Madaraka Day Speeches available at the Kenya Institute of Public Policy Research and Analysis (<https://kippra.or.ke>) website, and the selection criteria were based on adequate coverage of domestic and external affairs. The analysis was guided by Traits theories, positing that

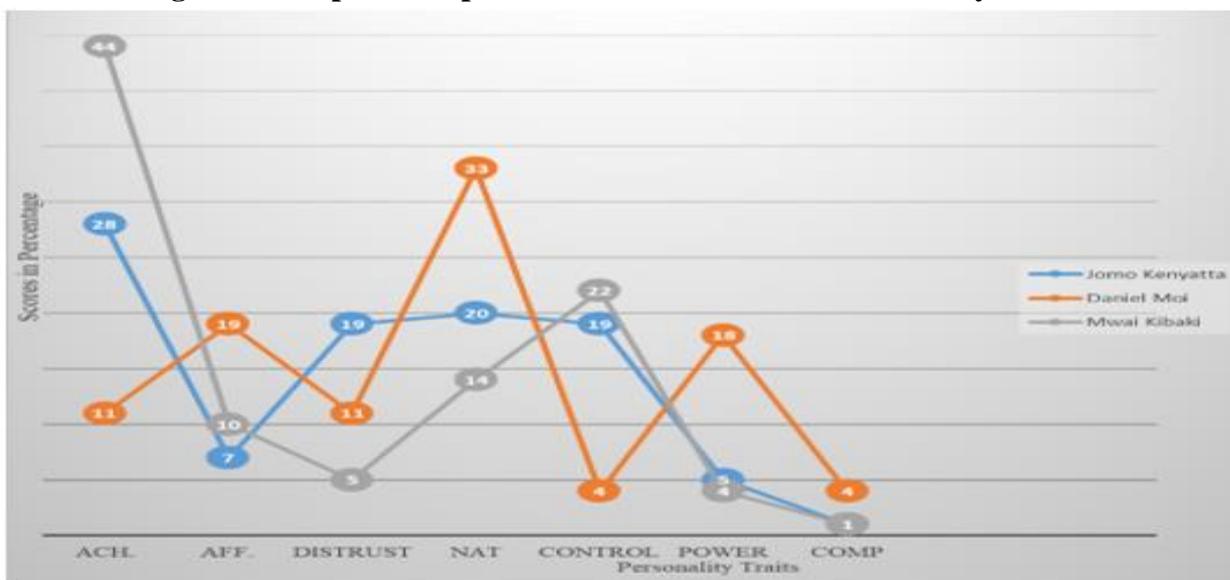
personalities consist of consistent and relatively stable traits. Based on this premise, individual personality profiles can be constructed by identifying and measuring traits using standardized assessment tools. Traits are considered to be relatively independent of each other, meaning that individuals can possess varying degrees of different traits simultaneously.

**Findings**

The following table presents the scores attained by the three Kenyan presidents obtained from the analysis of their Madaraka Day speeches.

| Personality Trait         | Jomo Kenyatta | Daniel Moi | Mwai Kibaki |
|---------------------------|---------------|------------|-------------|
| Achievement               | 28            | 11         | 44          |
| Affiliation               | 7             | 19         | 10          |
| Distrust of others        | 19            | 11         | 5           |
| Nationalism               | 20            | 33         | 14          |
| Ability to control events | 19            | 4          | 22          |
| Power                     | 5             | 18         | 4           |
| Conceptual Complexity     | 1             | 4          | 1           |

**Figure 1: Graphical Representation of Presidents' Personality Profiles**



## Interpretation of Results

Besides his low scores in power motivation, Kenyatta's low conceptual complexity, distrust of others, nationalism, and strong belief that he was in charge of events around him suggest that he possessed near aggressive personality Hermann (1980). Kenyatta was predisposed to prefer a foreign policy that is independent in style and content such as isolation from global politics. His suspicion of others and belief that he was in charge of events in Kenya indicates a possibility of ignoring regional norms. Low conceptual complexity suggests that he viewed issues in black-and-white terms with little consideration of other options.

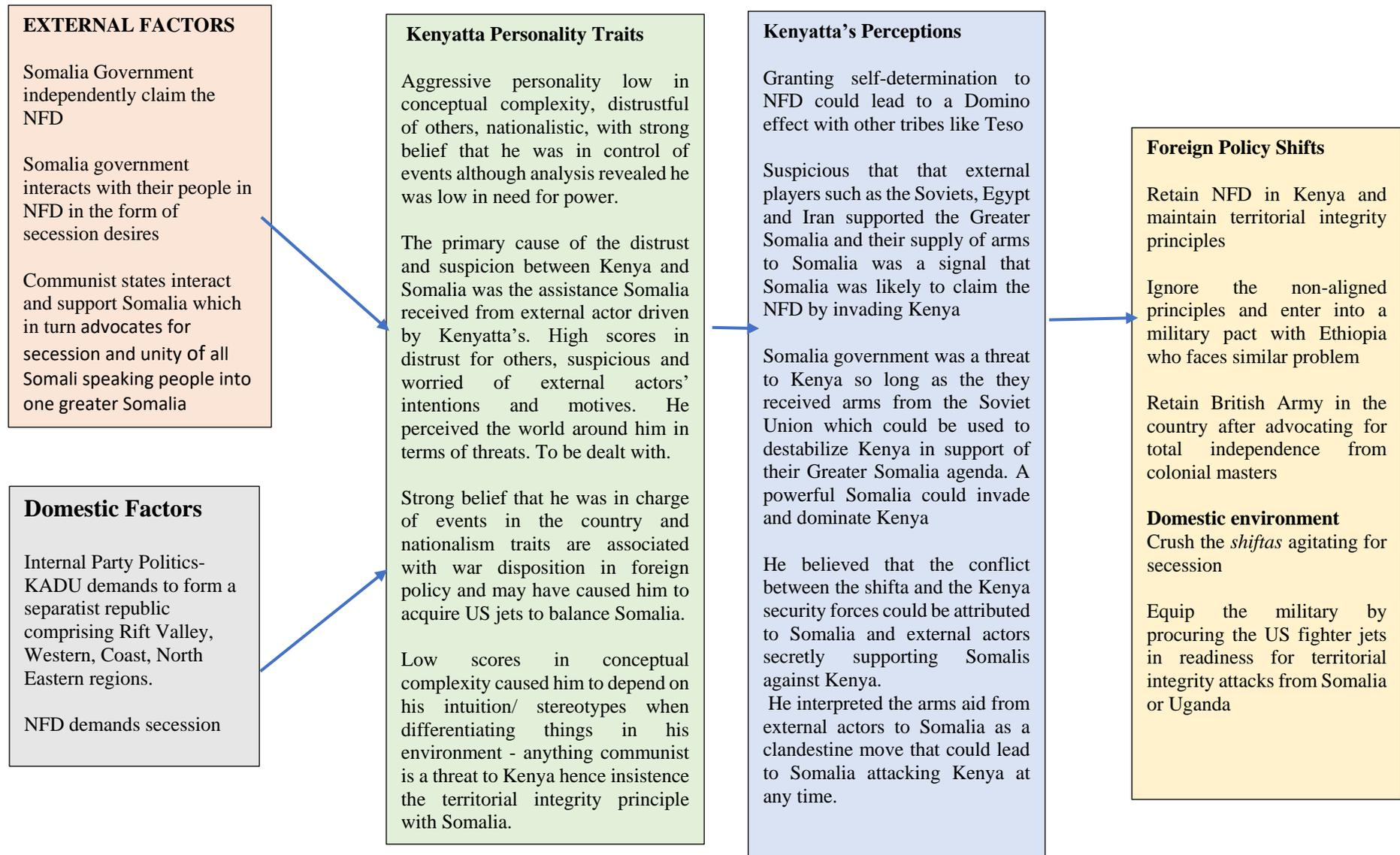
Besides, high scores in nationalism, Moi's high need for affiliation, high conceptual complexity, trust of others, and low belief in his ability to control events suggest that he possessed a near conciliatory personality. Moi was predisposed to prefer cooperative foreign policies such as the need to establish and maintain friendly relationships with other states, support regionalism and internationalism, participate in conflict mediation and peace initiatives due to his birth position, and swing between capitalist and communism due to his preference for cooperation and birth position. High conceptual complexity indicates that he needed so much information before making decisions. Low achievement motivation is consistent with low confidence in his ability to function independently. Kibaki's balanced

personality traits fall between aggressive and conciliatory leaders. He was predisposed to adopt a balanced foreign policy by invoking either aggressive or conciliatory strategies depending on the circumstances.

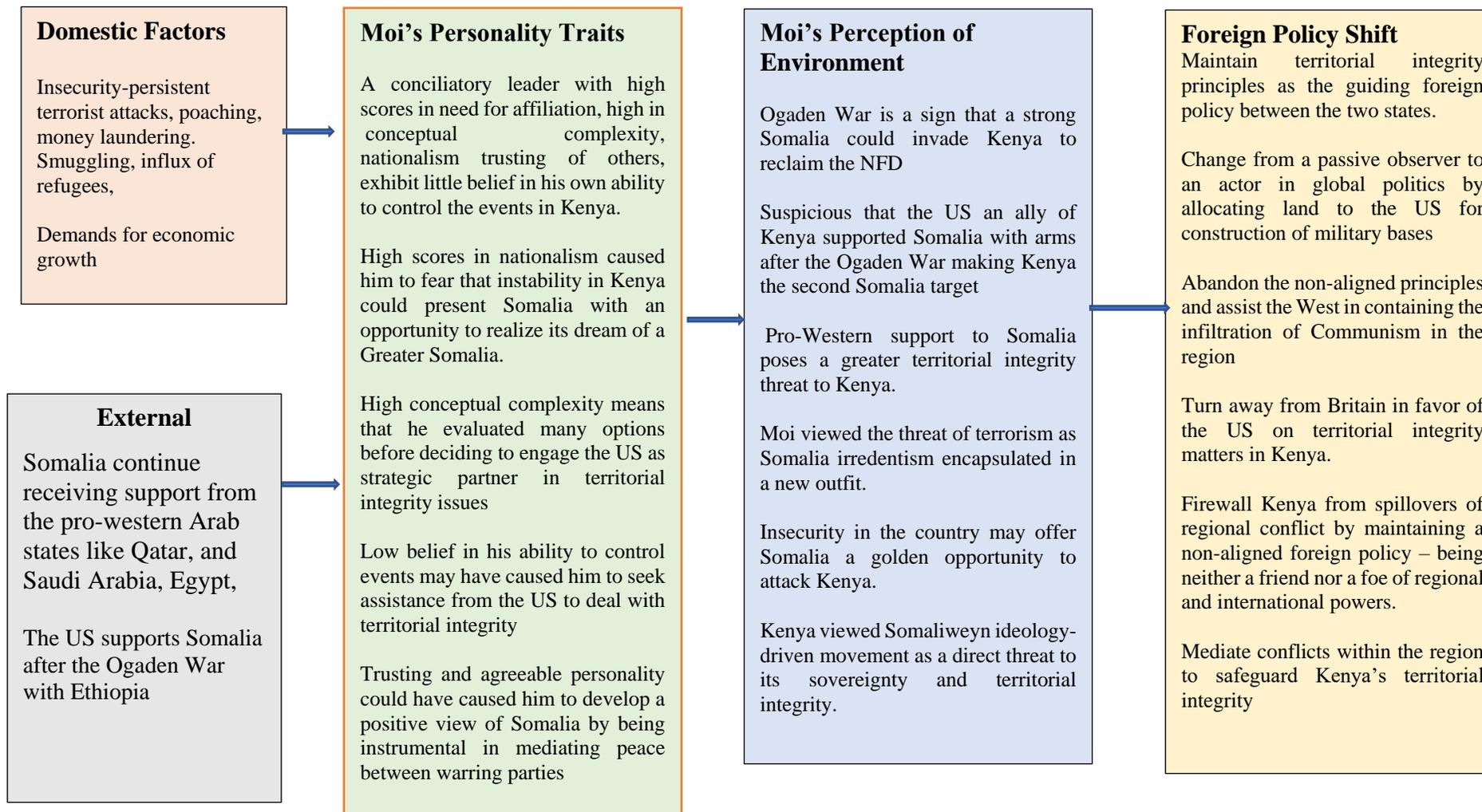
According to Hermann (1980), aggressive leaders are high in need of power, low in conceptual complexity, distrustful of others, nationalistic, and likely to believe that they have some control over the events in which they are involved. Based on Hermann's interpretation of traits, it is apparent that Jomo Kenyatta possessed personality traits similar to those of aggressive leaders. However, he was low in the need for power. Kenyatta was predisposed to prefer an assertive foreign policy on territorial integrity with Somalia.

In contrast, Hermann (1980) suggests that conciliatory leaders are high in need for affiliation, high in conceptual complexity, trusting of others, low in nationalism, and likely to exhibit little belief in their ability to control the events in which they are involved. The analysis revealed that Daniel Moi possessed personality traits similar to those of conciliatory leaders. However, he had low scores in belief in his ability to control events in the country. He was predisposed to adopt a conciliatory foreign policy on territorial integrity with Somalis. In the same vein, Mwai Kibaki possessed both aggressive and conciliatory personality traits and was expected to adopt both in his approach to territorial integrity foreign policy with Somalia.

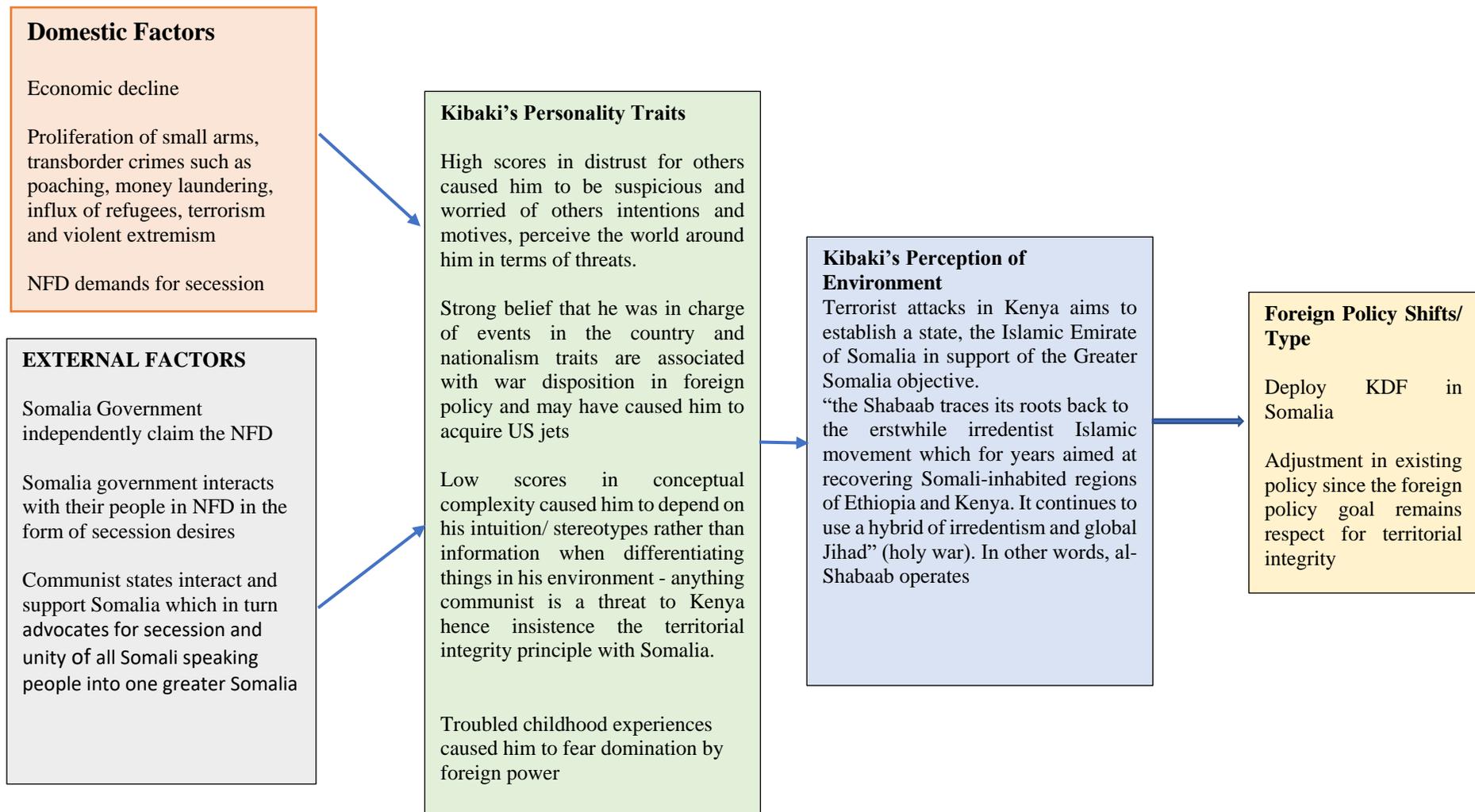
**Figure 2: Interaction between Domestic, External and Kenyatta's Personality Traits Resulting in Kenya's Foreign Policy Shifts**



**Figure 3: Interaction between Domestic, External and Moi's Personality Traits resulting in Kenya's Foreign Policy**



**Figure 4: Interaction between Domestic, External and Kibaki's Personality Traits resulting in Kenya's Foreign Policy Shifts**



## Conclusions:

This study has illustrated that the three Kenyan presidents', Jomo Kenyatta, Daniel Moi, and Mwai Kibaki personalities were influenced by different factors such as the social context that caused them to develop different worldviews concerning foreign policy issues. The three individuals possessed different intensities of the seven personality traits analyzed in this study causing their personalities and choices to be influenced differently when faced with Kenya's foreign policy on territorial integrity toward Somalia between 1963 and 2013. While maintaining the same foreign policy goal, they were predisposed to prefer different strategies for dealing with the problem. Each president adopted strategies reflecting their personalities, beliefs, and experiences causing them to shift the country's foreign policy on territorial integrity with Somalia. The three presidents possessed different personality traits, motives, and beliefs causing them to perceive and interpret territorial integrity challenges with Somalia differently depending on their dominant personality traits. The study concluded that these presidents' personalities influenced Kenya's foreign policy on territorial integrity toward Somalia,

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