



THE INFLUENCE OF TRUMP'S LEADERSHIP STYLE ON AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstrak

Para ahli berpendapat bahwa karakter dan pengalaman Donald Trump berpengaruh terhadap kebijakan luar negeri Amerika, terutama selama krisis seperti pandemi Covid-19. Kebijakan kontroversialnya dapat dilihat dari agenda pembukaan kembali Amerika pada saat situasinya belum kondusif, penolakan untuk bergabung dengan Covax, konfrontasi terhadap WHO dan Cina, dan pengurangan keterlibatan internasional dengan Uni Eropa untuk mengatasi Covid-19. Artikel ini mengkaji bagaimana gaya kepemimpinan Trump mempengaruhi kebijakan luar negeri Amerika selama pandemi Covid-19 pada tahun 2020. Artikel ini menggunakan metodologi psikobiografis dan analisis konten. Artikel ini menemukan bahwa Trump adalah pemimpin dominan dengan gaya yang lebih didorong oleh pencapaian tujuan. Selain itu, Trump adalah pemimpin yang suka menantang kendala, tertutup terhadap informasi, dan bermotivasi prestasi, dengan tipe ekspansionis. Kepribadian Trump menunjukkan bahwa tingkat dominasinya yang tinggi, kepercayaan diri yang tinggi, emosional, ambisius dan agresivitas membuat kebijakan luar negerinya menjadi tidak konsisten dan tidak dapat diprediksi terutama selama pandemi Covid-19 pada tahun 2020.

Kata Kunci: Donald Trump; gaya kepemimpinan; kebijakan luar negeri Amerika Serikat; pandemi Covid-19

Abstract

Scholars argue that Trump's character and experience influence American foreign policy during a crisis such as the Covid-19 pandemic. His controversial policy can be seen from his reopening of America agenda at a time when the situation was not conducive yet, the rejection to join Covax, confrontational behavior toward WHO and China, the reduction of international engagement with the European Union to address Covid-19. This article examines how Trump's leadership style influenced American foreign policy during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. It mainly uses psychobiography and content analysis as complementary methodologies. This article found that Trump is a predominant leader with a more goal-driven style. He is a leader who likes to challenge constraints, is closed to *information*, and is achievement-motivated, with an expansionist type. His personalities of high level of dominance, high self-confidence, emotional, ambitious and aggressiveness shaped his foreign policy to be inconsistent and unpredictable during the pandemic.

Keywords: American Foreign Policy; Covid-19 pandemic; Donald Trump; leadership style

Introduction

The winning of Donald Trump in the U.S election in 2016 has changed the focus on American foreign policy. During his period, Trump has a tendency to take controversial and extreme decisions and actions. The use of the 'America First' strategy as the main theme in Trump's administration showed the significant alterations as the result of the controversy and unpredictable action of the Trump administration. As a leader, Trump plays a vital role in shaping, making, and controlling the foreign policy of the U.S. The U.S. image and reputation rely on Trump because the "United States" means "Trump" and not vice versa (Neack, 2018: 34). Therefore, it cannot be denied that Donald Trump plays a prominent role in international affairs and has the sense to shape American foreign policy. A leader could be influenced by two factors such as internal (leader's personalities and perceptions) and external (domestic and international environments) (Breuning, 2007: 11). In an individual level of analysis, a leader's personality, perception and motivation should be acknowledged in order to understand what kind of decision that leader might adopt in a given situation. This article focuses on the personality traits of Trump as a primary factor influencing him in the foreign policy decision-making process. Based on the previous research, in the article "Kepemimpinan Donald Trump dan Turbulensi Tatanan Dunia ", Siswanto argued that a leader's personality is influential in shaping the form of foreign policy. In Trump's case, he is categorized as an active-negative leader, describing him as inconsistent, sentimental, and optimistic (Siswanto, 2018: 51).

Trump has consistently shown these characteristics from the first time he came into office until the last year as president in the middle of the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2020, the world will be shocked by the outbreak of Covid-19. The Covid-19 pandemic has struck most countries worldwide, threatening its citizen and health sectors and bringing disadvantages to a state's economy, social culture, tourism, and politics. During the Covid-19 pandemic, Trump's leadership was being tested, and he needed to handle the crisis and maintain the state's survival. Based on data, the U.S has the highest number of confirmed cases and the most deaths. Covid-19 pandemic obliges all states to prepare their public health system better. Every country should follow every instruction and advice from WHO as the main international organization that is responsible for

directing and coordinating global health matters. International community is not only anticipating WHO's response but also the big power countries, in this case the U.S, state with huge contribution and leadership to the global health system. Therefore, as the president of the U.S at that time, Trump's leadership had an important role in this. However, this topic about the relationship between Trump's leadership style and its effect on his foreign policy in handling Covid-19 is still rare. Therefore, this article highlights American foreign policy, precisely the Covid-19 policy under Trump's presidency. Hence, it comes up with one research question: "How does Trump's leadership style influence American foreign policy during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020?"

Literature Review

Foreign Policy

Foreign policy is a system of activities where foreign policy decisions are formulated and planned to be executed (Dugis, 2007: 115). Therefore, according to Modelski, foreign policy has 5 basic concepts such as policy makers, aims, principles, power to execute and the context of foreign policy (Dugis, 2007: 115; Modelski, 1962: Part One). As the system of activities, in foreign policy, input will proceed to be an output later. Policy makers will be guided in forming the policy by certain principles and objectives. Therefore, policy makers become one of the important elements in the decision-making process. Contrary to Modelski's definition, according to Rosenau (1976), foreign policy consists of 3 aspects, first, a cluster orientation. It will relate to the perceptions, attitudes, and values in world politics (Dugis, 2007: 115). It will be guidance to the policy makers when they are expected to make a decision and action as a response to the external and domestic circumstances. Second is a set of commitments and plans for action. It refers to taking concrete strategies and decisions as a reaction to an issue. In other words, this aspect is a tangible form of the translation of the cluster orientations (Dugis, 2007: 115). Lastly, a form of behavior. It means foreign policy performs as the external behavior of the state (Dugis, 2007: 115).

From these 2 definitions, foreign policy consists of 3 main aspects such as, firstly, the input or source of foreign policy. The source of foreign policy could be in the form of demand as response to certain events or pressure and support as the behavior of

certain actors who seek a foreign policy change. Rosenau argued that foreign policy is an adaptable behavior of the state toward the change of internal and external environment. According to Rosenau, the idiosyncratic leader is one of the kinds of input for foreign policy (Meutia, 2018: 20). It involves the values, goals, and personality of the state's leader (Rosenau et al., 1976: 18). Consequently, all the input, information, and way the leader proceeds the input will be determined by the leader's personality and its style.

Secondly, the process or decision-making part. For this part, it is called the "black box" because it cannot be observed directly regarding what really happened in this box (Neack, 2018: 20). In this process, the state's leader will not work individually. In American foreign policy, the president will interact with other administration officials, its advisers, the Congress, and non-governmental actors (Carter, 2019: 3). The process and way of interaction will be influenced by the leadership style of a president. Lastly, output. According to Kaarbo, the variety of foreign policy will be formed differently depending on the leadership style of the president (Kaarbo, 1997: 573). Output could be in the form of words -signal and policy declaration- and the assertive action (Carter, 2019: 3). After the output is launched, there will be feedback or response from other actors, including citizens, other leaders, and the international community. This feedback or response will be processed to be input again. In the end, leadership style can show its influence in the process, decision output part or independently. In specific circumstances such as crises, most likely leadership style could directly affect the foreign policy outcomes. It is because during crises, the influence of individual characteristics increases and the influence of other factors, such as bureaucratic routines, decreases (Hermann & Kegley, 1995: 515).

Leadership Style

According to Hermann's article "Assessing Leadership Style: A Trait Analysis," leadership style is a way for a leader to relate to the actors around them (Hermann, 1999: 5). Leadership style is a prominent element in the interaction process between a leader and other actors such as constituents, advisers, another leader and more. Each leader has their leadership style and political behavior. Leaders' orientation toward their position will distinguish them from others. A predominant leader generally has two

leadership style orientations: goal-driven and situationally responsive (Hermann et al., 2001: 86; Snyder, 1987: 202). As Hermann described, goal-driven leaders are known as “the crusaders, the ideologues, those who are directive, task-oriented, or transformational in focus--.” Leaders’ beliefs, attitudes, motives and passions build their interpretation of the environment (Hermann et al., 2001: 86–87). Furthermore, this leadership style tends to act and behave based on their unique set standard and seek to strengthen their leadership position (Browning & Jacob, 1971; Direnzo, 1977; Hall & Van Houweling, 1995; Hermann et al., 2001: 87). Their attitudes and beliefs hardly change due to how closed and selective they perceive information from their environment (Hermann et al., 2001 : 87). Consequently, goal-driven leaders do not have high political sensitivity and tend to neglect international involvement and domestic policymaking. They also like to work with people who are loyal to them and share them. These leaders also like to frame the norms and institutions for their agenda (Hermann et al., 2001: 87; Hermann & Preston, 1994; Preston, 1996).

Whereas leaders with situational responsiveness are described as “the pragmatists, the opportunists, and those who are consultative, relations-oriented, or transactional” (Hermann et al., 2001: 87). They have quick responses to certain conditions and are more sensitive to the current situation. These types of leaders are more flexible and open-minded. Subsequently, they are more open to information, ideas, criticisms, discussions and consultations with other actor decision-makers in forming foreign policy. Besides that, context-oriented leaders will adjust themselves to suit the situation. Moreover, they also ensure the other position in specific issues and project the likelihood of how various groups and institutions will act (Driver, 1977; Hermann et al., 2001: 87; Stewart et al., 1989). The last characterization of a situationally responsive leader is that other expectations and interests determine the leader’s self-image. The external validations are essential to ascertain that other relevant actors accept a leader’s ideas, attitudes, beliefs, motives and passions.

Hence, to determine and assess a leader’s orientation and sensitivity to contextual information, Hermann proposes three questions about the general characteristic of personality to be answered (Hermann, 1999: 5): (a) How leaders react to political constraints in the environment; (b) How leaders are to incoming information; and (c) What is the leader’s reason for seeking their position.

For point (a), goal-driven leaders tend to challenge the constraints and be insensitive to the political context. A leader who challenges constraints or is insensitive to the context tends to choose a quick resolution, being decisive and intent to face the situation directly (Hermann, 1999: 6). Otherwise, situationally responsive leaders are more respectful of constraints and sensitive environments. This type of leader is characterized as having highly-empathy for people's surroundings; being interested in other actors' views on certain events; being open to bargaining and agreement; and putting more attention on the event by event (Hermann, 1999: 6).

For point (b), goal-driven leaders are more selective and closed to information. They will act as advocates and persuade others to support their position. They work like the classic cognitive misers who force their agenda and tend to seek and choose the information that supports their perception only (Hermann et al., 2001: 93). Whereas situationally responsive ones tend to be flexible and open to any information. They will act as cue-takers, which means they will open up and follow the suggestions and interests of others, such as their advisors (Hermann, 1999: 7). They stand as hypothesis testers in response to foreign policy matters.

Lastly is the leader's reason for seeking their position (c). It refers to the motivation of a leader. Motivation will shape and affect their character and action. A leader's motivation can be internally driven by a specific problem or cause, ideology, and personal interest -to be accepted, approved, supported, status, and power; or externally incentivized, it is influenced by the relationships and interests of others (Hermann, 1999: 8). There are two functions of a leader's performance in groups, organizations, and institutions to differ in their motivation, first is focus on relationship building (ensure the survival of institutions), and second is focus on task performance (policy achievement) (Hermann et al., 2001: 93).

Method

This article uses qualitative method analysis to describe, interpret and contextualize Trump's leadership style and American foreign policy regarding the Covid-19 pandemic and their relations with each other. Moreover, to have a better and more profound examination of presidential character, this article also used psychobiography to analyze political leaders. In foreign policy analysis, psychobiography is one of the

primary at-a-distance measures used to study the personality and views of world leaders (Hudson, 2014: 58). Furthermore, this psychobiography method will work complementarity with qualitative content analysis. Words and themes are the primary data form in this method. Therefore, qualitative content analysis goes beyond counting words. It emphasizes examining a text's meanings, themes, and patterns more. It is possible to draw some interpretation of the results (Bengtsson, 2016: 10). This article examines the verbal word Trump and tries to associate it with Trump's psychobiography to show and prove which direction Trump's personality and leadership style is leaning toward. Moreover, the method to gather data for this research will rely on secondary data obtained from official government documents, health agencies' official websites, books, academic journals, reliable official news websites, and Trump's speeches, interviews, and videos regarding the Covid-19 issue.

Trump's Covid-19 Policy

In this section, the writer divides the implementation of Trump's Covid-19 policy into two parts. First, the writers discuss Covid-19 policy within the domestic arena (intermestic policies) to understand how Trump reacts and processes the information from WHO as input that, in the final, will produce policies to maintain the survival of the state and protect all citizens in crises, specifically in Covid-19 pandemic period in 2020. Second, the writers discuss how the multilateral capacity and power are taking place by highlighting the interaction between the U.S with various global actors in addressing Covid-19.

Prevention and Control Measures For Covid-19 (Intermestic)

In the book "Foreign Policy Analysis: A Toolbox" (2018), Morin & Paquin explained that the increase of porousness of the boundary between foreign and domestic policies has made several issues that are strictly international now include domestic policy. Some scholars called this blurring line "intermestic", a combination of the word international and domestic to indicate the linking of issue and interest (Neack, 2018: 5). For instance, the spread of this coronavirus that does not recognize any border when it has reached the pandemic level, where it is not only China's problem anymore but also an international issue that all countries worldwide should be aware of. As a global

problem for international politics, it is still vital for all states to implement those prevention and mitigation policies into their domestic policies to tackle down the virus. Moreover, these Covid-19 domestic policies also have international ramifications (Paquin & Morin, 2018: 4). The implementation of Covid-19 domestic policies will not only be vital to maintain the state's survival and its citizens but also protect the vital core of all human life from critical and pervasive threats on an international scale.

This article will explore the domestic prevention and control measures of Covid-19 related to the development of vaccines and Covid-19 protocol, particularly the travel ban and reopen America agenda.

a. Vaccine

To speed up the availability of the Covid-19 vaccine, the Trump administration initiated Operation Warp Speed (OWS). OWS has three main plans: development, manufacturing, and distribution (U.S Department of Health and Human Services, 2020). In vaccine development, the U.S prioritized fulfilling American needs first before globally helping others with vaccinations. It can be seen from the rejection to join Covid-19 Vaccine Global Access Facility (Covax) as the global program led by WHO.

The U.S vaccine development showed its tangible outcome in December 2020, when FDA issued the first and second EUA. for using the PfizerBioNTech and Moderna Covid-19 vaccine. At the end of 2020, the U.S successfully administered more than 1 million doses of the Covid-19 vaccine and vaccinated 2.8 million people in the U.S However, these numbers are still far from the nation's goal of 20 million (CDC, 2023).

b. Covid-19 protocol

Regarding Covid-19, this article focuses on implementing travel restrictions, lockdowns, and reopening the America agenda. At the end of January 2020, Trump imposed travel restrictions on China—however, experts and the WHO have objected to this restriction on China (Farley, 2020). Although received objections from the expert, this decision was still to be taken. Trump stated that his “bold” decision has “saved a lot of lives,” and he believed because of that, the U.S had a small number of cases of coronavirus (Farley, 2020). Besides that, Trump also suspended travel from 26 European countries (Schengen area) to the

U.S. His administration officials viewed Europe as a new epicenter for the pandemic (Liptak & Vazquez, 2020)

Nevertheless, this travel restriction did not last long due to Trump's impatience (Rutledge, 2020: 508). For example, he wanted to reopen the U.S faster for economic reasons, although the coronavirus cases in the U.S have escalated since March 2020. The indication of Trump's reopening agenda also got warned by several actors. For example, Anthony Fauci disagreed with Trump's school reopening agenda because he viewed it too fast and could lead to "needless suffering and death" (Strauss, 2020). To respond to Fauci's answer, Trump commented that "it is not an acceptable answer" and stayed committed to the school reopening issue (BBC, 2020c). In addition, Trump declared to use his power to pressure state governors to obey his command regarding the school reopening and face-to-face learning process (Wilkie, 2020). He threatened to cut off the funding if the state governors did not follow his order and blamed the CDC's guidelines for opening schools as being "very tough and expensive" (Chiacu & Psaledakis, 2020).

Bilateral and Multilateral Capacity And Power

To defeat the Covid-19 pandemic and its effects, it is necessary to establish international cooperation and solidarity in the form of development assistance (Schneider et al., 2021: 1). Increasing pandemic spending, channeling it through multilateral and bilateral forums and strengthening political strategy to enhance global health governance power could significantly influence this situation (Kavanagh, 2020: 518). Therefore, the state must adopt and support a foreign policy grounded in solidarity and the shared self-interest laid bare under Covid-19. Thus, the presence and action of great powers such as the U.S, which usually stands as the activator of multilateralism agreements, is required. The international community is looking to the U.S response as a country with huge contributions and leadership to the global health system.

Therefore, this chapter will explain how multilateral capacity and power is taking place by highlighting the interaction between the U.S with various actors, such as the World Health Organization (WHO) as the central international organization that leads

all countries and actions to tackle the crisis; great power countries, specifically China and the European Union.

a. The U.S relationship with World Health Organization (WHO)

The U.S is one of the critical states that have made a vital contribution to the establishment of WHO for a long time. However, this long-stable relationship has strained under the Trump presidency. It started when Trump criticized WHO for being “wrong about many things,” being too slow in announcing the coronavirus outbreak as a pandemic, and being very China-centric (The White House, 2020a: 4).

Furthermore, Trump has several claims that distorted the fact. For example, he accused WHO of misleading the world by its declaration that there was no transmission between humans. Trump claimed that there was credible information to suspect human-to-human transmission from the Lancet publication in December 2019 (Kessler, 2020). However, the Lancet immediately issued a statement calling this claim factually false, as their first report on COVID-19 was published on January 24th (Smith & Talmazan, 2020; The Lancet, 2020). Trump also falsely stated that the WHO disagreed and attacked his travel restrictions policy on China, but the WHO never openly criticized the U.S for that decision (Blake, 2020).

Subsequently, on April 14th, Trump threatened to halt WHO funding while his administration evaluated WHO related to Trump’s accusation that WHO is “severely mismanaging and covering up the spread of the coronavirus” (Lovelace Jr & Higgins-Dunn, 2020; The White House, 2020b: 4). Next month, on May 18th, Trump proclaimed that the U.S would permanently cut off its funding to the WHO and rethink its membership in WHO if it did not undertake a “substantive improvement” within 30 days (LeBlanc, 2020a). Then, in late May 2020, Trump announced his final decision to permanently terminate the U.S relationship with the WHO because “WHO failed to make the requested and greatly needed reforms.” (The White House, 2020c).

This announcement gained criticism, and many actors opposed it. For instance, Lawrence Gostin, the faculty director at Georgetown’s O’Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law, stated that this decision is “a dangerous

move” and an “earth-shattering decision” amid a pandemic (Joseph & Branswell, 2020). Even the director of the CDC, Robert Redfield, also said the “postmortem” on the pandemic should wait until the emergency was over (Joseph, 2020). Nevertheless, Trump remains firmly regarding his decision to end the U.S relationship with WHO. Subsequently, on July 6th, the U.S notified the U.N. of withdrawing from the WHO. Many actors, such as foreign leaders, health officials, and experts, urged that this decision bring disadvantages to the U.S and globally and ruin the international effort to encounter the virus (AJIL, 2020: 769; Gostin et al., 2020: 293).

b. The U.S relationship with China

Since Trump came into office, the interaction between the U.S and China has been more contested. The strained relationship also carries over in 2020 amid the pandemic period. Although, in the early pandemic period, Trump still positively responded to China’s handling of Covid-19, this behavior changed in March 2020 when Lijian Zhao, the Chinese government spokesperson, promoted conspiracy theories about the U.S army who first brought the novel coronavirus to Hubei province (Westcott & Jiang, 2020). His tweet responded to the U.S accusation and blamed China for the outbreak. To fight this back, the U.S, specifically Senator Tom Cotton, during his interview with Fox News, brought up a conspiracy theory that the virus might come from the high-security biochemical lab affiliated with the Chinese Academy of Sciences, which is its location near the Wuhan market (Brito, 2020). Trump also showed his support for this evidence-free conspiracy theory, although most experts have denied this claim.

Moreover, one thing that escalated the tension between China and the U.S was when Trump repeatedly used the terms “Wuhan virus” and “Chinese virus” and put the blame on China for the coronavirus pandemic (Mangan, 2020). Trump’s habit of saying “Chinese virus” or “Wuhan virus” has received much criticism from various actors. Nevertheless, Trump does not show his concern about the criticism and Chinese Americans’ concerns about racism. Trump defended himself by saying that it was “not racist at all” and “it comes from China. I want to be accurate” (Mangan, 2020).

The resentment of the U.S rose significantly, fueled by the Trump administration blaming China for every pandemic aspect and demanding accountability for China (Bisley, 2020). In the White House news conference, Trump stated that “the world is paying a very high price for what they did” (Mangan, 2020). The U.S and China are blaming each other for mishandling the spread of coronavirus. Covid-19 became a new reason behind the acceleration of China-U.S. hostilities and tension.

c. The U.S relationship with European Union (EU)

The European Union and the U.S had a long history of relationship together as the main geopolitical alliance and economic partner to each other. However, in recent years, especially in the Trump era, the relationship between transatlantic partners has experienced severe strain. The Covid-19 pandemic has affected the transatlantic relationship negatively.

In early March 2020, Trump imposed a travel ban on 26 European countries that form the Schengen area. This decision is unacceptable on the European Union side (Amaro, 2020). The EU officials argued that cooperation is more needed due to the global crisis rather than unilateral action (Amaro, 2020). The travel ban announcement has sown confusion and anger, escalated the tension between the transatlantic alliance, confused diplomats, confounded some State Department officials, and turbulent financial markets that plummeted (Gaouette et al., 2020).

Contrary to the EU's response, Trump claimed that the U.S has frequently communicated with the allies. However, it has been denied by the EU side. Then, Trump stated that he did not give the early information to EU counterparts because it took much time and added that they should move quickly (BBC, 2020a). Trump also told the reporters that his action was implicitly a payback to the EU's past decision (related to European's action to raise the taxes on American goods) (Gaouette et al., 2020). Besides that, Trump also blamed Europe for not acting quickly to prevent the spread of coronavirus, which he viewed as the cause of a significant increase in Covid-19 cases in the U.S (Gaouette et al., 2020). Trump also used the term “foreign virus.”

The quality of the U.S-EU relationship also worsened due to Trump's decision to withdraw from WHO. The EU urged Trump to reconsider this

decision with consideration at that time; the condition was still far from conducive, and there was a surge of coronavirus cases in several countries (News Wires, 2020). Trump has disrespected science and scientists through how he handles the pandemic and thus has worsened the crisis. The European believed that the administration needed mature and responsible people in a given situation to temper the erratic behavior of Trump during the pandemic period (Arvanitopoulos, 2020). How Trump handled the pandemic has eroded the trust in the alliance of the U.S leadership, especially in the global health system.

Discussion

If we take a look at Trump's political behavior from the presidential campaign in 2016 until the last year of his presidency amid the pandemic, Trump can be categorized as a predominant leader who is more goal-driven. Nai et al (2019) argued that the political leaders' personality (e.g Trump's personality) is likely to matter. From the beginning, Trump has shown his high dominance and supreme self-confidence in foreign policymaking (Immelman & Marie Griebie, 2020: 27). Trump put himself as the ultimate entity with the power to direct others. Trump will be tough to maintain and defend his position in power. Trump will do anything to achieve what he wants and all his administration's members should follow his instructions. Hence, Trump highly values the loyalty among his advisers and members of his administration (Immelman, 2017: 10). Moreover, Trump is more goal-directed rather than relationship-oriented. Trump will focus more on achieving goals rather than building a relationship (Griebie, 2021: 40). This type of leader will be inflexible and closed-minded in decision-making (Griebie, 2021: 39). It will lack objectivity and rely on its predisposed ideals, beliefs and values (Griebie, 2021: 39). Trump is also known for his aggressiveness and volatile temper, which is hard to control. Trump is dominant with a lack of empathy and is prone to irritability. Therefore, Trump's policy cannot be predicted and is always unexpected. Trump also has huge ambitions. It can be described by his boldness, competitiveness and self-assured attitude (Immelman & Marie Griebie, 2020: 8). Trump also tends to make a decision based on his emotion and instincts. He has poor impulse control and temper tantrums (Drezner, 2020: 387–388). His mood is subject to rapid fluctuation, assessing political leadership, predisposed to acts impulsively; they may be

overly excited, exhibit a pervasive tendency to be easily attracted and as quickly bored or angered, make reckless and incautious judgments and initiate rash or thoughtless courses of action (Immelman, 2017: 7).

Trump's Leadership & Personality

Based on previous research, it is believed that personality of Trump is the primary factor in influencing his decision-making ability (Abdiel, 2020: 25; Al Malla, 2021: 1; Drezner, 2020: 387; Siswanto, 2018: 61; Turner & Kaarbo, 2021: 453). In general, Trump's personality traits are described as inconsistent, acting impulsively, all actions reflecting on his emotions at the moment, and confidence that leads to self-glorifying.

In leadership traits, one of its elements is conceptual complexity as a measurement. Trump is categorized as a low conceptual complexity leader (Hassan & Featherstone, 2021: 409; Siniver & Featherstone, 2020: 74). Low-complexity leaders can hardly define a difference in their environment dimensions (Siniver & Featherstone, 2020: 73). A low-complexity leader also upholds a plutocratic worldview that draws foreign policy situations into an economic-transactional lens (Siniver & Featherstone, 2020: 75). As a long-time businessman who goes into politics, Trump has experienced many events, whether success or crisis. Therefore, his business background will influence his perception and view (Abdiel, 2020: 17; Mollan & Geesin, 2020: 409; Siniver & Featherstone, 2020: 74–75). For example, Trump upholds a zero-sum worldview. It can explain why Trump made America protectionist on trade and politics. In his perception, global trade and multilateralism disadvantage the U.S (Putri et al., 2019: 37; Ziv et al., 2019).

However, why does Trump not lose his political power and his controversial policies still can be implemented? It is because other decision makers such as Mike Pompeo and John Bolton also share the same perception with Trump (Olsen, 2021: 78). They are on the same page which view that the U.S owes nothing to anyone specifically the U.S allies. As a result, they started to form policies that abandoned American values such as openness, equality and freedom. Besides that, Trump also uses the sentiment of nationalism through his populist speech to win the nativist and illiberal audience. This is how Trump gained public and institutional support to legitimize his extraordinary policies (Magcamit, 2017: 30). Moreover, several studies urged that voters have a

tendency to support and like candidates with personalities that “match” their own (Nai et al., 2019: 611). Personality traits of political leaders are visible and tend to be consistent and closely related to behavior. For electoral dynamics, it could be a perfect yardstick for predicting what to be expected from certain candidates. However, the personality of political leaders is beyond it. It can be an aspect to drive the leaders’ achievement after coming into the office, for example, in terms of policy accomplishments, relationships with the legislative branch, use of executive orders, and likelihood of unethical behavior (Nai et al., 2019: 611).

These personality traits show two things about Trump. First, it reveals Trump’s tendency to show his superior authority to involve and make all decisions. Therefore, Trump can be defined as the predominant leader (Abdiel, 2020: 17; Immelman, 2017: 2). This type of leader uses their power to stop and encounter any opposition, or other parties they suspect could hamper their plan. Second, in the case of Trump, he can be considered a ‘goal-driven’ president (Abdiel, 2020: 18; Immelman, 2017: 10; Turner & Kaarbo, 2021: 460). It can be seen from Trump’s actions that he only has a purpose to achieve his goals, not to clear up the situation. Thus, one of the goal-driven presidential features is the aggressiveness to tackle any political constraints (Abdiel, 2020: 19).

Moreover, with high confidence and ambition, Trump would insist on conducting extreme policies and still believe in his success. Why? First, Trump is not detail-oriented due to his short attention span (Drezner, 2020: 388). Subsequently, Trump avoided introspective thought to evaluate his mentality towards a situation. Second, Trump is a power-motivated leader with high-dominant charisma (Turner & Kaarbo: 456). It makes all of Trump’s motivation purely for achieving his personal desires. Moreover, Trump could manipulate others to follow his instructions (Nai et al., 2019: 623). As a result, American foreign policies lack quality due to poor decision-making.

However, some previous study shows other criteria that could influence Trump in making decisions besides his personality. For instance, Trump’s policies are not only influenced by his personality traits but also cannot be separated from the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) that occurred in 2007-2008 (Putri et al., 2019: 43). Trump criticizes Obama’s post-GFC policies, which are considered to weaken the economic performance of the U.S while China has risen as a new power. This event triggered the revival of the state and nationalism.

Although most of the articles are recent, the researchers focus on the early case of the Trump presidency. Therefore, this article fills the gap in the literature about how Donald Trump makes decisions during the pandemic.

Predominant Leader

A predominant leader is a single individual with ultimate power in choosing the government (Hermann & Hermann, 1989: 365). They put themselves as the only entity permitted to draw the final decision. The involvement of a leader in policymaking can be influenced by either the leader who has a record of being in military or government service or a leader who is lacking in experience but has an interest in being in the middle of affairs (Hermann & Preston, 1994: 81). These two factors differ in the level of personality that influences foreign policy. Moreover, the predominant leaders have their preferences. If it is known, the alternative proposal and other points of view will be irrelevant and no longer matter to the political outcome (Hermann & Hermann, 1989: 365).

Trump is categorized as a predominant leader with high involvement in foreign policy due to his excitement (Abdiel, 2020: 18). Therefore, his judgment and view have a crucial role in foreign policymaking. Trump does not have a professional background in international politics. Trump comes from a background as a businessman; therefore, his global affairs are meant for personal business only (Abdiel, 2020: 17). It can be seen when Trump wanted to reopen America again. However, the condition at that time was not conducive yet. There was a surge in Covid-19 cases in the U.S. Trump wanted to reduce the physical distancing measures and lifted the restriction by reopening the country and stabilizing the economy. Although experts warned about the deadly threat of the coronavirus, Trump still wanted the U.S economy to “open” back up by Easter on April 12th (Breuninger, 2020).

During his speech and interview, Trump intensively used the words “I,” “my,” “me,” and “mine.” As Hermann (2002) argued, Hermann argued that if a speaker intensively uses the singular first-person pronouns in substantial sentences in his/her speech, it means that they want to show that they have a vital role in the situation.

Table 1 : Regarding the reopen America agenda, here are some examples of Trump’s statement

Statement	Meaning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “I will be speaking to all 50 governors very shortly.” ● “I’m going to have to make a decision. It’s the biggest decision I’ve ever had to make.” ● “And I will then be authorizing each individual governor of each individual state to implement a reopening, very powerful reopening plan of their estate in a time in a manner which is most appropriate.” 	Trump wants to be considered the one who initiates and judges this action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “We’re opening up this incredible country. Because we have to do that. I would love to have it open by Easter.” ● “I would love to have that. It’s such an important day for other reasons, but I’d love to make it an important day for this. I would love to have the country opened up and raring to go by Easter.” ● “Easter’s a very special day for me.” 	The reopening of America for his personal interest and excitement only

Source : (Breuninger, 2020; CBS News, 2020)

This reopens the agenda and foments opinions from the partisan, democrats and republican. Republicans tend to be more optimistic and agree on the possibility of reopening the state (Schwartz, 2020). In contrast, democrats opposed and viewed it as too early to reopen America again (Schwartz, 2020). Especially at that time, the U.S had 654,301 confirmed cases and 32,186 deaths due to the virus (BBC, 2020b). CDC, FEMA, and other health experts also showed concern regarding this agenda because America was not ready and was not in a condition where it was safe to reopen (Schwartz, 2020).

Responding to the democrats, Trump argued that their actions were only to hurt him politically in the November elections. “Well, I do. I do. I think it’s a political thing,” said Trump to the press (Donmez, 2020). In an interview with Maria Bartiromo, when she asked whether reopening “as quickly as possible” would put money ahead of lives, Trump denied it and said Americans agree with him (Donmez, 2020). Even though, based on a survey conducted by Politico after the reopening announcement, more than eight in 10 voters, 81 percent, say Americans “should continue to the social distance for as long as is needed to curb the spread of coronavirus, even if it means continued damage to the economy” (Shepard, 2020).

Trump remains persistent in defending the decision. Those disagreements cannot stop his action. It also shows that Trump seems to be in denial about any advice from health experts who know more about the pandemic and coronavirus. Trump abandoned public health interests which should have been his top priority. Trump was so eager to have a good economy by election day that he refused to do the critical thing to contain the virus. Trump left the governors and local officials alone and then cautioned that the “cure” for the economic shutdown was “worse than the disease” (Reich, 2020).

Moreover, as a leader with low-conceptual complexity, it is unsurprising that Trump will view the world through a binary term. As such, Trump will momentarily take every action based on his emotion and mood. Thus, the policies or actions of Trump are predictably unpredicted. Low conceptual complexity leaders typically will be insensitive to international opinion (Siniver & Featherstone, 2020: 73). Therefore, in several moments, Trump has reduced the American commitment to international politics by withdrawing from several essential agreements. It can be seen from how Trump terminated the U.S and WHO relationship and his unilateral action against the EU regarding travel restrictions. The predominant leader will eliminate the situation if it no longer follows his views. In the WHO's case, Trump viewed WHO as no longer profitable for the U.S mismanaging the coronavirus and becoming a “puppet” of China.

Goal Driven-Leader

In the article “Who Leads Matters: The Effects of Powerful Individuals”, Hermann et al. (2001) explained that predominant leaders have two kinds of leadership styles, one type is more goal-driven, and the other is more situationally responsive. Goal-driven leaders are described as “the crusaders, the ideologies, those who are directive, task-oriented or transformational in focus” (Hermann et al., 2001: 86). This leader interprets the environment based on their beliefs, attitudes, motives, and passions. The goal-driven leaders tend to challenge political constraints and are relatively closed to information from the environment. For the motivation behind every action, a goal-driven leader tends to act for policy achievement (e.g., getting this done, task performance). Taking a look at Trump's actions and policies shows that Trump tends to focus on “achieving” a goal rather than “resolving a situation” (Abdiel, 2020: 18). Thus, Donald Trump fits the characteristics of a goal-driven leader.

To assess his sensitivity of Trump to the political context in the pandemic era, we can see how he reacts to political constraints, how open Trump is to incoming information, and what motivates Trump to take action.

a. Challenges Constraints

Trump is not a leader who respects constraints; he is the type of leader who likes to challenge them. Hermann explained that leaders less sensitive to the context tend “to meet a situation head-on, achieving a quick resolution to problems they are facing, being decisive and dealing with what is perceived as the problem of the moment” (Hermann et al., 2001: 91). Thus, it can be seen from the ambitious side of Trump that he would fight for what he believes in even though it might be controversial and get many people against it. Thus, it can be seen from the ambitious side of Trump that he would fight for what he believes in despite the fact that it might be controversial and get many people against it. Trump once stated in his book “Trump: the Art of the Deal” (1987) that “I aim very high and that I just keep pushing and pushing and pushing to get what I am after (Trump & Schwartz, 1987).

Based on the previous research, Trump is a leader with a high score in narcissism trait personality (Nai et al., 2019: 623). It makes Trump not afraid to take a risk and be bold with an expansive imagination. Consequently, it could lead to chaos in the White House because of Trump’s impulsive and emotional actions. Moreover, Trump is also full of himself and much better than others. Trump often called out several actor incompetent people. For example, Trump criticized China or European countries that they have failed to prevent the spread of viruses.

In addition, Trump also scores low in emotional stability, which drives him to act impulsively and prefer unilateralism over multilateralism (Nai et al., 2019: 673). It can be seen from Trump’s unilateral action is his decision not to join Covax as the global effort for vaccine development. Trump also decided unilaterally to impose a travel ban on 26 European countries without consulting it first to the EU.

b. Closed to information

Leaders less sensitive to the political context tend to be closed to the information. They tend to act like advocates, use only acceptable information in line with their perception and position on the situation, and sometimes overlook any evidence that may be invalid (Hermann et al., 2001: 92). Because Trump is more closed to information, he tends to be in denial and insensitive to his surroundings. We can see this when Trump showed his denial behavior through America's reopening policy again. As previously explained, health experts view it as too fast to reopen America again. The situation could worsen because America is still waiting to reopen its country. Many things still need to be added, especially regarding the national testing strategy and medical equipment required by the states. This policy shows that Trump is too hasty in pushing his agenda. Trump is wrong in order what needs to be prioritized first. In this pandemic, public health must be prioritized more than the economy. If Trump is forced to open the economy without the proper preparation, it could bring America into a collapse.

c. Achievement-motivated

If we observe Trump's foreign policies in general, Trump focuses more on his beliefs and what he needs to achieve, which in consequence, the approval or acceptance of others will not be essential to be sought by him. Therefore, Trump is a leader who focuses on internal problems and tends to be achievement-motivated. Hence, to ease themselves in driving their agenda to be actualized, this type of leader will not take much contextual information to be considered.

As a goal-directed leader, it proves that the primary motivation of Trump is problem-solving; therefore, his leadership type is expansionist. It explains why Trump dislikes people who do not support his ideas. An expansionist leader identifies with their goal entirely and believes that his/her beliefs are the right ones and those who disagree are seen as traitors (Hermann et al., 2001: 98). Regarding Covid-19 policies, Trump was caught being in denial and insensitive to public health experts' advice. For instance, the nation's top infectious disease specialist, Dr. Anthony Fauci, stated that the status of Covid-19 outbreaks in the U. S "is not really good" and "still knee-deep" in the first wave of Covid-19 (LeBlanc, 2020b). However, Trump rebuked Fauci's statement: "I think we are in

a good place. I disagree with him” (Liptak & Valencia, 2020). Trump does not want to trust or follow the advice of the expert.

The disagreement between Trump and health experts is not a new thing. If we view Trump’s personality traits, according to previous research by Nai et al. (2019), Trump scores high on psychopathy and very low on agreeableness. Having high scores in psychopathy means Trump has a “tendency to show a lack of remorse and to display callousness and insensitivity” (Nai et al., 2019: 623). Consequently, Trump is reluctant and insensitive to taking immediate and decisive action to defeat Covid-19. Believing his belief is right makes Trump more ignorant of the suggestions of health experts.

Moreover, for scoring low on agreeableness, Trump is “considered simultaneously as extremely critical and quarrelsome and neither sympathetic nor warm” (Nai et al., 2019: 621). Trump’s rhetoric and personal attack will be aggressive to encounter his in and outside political opponents (Nai et al., 2019: 621). Furthermore, Trump is likely to behave confrontational, which leads him to focus on his goals rather than building and maintaining relationships. Thus, if some antis come from others, Trump will not hesitate to attack them again privately or publicly. One of the ways Trump attacked back then was by firing people who disagreed with him in perceiving U.S foreign policy—for example, the fire of Christy Grimm and Rick Bright.

Conclusion

In the study of Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA), leaders play an essential role in perceiving and interpreting international and domestic constraints. Therefore, it cannot be denied that Donald Trump plays a prominent role in international affairs and has the sense to shape American foreign policy. There is a correlation between Trump’s leadership style with American foreign policy in handling Covid-19. Some of his Covid-19 policies received a lot of criticism, such as the U.S’ termination from WHO, the rejection to join Covax, America's reopen agenda, the strained relationship with China, and rising mistrust between the U.S and EU As a predominant leader who is more goal-driven, Trump is described as a leader with a high level of dominance, high self-confidence, emotional, ambition, and aggressiveness. It directly influenced how he

shaped American foreign policy to be inconsistent and unpredictable, even during crises.

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