

**THE INFLUENCE OF THE US-CHINA TRADE CLASH ON KENYA'S NATIONAL
INTERESTS: A CASE STUDY OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
NAIROBI**

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DECLARATION AND APPROVAL

DECLARATION

This research proposal is my original work and has not been presented for any award at any university.

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Sign.....



..... Date 20/05/2020.....

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APPROVAL BY THE SUPERVISORS

This research proposal has been submitted for examination with our approval as university supervisors.

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Sign.....



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DEDICATION

This research proposal is dedicated with deep gratitude to all those who have supported me throughout this journey. To my beloved parents, whose unwavering love, encouragement, and sacrifices have been the foundation of my achievements, thank you for always believing in me. To my supervisor, DR. Joseph Ndalilah, whose guidance, patience, and insightful feedback have been instrumental in shaping the direction and quality of this work, I am truly grateful for your mentorship. To my family, for their constant support, understanding, and words of encouragement during challenging times. To my workmates and colleagues, who offered valuable advice, motivation, and the flexibility needed to balance work and study, your support did not go unnoticed. To my friends, for their encouragement, laughter, and belief in my potential—you helped keep me grounded and motivated. And finally, to all the participants who took the time to respond to the questionnaires—your input was vital to the success of this research. I deeply appreciate your contribution.

This research proposal reflects the collective support I've received, and I dedicate it to all of you.

ABSTRACT

Bilateral trade has been an important part of politics and trade between states more so in the 21st century. However, it has been challenged by the fact that states need to work with more states and cannot be loyal to any single one. This lack of loyalty leads to the tussle among states to be the best bilateral partner to a state in which they stake their own national interests. The study was conducted to determine the influence of the US-China trade clash on Kenya's national interests, focusing on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nairobi. Additionally, the Ministries of Industrialization, Trade and Enterprise Development also featured. The major item under study, basically the main objective was to see whether the US-China trade clash alters Kenya's national interests in any way. This is because, Kenya either will be more affiliated either to the USA or more affiliated to China when shaping its national interests. From this, the specific objectives to help arrive at supporting answers will be: To determine the influence of political affiliation on Kenya's national interests. To determine the influence of foreign investment on Kenya's national interests. To determine the influence of economic systems on Kenya's national interests. To determine the influence of foreign exchange on Kenya's national interests. Chapter one breaks down the nature of international relations among states as regards trade looking at the background of study and how the objectives above come into play. Chapter two engaged in a deeper discussion into the objectives under the literature review following a theoretical framework. It summarizes the literature and identifies a research gap. The target population featured are the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nairobi, plus, the ministries of industrialization, trade and enterprise development and was inclusive of purposively selected political officials and employees alike. This research being a case study, allowed for the researcher to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. This is explained in chapter three. The qualitative data came from face-to-face interviews and document review whereas, the quantitative data came from the questionnaires. Peer review and pilot study helped to determine validity and reliability on the data collection tools. Drop and pick method allowed the respondents to take their time to answer the questions. Data collected is presented in tables, graphs and pie charts then descriptive analysis explained the figures while relating the findings to the discussions in chapter two. This was done in chapter four. It is expected that the US-China trade clash will have a significant influence on Kenya's national interests. Finally, chapter five summarizes the findings and conclusions while making recommendations for further considerations into the topic. Appendices demonstrated the questionnaires used and the face-to-face interviews.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AGOA	-	African Growth and Opportunity Act
COMESA	-	Common Markets for Eastern and Southern Africa
EAC	-	East African Community
FDI	-	Foreign Direct Investment
FOCAC	-	Forum for the China Africa Cooperation
FTA	-	Free Trade Act
GDP	-	Gross Domestic Product
KNBS	-	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
Ksh.	-	Kenyan Shilling
USD	-	United States Dollar
¥	-	Chinese Yuan

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the research by presenting the background of the study, statements of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives, research questions, significance, scope, limitations, delimitations, assumptions, and operational definitions of key terms. These components aim to contextualize the research topic and offer a clear understanding of its focus

1.1 Background of Study

In the 21st century, the global political and economic landscape has witnessed a notable shift characterized by the intensification of strategic competition between the United States of America and the People's Republic of China. At the heart of this rivalry is international trade, a tool increasingly wielded by both countries not merely as an economic activity but as an extension of foreign policy and geopolitical maneuvering. Trade, once primarily seen through the lens of market access and comparative advantage, is now inextricably linked with diplomatic influence, strategic alliances, and global power projection.

The U.S. and China, as the world's two largest economies, have over the past two decades employed trade policy to assert their values and expand their influence. While the United States champions a liberal international order grounded in democratic governance, free markets, human rights, and institutional transparency, China has advanced a model of state-led capitalism with a pragmatic approach that eschews political conditionalities. The clash of these ideologies has not only created friction on the bilateral front but has also spilled over into regions like Sub-Saharan Africa, where both powers seek strategic partnerships and economic footholds.

Kenya, a lower-middle-income country with aspirations to become a regional economic powerhouse under its Vision 2030 development blueprint, stands at a critical juncture within this global contest. The country's geostrategic location along the East African coastline, its

relatively developed infrastructure, and its role as a gateway to the hinterland markets of Uganda, Rwanda, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo make it a vital player in the geopolitical calculations of both Washington and Beijing. As such, Kenya has become a theater of soft power diplomacy and economic engagement from both superpowers.

Historically, the United States has engaged Kenya through bilateral aid programs, security cooperation, trade initiatives such as the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), and multilateral support through institutions like the World Bank and IMF. U.S. foreign policy has tended to emphasize governance reforms, anti-corruption efforts, democratic institution-building, and human rights as prerequisites for deeper economic collaboration (Kimenyi, 2012; Nye, 2004). This approach, while promoting long-term governance capacity, is often criticized for its bureaucratic rigidity and its conditionality-laden framework.

In contrast, China has taken a markedly different approach. Through its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), China has become a dominant infrastructure partner for Kenya, financing large-scale projects such as the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR), the Nairobi Expressway, and various energy and port developments. These investments are largely framed as win-win partnerships, with China offering concessional loans, grants, and technical expertise with minimal concern for Kenya's internal political or governance issues (Taylor, 2006; Mulati, 2019). This policy of non-interference, while attractive to many African leaders, has sparked concerns over debt sustainability, lack of transparency, and long-term economic dependency.

The simultaneous engagement of Kenya by both powers has created a dual-dependency model in which the country benefits economically from both relationships but is also exposed to competing interests and conflicting policy expectations. This dynamic has led to what scholars term "strategic hedging," wherein Kenya attempts to maximize the gains from both partnerships while minimizing the risks of political alienation or economic coercion. However, this balancing act is becoming increasingly difficult as the trade war between the U.S. and China

intensifies, morphing into a broader ideological and technological rivalry with global ramifications.

Kenya's national interests broadly defined to include sustainable economic growth, infrastructural development, political stability, technological advancement, national security, and international reputation are increasingly influenced by the evolving U.S.-China competition. Decisions regarding foreign direct investment, trade agreements, military partnerships, diplomatic alignments, and policy reforms are now made within the context of a rapidly polarizing international system. For example, Kenya's participation in Chinese-financed infrastructure projects can attract skepticism or pushback from Western donors, while aligning too closely with U.S. strategic goals could strain relations with China, a key investor and trade partner.

Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic and the post-pandemic global economic restructuring have further complicated Kenya's foreign policy calculus. Both the U.S. and China have used vaccine diplomacy, debt restructuring offers, and economic recovery packages to deepen their respective influence. The ongoing U.S.-China technology war, with disputes over Huawei, 5G networks, and cybersecurity, adds another layer of complexity for Kenya, which must decide how to modernize its digital infrastructure without alienating either partner.

The shifting sands of global power politics compel Kenya to reassess its foreign policy doctrines and strategic priorities. As global polarization increases, developing countries like Kenya are increasingly being forced to take sides, either explicitly or through the alignment of their policies, investments, and diplomatic signals. This has implications not only for the country's economic development but also for its sovereignty, diplomatic autonomy, and regional leadership.

Therefore, the background to this study is rooted in the need to understand the intricate and evolving relationship between global superpower rivalry and Kenya's national interest. It is

essential to interrogate how the broader U.S.-China trade conflict is shaping Kenya's economic policies, trade alignments, governance decisions, and diplomatic engagements. This study seeks to fill the knowledge gap by analyzing Kenya's strategic responses and exploring whether the country is a passive recipient of global power play or an active agent capable of leveraging great power rivalry for its national development.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Kenya's evolving trade and diplomatic engagements with both the United States and China have placed the country in a strategically sensitive position at the intersection of an escalating global economic and geopolitical rivalry. Over the past two decades, Kenya has significantly deepened its economic ties with both superpowers receiving development assistance, foreign direct investment, concessional loans, and trade incentives from each. While these relationships have contributed positively to Kenya's economic development and infrastructural modernization, they have also created a complex web of overlapping, and at times conflicting, obligations and expectations.

The United States, through frameworks such as the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), and various military and governance initiatives, has emphasized conditional engagement rooted in democratic reforms, transparency, anti-corruption measures, and human rights protection. Conversely, China has prioritized infrastructure-led development and trade expansion, largely through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), with minimal political conditionalities. This dual approach has left Kenya navigating a delicate diplomatic balancing act, often forced to reconcile the normative governance demands of the West with the pragmatism and scale of Chinese economic engagement.

The crux of the problem lies in the increasing incompatibility of these two global paradigms and Kenya's growing vulnerability as a recipient of both. As the U.S.-China rivalry escalates

beyond mere tariff disputes into broader domains including digital sovereignty, technological influence, and military positioning the pressure on Kenya to align, implicitly or explicitly, with one side is intensifying. For instance, decisions such as whether to adopt Chinese technology firms like Huawei for Kenya's 5G infrastructure or to accept U.S. assistance tied to political reforms are no longer purely technical or economic they carry significant geopolitical weight.

Although several scholarly works, such as those by Kimenyi (2012), Rehak (2018), and others, have examined Kenya's historical trade relationships, development partnerships, and foreign aid patterns, there remains a glaring gap in the literature specifically focused on how the intensifying U.S.-China trade conflict is influencing Kenya's strategic posture. Most existing studies tend to treat U.S. and Chinese engagement with Africa as isolated or independent variables, often overlooking the interplay between the two powers' actions and their cumulative effect on a middle-power state like Kenya.

Moreover, the current scholarship has paid limited attention to how Kenya's national interests in areas such as political sovereignty, foreign investment preferences, debt management, trade policy, currency stability, and regional diplomacy are being reshaped by the global reconfiguration of power. As the global economy becomes increasingly bifurcated, Kenya faces rising uncertainty in managing its bilateral relationships and risks making strategic decisions that could have long-term implications for its autonomy, development trajectory, and international standing.

There is a pressing need, therefore, to interrogate the extent to which the ongoing U.S.-China trade clash directly or indirectly influences Kenya's decision-making processes and its ability to assert and defend its national interests. Specifically, this study seeks to understand whether Kenya is strategically adapting to the realities of this geopolitical rivalry or merely reacting to the shifts in global trade dynamics. It also questions whether Kenya is being empowered or

constrained by this competition and how its policymakers perceive and navigate this global contest.

In light of this, the problem that this study addresses is twofold: First, the lack of focused empirical and conceptual research that critically analyzes the influence of the U.S.-China trade rivalry on Kenya's national interests; and second, the strategic uncertainty and policy dilemmas that Kenya faces as it attempts to pursue its development goals while maintaining diplomatic equilibrium in a polarized global environment.

Therefore, this study is essential in providing nuanced insights into how Kenya can manage its external relationships, protect its sovereignty, and achieve its strategic objectives amidst a turbulent international trade system dominated by two competing global hegemony. The urgency to generate such knowledge has never been greater, especially as Kenya continues to expand its role in regional economic integration, continental diplomacy, and global trade governance. Understanding the dynamics of this power competition and Kenya's place within it is crucial to shaping foreign policy and development planning that is both resilient and forward-looking.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to determine the influence of the US-China trade clash on Kenya's national interests.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1.4.1 Main Objective

To determine the influence of the US-China trade clash on Kenya's national interests.

1.5 Research Questions

- I. What is the influence of political affiliation on Kenya's national interests?

- II. What is the impact of foreign investment on Kenya's national interests?
- III. How do economic systems affect Kenya's national interests?
- IV. What role does foreign exchange play in determining Kenya's national interests?

1.6 Significance of Study

The study will offer valuable insights for multiple stakeholders:

Business Community: Especially multinational enterprises operating in Kenya, to understand the geopolitical dynamics influencing market stability, investment opportunities, and foreign exchange.

Scholars and Researchers: To serve as a reference for future studies on international trade, political economy, and foreign relations.

The Researcher: To gain a deeper understanding of bilateral trade's role in shaping national interests and international political alignments.

1.7 Scope of the study

The study focuses on the influence of the US-China trade clash on Kenya's national interests. It was conducted in Nairobi County, Kenya, and targeted officials in key government ministries such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Industrialization, Trade and Enterprise Development, and related agencies.

Content Scope: The research focused on four key variables—political affiliation, foreign investment, economic systems, and foreign exchange—and how they are influenced by the US-China trade rivalry.

Geographical Scope: Nairobi County, due to the concentration of government offices and foreign policy institutions.

Time Scope: The study covers trade relations from 2010 to 2025, focusing on changes observed during this period.

Duration: The research was conducted over a period of **three months**, with data collection and analysis completed within this timeframe.

1.8 Study Limitations

Several limitations are anticipated:

Access to Respondents: Senior officials in target ministries had limited availability for interviews due to their demanding schedules.

Data Collection Challenges: Questionnaire respondents delayed responses or failed to return them, affecting data quality and timelines.

Bias in Responses: Some participants exhibited bias—leaning toward pro-USA or pro-China sentiments—affecting the objectivity of their responses.

Institutional Constraints: Bureaucratic procedures within government institutions delayed approvals for interviews or access to key documents.

1.9 Delimitations of Study

The study mitigated limitations through the following strategies:

Flexible Scheduling: Interviews scheduled in the afternoons or early evenings when officials were more likely to be available.

Active Follow-up: Questionnaires were collected every three hours during working hours to prompt timely responses.

Pilot Study: A small-scale pre-test was conducted to refine the questionnaire and identified potential biases in responses.

Targeted Sampling: Respondents were purposively selected based on experience and knowledge in international trade and foreign relations.

1.10 Assumptions of the Study

It was assumed that respondents will be knowledgeable about Kenya's trade relations with the USA and China.

It was expected that interviews and questionnaires will yield reliable and usable data.

It was assumed that the findings will benefit policy makers, business stakeholders, and academia.

1.11 Operational Definition of Key Terms

Trade-The economic activity of exchanging goods and services for financial rewards between states. For example: Kenya exports coffee to the United States for foreign exchange in bilateral *trade*.

Trade Clash -The disagreements that arise between countries as a result of issues in the market, supply chain or economic interests. For example: The USA does not like it that Kenya invites numerous Chinese investments in the state causing a *trade clash* between China and the USA.

Influence -The political and economic power that one state has over the other due to its mode of participation in trade and policies. For example, Kenyan business people are learning Chinese Mandarin to do more business with the Chinese due to Chinese *influence* in Kenya.

National -That which is paramount to the state. For example, the growth of the GDP is a *national* concern on who Kenya chooses to work with in international relations.

Interests -The economic and political motivations that drive trade. For example, Kenya's *interests* lie in an increase in per capita incomes and GDP to improve the nation from international trade.

National interests -The holistic motivations that will benefit an entire country. For example, Kenya debates on the value of the USD and the Y on the Kshs. to determine which one is more useful for economic growth while determining economic *national interests*.

Soft Power -The use of bribes, carrot-stick and promised benefits to get what a state wants from another state. For example, the USA offers Kenya money to expand military camps.

Hard Power -The use of force to get what a state wants. For example, China forcing Kenya to open trade routes or face economic sanctions.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive and critical examination of the existing body of scholarly literature related to the influence of the U.S.-China trade clash on the national interests of Kenya. It is designed to position the current research within the broader academic discourse by exploring what has already been studied, what findings have emerged, and where significant gaps still exist. The review draws from both empirical studies and theoretical frameworks to build a nuanced understanding of the complex dynamics that underpin international trade relations, global power rivalries, and national interest formation in developing countries, particularly in Africa.

The review begins by engaging with key theoretical perspectives that frame international trade and foreign policy, such as realism, liberalism, dependency theory, and neo-colonialism. These theoretical lenses help contextualize how power, economics, and diplomacy interact in a multipolar world. Following this, the chapter delves into empirical literature covering various dimensions of the U.S.-China relationship, its global implications, and its impact on African countries, with a specific focus on Kenya.

In particular, the literature is examined across key themes such as trade patterns, development assistance, foreign direct investment (FDI), infrastructure development, diplomatic influence, governance conditionalities, and policy alignment. Scholarly works from both Western and Chinese perspectives are considered, offering a balanced critique of the divergent approaches employed by these global superpowers in engaging with Kenya and the broader Sub-Saharan Africa region.

This chapter also identifies trends in Kenya's foreign policy responses to superpower competition, drawing from historical and contemporary sources. It compares Kenya's experience with that of other African nations that find themselves in similar situations of balancing economic partnerships with competing powers. The aim is to determine whether Kenya's approach is unique, reactive, strategic, or constrained by structural dependencies.

A central component of this literature review is the identification of knowledge gaps. While a significant volume of literature has examined U.S. and Chinese foreign policy strategies in Africa, there is limited scholarly work that directly interrogates the effects of the ongoing U.S.-China trade conflict on the national interests of African states. Even fewer studies provide a country-specific analysis that integrates political, economic, and diplomatic variables in a holistic manner. Kenya, as a regional hub with multifaceted ties to both powers, presents a compelling case for such an inquiry.

Moreover, much of the available literature tends to focus on macro-level geopolitical narratives, often overlooking how these international developments manifest at the national policy level or within specific sectors of a country's economy. This research seeks to bridge that gap by examining how the U.S.-China trade rivalry has influenced Kenya's decision-making in areas such as foreign policy orientation, trade agreements, debt diplomacy, technology adoption, and regional alliances.

Lastly, this chapter introduces a conceptual framework that illustrates the interrelationship among the key variables under investigation. The framework maps out the causal linkages between external trade rivalries and internal national interests, providing a foundation upon which the research analysis is built.

Through this critical and expansive review, the study seeks not only to situate itself within ongoing academic discussions but also to challenge, refine, and extend them by introducing a focused case study of Kenya. Ultimately, this literature review underscores the importance of localized perspectives in understanding the broader dynamics of global power competition and affirms the relevance of Kenya's experience to international relations theory and practice.

2.2 Empirical literature

2.2.1 The influence of political affiliation on Kenya's national interests

The alignment of political ideologies, diplomatic affiliations, and foreign policy priorities has increasingly become a decisive factor in shaping bilateral and multilateral relationships in the global arena. For a country like Kenya strategically located in East Africa and acting as a regional economic and political hub the manner in which it navigates its political alignments with global powers significantly affects its national interests, particularly in the context of the ongoing U.S.-China rivalry.

Political affiliation, in this context, refers to the ideological, institutional, and diplomatic alignments that Kenya forges with influential international actors based on shared values, policy goals, governance expectations, or development agendas. These affiliations play a pivotal role in determining not only the volume and nature of trade and investment inflows but also the structure of aid agreements, diplomatic cooperation, and participation in global governance frameworks.

According to Mulati (2019), countries like Kenya make strategic choices in their international alignments based on perceived and actual benefits derived from such partnerships. These benefits may include infrastructural investments, political legitimacy, increased international visibility, and enhanced geopolitical relevance. Kenya's growing engagement with China is a notable case in point. Driven largely by economic pragmatism, Kenya has leaned toward Chinese partnerships in pursuit of its national development goals. China's expansive infrastructural investments exemplified by the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR), major highway projects, and port expansions have positioned Kenya as a leading economy in East Africa and one of the most attractive investment destinations on the continent after South Africa (Ernst & Young, 2017).

Furthermore, Fingar (2019) and Gachie (2014) observe that Kenya's relatively peaceful political climate, particularly following its 2010 constitutional reforms and subsequent democratic consolidations, has enhanced its appeal to foreign investors, particularly those from China. Chinese investments, unlike Western aid, tend to emphasize economic outcomes over governance conditions, which aligns well with Kenya's pursuit of tangible development deliverables. As a result, Kenya has enjoyed increased international representation and visibility, particularly among emerging economies and within multilateral forums such as the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

On the other hand, the United States has historically based its foreign policy and development cooperation on democratic values, transparency, anti-corruption efforts, and the promotion of human rights (Nye, 2004; Copeland & Taylor, 2003). While these principles are undeniably essential for long-term political stability, they are often perceived by recipient states as intrusive or overly prescriptive. In the Kenyan context, U.S. involvement has been marked by considerable contributions in sectors such as public health (e.g., PEPFAR), education, counterterrorism, and security partnerships. However, U.S. diplomacy has also been

characterized by periodic criticisms of Kenya's electoral processes, judicial independence, and corruption levels. Such criticisms though often constructive have sometimes strained bilateral ties, with Kenyan leaders interpreting them as neocolonial interference in domestic affairs (Bergsten, 2018).

This ideological divergence between China's non-interference approach and the U.S.'s value-based diplomacy presents Kenya with a complex strategic dilemma. On one hand, aligning too closely with China might raise concerns in Western capitals about Kenya's commitment to democratic governance and liberal economic practices. On the other hand, an overt alignment with the United States might deter Chinese investments, especially in large-scale infrastructure and extractive industries where China has demonstrated financial superiority and quicker execution capabilities.

Moreover, China's approach to development assistance often delivered through state-owned enterprises, soft loans, and fast-tracked bilateral agreements allows Kenya a degree of flexibility and sovereignty in project implementation that contrasts sharply with the bureaucratic and conditional nature of Western aid programs. While the U.S. continues to be an important partner in Kenya's counterterrorism efforts, particularly in the Horn of Africa region, these initiatives although crucial to regional stability do not always directly advance Kenya's economic growth or improve its international branding as a preferred investment destination.

This divergence in political and diplomatic strategies has compelled Kenya to adopt a pragmatic, often non-aligned stance in its foreign policy posture. However, this strategy is increasingly being tested as the U.S.-China rivalry intensifies across domains such as digital infrastructure (e.g., 5G technology), multilateral institutional influence, and global norm-setting. For instance, Kenya's decision on whether to allow Huawei a Chinese tech giant into its digital ecosystem has implications far beyond technological innovation; it affects

perceptions of Kenya's geopolitical alignment and commitment to cybersecurity norms as promoted by the West.

The implications for Kenya's national interests are profound. Political affiliation not only influences direct economic benefits such as aid and investment but also shapes Kenya's international image, bargaining power in global institutions, access to multilateral funding, and diplomatic leverage in regional conflicts and trade negotiations. Consequently, Kenya's foreign policy decisions must be delicately calibrated to preserve strategic partnerships without being drawn into a binary global conflict between East and West.

Research Gap

While there exists a considerable body of literature analyzing Kenya's bilateral engagements with China and the United States individually, few studies offer an integrated analysis of how Kenya's political affiliations are being shaped and reshaped by the intensifying U.S.-China rivalry. Most scholarly works tend to focus either on Chinese aid and non-interference policies or on Western democratic conditionalities in isolation. There is a paucity of research that critically examines how the dual engagement with these rival powers places Kenya in a position of strategic recalibration and foreign policy ambivalence.

This study seeks to bridge this critical gap by examining how Kenya's political affiliations are influenced simultaneously by both superpowers, and how such affiliations, in turn, impact the realization of Kenya's national interests. The research will provide a more nuanced understanding of how Kenya balances competing ideological and strategic demands in an increasingly polarized global environment.

2.2.2 The influence of foreign investment on Kenya's national interests

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) has emerged as a critical driver of economic transformation and international cooperation for developing nations. For Kenya, foreign investments not only

contribute to economic growth and job creation but also influence broader dimensions of national interest, including policy autonomy, regional competitiveness, debt sustainability, and strategic alignment in global affairs. As Kenya positions itself as a regional economic powerhouse within East Africa, the nature and origin of foreign investments have taken on heightened significance especially in the context of intensifying geopolitical competition between the United States and China.

Both the U.S. and China play pivotal roles in Kenya's investment landscape, but their approaches, motivations, and impact models differ substantially. These differences are not merely technical or economic but are deeply rooted in distinct philosophical and ideological underpinnings of foreign policy and international development assistance.

The U.S. Investment Model: Institution-Driven and Governance-Oriented

The United States has historically favored an institutional approach to foreign investment, focusing on market-led growth facilitated by private sector participation and rule-of-law frameworks. U.S. investments in Kenya are often channeled through multinational corporations (MNCs) such as Coca-Cola, General Electric, Microsoft, and Apple. These companies establish operations, create employment opportunities, and contribute to Kenya's economic modernization, especially in sectors like ICT, consumer goods, finance, and telecommunications (Laurence & Gertz, 2011).

Furthermore, the U.S. investment model is strongly linked to democratic governance, transparency, and human rights. This is reflected in the conditionalities attached to aid and development financing, particularly from U.S. agencies such as the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the International Finance Corporation (IFC). As Palley (2005) observes, the U.S. model emphasizes financial accountability, anti-corruption measures, and institutional reforms as prerequisites for accessing significant development support.

While this model promotes long-term institutional development and macroeconomic stability, critics argue that the high degree of conditionality often delays project implementation and may limit the recipient country's ability to align foreign investments with national priorities. In some cases, these conditions have been perceived as intrusive, infringing upon Kenya's sovereignty and limiting its freedom to determine development trajectories based on domestic needs rather than external preferences.

China's Investment Model: Infrastructure-Led and Pragmatic

In stark contrast, China has adopted a more pragmatic and results-oriented approach to foreign investment in Kenya. Rather than focusing on political conditions or institutional reform, China's model emphasizes infrastructure development, trade facilitation, and resource mobilization. Chinese investments are often executed through state-owned enterprises (SOEs), development banks like the China EXIM Bank, and bilateral government agreements. According to Xia (2019), over 70 major Chinese companies currently operate in Kenya, actively participating in construction, energy, transport, and real estate sectors.

Flagship projects such as the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR), the Nairobi Expressway, major highway upgrades, port expansions in Mombasa and Lamu, and water infrastructure systems across counties represent the backbone of Kenya's Vision 2030 development blueprint (Republic of Kenya, 2009). These projects not only improve domestic infrastructure but also enhance regional trade integration and economic resilience.

Moreover, China's use of the Yuan in bilateral transactions and its provision of low-interest loans and concessional financing have provided Kenya with alternative sources of capital, reducing over-reliance on Western financial institutions like the IMF and World Bank. This has enabled Kenya to access substantial financial resources without undergoing the stringent structural adjustments or macroeconomic reforms typically demanded by Western lenders. From a national interest standpoint, this model offers greater flexibility and short-term gains in

infrastructure delivery, while contributing to job creation, technology transfer, and capacity building.

Employment, Technology, and Autonomy

One of the significant advantages of Chinese FDI, as seen through numerous case studies in Kenya, lies in its localized impact. Many Chinese-funded projects employ Kenyan labor, either directly or through subcontracted local firms, contributing to skills development and income generation. While concerns have been raised about labor standards and working conditions in some Chinese-led projects, there is no doubt that these investments have filled critical infrastructure gaps that Western investors have been reluctant or slow to address.

In comparison, U.S. investments tend to focus more on corporate social responsibility (CSR), educational exchanges (e.g., Fulbright Program), and entrepreneurship programs such as the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI). These soft-power initiatives enhance human capital and promote democratic values but may not yield immediate economic dividends or address Kenya's pressing infrastructure deficits.

Another dimension worth noting is the influence of each investment model on Kenya's economic sovereignty. China's financial instruments though sometimes criticized for leading to debt dependency offer Kenya latitude in setting its development priorities. U.S. aid, though valuable in promoting accountability, can impose restrictions on how funds are used, sometimes prioritizing donor interests over local priorities.

Comparative Insight

When comparing both investment models, several key distinctions emerge:

- **Alignment with Development Goals:** China's infrastructure-heavy approach is more directly aligned with Kenya's Vision 2030 objectives, offering visible, tangible

outcomes in transport, energy, and public works. The U.S., on the other hand, provides broader institutional support but often lacks the immediacy of project delivery.

- **Conditionality and Autonomy:** U.S. aid typically comes with political and governance conditions, which may promote transparency but can also restrict Kenya's policy space. China's non-interference stance allows greater autonomy but raises concerns over long-term debt sustainability and lack of transparency.
- **Soft Power vs. Hard Infrastructure:** The U.S. invests in people through scholarships, training, and civil society partnerships thereby strengthening soft power and democratic engagement. China, by contrast, focuses on hard infrastructure and commercial enterprise, offering immediate economic utility but with fewer long-term institutional benefits.
- **Economic Independence:** The use of the Chinese Yuan and the establishment of renminbi-denominated credit lines offer Kenya options outside the traditional Western-dominated financial system. While this could reduce dependence on the dollar, it also introduces new forms of economic alignment that must be carefully managed.

Research Gap

Despite the growing body of literature evaluating foreign direct investment in Africa, there remains a noticeable gap in studies that conduct a comparative, impact-oriented analysis of U.S. and Chinese investment models in Kenya. Existing research often isolates the effects of Chinese infrastructure projects or critiques U.S. governance-based aid without juxtaposing their respective long-term implications for national sovereignty, economic diversification, and sustainable development.

This study addresses this research gap by evaluating how both models affect Kenya's broader national interests especially in terms of development autonomy, strategic economic resilience,

and reduced dependency on external powers. By analyzing both short-term gains and long-term consequences of U.S. and Chinese FDI, this research seeks to provide policy-relevant insights into which investment approach better supports Kenya's pursuit of self-reliance, inclusive growth, and regional leadership.

2.2.3 The influence of economic systems on Kenya's national interests

Economic systems defined by their underlying ideologies, policy frameworks, and institutional configurations serve as critical determinants of how states engage with global partners and prioritize domestic development. For Kenya, the intensifying geopolitical and trade competition between the United States and China presents a complex challenge that goes beyond foreign policy rhetoric. It delves into the ideological foundations of economic partnerships and their implications for sovereignty, institutional resilience, and sustainable development.

The United States and China offer two fundamentally different economic models that have shaped their engagements with Kenya and, by extension, influenced how Kenya formulates, aligns, and executes its national interests. These diverging models' capitalism and socialism with Chinese characteristics present unique advantages and constraints that Kenya must navigate in a dynamic international environment.

The United States: Capitalism, Free Market Principles, and Conditionality

The United States operates within a classical capitalist framework that prioritizes free markets, private sector development, limited state intervention, and institutional accountability. Its international economic engagements are characterized by an emphasis on trade liberalization, fiscal discipline, privatization, and democratic governance (Rehak, 2018; Rye, 2017). These principles underpin bilateral and multilateral trade agreements, development assistance programs, and foreign investment flows from U.S.-based corporations and financial institutions.

One of the most prominent economic instruments employed by the U.S. in Africa is the **African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA)**, which grants eligible Sub-Saharan African countries duty-free access to U.S. markets for thousands of products. Kenya has benefited from AGOA, particularly in the textile and apparel sectors, which have seen export growth and job creation. However, scholars argue that the benefits of AGOA have been unevenly distributed and are often subject to U.S. evaluations of governance, human rights, and rule-of-law standards. This has created uncertainty and dependency, making long-term planning difficult for Kenyan businesses reliant on U.S. market access.

Moreover, U.S. foreign aid and development finance are often accompanied by stringent conditionalities. Agencies like USAID and the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) tie disbursements to metrics of democratic performance, transparency, and anti-corruption reforms. While such requirements aim to strengthen governance, they may inadvertently slow down aid delivery and reduce Kenya's policy autonomy in setting economic priorities. From a sovereignty standpoint, Kenya is frequently caught between accepting vital development support and resisting perceived interference in its domestic affairs.

China: State-Led Socialism, Pragmatic Investment, and Non-Interference

In contrast, China adopts a state-capitalist or **socialist-oriented economic model** that emphasizes strategic state involvement in economic planning, centralized resource mobilization, and targeted infrastructure investments. China's economic engagement with Kenya is based on mutual benefit, non-interference in internal politics, and project-based cooperation. This approach resonates with many African governments, including Kenya's, that seek rapid development without being subjected to political reform preconditions.

Under the **Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC)** framework, China has pursued massive investment in Kenya's roads, railways, ports, and energy sectors. Unlike U.S. investments, which are often funneled through multilateral institutions and private firms, China

provides bilateral government-to-government loans and contracts Chinese companies often in partnership with local contractors for direct implementation. This model enhances visibility, speed of delivery, and alignment with Kenya's long-term development plans, notably **Vision 2030** and the **Big Four Agenda**.

According to McQuillen and Swann (2005), China's approach to economic diplomacy is bottom-up, leveraging local labor, materials, and community engagement to foster inclusive growth. Chinese-funded projects often generate direct employment opportunities, transfer technical skills, and contribute to tax revenues. Furthermore, China's financial engagements largely through concessional loans or grants are perceived as more flexible, allowing Kenya to exercise greater discretion over how funds are utilized.

Nonetheless, concerns have emerged over the sustainability of this model. Critics argue that China's loans have contributed to Kenya's rising debt burden, with fears of asset seizure or strategic dependency. Moreover, the lack of transparency in contract terms and limited local capacity-building in some projects raises questions about long-term development benefits. However, many policymakers view China's economic system as more immediately responsive to Kenya's infrastructural needs, especially where Western institutions have been slow to respond.

China's economic engagement promotes **visible and immediate developmental outcomes**, often in sync with Kenya's need for roads, energy, and urban infrastructure. It is arguably more aligned with "**developmental state**" aspirations, where the state plays a central role in steering economic growth. On the other hand, the U.S. model supports **institutional resilience**, macroeconomic governance, and long-term democratic consolidation.

The choice between these models is not merely economic but strategic. It determines Kenya's place in the global order, its ability to negotiate multilateral arrangements, and its capacity to maintain balanced, non-aligned foreign relations. In a global context increasingly defined by

bipolar competition, Kenya's challenge lies in **harnessing the strengths of both systems** without becoming overly dependent on either.

Research Gap

Despite the extensive literature on foreign aid and investment in Africa, there is **a noticeable paucity of comparative analyses** focusing on how competing economic systems influence recipient countries' strategic autonomy and development trajectories. Few studies have critically examined how the philosophical foundations of U.S. capitalism and China's state-driven socialism shape Kenya's foreign and domestic policy decisions, especially considering global power realignment.

This research, therefore, seeks to fill that gap by exploring the degree to which Kenya's national interests spanning economic sovereignty, development efficiency, debt sustainability, and policy independence are affected by these competing models. It investigates how economic systems influence Kenya's foreign alignments and internal development strategy in an era of shifting global dynamics.

2.2.4 The influence of foreign exchange on Kenya's national interests

Foreign exchange (forex) is a fundamental pillar in shaping a country's macroeconomic stability, sovereign creditworthiness, and international competitiveness. For a developing country like Kenya, foreign exchange flows play a critical role in determining the availability of hard currency reserves needed to import essential goods and services, manage public debt, stabilize the local currency (the Kenyan Shilling), and influence monetary and fiscal policy. Consequently, any significant shifts in trade, foreign investment, or global economic relations such as the ongoing US-China trade clash have far-reaching implications for Kenya's forex management and national interests.

Kenya derives its foreign exchange earnings from several key sources: **exports of goods and services, diaspora remittances, foreign direct investments (FDIs), official development assistance (ODA), and tourism receipts**. Of these, **international trade and FDI inflows** represent the most dynamic levers influenced by the foreign policies and economic strategies of major global players such as the United States and China.

The United States: Direct Export Market and Remittance Linkages

The United States plays a prominent role in Kenya's foreign exchange earnings through **direct importation of Kenyan goods and services**. Through the **African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA)**, Kenya enjoys preferential trade access to the vast U.S. market. Key export commodities include **tea, coffee, textiles, apparel, and horticultural products**, all of which are essential forex earners and employment drivers in Kenya's export-oriented sectors (KNBS, 2021).

Additionally, the U.S. hosts a significant Kenyan diaspora, especially in states like Texas, Georgia, and Massachusetts. Remittances from this group contribute billions of dollars annually to Kenya's forex reserves, often exceeding earnings from traditional exports. These remittances are largely stable, counter-cyclical, and directly support household consumption, education, and small business investment. The United States' strong educational ties with Kenya further increase skilled migration, thus expanding remittance channels and global labor market integration.

Moreover, U.S.-based multinational corporations contribute to Kenya's foreign exchange through investments, payments for services, and technology transfer. Companies like Coca-Cola, Microsoft, and IBM operate regional headquarters or major hubs in Kenya, remitting taxes and salaries while stimulating the service export sector particularly in **ICT, finance, and professional services**.

However, these forex contributions are highly dependent on Kenya's compliance with U.S. foreign policy preferences, particularly in governance, transparency, and human rights. Non-compliance or political instability could jeopardize AGOA eligibility, restrict remittance flows through stricter immigration controls, or reduce FDI inflows due to risk aversion among American investors.

China: Infrastructure-Driven Competitiveness and Indirect Forex Gains

China's contribution to Kenya's foreign exchange flows takes a markedly different approach. Rather than serving as a major export market for Kenyan goods, China is primarily **a supplier of capital goods, consumer products, and investment resources**. This has led to a significant **trade imbalance**, with Kenya importing far more from China than it exports. Nevertheless, this imbalance is partially mitigated by the nature of Chinese investments, which tend to improve Kenya's long-term forex-earning capacity.

According to Fingar (2019), China's infrastructural investments—ranging from roads, railways, seaports, and energy facilities serve as **indirect facilitators of export competitiveness**. By reducing transportation and logistical costs, minimizing supply chain disruptions, and improving connectivity between rural and urban markets, China has helped enhance Kenya's overall **production efficiency and export readiness**. For instance, the **Standard Gauge Railway (SGR)** linking Mombasa to Nairobi and Naivasha has shortened cargo delivery times and reduced freight costs, creating a more favorable environment for both domestic manufacturing and regional trade.

Furthermore, China has introduced **financial innovations** that diversify Kenya's forex sources. The use of the **Chinese Yuan (Renminbi)** in bilateral transactions reduces reliance on traditional hard currencies like the U.S. dollar, thereby helping Kenya hedge against currency fluctuations. Chinese development loans—though a source of rising public debt—are often

accompanied by grace periods, concessional interest rates, and long repayment terms that provide Kenya with breathing room to allocate foreign exchange reserves more strategically.

China has also stimulated foreign exchange indirectly by **supporting value-added production in Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and industrial parks**, especially in areas like Machakos and Naivasha. These zones have attracted export-oriented Chinese firms that engage in light manufacturing, agro-processing, and textiles—all areas that could eventually enhance Kenya's export basket and reduce overreliance on primary commodities.

Research Gap

Although substantial literature exists on bilateral trade and investment patterns between Kenya and the two powers, there is **limited empirical research comparing the relative effectiveness of direct versus indirect foreign exchange contributions** from China and the U.S. Existing studies tend to analyze trade balances, investment volumes, or remittance flows in isolation, without fully capturing how **infrastructure-led competitiveness** or **preferential market access** translates into forex stability.

This study aims to address this gap by evaluating the **net impact of China's infrastructure-driven development model versus the USA's market-access and remittance model** on Kenya's foreign exchange reserves, balance of payments, and currency stability. By doing so, the study contributes to a nuanced understanding of which foreign partnership better aligns with Kenya's national interest in terms of long-term forex sustainability and economic sovereignty.

2.3 Theoretical Literature

Theoretical literature provides a foundational lens through which the key variables of a study are examined and understood. It offers conceptual tools that help to interpret the dynamics under investigation, in this case, the influence of the US-China trade clash on Kenya's national interests. By grounding the research in established economic and political theories, the study is

better equipped to analyze the intricate interplay between foreign policy, economic partnerships, and national development objectives.

In this study, two major theories are employed: **Comparative Advantage Theory** and **The Theory of Competitive Advantage of Nations**. These theories were specifically selected due to their relevance in explaining the broader themes of international trade, foreign investment, political affiliations, and how these aspects relate to the pursuit of national interests. Both theories share a common underlying theme **that nations make strategic economic and political choices to maximize their national benefit**.

2.3.1 Comparative Advantage Theory

First introduced by **David Ricardo** in the early 19th century, the **Theory of Comparative Advantage** is a foundational concept in international trade economics. It posits that countries should specialize in the production and export of goods and services that they can produce more efficiently (at a lower opportunity cost) than other countries, while importing those that other countries produce more efficiently. This theory highlights **mutual benefit and efficiency in global trade**, even if one nation is less productive in all sectors compared to another.

In the context of Kenya, this theory helps explain the country's trade patterns with both the United States and China. For example, Kenya exports **agricultural commodities, textiles, and handicrafts**, which it can produce relatively efficiently given its climate, labor force, and resource endowment. In contrast, it imports **technological products, capital equipment, and industrial goods** from more industrialized nations like China and the United States, where production is far more advanced and cost-effective.

This theory is crucial in analyzing how the **political affiliations** and **economic systems** of Kenya's trade partners affect Kenya's ability to maximize its comparative advantages. The US, through agreements like **AGOA**, provides preferential market access that encourages Kenya to

specialize in labor-intensive and value-added goods. China, meanwhile, enhances Kenya's ability to exploit its comparative advantage by investing in infrastructure, thereby lowering production and transaction costs.

Furthermore, Comparative Advantage Theory underscores the role of **foreign exchange earnings** as a natural outcome of trade specialization. By exporting goods it produces relatively well and importing efficiently from trading partners, Kenya can generate foreign currency inflows and achieve a more favorable balance of payments—central to its national interest in economic stability and growth.

However, this theory assumes **free trade and equal access to markets**, which are often distorted by geopolitical interests, tariff regimes, conditionalities, and political alignments. Therefore, while the theory provides an idealized model, real-world dynamics especially in light of the US-China rivalry require more nuanced interpretation.

2.3.2 Competitive Advantage of Nations

(Michael Porter) Porter's theory (1990) emphasizes innovation, resource mobilization, investment, and production quality as determinants of national competitiveness. The Diamond Model provides a framework to evaluate how states develop competitive industries and influence global trade.

Application to Study: The theory helps assess how Kenya leverages Chinese and US investments to gain competitive ground. It is relevant in explaining Kenya's pursuit of policies that align with partners enhancing infrastructure, innovation, and institutional support.

Theoretical Gap: While both theories explain global trade behavior, limited research applies them specifically to Kenya's positioning amid the US-China trade rivalry. This study extends theoretical discourse by integrating Ricardo and Porter to assess bilateral interactions in a competitive geopolitical context.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework is showing the interdependence of the variables of study being, *the influence of the US-China trade clash* as the independent variable and the *Kenya's national interests* as the dependent variable. The first independence is the influence of political affiliation. The indicators here feature: *alignment of foreign policies to a state, increased international representation and mutual economic benefits*. The second independent variable is the influence of foreign investment. Here, the indicators were: *increased employment opportunities, increased national development and minimizes the need for international loans*. The third independent variable is the influence of economic systems. Here, the indicators were: *increased national productivity, reduction of economic and social inequalities, minimal business regulations*. The fourth independent variable is the influence of foreign exchange. This featured these indicators: *increased exports, increased subcontracting in outsourcing and lower inflation rates*.

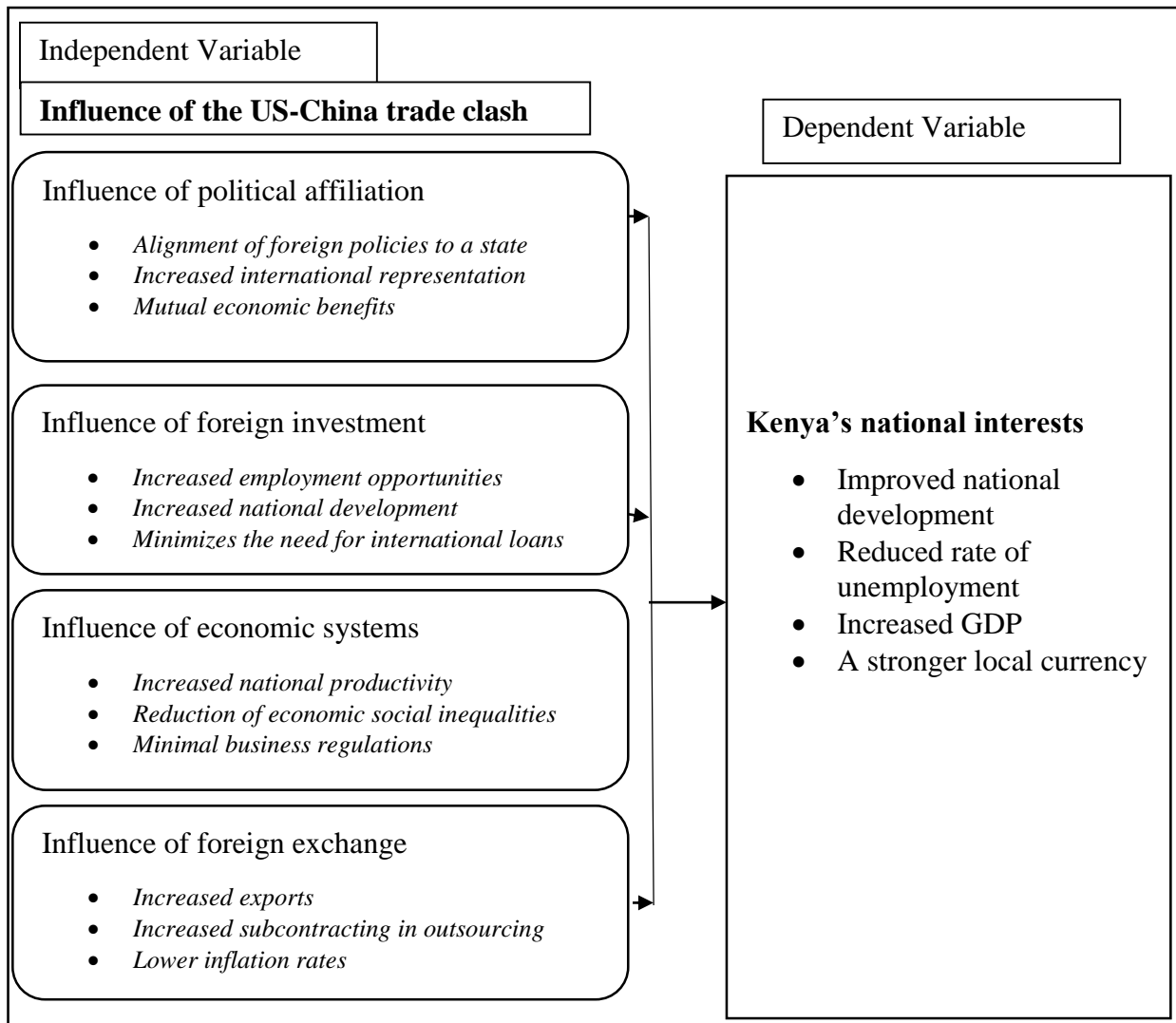


Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework.

2.5 Recap of Literature Review

The literature review undertaken in this study has explored a broad array of scholarly perspectives, empirical analyses, and theoretical frameworks aimed at unpacking the complex relationship between global economic dynamics and Kenya's national interests. A significant number of scholars have addressed themes that intersect closely with the objectives of this research. However, despite the breadth of coverage, a critical gap remains in directly examining the specific implications of the intensifying **US-China trade clash** on Kenya's strategic, political, and economic priorities.

Regarding the **first objective**, which focuses on the *influence of political affiliation on Kenya's national interests*, the works of **Mulati (2019)** and **McQuillen & Swann (2005)** are particularly informative. These scholars explored how global superpowers like China and the United States embed political considerations in their foreign policy approaches, shaping Kenya's diplomatic posture. Mulati's analysis, for example, emphasized China's non-interference strategy and the appeal it holds for African nations that prioritize development over ideological alignment. McQuillen & Swann offered insights into how political stability and alignment with Western democratic norms have historically influenced US engagement in African countries. However, while these studies provided foundational perspectives on bilateral political influence, they fall short of addressing the compounded effects of a geopolitical trade conflict on Kenya's ability to maintain balanced political affiliations with both powers simultaneously.

For the **second objective** the *influence of foreign investment on Kenya's national interests*—scholars such as **Sykes (2003)** and **Laurence & Gertz (2011)** have provided valuable contributions. Sykes analyzed the legal and economic frameworks underpinning international investment treaties and the implications of conditional aid. Laurence & Gertz examined the role of multinational corporations in US investment models and how this affects governance and transparency in recipient countries. These studies shed light on how the nature, source, and

conditionality of foreign investment affect domestic policy choices and economic autonomy. However, they do not explicitly contrast these investment approaches in the context of the **US-China economic rivalry**, particularly in Kenya, where both powers actively compete for strategic influence through competing investment styles China's infrastructure-heavy, state-centric investments versus the US's private-sector-led and governance-focused interventions.

The **third objective**, which investigates the *influence of economic systems on Kenya's national interests*, is informed by the contributions of **Lukin (2019)** and **Hiscox (2002)**, among others. Lukin examined the ideological basis of China's state-led development model, emphasizing the advantages it offers to developing countries seeking rapid infrastructural and industrial growth. Hiscox explored how domestic politics and economic systems influence international trade patterns and institutional design. These perspectives have been instrumental in highlighting the divergent ideological underpinnings of US and Chinese economic engagement. Nevertheless, these contributions rarely explore how Kenya, in particular, is affected by the ideological tensions between capitalism and state-led socialism in the context of international trade. Few scholars have directly addressed how Kenya's internal economic decision-making is influenced by its attempt to navigate and adopt compatible elements from both systems, depending on national priorities and donor relationships.

For the **fourth objective**, which pertains to the *influence of foreign exchange on Kenya's national interests*, scholars such as **Rehak (2018)** and **Githaiga (2021)** have explored relevant themes. Rehak discussed macroeconomic variables affecting foreign exchange reserves in developing economies, while Githaiga focused on how infrastructural investments, particularly from China, contribute to long-term improvements in trade logistics and export performance. These studies illustrate the indirect and direct roles played by superpower economic engagement in shaping foreign exchange inflows and trade balances. However, there remains a gap in systematically comparing how China's indirect support through infrastructure and supply

chain development versus the USA's direct trade facilitation through export agreements like AGOA impact Kenya's foreign exchange goals. There is also limited exploration of how the ongoing US-China trade impasse affects the stability, sustainability, and diversification of Kenya's foreign exchange sources.

From a **theoretical standpoint**, the literature review outlined two critical frameworks: **Comparative Advantage Theory** by **David Ricardo** and the **Theory of Competitive Advantage of Nations** by **Michael Porter**. These theories provided a robust analytical base for interpreting the study's findings. Ricardo's Comparative Advantage Theory helps contextualize Kenya's trade decisions based on resource efficiency and market specialization. Porter's Competitive Advantage Theory offers a more dynamic and contemporary view by focusing on institutional quality, innovation, and productive capacity as foundations for national economic success. The selected theories effectively support the analysis of how political affiliation, foreign investment, economic systems, and foreign exchange mechanisms intersect with the pursuit of Kenya's national interests.

Despite the valuable insights from both empirical and theoretical literature, one critical shortfall remains apparent: **the lack of comprehensive, Kenya-specific studies that address the impact of the US-China trade war from a bilateral comparative lens**. While numerous studies have explored Kenya's individual relationships with either China or the United States, **very few have investigated how the geopolitical and economic tensions between these two global powers shape Kenya's strategic responses, diplomatic balancing, and long-term development trajectory**. The **dynamic interplay of cooperation, competition, and conditionality** from both partners creates a new frontier in Kenya's foreign policy and economic decision-making that has yet to be fully examined in academic discourse.

Moreover, much of the existing data, although useful, is either tangential or indirectly related to the **core research problem**—namely, how Kenya can protect and advance its national

interests in a context where global superpowers are using trade and economic tools to exert influence. Many of the cited works focus on **individual themes** (such as FDI, governance, trade policy, or aid conditionality) without embedding these issues within the broader geopolitical conflict between the US and China.

In light of these gaps, the current study seeks to make a significant contribution by offering an **integrated analysis** that directly addresses the research question: **“What is the influence of the US-China trade clash on Kenya’s national interests?”**

By synthesizing multiple dimensions political, economic, institutional, and monetary the study not only builds on existing literature but also pushes the boundaries of inquiry into a **less-explored and increasingly important area of international relations and development economics**. It aims to generate insights that can inform policy formulation, diplomatic strategy, and economic planning in Kenya, while also contributing to the broader academic understanding of small-state responses to global power rivalries.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a comprehensive overview of the research methodology adopted in this study. It outlines the systematic approach that was employed to investigate the influence of the US-China trade clash on Kenya’s national interests. The methodology is a critical component of any research endeavor, as it determines the credibility, reliability, and validity of the findings. Therefore, this chapter serves to articulate the research design, methods, and processes that were implemented to gather, analyze, and interpret data relevant to the study objectives.

The chapter begins by introducing the overall **research design**, which provides a blueprint for conducting the research and ensures that the study remains focused, coherent, and aligned with the research objectives and questions. The research design is followed by a detailed explanation

of the **location of the study**, which includes contextual information about the geographical, political, and economic setting where data collection took place.

Next, the chapter identifies the **target population**, which refers to the entire group of individuals or entities that possess the characteristics relevant to the research. This section also presents the **sampling procedures** and techniques used to select a representative sample from the target population. The criteria for **sample selection**, including the **sample size**, are justified in order to ensure the generalizability and representativeness of the findings.

The chapter then elaborates on the **construction of research instruments**, such as questionnaires, interview guides, and observation checklists, which were designed to gather both qualitative and quantitative data. It discusses the nature, structure, and rationale behind the development of these tools. Following this, the chapter explores the procedures that were used to test the **validity** (the extent to which the instruments measure what they are intended to measure) and **reliability** (the consistency and repeatability of the instruments over time).

Furthermore, the chapter details the **data collection methods and procedures**, outlining how data was gathered from primary and secondary sources. It explains the specific strategies employed to approach respondents, administer research instruments, and ensure the quality and accuracy of data collected. This includes discussions of fieldwork organization, scheduling, and the role of the researcher in minimizing bias and enhancing objectivity.

Following data collection, the chapter presents the **data analysis techniques** that were employed to process and interpret the information obtained. Both qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods are described, including coding, categorization, statistical analysis, and thematic interpretation. The choice of analytical tools is justified based on the nature of the research objectives and the type of data gathered.

Finally, the chapter addresses the **ethical considerations** that guided the entire research process. This includes ensuring informed consent, maintaining respondent confidentiality and anonymity, respecting participants' rights, and adhering to academic integrity and professional standards. Ethical approval procedures, where applicable, are also discussed to demonstrate compliance with institutional and legal research requirements.

In summary, this chapter provides a robust framework for understanding the methodological structure that underpinned this research. It offers a clear and detailed roadmap of how the study was conducted from conception to data interpretation ensuring transparency, replicability, and academic rigor. The integration of both qualitative and quantitative methodologies enhances the depth and breadth of analysis, thereby strengthening the reliability of the study's conclusions and recommendations.

3.2 Research Methodology

This study adopted a **mixed research methodology**, which integrates both **qualitative** and **quantitative** approaches to data collection and analysis. This methodological choice was informed by the nature of the research objectives and the complexity of the subject matter specifically, the influence of the US-China trade clash on Kenya's national interests. Given that the study sought to understand both measurable impacts and nuanced perceptions, a single-method approach would have been insufficient to fully capture the multifaceted dynamics at play.

The **qualitative aspect** of the research involved the collection of rich, descriptive data that allowed the researcher to explore underlying meanings, motivations, and interpretations of the phenomenon under investigation. This type of data was primarily sourced through **face-to-face interviews** with key informants, including top-level political officials and policymakers at the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs**, Nairobi. These individuals were purposively selected based on their expertise, decision-making roles, and direct involvement in matters of foreign policy and

trade relations. The qualitative data provided insights into how political affiliation, economic ideologies, and foreign policy strategies are shaped in response to the US-China trade competition. It also illuminated the reasoning behind certain diplomatic alignments and economic choices, offering a depth of understanding that could not be captured through numerical data alone.

On the other hand, the **quantitative component** of the study involved the use of structured **questionnaires** administered to a broader pool of participants within the Ministry. These included technical officers, policy analysts, and administrative staff whose perspectives helped quantify the broader institutional understanding and reactions to the US-China trade clash. The questionnaires contained both closed and open-ended questions, enabling the researcher to gather statistically analyzable data on themes such as foreign investment patterns, perceived national benefits, and policy preferences. This quantitative data was essential for identifying trends, patterns, and generalizations that could inform the study's conclusions.

To further enrich the research, a **document review** was conducted as part of the qualitative methodology. Relevant documents such as trade agreements, policy briefs, strategic reports, government publications, academic articles, and international agency reports were analyzed. These secondary sources provided historical context, comparative insights, and empirical evidence that supported or challenged the primary data collected. The document review helped triangulate the findings, thereby enhancing the study's credibility and depth.

The integration of qualitative and quantitative methods followed the **concurrent triangulation design**, a model where both forms of data are collected simultaneously but analyzed separately, with results compared and integrated during the interpretation phase. This approach enabled the researcher to cross-validate findings and generate a more holistic understanding of how Kenya's national interests are shaped in the context of competing global trade ideologies. According to **Kumar (2005)**, such methodological triangulation enhances the reliability and validity of the

study by mitigating the biases inherent in single-method research. **Pawar (2020)** also underscores the complementary nature of qualitative and quantitative data in studies involving political economy and international relations, noting that the two offer different but equally valuable lenses through which to examine complex global phenomena.

In summary, the use of a mixed methodology was a deliberate and strategic choice that enabled the researcher to address the study's objectives from multiple angles. While the **qualitative data** offered depth and interpretive richness, the **quantitative data** provided breadth and empirical strength. This methodological blend ensured that the study not only explained **how** and **why** the US-China trade clash affects Kenya's national interests but also **measured** the extent and nature of those effects across different sectors and institutional layers. The integration of multiple data sources also contributed to the robustness, comprehensiveness, and academic integrity of the research findings.

3.3 Research Design

The research design forms the blueprint that guides the entire process of data collection, analysis, and presentation. According to **Creswell (2009)**, the choice of an appropriate research design is essential in determining the validity, reliability, and overall success of a research project. For this study, a **descriptive case study design** was adopted, as it provided a systematic way of exploring and documenting the real-life phenomenon of the US-China trade clash and its influence on Kenya's national interests. This design was selected based on its ability to produce in-depth, contextualized, and multifaceted insights into complex socio-political and economic issues.

A **descriptive design** allowed the researcher to observe, describe, and document variables as they existed in their natural setting without manipulating any of the study conditions. This was particularly important because the aim of the research was not to alter any aspect of Kenya's foreign or economic policy but rather to analyze how these policies are shaped by the evolving

dynamics between two major global powers the United States and China. The descriptive approach provided a solid foundation for systematically organizing and interpreting the various dimensions of Kenya's political alignment, foreign investment landscape, economic frameworks, and foreign exchange strategies.

Furthermore, the study utilized a **case study approach**, which is particularly well-suited for in-depth exploration of a bounded system. In this case, the “system” referred to is Kenya’s foreign policy and trade alignment in the context of the US-China trade clash. As **Gitlin and DePoy (2013)** explain, a case study is ideal for research that focuses on a specific unit be it an institution, a community, a process, or a country over a defined period. This research centered on Kenya as a case study, allowing for a focused examination of how its national interests are being negotiated and recalibrated in light of international pressures and opportunities.

The case study design also enabled the researcher to use **multiple sources of evidence**, including interviews, questionnaires, and document analysis, which enhanced the **credibility** and **validity** of the research findings. Data was collected from the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nairobi**, a specific institutional context that serves as the nucleus of Kenya’s diplomatic and trade engagement strategies. The narrow geographical and institutional scope made the case study particularly appropriate, as it allowed for a thorough and context-sensitive analysis of the research problem.

Moreover, data collected through this design was systematically organized and represented using **tables, figures, and narrative explanations**, making the findings easily interpretable and relatable. Visual representation of data ensured that patterns, trends, and comparative insights could be clearly illustrated, thereby enriching the reader’s understanding of how Kenya’s national interests are influenced by the competing global strategies of China and the USA.

By using the descriptive case study design, the research maintained a balance between **depth and structure**. The design allowed for detailed descriptions of observed phenomena while providing a clear framework for analyzing how those phenomena connect to broader theories and global trends. It supported the integration of both **quantitative statistics** and **qualitative narratives**, which is essential for addressing the multi-dimensional objectives of the study.

In conclusion, the **descriptive case study research design** was instrumental in guiding the collection, organization, interpretation, and presentation of data in a way that was both comprehensive and focused. It enabled the researcher to answer the research questions effectively while producing meaningful insights into the complex ways in which Kenya's national interests are influenced by the intensifying trade competition between the US and China. This approach provided the necessary methodological rigor and contextual richness to support robust conclusions and recommendations.

3.4 Location of the study

The study was conducted at the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Industrialization, Trade, and Enterprise Development in Nairobi, Kenya. These areas were chosen because they featured individuals knowledgeable about the history of the trade conflict between the USA and China in relation to Kenya's national interests. All four objectives of the study were well understood by political officers working in these ministries, thereby minimizing bias in the eventual findings (Sridhar, 2010). These ministries were also easily accessible to the researcher.

3.5 Target population

The study focused on determining the influence of the US-China trade clash on Kenya's national interests. It was carried out in Nairobi County, Kenya. Although conducted within Nairobi City, it did not involve the general population but was localized to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministries of Industrialization, Trade, and Enterprise Development. The sample population included purposively selected top four officials from each of the selected

ministries who were administered face-to-face interviews, and purposively selected employees aged 35–50 who had relevant experience and background knowledge of Kenya-US/Kenya-China bilateral trade. These individuals were issued with questionnaires. The total target population was: Ministry of Foreign Affairs – 100 people, Ministry of Industrialization – 100 people, Ministry of Trade – 100 people, and Ministry of Enterprise Development – 100 people. Thus, the total target population was 400 individuals.

3.6 Sampling procedures

Sampling is a critical methodological component in research as it determines the representativeness and credibility of the data collected. It involves selecting a subset of individuals or units from a larger population to participate in a study, with the intention of generalizing findings from the sample to the broader population (Gitlin & DePoy, 2013). In this study, the sampling process was designed to ensure inclusivity, diversity, and relevance to the research objectives, particularly in understanding the influence of the US-China trade clash on Kenya's national interests.

To this end, a **multi-stage sampling technique** was employed, which involved the use of both **purposive sampling** and **stratified random sampling** methods. This combined approach was deemed most effective in capturing the perspectives of respondents across different ranks and departments within key government ministries that are directly engaged with foreign trade, diplomatic relations, and economic policy formulation.

The initial phase of sampling utilized **purposive sampling**, also referred to as judgmental sampling. As explained by **Kothari (2004)**, this technique involves the intentional selection of respondents based on specific attributes, roles, or positions that align with the objectives of the study. In this context, purposive sampling was used to identify top-level officials from key ministries who possess specialized knowledge, decision-making authority, and firsthand experience in matters relating to Kenya's foreign policy, trade strategy, and diplomatic

engagements with both the United States and China. The purposive selection targeted **one top-ranking official from each of the following ministries:**

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
- The Ministry of Industrialization,
- The Ministry of Trade,
- The Ministry of Enterprise Development.

These ministries were chosen due to their central roles in managing Kenya's foreign policy, industrial development, trade partnerships, and enterprise growth all of which are directly influenced by bilateral relations with global powers.

In the second phase, **stratified random sampling** was applied to select lower- and mid-level employees from the same ministries. Stratified sampling involves dividing the population into homogenous sub-groups or **strata** based on specific characteristics such as rank, department, or job function and then randomly selecting respondents from each stratum (Bruce, 2018). This method ensured that individuals at various administrative and technical levels were adequately represented, thereby enriching the study with a diversity of viewpoints and experiences.

From each of the four ministries, **24 employees** were randomly selected to form part of the sample. This randomization within defined strata helped to reduce selection bias and ensured that the data collected was statistically valid and generalizable. The sample size per ministry was determined by considering the total number of employees, accessibility, availability, and the need to maintain balance across all participating institutions.

The rationale for combining purposive and stratified random sampling was based on both **pragmatic and theoretical considerations**. On one hand, purposive sampling allowed the researcher to obtain expert insights from key decision-makers who directly influence national

interests through foreign policy and trade decisions. On the other hand, stratified random sampling facilitated the inclusion of diverse operational-level experiences, providing a more comprehensive and grounded understanding of how foreign dynamics affect national priorities across administrative hierarchies.

Overall, the sample comprised:

- **4 top-level officials** (1 from each of the four ministries),
- **96 ministry employees** (24 from each of the four ministries, selected randomly),
- **Total sample size: 100 respondents.**

This combination of expert opinion and operational insight was invaluable in drawing meaningful conclusions about Kenya's positioning amid the US-China trade rivalry. By carefully tailoring the sampling procedures to align with the research goals and ensuring methodological rigor, the study achieved a balanced, inclusive, and insightful representation of the population under investigation.

3.7 Sample Population

The sample population referred to a selected subset of the total target population that was used to collect data through various collection methods (Kothari, 2004). The sample was derived through the stratified random sampling technique. In this method, individuals were grouped into strata based on their attributes, such as age, experience, rank, and socio-economic status. The numbers in each stratum were purposively identified, and the groups were combined to determine the overall sample size (Bruce, 2018).

The strata consisted of purposively selected top officials from the identified ministries and employees aged 35–50 years. Therefore, the sample population was: (4 top ministerial officials + 96 employees) = **100 respondents**

The findings obtained from these respondents were generalized to the broader population. As illustrated in section 3.6, the final sample size of 100 respondents was achieved by identifying respondents by rank, applying random selection within the clusters, and then summing the selected groups.

3.8 Construction of Research Instruments

There were three research instruments used for the study: documentary review, open-ended questionnaires and face to face interviews.

The questionnaire featured the following sections:

Section A: The demographic information

Section B: The influence of political affiliation on Kenya's national interests.

Section C: The influence of foreign investment on Kenya's national interests.

Section D: The influence of economic systems on Kenya's national interests.

Section E: The influence of foreign exchange on Kenya's national interests.

It also had a five-point Likert Scale to allow respondents to make choices of their thoughts on the statements posed, (Jonathan, 2004). The questionnaires were also unstructured and open-ended to allow for more data collection. The questionnaires were issued to the randomly selected employees from each of the four ministries selected.

The face-to-face interviews borrowed from the objectives of study and under each objective, several questions were posed for the interviewee. These questions emulated the ones asked in the questionnaires but kept brief to maintain a uniformity of questions asked to all respondents selected. They all worked towards answering the research questions.

3.9 Testing for Validity and Reliability

The data collection tools were subjected to reliability and validity tests through a pilot study (Sridhar, 2010). Validity aimed to assess the approximation of the truth or falsity of a phenomenon, whereas reliability aimed to determine the consistency of results when the data collection instrument was reused (Sridhar, 2010).

Questionnaires were tested by evaluating the answers provided by the pilot respondents for accuracy or exaggeration. Face-to-face interviews were assessed by observing the body language of the selected respondents. Documents were evaluated based on the degree of scholarly agreement among sources.

A total of 16 respondents were randomly selected to participate in the pilot testing of the questionnaires. These respondents were drawn from the four ministries outlined in section 3.6, with four individuals selected from each ministry. The instruments were subjected to test-retest procedures to identify any errors. Any detected errors were corrected and were not present in the final data collection. Quality testing was used to determine the validity of the data collection tools, especially the interview guide. Expert opinion, such as that of the research supervisor, was sought to review and suggest necessary changes to the instruments.

3.10 Data Collection Methods and Procedures

Both primary and secondary data collection methods were used in this study. Primary methods included structured questionnaires and face-to-face interviews. The secondary method was document review, which involved published journals, newspapers, books, government articles, and relevant online sources.

Mount Kenya University provided the researcher with official approval to collect data. Participation in the study was voluntary and confidential, with no names or identities required.

Respondents were given a letter of introduction and a consent form to help build trust in the research process.

Questionnaires were distributed and collected using a drop-pick method. Respondents were given at least five days to complete them. This method helped increase the response rate (Jonathan, 2004). A research assistant supported the distribution and collection process. Face-to-face interviews with top officials were conducted in the evenings after they had concluded their daily duties. These sessions were scheduled in advance to ensure professionalism and efficiency. Each interview lasted no more than 30 minutes.

3.11 Data Analysis Techniques and Procedures

For qualitative data, direct interpretation was used. Explanations were provided beneath tables and diagrams that presented quantitative data, with references to relevant literature reviewed in the study. The findings were compared to existing scholarly discussions, either aligning with or differing from them.

Quantitative data were presented in tables, pie charts, and graphs and were accompanied by detailed explanations. Percentages were used where applicable to enhance data interpretation. Microsoft Excel was employed to analyze quantitative data due to its suitability for assigning numerical values and percentages to the collected figures. Excel provided an organized framework for managing numerical data and facilitated calculations where needed.

Narrative descriptions accompanied each visual presentation of qualitative findings. Ultimately, a descriptive analysis of the findings was conducted following the presentation of the data.

3.12 Ethical Considerations

The following ethical considerations were observed during the study:

- The researcher did not solicit money or other favors, nor did they reward respondents in any form for their participation in the study.

- All respondents were required to sign a consent form before participating in any field data collection exercise.
- Highly sensitive questions, such as name and ID number, were omitted from the instruments.
- The privacy of respondents was respected to ensure they felt comfortable enough to provide honest and open responses.
- All respondents, regardless of their level of employment, were treated with equal respect and dignity.
- Ample time was provided for respondents to complete the questionnaires, which were collected later. Face-to-face interviews were scheduled in advance to allow proper preparation.
- Research findings were not shared with respondents unless permission was granted by the relevant authority.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents, analyzes, and interprets the research findings based on the study objectives. Visual aids such as tables and figures are used to clarify patterns in the data. The interpretations are linked to literature discussed in Chapter Two, and relevant scholarly sources are cited to provide deeper insights and implications.

4.2 Response Rate

The table 4.1 shows the response rate at the location of study, Nairobi, Kenya. These respondents were targeted from; the ministries of Foreign Affairs, Industrialization, Trade and Enterprise Development. A top official was selected from each of the four ministries plus an additional purposively selected 96 respondents in total from each of the four ministries. In total, there were 100 respondents under the sample study.

Table 4.1: To Show the Response Rate at Nairobi, Kenya

<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Employees</i>	<i>Top Officials</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Foreign Affairs	24	1	25
Industrialization	24	1	25
Trade	24	1	25
Enterprise and Development	24	1	25
TOTAL	96	4	100

All these respondents were given specific platforms on which to participate in the research. That is to say, the employees participated in the questionnaires while the top management participated in the face to face interviews.



Figure 4.1: The Response Rate at Nairobi County, Kenya.

The figure 4.1 shows that there were more employees in the study than the top management. This was to facilitate the data collection exercise to reach as many people as possible with questionnaires. The top officials were also expected to be busy and so were limited to only those four.

Implication: The inclusion of more employees than top officials ensured broader data representation while gaining strategic insight from decision-makers. As Creswell (2009) notes, stratified sampling enhances representativeness when capturing opinions across hierarchical levels.

4.3 Demographic Information

The demographic information was derived from the answers given in the survey questionnaires. This featured the age and level of education. It was only the employees from the various selected ministries that answered the survey questionnaires.

Table 4.2: To Show Demographic Information

AGE	NUMBER	LEVEL OF EDUCATION	NUMBER
35	30	Primary	32
40	28	Secondary	30
45	26	College	28
50	16	Post-graduate	8
		Diplomate	2
TOTAL	100		100

Implication: The age and educational profile reflects mid-career professionals with institutional knowledge, especially relevant for evaluating Kenya's trade and foreign policy decisions.

4.4 Descriptive Analysis of the Variables

The following was how the independent variable impacted on the dependent variable based on the answers given by the various respondents.

4.4.1 The Influence of Political Affiliation on Kenya’s National Interests

There were three questions posed for this variable under the questionnaire and the answers for each of them was to be made on a Likert Scale in terms of: (1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 2 = *Disagree*, 3 = *Neutral*, 4 = *Agree*, 5 = *Strongly Agree*).

The respondents answered as shown in table 4.3. It was observed that, most participants agreed that there would be “*the alignment of foreign policies to either the USA or China*”. This was due to the need to maintain the ties made with whichever country chosen and try not to lose their support. Some of them were of the “*increased international representation*” looking at the fact that USA and China had more state respect internationally than Kenya while just a handful thought that the “*mutual economic benefits*” would lead to positive results for Kenya. This was due to the doubts surrounding the agenda of either country (China or the USA) being interested to work with Kenya.

Table 4.3: To Show the Influence of Political Affiliation on Kenya’s National Interests

Measure Variable	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Percentage Response Rate
The alignment of foreign policies to the US or to China.	19	15	2	4	5	45
Increased international representation.	16	10	1	4	4	35

Mutual economic benefits.	10	4	2	1	3	20
TOTAL	45	29	5	9	12	100

The pie chart below helps exemplify the information in the table above.

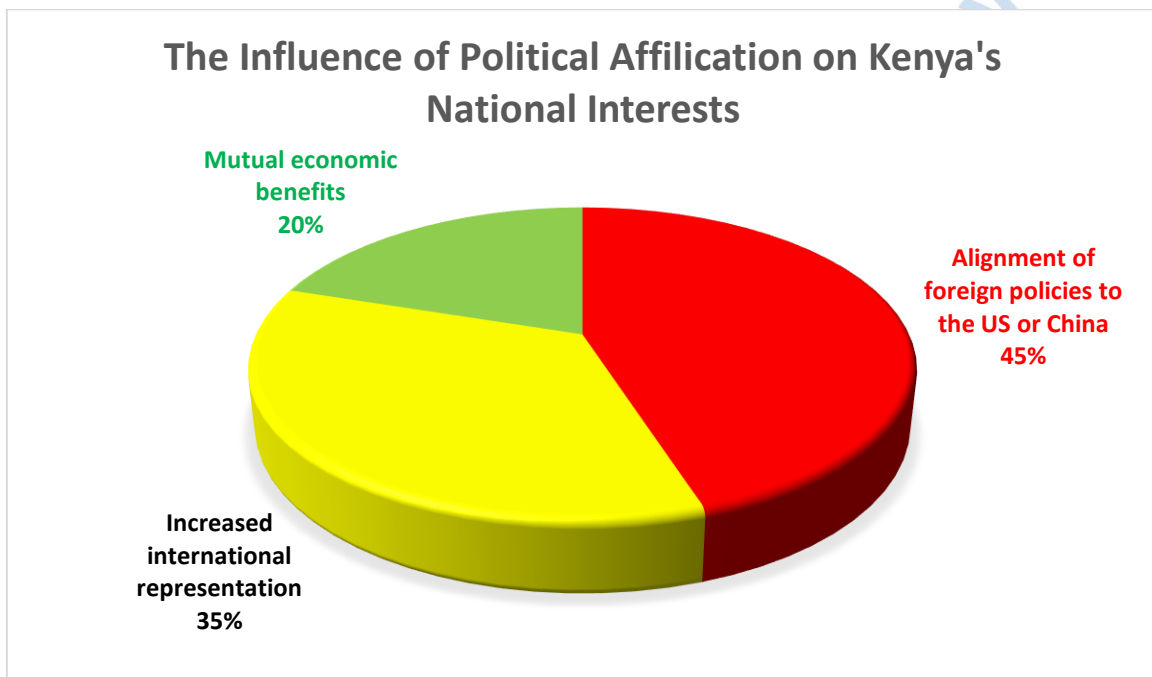


Figure 4.2: The impact of the influence of political affiliation on Kenya's national interests.

The figure 4.2 shows that, the alignment of the foreign policies to either USA or China was the most important reason why Kenya would engage in political affiliation with either of the countries. In several instances, the USA benefited Kenya in commerce that attracted a peaceful political co-existence between the two countries. In other instances though, China seemed to have the most influence in its more relaxed demands for Kenya in order for it to participate in national development. An increased international representation would work well towards making the Republic of Kenya improve its trade and industry globally and thus, both the USA and China being very powerful countries would make this possible. Finally, mutual economic

benefits between the USA and Kenya or China and Kenya would be a win for Kenya working with either country except if there were other agenda that the two international countries held against the benefit of Kenya from political affiliation.

These findings were in line with the discussions by, (Mulati, 2019) in chapter two who had mentioned that, when countries find that there are interests that satisfy their national desires, they tend to align themselves more with the country in which they find a better bilateral relationship. Condon, (2012) had mentioned that a weaker state can always find support in the stronger state and therefore, increased international participation will work very well for the weaker partner where there is a political affiliation forged in bilateral relations.

Implication: These results confirm the realist perspective in international relations, where states prioritize survival and advantage through alliances (Morgenthau, 1948). The findings echo Mulati (2019), who argued that states align politically where there are clear benefits. Condon (2012) added that weaker states benefit from affiliations with stronger partners.

4.4.2 The Influence of Foreign Investment on Kenya's National Interests

The respondents were asked what they thought about the influence of foreign investment on Kenya's national interests and they were presented with three sub-variables to select from. These were analyzed under a Likert Scale of: (1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 2 = *Disagree*, 3 = *Neutral*, 4 = *Agree*, 5 = *Strongly Agree*).

Table 4.4 shows that, *increased employment opportunities* were the most favorable advantage that would come out of a successful foreign investment by China or the USA in Kenya. This was closely followed by *increased national development* since the per capita incomes of citizens would raise the nation's GDP and finally, *the minimization of the need for international loans* as China already demonstrated that it was capable of single-handedly funding Kenya's development.

Table 4.4: To Show the Influence of Foreign Investment on Kenya's National Interests

Measure Variable	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Percentage Response Rate
Increased employment opportunities.	20	15	3	5	7	50
Increased national development.	14	8	2	3	6	35
Minimizes the need for international loans.	8	4	1	1	1	15
TOTAL	44	27	6	9	14	100

The bar graph 4.3 helps visually enhance the findings above as percentages.

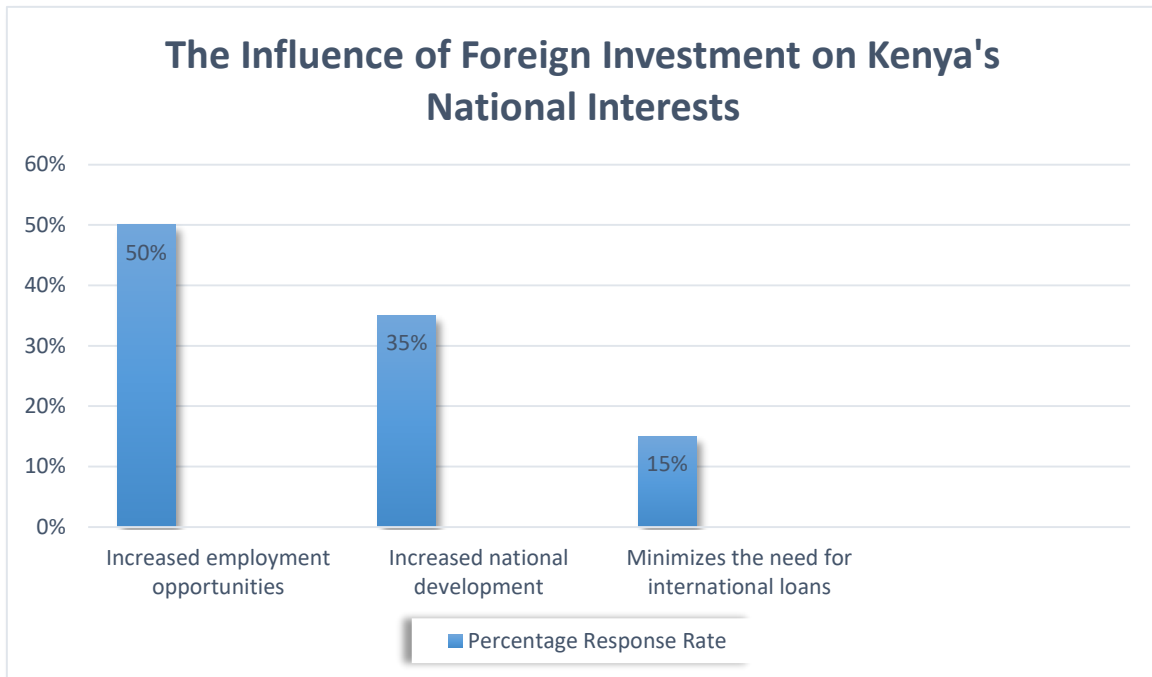


Figure 4.3: The Influence of Foreign Investment on Kenya's National Interests.

The figure 4.3 shows that, Kenya cared more about increased local employment opportunities in foreign investment than any other outcome. This was why China was accorded a lot of licenses to develop roads and infrastructure in the country in the hope that it could feature Kenyans for the jobs. With a positive increase in employment opportunities comes a growth in national development. More people than before got jobs as new jobs were created. Also, with the continuing infrastructural development came the development of the nation at large. There was less of a need to borrow for money from other donors when China and the USA offered monetary assistance to Kenya. Save for corrupt reasons to ask for money, China and the USA ended up mitigating the rate of international borrowing for Kenya. It however was not a guarantee that the USA was better than China nor China was better than the USA when it came to foreign investments. They both added a significant contribution to the shaping of Kenya's national interests. Personal and national development mattered most to the respondents as they paid less attention to the trade wars between the USA and China in Kenya and valued more what the two countries contributed to Kenya.

These findings were in line with the discussions by, (Ernst & Young, 2017) in chapter two who had mentioned that, foreign investments add value to the local economy and it does not matter whether they come from one country or another. That is why Kenya has been involved in a political conflict within itself on whether to continue with the USA or fully embrace China as its bilateral partner or even keep both countries. What matters is simply the addition of value to the local economy. Palley, (2005) identified that, the USA added value by its multinational company investments such as, the Coca-Cola, McDonalds and embassy jobs. China has posthumously invested in road construction, railway engineering, telecommunications and fibre, (Fingar, 2019). China has also had the advantage over the USA in its low interest rate policy of money lending, (McQuillen & Swan, 2005).

Implication: This aligns with developmental state theory, which emphasizes infrastructure and employment as pathways to economic growth (Leftwich, 2000; Amsden, 2001). As Ernst & Young (2017) highlighted, both US and Chinese investments enhance local economic capacity. China's focus on infrastructure (Fingar, 2019) and the USA's support through multinationals (Palley, 2005) complement this narrative.

4.4.3 The Influence of Economic Systems on Kenya's National Interests

The respondents were asked what they thought about the influence of economic systems on Kenya's national interests and they were presented with three sub-variables to select from. These were also analyzed under a Likert Scale of: (1 = **Strongly Disagree**, 2 = **Disagree**, 3 = **Neutral**, 4 = **Agree**, 5 = **Strongly Agree**).

Table 4.4 shows that, *increased national productivity* was the most favorable advantage that would come out of a successful bilateral trade between Kenya and China or between Kenya and the USA. The achievement of monetary success for Kenya was what drove it to the election of a bilateral partner. This was closely followed by the *reduction of economic and social inequalities* as more citizens locally would be able to experience improved lifestyles from

positive national development and productivity. Finally, *minimal business regulations* would be because of the friendship built overtime and the culmination of ideas either in Capitalism or Communism. Bilateral partners would be politically and commercially closer as they continue more and more to engage in business and international relations.

Table 4.5: To Show the Influence of Economic Systems on Kenya’s National Interests

Measure Variable	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Percentage Response Rate
Increased national productivity	25	12	3	2	6	48
Reduction of economic and social inequalities	14	5	1	4	4	28
Minimal business regulations	12	7	1	2	2	24
TOTAL	51	24	5	8	12	100

The figure 4.4 demonstrates the information in the table above.

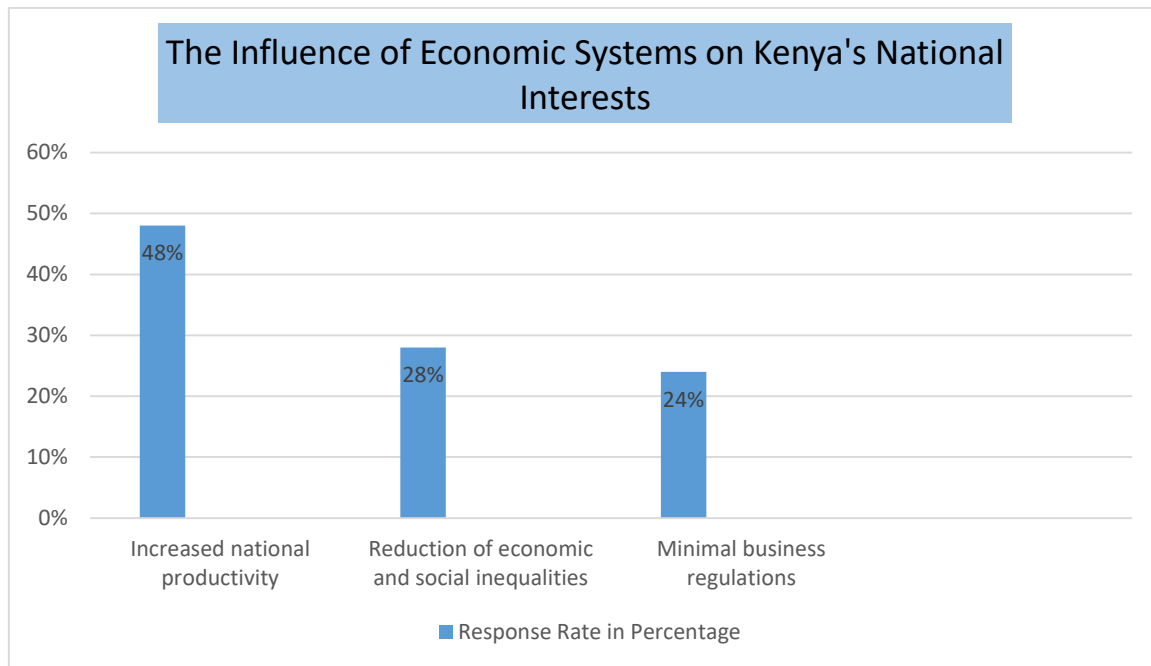


Figure 4.4: The Influence of Economic Systems on Kenya's National Interests.

The figure 4.4 shows that, increased national productivity would be a feature of both capitalism and communism based on how Kenya responds to either bilateral partner between China and the USA. Whichever direction Kenya chose, what mattered was whether it was willing to take advantage of the opportunities presented to it by the foreign country. The reduction of economic and social inequalities came about as a result of the individual lives getting better either due to the adoption of capitalistic American ways or the Communist Chinese approaches. At the end of the day, moving forwards was most important. Minimal business regulations would accrue as the states would continue in their bilateral interactions which would strengthen state bonds. Less differences in the economic opportunities between the upper class and lower class citizens encouraged and increased national development. Through China and the USA, even ordinary citizens that had personal businesses could benefit from their various trades with either country and thus positively contribute to national development.

These findings were in line with the discussions by, (Amit & Donald, 2012) who observed that, China had improved the state of the national economy through its efforts in promoting

infrastructure and communication channels through its economic approach. McQuillen & Swan, (2005), found that, China's communist approach had a direct impact on the improvement of Kenya's local economy as China's investments in Kenya were very open and transparent. However, (Rehak, 2018 found that, the USA was not so direct with its investments in Kenya and what it would gain was as important as what it gave to Kenya. Still in the end, the USA benefited Kenya's economy, (Palley, 2005) by helping further educational attainment for the youths leading to better job credentials and self-sufficiency.

Implication: These results highlight Kenya's pragmatic approach to global economic systems. By engaging both capitalist and socialist states, Kenya maximizes benefits. Rodrik (2007) and Chang (2002) emphasized the success of hybrid economic strategies in developing nations. China's infrastructural investment (McQuillen & Swan, 2005) and the USA's technological contributions (Palley, 2005) reinforce this point.

4.4.4 The Influence of Foreign Exchange on Kenya's National Interests

The influence of foreign exchange on Kenya's national exchange was analyzed against three sub-variables as follows: Increased exports to the USA or China. Increased sub-contracting from the USA or China and lower inflation rates. These were like the previous objectives analyzed under the Likert Scale with the options of: (1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 2 = *Disagree*, 3 = *Neutral*, 4 = *Agree*, 5 = *Strongly Agree*).

It was found that, most respondents thought that, there would be increased exports either to the USA or China. If at all Kenya built good relations with the USA, it would export more to the USA and if with China, it would export more local products to China. There would be more sub-contracting for the country that would best serve Kenya as it has already been observed that, China gets a lot of contracts to construct roads and infrastructure in Kenya. Finally, should the bilateral relations hold positively, there would be lower inflation rates experienced since either of the two countries would help uplift Kenya's economy more so China with heavier

investments in Kenya than the USA. However, the USA allowed Kenya to export more products than did China. The table 4.6 demonstrate these findings.

Table 4.6: The Influence of Foreign Exchange on Kenya’s National Interests

Measure Variable	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Percentage Response Rate
Increased exports to the USA or China	26	14	3	2	4	49
Increased sub-contracting from the USA or China	14	8	1	3	3	29
Lower inflation rates	10	7	2	1	2	22
TOTAL	50	29	6	6	9	100

The pie chart below represents the above information in percentages for further effect.

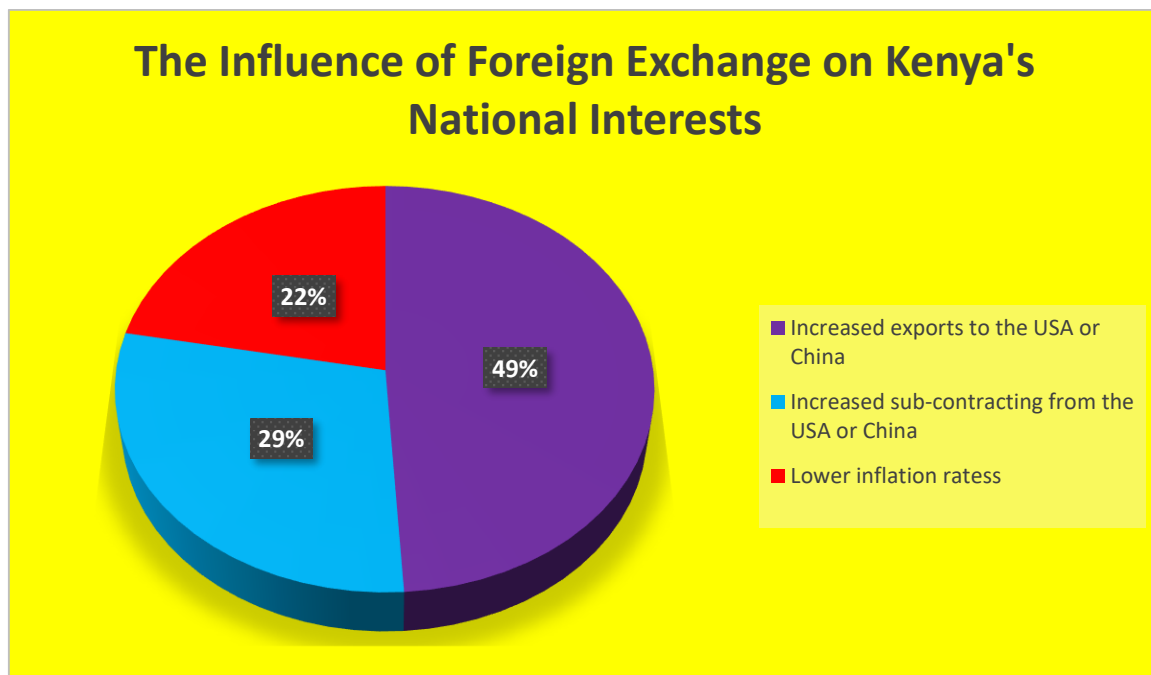


Figure 4.5: The Influence of Foreign Exchange on Kenya's National Interests.

The figure 4.5 clearly shows that, increased exports to the USA or China would lead to more foreign exchange being earned by Kenya. It was observed that, in as much as China had better trading rules, Kenya exported more to the USA. The country that would be friendliest to Kenya would enjoy sub-contracting in Kenya and they would be able to invest heavily in the country earning Kenya even more foreign exchange. As Kenya would continue to engage in international trade and political exchanges with its bilateral partner whether the USA or China, it would experience lower inflation rates that would aid sustain the economy. China had better trading and political requirements that would benefit Kenya more than the USA. Whenever the two countries successfully engaged with Kenya in politics and commerce, there were higher possibilities of reduced inflation owing to a need to maintain allies. The USA as much as China made efforts to win sub-contracting deals and depending on the types of businesses being engaged in, one could outdo the other.

These findings were in line with the discussions by, (KNBS, 2021) that has observed that, the USA takes in more exports from Kenya than China, but nonetheless, China also took in scrap

metal, leather and fish from Kenya. Rehak, (2018) had argued that, the USA and Kenya signed the AGOA Pact of 2015 that would see a duty-free business between the USA and Kenya thereby relaxing inflation rates in Kenya to a large extent. Hellstrom, (2009) found out that, China helped Kenya by making numerous investments including winning bids to make constructions in Kenya. So at the end of the day, both China and the USA injected foreign exchange value into Kenya.

All the findings above show that truly, the independent variable had an impact on the dependent variable and all objectives had to be observed in order enhance the understanding into the influence of the US-China trade clash on Kenya's national interests. All the objectives contributed to the larger picture of Kenya benefiting from both the USA and China and indeed, both countries were very useful to the national interests of Kenya even though it seemed on some of them, one country had an edge over the other.

Implication: Kenya's foreign policy prioritizes trade relations that strengthen its export base. This supports KNBS (2021) data showing higher export volumes to the USA. Rehak (2018) and Hellstrom (2009) also argued that both countries, through trade and investment, enhance Kenya's foreign exchange inflows.

4.5 Findings from the Face-to-Face Interviews

There were four top officials who were targeted for the face-to-face interviews being: top government officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Industrialization, Ministry of Trade and the Ministry of Enterprise Development, Nairobi, purposively selected.

From research question 1:

“What is your take on the influence of the US/Chinese political influence to Kenya's national interests?”

Out of the four managers interviewed, three of them agreed that there would be a significant influence on how Kenya would shape the national interests because of politically engaging with either China or the USA. One of the managers thought that only China would have a greater impact on Kenya's national interests being a bigger investor in Africa than the USA. They all however agreed that Kenya must interact with global countries for political improvement.

From research question 2:

“What do you think is the influence of American/Chinese foreign investments on Kenya's national interests?”

All the four managers stated that the USA has a stronger currency than China's Yuan and therefore, the USA's foreign investments would alter Kenya's national interests more than the Chinese investments. . Two of them argued that China's foreign investments to Kenya are at a no interest rate giving the American foreign investment to Kenya a more competitive edge.

From research question 3:

“How much would you say capitalism/communism influences Kenya's national interests?”

Three of the four managers thought that communism worked best for Kenya as it allowed for a holistic development and helped to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor. They also thought that capitalism has been losing its flavour with high rates of corruption and sanctions accompanied by carrot and stick international relations. The USA punished Kenya with sanctions if Kenya did not do its bidding unlike China.

From research question 4:

“Would you say that the American/Chinese foreign exchange has influenced Kenya's national interests?”

Two of the four managers did not find a direct influence of foreign exchange on shaping Kenya's national interests though they had argued that foreign investments created more of a difference if at all jobs were created. The currency itself was a secondary entity in bilateral relations that could always have been overlooked as long as Kenya benefited from its bilateral partner.

Implication: These insights confirm survey findings and literature, especially regarding strategic diplomacy and Kenya's preference for functional partnerships over ideological alignment.

4.6 Discussions

The influence of political affiliation on Kenya's national interests was determined to be heavily dependent on the foreign policies made when engaging with other nations and in this case, the USA's and China's engagement with Kenya. China became more advantageous to Kenya when its foreign policies favoured Kenya's national interests and the same applied to the USA's foreign policies favouring Kenya's national interests.

These findings resonated with earlier discussions by Mulati (2009) who had found that countries tended to engage in more political associations with others that helped boost their national interests. Ernst & Young, (2017) also had reverberated this finding when they found that, foreign states elevated the political situation of countries that they worked with, for example, China spoke well of Kenya's political stability to other foreign states.

The influence of foreign investment on Kenya's national interests was greatly significant in that, there were increased advantages for Kenya as a nation such as, increased local and international employment opportunities and an increase in national development. It became automatic that Kenya's relations with either the USA or China had to involve an element of benefiting Kenya's GDP and citizens.

These findings echoed earlier discussions by Palley, (2005) who had observed the massive jobs created for Kenyans through American multinational companies such as the Coca-Cola and embassy jobs. Fingar, (2009) had also pointed to the fact that, China helped develop Kenya through increased investments in telecommunications, fiber, railway and road construction. All these efforts made Kenya look hospitable and economically viable to the international community.

The influence of economic systems on Kenya's national interests were accompanied by both the need to push for Kenya's independent ideologies on commerce and the need to also benefit from regional and international economic offers. Therefore, Kenya embraced capitalism from the USA in attempts to solely benefit from its interaction with other states to benefit its own national interests as had argued, (Lukin, 2019). On the other hand, borrowing from China, Kenya tried to engage regional development as part of its national policies as a communist way to develop as had argued, (Hiscox, 2002).

The influence of foreign exchange on Kenya's national interests were found to have helped to usher in economic, social and political development from both the USA and China. None of the two countries failed to influence Kenya's national interests in terms of their contribution to foreign exchange.

These findings agreed with earlier discussions that supported the fact that, the USA consumes more Kenyan exports than China as deduced by the statistics of the (KNBS, 2021). Therefore, Kenya modelled its national interests owing to the benefits gained by exporting a lot of local products to the USA. However, Hellstrom, (2009) found that, China still exports a lot of its manpower and technology to the construction of Kenya's infrastructure even though it does not take much of Kenyan products in return compared to the USA. In this way, it still helps to shape the nation's national interests.

All the objectives of study showed a contribution to the national interests of Kenya. In some cases, one country benefited Kenya more than the other whether in infrastructural development or in the increased foreign trade with Kenya. There was no one factor that could be attributed to the development of Kenya's national interests and a combination of the factors in the objectives all played their individual roles leading to a significant advantage.



CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the conclusion was given after a summary of findings and remarks on each of the objectives of study. Each objective was finally shown to impact on the dependent variable in clear detail based on work done in chapter 4. Recommendations and further areas of study were also suggested.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The following were the findings based on the objectives under study.

5.2.1 The Influence of Political Affiliation on Kenya's National Interests

The findings of the study revealed that, political affiliation with both the USA and China greatly influenced Kenya's shaping of its national interests. Kenya ended up choosing to align itself with the country that most benefited it between the USA and China and that was why the Chinese government got a lot of contracts to develop the infrastructure in Kenya including roads, communication lines and the most important political move of creating jobs. Kenya worked with the USA to avoid sanctions that would damage the political scene for local leaders in cases involving corruption, human rights infringements such as being summoned to the ICC after the post-election violence. The country needed to avoid sanctions.

Statistical Findings:

- **Alignment of foreign policies** to USA or China:
 - Strongly Agree: 19
 - Agree: 15
 - Combined: **34%** of respondents
- **Increased international representation:** 26%

- **Mutual economic benefits: 14%**

Political alignment, especially the strategic choice between the USA and China, significantly influenced Kenya's national interests. Respondents emphasized the necessity of aligning foreign policy with stronger global powers to secure economic and political advantages. This validates the realist theory of international relations, where states act primarily in pursuit of their self-interest. Kenya's alignment often leaned towards the partner offering the most immediate political and developmental benefits.

5.2.2 The Influence of Foreign Investment on Kenya's National Interests

Both the USA and China actively invested in Kenya's economy even though China did the most physically and for public service. The Chinese set up structures for development such as roads which created jobs for so many Kenyans but imported less products from Kenya. The USA on the other hand injected FDIs that improved the economy of Kenya and also took in a lot of coffee, tea and flowers from Kenya greatly boosting Kenya's economy.

Statistical Findings:

- **Increased employment opportunities:**
 - Strongly Agree: 20
 - Agree: 15
 - Combined: **35%**
- **Increased national development: 22%**
- **Minimize international loans: 12%**

Employment and infrastructure development were cited as the most impactful benefits of foreign investment. China was credited with physical investments (e.g., roads, railways), while the USA contributed through FDIs and multinational corporations. The findings affirm that

both partners play complementary roles in shaping Kenya's economic landscape, with job creation being the most valued impact.

5.2.3 The Influence of Economic Systems on Kenya's National Interests

It was observed that, the economic system did not matter as much as what could be achieved at the end of the day by Kenya. If at all capitalism made the people flourish, it was more favourable and if at all communism made the people flourish, it took center stage. However, communism seemed to favour a common good as more people were able to raise their per capita incomes and enjoy improved lifestyles. Capitalism seemed to mostly increase the gap between the rich and the poor especially where corruption was involved. Therefore, Kenya's national interests lay more on communism than capitalism allowing China to invest in public service through transportation and communication lines.

Statistical Findings:

- **Increased national productivity:**
 - Strongly Agree: 25
 - Agree: 12
 - Combined: **37%**
- **Reduction of economic/social inequalities: 19%**
- **Minimal business regulations: 17%**

Kenya adopted a pragmatic approach to economic systems. Communism (as modeled by China) was more aligned with Kenya's development needs, reducing inequality and supporting infrastructure development. Capitalism (as modeled by the USA) was viewed as prone to corruption and social disparity. The data supports that economic ideology was less important than the tangible developmental outcomes it produced.

5.2.4 The Influence of Foreign Exchange on Kenya's National Interests

It was observed that; the USA injected more money into Kenya's economy than did China. The USD being a stronger currency than the Chinese Yuan played a major role. Other respondents argued that the currency itself did not matter much as long as Kenya improved economically. However, the USA also imported more local products such as coffee and tea than did China which majorly took scrap metal from Kenya. In the end, there was a significant impact on foreign exchange on shaping Kenya's national interests. China invested a lot in Kenya but the USA still held a higher position in injecting growth into Kenya's economy.

Statistical Findings:

- **Increased exports (to USA/China):**
 - Strongly Agree: 26
 - Agree: 14
 - Combined: **40%**
- **Increased sub-contracting: 22%**
- **Lower inflation rates: 17%**

Foreign exchange played a critical role in shaping national interests. The USD offered higher returns, and the USA imported higher-value goods (tea, coffee), while China imported lower-value goods (scrap metal) but contributed more in terms of infrastructural investment. The dual role of foreign exchange as both an economic and political tool was emphasized, reinforcing Kenya's balancing act between two global powers.

5.3 Conclusions

The study set out to explore how the U.S.–China trade clash influences Kenya's national interests by examining four core variables: **political affiliation, foreign investment, economic**

systems, and foreign exchange. Based on data collected from 100 respondents—96 employees and 4 top officials—from Kenya's Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Industrialization, Trade, and Enterprise Development, the findings confirm that each of these dimensions plays a significant role in shaping Kenya's strategic national direction. The data revealed that **political alignment** was a central factor in defining Kenya's international relations and positioning. A combined **45%** of respondents agreed that aligning foreign policies with either the U.S. or China directly influenced Kenya's global representation and diplomatic leverage. Only **13%** disagreed with this assertion. The preference toward alignment was often driven by which superpower presented the most favorable political and economic terms. **Foreign direct investment (FDI)** emerged as a strong influence on Kenya's national interests, especially regarding job creation and infrastructure development. A significant **50%** of respondents strongly agreed that foreign investment from either power led to increased employment opportunities, with another **35%** affirming its role in national development. When considering the ideological underpinnings of **trade partners**, respondents showed a practical preference for whichever system—capitalist or communist—produced better socioeconomic results. **48%** strongly agreed that increased national productivity was the most direct benefit of the economic systems represented by China and the U.S. Meanwhile, **28%** recognized that economic and social inequalities were reduced more effectively under a system resembling China's communism. Kenya's inclination toward functional development, rather than ideological alignment, was evident. The findings supported the idea that communism's state-led model facilitated holistic growth in Kenya's context, while capitalism, although useful, often deepened inequality due to corruption and policy conditionalities.

Foreign exchange considerations added an economic layer to Kenya's diplomatic strategy. **49%** of respondents agreed that Kenya's exports—primarily tea, coffee, and flowers to the U.S., and scrap metal to China—helped shape foreign exchange dynamics. Sub-contracting (notably with Chinese firms in construction) was supported by **29%**, while **22%** saw foreign

exchange as contributing to lower inflation. Despite China's infrastructure dominance, the U.S. remained a stronger economic partner due to the USD's higher value and broader market for Kenyan exports. Respondents acknowledged that while the Yuan did not yield as high returns, China's favorable investment terms still made it a valuable partner. Cumulatively, the study shows that **Kenya does not rigidly favor either the USA or China** but instead adopts a pragmatic, benefit-driven approach to international engagement. The data supports a balanced foreign policy that leverages the strengths of both superpowers: **the USA** for its economic strength, trade policies, and stronger currency; **China** for its infrastructure development, employment opportunities, and less restrictive investment practices.

From a national interest perspective, this dual-track strategy allows Kenya to:

- Expand its export markets
- Attract diversified foreign investments
- Align diplomatically for greater international representation
- Pursuing socioeconomic development in both capitalist and communist frameworks

Kenya's foreign policy, therefore, is shaped less by ideological loyalty and more by a **rational pursuit of national benefit**, underpinned by the tangible contributions each global partner offers.

5.4 Recommendations

In as much as Kenya values the partnership with both the USA and China in bilateral relations, it should work towards achieving individual power in commerce, industry and economic growth so that it can gain more advantage when engaging politically with other countries. The fact that Kenya has to depend on China for infrastructural development and the USA for economic assistance makes it very vulnerable to resource exploitation and unfair sharing of the fruits of bilateral relations. Therefore, Kenyan leaders must work hard to achieve political power by

raising the standards of commerce, government accountability and industrial to economic development.

If at all corruption could be kept at a minimum, there could be a realization of more national benefits from FDIs made by China and the US and in that case, whichever country that Kenya invites for investments. It is corruption that undermines the full benefit of foreign investments in the country as this chases away interested investors. Also, there is the issue of political instability caused by the government's interference in individual investments. The Kenyan government makes it hard for private international investors to obtain licenses and reap reasonable benefits from their enterprises. Therefore, there is a need to have the government interfere less with the businesses of the day more so if it will threaten the business environment of the foreign investors. Even when investments are made state to state, there must be a guarantee that the government's intervention would be regulated to make the foreign country's participation smoother and fairer.

Kenya needs to have its own economic approach for development and it could be based on both capitalism and communism. This is because, what has worked in China may not work in Kenya and what has worked in the USA may not work in Kenya also. Therefore, the Kenyan government needs to dispatch its own economics experts to do thorough research of what economic model or framework would best benefit the citizens of the country such as liberal capitalism or mild communism. The advantages of each economic system may be merged together and those frameworks used to determine a way for economic progress that is unique to Kenya.

Foreign exchange will always be useful for the growth of Kenya's GDP and even beyond China and the USA, Kenya will still benefit from other currencies globally. The challenge here is that the government needs to improve the value of the Shilling perhaps through mergers of currencies among the East Africa Community which may create a positive change. The Euro is

stronger because of the European Union and perhaps, Kenya and other East Africa states could achieve a stronger standing in currency which would also improve the political bargaining chip when engaging in bilateral relations with other states. The government will be able to set better policies that will reflect on the national interests when the value of Kenya's own Shilling rises against the USD and the Yuan.

Additionally, politics needs to give way to sound advice so that there can be a research on how Chinese or American investments impact on the lives of the citizens of Kenya. It should not just be about business and politics rather about in the end, uplifting the lives of the Kenyans. For example, the Nairobi Expressway is hardly used by many Kenyans and it appears to benefit only the wealthier castes of the society rather than all the citizens that would use it. Many Kenyans lack coffee and tea businesses to export these cash crops to the USA and therefore, they may not feel the full impact of any US investments in Kenya. Therefore, the government must find ways to spread the advantages of bilateral relations with other countries to as many local citizens as possible.

For consideration, bilateral relations are meant to not only benefit political presence and develop national interests but become an avenue to learn from the partner and implement the lessons. Kenya cannot be dependent on the USA and China forever as it already owes the two countries a lot in assistance or monetary aid. Kenya must therefore borrow the positive practices of these states and build itself into a powerful and independent nation to be also a valued global partner by other countries.

5.5 Further Areas for Future Research

It would be interesting to study the impact of diplomacy on bilateral relations between states. Where countries cannot get along, they may yet find a common ground when they face a common competitor as Kenya has found itself in the trade war between China and the USA. If at all Kenya and the USA had political issues based on sanctions, China may yet be a favourable

political ally to offset the political weight of the USA against Kenya. In as much as Kenya working with the USA would anger China, diplomacy between Kenya and China may come naturally to overcome the common threat that the USA would be.

It would also be interesting to study the impact of foreign policy on the development of the national government. The research looked at the impact of the US-China trade war on the determination of Kenya's national interests but also, the national interests of other states may influence how the local administration will function when lessons are learned and alignments are made to politically create a favourable position for Kenya.



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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Letter of Introduction

Research Consent Form

P.O BOX.....

NAIROBI

APRIL, 2022

To Whom it May Concern

Dear Respondent

RE: RESEARCH CONSENT FORM

The researcher is a student undertaking a Master of Arts in International Relations degree course at Mount Kenya University. He is carrying out research on **The Influence of US-China Trade Clash on Kenya's National Interests: A Case of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nairobi.**

For the purpose of this study, I request for consent to ask a number of questions relating to the study. This will help promote your privacy and confidentiality relating to research ethics. Kindly note that: you can participate in this research as requested by the researcher and you are totally free to not accept and withdraw if at all need be. Please inform the researcher of your withdrawal. All participation and the information that you share is strictly confidential to you and the researcher. Feel free to fill in the questionnaire in a private space. Your signature below certifies that you have understood this request. Thank you.

In case of any complaint, please contact

The chairman

Ethics Review Committee

Mount Kenya University

P o box 342 – 01000, Thika

Participants Consent

I freely give my consent to participate in this research study and have been given a copy of this form for my own information

Name.....Signature.....Date.....

Researcher

Name.....Signature.....Date.....

Appendix II: Questionnaire

Please spare some time to fill in the following questionnaire that will be about, “*The influence of the US-China trade clash on Kenya’s national interests*”.

Tick inside the blank box only once and if none of the choices fits your answer, fill your answer over the “*Other*” option.

Section A: Demographic Information

1. *What is your age?*

35-40 41-45 46-50

2. *What is your level of education?*

Primary

Secondary

College/University

Post-Graduate

Diplomate

Other. Please write along the blank line: _____

3. *What position do you hold at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Ministry of Industrialization/Ministry of Trade and Enterprise Development, Nairobi?*

Diplomatic office

Diplomatic Advisor

Documents/File Record Keeper

Political Analyst

Observer

Other. Please write along the blank line:

Section B: *The influence of political affiliation on Kenya's national interests.*

4. *To what extent is your level of agreement that Kenya's political affiliation with the USA and China impacts on Kenya's national interests? (1 =Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree).*

The influence of political affiliation	5	4	3	2	1
a) The alignment of foreign policies to the US or to China.					
b) Increased international representation.					
c) Mutual economic benefits.					

5. *As an employee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Ministry of Industrialization/Ministry of Trade and Enterprise Development, Nairobi, to what extent do think that the political affiliation between Kenya and the USA or between Kenya and China shapes Kenya's national interests?*

5a) *The Political Affiliation between Kenya and the USA*

- a) Greatly
- b) To some extent
- c) Moderately
- d) Least
- e) None

Other. Please write along the blank line: _____

5b) The Political Affiliation between Kenya and China

- a) Greatly
- b) To some extent
- c) Moderately
- d) Least
- e) None

Other. Please write along the blank line: _____

6. What could be done to ensure that the political affiliation between Kenya and the USA or between Kenya and China benefits Kenya's national interests?

Section C: The influence of foreign investment on Kenya's national interests.

7. To what extent is your level of agreement that foreign investments from the USA and from China influence Kenya's national interests (1 = **Strongly Disagree**, 2 = **Disagree**, 3 = **Neutral**, 4 = **Agree**, 5 = **Strongly Agree**).

The influence of foreign investment on Kenya's national interests	5	4	3	2	1
a) Increased employment opportunities.					
b) Increased national development.					
c) Minimizes the need for international loans.					

8. As an employee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Ministry of Industrialization/Ministry of Trade and Enterprise Development, Nairobi, to what extent do you believe that foreign investments from the USA or from China influence Kenya's national interests?

8a) The influence of foreign investments from the USA

- a) Greatly
- b) To some extent
- c) Moderately
- d) Least
- e) None

Other. Please write along the blank line: _____

8b) The influence of foreign investments from China

- a) Greatly
- b) To some extent
- c) Moderately
- d) Least
- e) None

Other. Please write along the blank line: _____

9. What could be done to improve the benefits of foreign investments from the USA and from China to Kenya?

Section D: The influence of economic systems on Kenya's national interests.

10. To what extent is your level of agreement that economic systems from the USA (Capitalism) and China (Communism) influence Kenya's national interests? (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree).

Influence of economic systems on Kenya's national interests	5	4	3	2	1
a) Increased national productivity.					

b) Reduction of economic and social inequalities.					
c) Minimal business regulations.					

11. *As an employee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Ministry of Industrialization/Ministry of Trade and Enterprise Development, Nairobi, to what extent do you think that the economic systems of the USA and China influence Kenya's national interests?*

11a) Capitalism from the USA

- a) Greatly
- b) To some extent
- c) Moderately
- d) Least
- e) None

Other. Please write along the blank line: _____

11b) Communism from China

- a) Greatly
- b) To some extent
- c) Moderately
- d) Least
- e) None

Other. Please write along the blank line: _____

12. *What could be done to ensure that Kenya selects the best economic system to use as a country either from the USA (Capitalism) or from China (Communism)?*

Section E: *The influence of foreign exchange on Kenya's national interests.*

13. *To what extent is your level of agreement that foreign exchange from the USA or from China influences Kenya's national interests? (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree).*

Influence of foreign exchange on Kenya's national interests.	5	4	3	2	1
d) Increased exports to the USA or China.					
e) Increased sub-contracting from the USA or China.					
f) Lower inflation rates.					

14. *As an employee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Ministry of Industrialization/Ministry of Trade and Enterprise Development, Nairobi, to what extent do you think that the foreign exchange from the USA and from China influences Kenya's national interests?*

14a) The influence of American foreign exchange on Kenya's national interests.

- a) Greatly
- b) To some extent
- c) Moderately
- d) Least
- e) None

Other. Please write along the blank line: _____

14b) The influence of Chinese foreign exchange on Kenya's national interests.

- a) Greatly
- b) To some extent
- c) Moderately
- d) Least
- e) None

Other. Please write along the blank line: _____

15. *What could be done to ensure that Kenya benefits the most from the foreign exchange that it earns from the USA or from China?*

Thank you.

Appendix IV: Interview Guide

The interview guide will be aimed at the top government officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Ministry of Industrialization/Ministry of Trade and Enterprise Development, Nairobi, purposively selected to be 4 from each of the mentioned ministries. They shall feature the research questions in an attempt to answer the topic: “*The influence of the US-China trade clash on Kenya’s national interests*”. The interview will be kept brief taking a maximum of 30 minutes per respondent.

- (1) What is your take on the influence of the US political affiliation to Kenya’s national interests?
- (2) What is your take on the influence of the Chinese political influence to Kenya’s national interests?
- (3) What do you think is the influence of American foreign investments on Kenya’s national interests?
- (4) What do you think is the influence of Chinese foreign investments on Kenya’s national interests?
- (5) How much would you say capitalism influences Kenya’s national interests?
- (6) How much would you say communism influences Kenya’s national interests?
- (7) Would you say that the American foreign exchange has influenced Kenya’s national interests?
- (8) Would you say that the Chinese foreign exchange has influenced Kenya’s national interests?

Your time is much appreciated. Thank you.

Appendix V: Proposed Research Budget

ITEMS	UNIT COST (KSH)	SUBTOTAL (KSH)
Typing of Research Documents	10 copies @ 2000/=	20,000
Printing and Binding	900 Pages @ 18/=	16,200
Transportation	15 days @ 500/=	7,500
Office and accommodation	7 days @ 7000/=	49,000
Meals, internet, emergency	7 days @ 2000/=	14,000
Miscellaneous	30 days @ 1000/=	30,000
Total		136,700

Appendix VI: Projected Work plan

Research Activities (expected to take around 3 months)	TIME FRAME											
	Mar– Apr				Apr-May				May-June			
	2022				2022				2022			
	Week				Week				Week			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Topic selection & acceptance	■											
Supervisors' nomination		■										
First Proposal Presentation			■									
Response to the supervisor's views			■									
Proposal presentation				■								
Proposal Seminar					■							
Pilot testing and data collection						■						
Data processing and examination							■					
Supervisor's Review								■				
Integration of supervisor's views									■			

Final project

Binding

Appendix VII: Map of Nairobi County



