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An Examination of Mugabe's Look East Policy, 2003-2017:

An Afrocentric perspective

by

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to the following people,

- My son Kgothatso Diplomat Mogofe
- My late grandfather Mathulamise Albert Boyi Maphaka, grandmother Monare Maphaka, and aunt Ramadimetse Esther Sethotse.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the dissertation titled *An examination of Mugabe's Look East Policy, 2003-2017: An Afrocentric Perspective* is my work in design and execution and has never been submitted to this or any other university.

ABSTRACT

Zimbabwe-China relations have elicited attention from the media, academics, and scholarly literature. Since the introduction of Zimbabwe's unwritten Look East Policy in 2003 and its implementation until the ousting of Mugabe in 2017, the two countries deepened relations in various sectors with the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, serving as a platform, thus it continues to shape the two countries' relationship on a broader level. Mugabe-led Zimbabwe sought refuge in the Asian giant, in the face of a Western economic and political onslaught, which culminated in economic woes for the Southern African country. The literature in this area has focused primarily on the benefits and challenges that ensued from the introduction of this Policy. Considering that the individual decision-maker has been neglected by studies concerning the Policy, this exploratory qualitative research examines the role played by Mugabe in the formulation and implementation of Zimbabwe's unwritten Look East Policy. Guided by the underutilised Behaviourist approach in foreign policy analysis, the study draws data from both primary and secondary sources to show the role played by Mugabe in Zimbabwe's foreign policy.

Keywords: Mugabe; Look East Policy; Foreign Policy Analysis, Implementation; Afrocentric

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	i
DEDICATION	ii
DECLARATION	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY	
1.1. Identification of the research theme	1
1.2. Literature overview	3
1.3. Formulation of the research problem, research question, and sub-questions	12
1.3.1. Research problem	12
1.3.2. Research question	
1.3.3. Research sub-questions	13
1.4. Definition of key concepts	13
1.5. Behaviourism, Afrocentrism and Mugabeism	14
1.6. Purpose of the study	16
1.6.1. Aim	16
1.6.2. Objectives	16
1.7. Research methodology and design	16
1.8. Data analysis	17
1.9. Significance of the study	17
1.10. Ethical considerations	18
1.11. Study limitations	18
1.12. Chapter outline	18

CHAPTER TWO: OPTIMISTIC VIEWS ON MUGABE’S LOOK EAST FOREIGN POLICY	20
2.1. Introduction	20
2.2. Look East Policy and the deepening of Zimbabwe-China trade relations	20
2.3. A well-calculated policy	24
2.4. Zimbabwe’s resistance to imperialism and African solidarity	26
2.5. Zimbabwe-Western relations and multilateral institutions	29
2.6. Changing Zimbabwe’s international image and identity	32
2.7. Conclusion	33
CHAPTER THREE: PESSIMISTIC VIEWS ON MUGABE’S LOOK EAST FOREIGN POLICY	34
3.1. Introduction	34
3.2. Retaliation and a miscalculated policy	34
3.3. The policy delinked from Zimbabwe’s strategies	35
3.4. A rhetorical and desperate policy	36
3.5. Opened the country for looting	40
3.6. Sloganeering and survival strategy	43
3.7. Ushering in a threat to democracy, peace and security	48
3.8. China undermines Zimbabwe’s investment and trade regulations	49
3.9. Look East to look the least	51
3.10. China flouting labour laws	53
3.11. Chinese businesses taking Zimbabwe’s informal and formal market	54
3.12. Fails to replicate the Chinese development model	57
3.13. Impact on Zimbabwe’s infrastructure	58
3.14. A debt-trap	61
3.15. Crime and localisation of Mandarin	65

3.16. Conclusion	65
CHAPTER FOUR: FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS AND THE INDIVIDUAL DECISION-MAKER	67
4.1. Introduction	67
4.2. Foreign Policy Analysis	67
4.3. Analytical framework	70
4.4. Personal characteristics and beliefs	71
4.5. Political system	72
4.6. Images	73
4.7. Worldviews	74
4.8. Emotions	74
4.9. Early life	75
4.10. Conclusion	75
CHAPTER FIVE: BEHAVIOURISM, AFROCENTRISM, AND MUGABEISM IN MUGABE'S FOREIGN POLICY	76
5.1. Introduction	76
5.2. Behaviourism	76
5.3. Afrocentrism	80
5.4. Mugabeism	86
5.5. Conclusion	
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION	97
6.1. Introduction	97
6.2. Recommendations for further research	102
BIBLIOGRAPHY	104

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AGOA	African Growth and Opportunity Act
AGRITEX	Agricultural Technical and Extension Services
ANC	African National Congress
ATDC	Agricultural Technology Demonstration Centres
AU	African Union
CHINA EXIM-BANK	China Export-Import Bank
EU	European Union
FOCAC	Forum on China-Africa Cooperation
FPA	Foreign Policy Analysis
GNU	Government of National Unity
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LEP	Look East Policy
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
PDP	People's Democratic Party
SA	South Africa
SADC	Southern African Development Community
UN	United Nations
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USA	United States of America
WB	World Bank
ZANLA	Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic-Front
ZANU	Zimbabwe African National Union

ZAPU

Zimbabwe African Peoples Union

ZIDERA

Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act

CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

1.1. Identification of the research theme

Advanced between 2003 and 2017, Zimbabwe's Look East Policy (hereafter referred to as 'the Policy') marked the beginning of the deepening of relations between Zimbabwe and Asian countries, especially the People's Republic of China (hereafter referred to as 'China'). This unwritten policy¹ – advanced by Robert Gabriel Mugabe (the former and late President of Zimbabwe) – was sparked by several factors, notably, Western sanctions against Zimbabwe, Mugabe's eagerness to promote Zimbabwe's agency internationally, and a rejection of Western ideology. While the policy marked the deepening of relations between Zimbabwe and countries in Southeast Asia and the Far East, the country's relations with China, as the second largest economy in the globe, and a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), took precedence (Maphaka 2024).

China's economic position and permanent membership within the UNSC meant it was able to invest in many sectors of the Zimbabwean economy and to use its veto in the Council to block any sanctions tabled by the West against Zimbabwe. The West sought to impose sanctions against Zimbabwe for alleged election fraud and human rights violations in 2005. It should be noted too that China has deepened economic relations with 54 African countries through the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) established in 2000 (Chun 2014). However, Zimbabwe's relations with China date back to the days of the struggle when China supported the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) against the colonial administration of Ian Smith (Maphaka 2024).

Mugabe viewed himself as the legitimate leader at home and on the African continent and whose ideas should drive Zimbabwe's foreign policy. In this regard, the Policy was shaped by ideas that emerged from the liberation struggle, with Mugabe stressing Zimbabwe's sovereignty and viewing Western countries, especially Britain, as trying

¹ Unwritten foreign policy denotes a policy that has no official document and that is largely driven by the preferences of an individual decision-maker.

to recolonise the country (Chigora 2007). Building on the historical relations he had established with China, Mugabe saw China as an alternative partner amid tensions with the West (Mudavanhu 2014; Maphaka 2024).

For Mugabe, the Policy was also strategic, because former colonised Asian countries had managed to grow their economies which had previously been at the same level as those of formerly colonised African countries (Youde 2007). For Mugabe, Zimbabwe could draw some lessons from Asian economic development models, in the same way, the country had learnt from the Asian countries' struggle against colonialism. In this regard, the Policy represented a drive by Mugabe to move from being only a political liberator, to being an economic liberator as well. He wanted to promote Zimbabwe as an independent state resistant to foreign domination (Youde 2007). Thus, Mugabe positioned himself as a leader who was against neo-liberal policies (Murasi 2019) and so the Policy served as a rejection of having to conduct Zimbabwe's economy based on the dictates of Euro-American countries (Chigora 2007; Maphaka 2024).

Mugabe became the central figure in Zimbabwe's foreign policy. The country's foreign policy was therefore shaped by his experience as a nationalist and as an advocate of Pan-Africanist ideology (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009). This posture would suggest that Mugabe was an Afrocentrist, given that he administered Zimbabwe based on the country's experience as an African country, whose material conditions were shaped by colonial history. Mugabeism therefore represents the personality of Mugabe as an individual. It can be said that his personal ideology formed an integral part of Zimbabwe's foreign policy, accompanied by his views, ideas, and experience as an African nationalist who fought for the liberation of Zimbabwe (Ndimande & Moyo 2018a). Mugabe expressed his disdain for neoliberalism and castigated the West as intimidatory actors who seek to promote their hegemonic interests and ambitions at the expense of the Global South (Murasi 2019; Maphaka 2024).

The period between 2003 and 2017 was marked by several developments in Zimbabwe. During this period, Zimbabwe embarked on a Fast Track Land Reform Programme which sparked discontent between Zimbabwe and Britain, and which precipitated sanctions from Western European countries and the United States of

America (USA) (Ndimande & Moyo 2018b). This was occasioned by the conflictual view on the land question between Zimbabwe and the West, where the former believed that land should be taken without compensation because it had been expropriated by settlers without compensation, while Britain and its allies viewed land dispossession as a violation of the private property rights of white farmers.

The study examines the role played by Mugabe in the Policy as the individual decision-maker that has been neglected by the existing literature. It adopted exploratory qualitative research to examine the role played by Mugabe in the formulation and implementation of Zimbabwe's unwritten Policy. Guided by the underutilised Behaviourist approach in foreign policy analysis, the study draws data from both primary and secondary sources to show the role played by Mugabe in Zimbabwe's foreign policy.

1.2. Literature overview

The literature reviewed here provides the conceptualisation and contextualisation of the Policy that Zimbabwe has embarked on to draw monetary and non-monetary support from countries of the East, beyond China which is the main focus of this research. It provides a background of socio-economic and political developments that prompted Zimbabwe to adopt the Policy and how the Policy has evolved over time to draw support from China and other countries of the East. In other words, the actual literature review will be provided in chapters 2 and 3.

The former Malaysian Prime Minister, Mahathir bin Mohammad, is credited with having pioneered the term 'Look East Policy,' in 1981. For Malaysia, this policy initiative was meant to draw developmental lessons from the achievements made by Japan and Korea in areas such as academic and technological know-how, labour ethics, and discipline. In this regard, Malaysia sought to stimulate economic growth and development by drawing lessons from the East. Subsequently, many countries started to Look East for various reasons in the post-Cold War era, including Zimbabwe, which adopted its Look East Policy to contain the collapse of its economy and to find alternative sources of technology, capital, and trade partners (Chimanikire 2016; Maphaka 2023b).

The Policy refers to a strategic policy introduced and adopted by the Zimbabwean government to contain the economic woes brought about by its being isolated by its traditional Western partners by deepening trade and investment relations with countries of the East (Kushata 2017). The policy has had both economic and political objectives, such as Zimbabwe's striving to draw much-needed investment and projecting itself as the defender of independence and sovereignty (Laura, German, Schoneveld, Wertz-Kanounnikoff, & Gumbo 2011). After Mugabe visited the Far East in 2001, Zimbabwe opted to look to the East to diversify its trade and investment partners away from traditional Western partners. Significantly, the Policy was also designed in an effort to learn from the economic development models of the East, and to deepen Zimbabwe's relations with countries in the East in various fields of the economy (Chimanikire 2016). At the heart of the policy, was the promotion of cooperation between Zimbabwe and countries of the East. Zimbabwe targeted projects that had drawn the interests of countries of the East and these countries had the capacity to stimulate growth (Chinyama 2015, Maphaka 2023b). Between 2000 and 2003, Zimbabwe was additionally subjected to economic sanctions by the European Union (EU), the USA, New Zealand, and Australia. These sanctions included targeted sanctions which imposed travel bans and the freezing of assets of individuals aligned to the Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic-Front (ZANU-PF) who were accused of violating democracy and human rights. The said sanctions affected various sectors of the Zimbabwean economy including manufacturing, agriculture, and health (Chipanga & Mude 2015).

The Mugabe-led ZANU-PF introduced the fast-track land reform programme in 2000 which ostensibly went against the willing buyer-willing seller model endorsed by the West. This resulted in the expropriation of the land of white farmers without compensation (Nare 2017). The formation of the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in 1999 and its popularity in the Zimbabwean political landscape, posed a threat to the ZANU-PF which had been the dominant party since independence. For the first time since independence, the ZANU-PF lost its majority in parliament to the MDC. Consequently, the Mugabe-led ZANU-PF took autocratic and repressive measures against the MDC, resulting in the violation of human rights against the majority of the Zimbabwean population. Among other things, the ZANU-

PF-led government suppressed freedom of speech and assembly and used violence to intimidate the opposition (Ploch 2011).

The Land Reform and Redistribution Programme, as well as the suppression of the opposition MDC, were followed by Western punitive measures such as sanctions from the USA in the form of the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act (ZIDERA) in 2001. The EU followed suit with sanctions, and Zimbabwe was also suspended from the Commonwealth in 2003. Consequently, Zimbabwe's economy began to decline, causing skyrocketing unemployment as companies closed. The inflation rate also rose, leading to high prices of basic goods, with a majority of the Zimbabwean population losing buying power. Western sanctions such as the ZIDERA of the USA led to capital flight (Mathende & Nhapi 2017).

Signed by the then President of the USA, George W Bush Junior, the ZIDERA Act mandated the USA's national treasury to block the provision of monetary aid to Zimbabwe. At the international level, the American delegates at the World Bank (WB), and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), were mandated to block the cancellation of debt and the provision of loans to Zimbabwe. As such, Zimbabwe faced a balance of payment problems because international financial institutions could not provide the country with offshore loans. The sanctions saw the IMF close its offices in Harare in 2002, and suspending the country's voting rights in 2003 (Thompson & Fingar 2012). The European Union stopped its financial support and halted its projects in Zimbabwe. As a result, Zimbabwe experienced a high unemployment rate, industry closures, and a decline in international trade as the country could not trade with the world's biggest markets in Western Europe and the USA (Kushata 2017).

The ZIDERA required Zimbabwe to conduct democratic free and fair elections and to restore the rule of law. In addition, the Act required Zimbabwe to adopt an equitable, legal, and transparent land reform programme and to prohibit the intervention of the army and the police in civilian affairs (Chigora & Dewa 2009). The disinvestment in the agricultural sector, which was labour-intensive, and the mainstay of Zimbabwe's economy disrupted the generation of revenue and prompted a high unemployment rate. A large part of the population working in the agricultural sector, lost their jobs, and Western donors suspended aid provided to the sector. As a result, the new black farmers had no support and capacity to farm the land (Kushata 2017).

As such, the Zimbabwean government adopted the Policy to draw investment from countries of the East, China in particular (Mathende & Nhapi 2017). Building on the Government's Policy, Vision, and Strategy documents of 2013, the Zimbabwean government opted for the implementation of this Policy to draw investment from Asian and Far East countries. The Policy became consolidated with statements and actions with government officials targeting countries of the East (Soyapi 2015). The implementation of the Policy saw Zimbabwe deepening relations with Iran, Iraq, India, Malaysia, North Korea, China, Indonesia, and Singapore. However, China became an alternative trading partner that shaped Zimbabwe's development prospects (Chipanga & Mude 2015; Tigere 2016).

Zimbabwe exploited closer relations that China had built with the continent through FOCAC. The formation of the FOCAC, which aims to deepen China-Africa relations, coupled with the Asian giant's no-strings-attached form of aid, boosted Mugabe's disengagement with traditional Western partners, thus opting to Look East (Matahwa 2007). The 2006 FOCAC set aside a \$5 billion China-Africa Development Fund to provide incentives for Chinese companies investing in Africa. Zimbabwe's gravitation to the East was meant to draw Chinese support under the auspices of FOCAC through cheap infrastructure development loans, debt relief, diplomatic support in multilateral institutions, and financial assistance from Chinese funding agencies such as the China Export-Import Bank (China-Exim-Bank) which serves as alternative funding institutions to the IMF and the WB. In other words, they provided options for countries that were not given credit lines by the IMF and the WB (Kambudzi, Mumma-Martinon & Amadi 2023).

Because of the economic sanctions which meant that Zimbabwe could not benefit from the USA's African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), Mugabe's Policy was spurred to tilt more toward China (Chipaike & Mhandara 2013). With this, Zimbabwe developed a partnership with China to draw credit facilities, loans, and investment to boost several sectors of its economy (Chivanga & Monyai 2020). The convergence of views of the two countries over a policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states consolidated Zimbabwe-China relations (AFRODAD 2008). China's non-interference policy resonated with the Zimbabwean foreign policy as they both emphasise the sovereignty and equality of states in the international arena. This

commonality in policy outlook provided a ground for mutual cooperation and support for one another in the international system (Chipaike & Mhandara 2013).

Bilateral relations with China covered a package of aid, trade, and investment to rescue Zimbabwe's ailing economy. These ranged from the provision of transport, such as passenger planes and commuter buses, as well as the construction and refurbishment of the railway network. It is within this context that China became the leading investor in Zimbabwe after the massive disinvestment by Western Multinational Corporations. Among others, China boosted Zimbabwe's ailing economy with \$1.3 billion in 2006 (Mashingaidze 2006).

The Asian giant's investment grew exponentially between 2009 and 2013, thus becoming the largest investor in Zimbabwe. Chinese investment in Zimbabwe rose from \$11.2 million recorded in 2009 to \$602 million in 2013 (Yuliang & Chifamaba 2019). Under the Policy Zimbabwe drew investment from China to support various sectors of its economy. Consequently, China invested in mining, telecommunications, power generation, and infrastructure projects such as housing in Zimbabwe (AFRODAD 2019). The Policy was developed to cover every sector of the Zimbabwean economy. In this regard, China expanded its activities by extending aid to the health and infrastructure development sectors which had been neglected by the Western aid programmes. With this, China provided a complete package that included monetary and technological know-how (Youde 2007).

China became the largest purchaser of Zimbabwean tobacco, and China invested largely in the production of cell phones, television, radio, and power generation. In addition, the Asian giant shipped oil to Zimbabwe. For its part, Zimbabwe granted China mineral concessions to process the resources that the country could not develop. Given the deepening economic and trade relations, Zimbabwe's national airline, Air Zimbabwe, introduced direct flights to Asian countries such as China and Singapore. Moreover, the implementation of the Policy involved skillful and aggressive courting for Zimbabwe to receive favourable development financial assistance. In this regard, Mugabe dubbed China as an 'all-weather friend' and a partner that does not interfere in the domestic affairs of Zimbabwe, and respects the sovereignty of the Southern African country (Kambudzi 2022).

Relations with China took another turn in 2009 as the then Zimbabwean opposition leader, Arthur Mutambara, called on China to move from investing in unprocessed raw materials to investing in building manufacturing plants in the Southern African country. Among other things, the Asian giant was lobbied to invest in the production of computers, cars, and the funding of Zimbabwe's banking sector (Chien 2009). Zimbabwe's five-year blueprint to revive its economy was tied to the Policy. In this regard, the \$27 billion investment plan saw Mugabe signing agreements on economic and technical cooperation, food, financing, and tourism with China in 2014. The Zimbabwean government sought to boost its economy and upgrade sectors such as agriculture, industry, mining, and infrastructure (Shengnan 2014). Over the years, the Policy saw Zimbabwe becoming the first foreign country to adopt the Chinese Yuan as its main international currency in December 2015 (Ramani 2016).

The hostility between Zimbabwe and its traditional Western partners forced Zimbabwe to redesign its foreign policy to seek partnerships outside of Western circles. The government unlocked investment opportunities in various sectors of the economy by entering joint venture agreements with new partners. A case in point is the joint venture between the Zimbabwean Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) and the Midex Overseas Limited of India (Chigora & Chisi 2009). India extended support to various sectors of the Zimbabwean economy. The two sides signed an agreement accounting for \$5 million to boost Zimbabwe's small and medium enterprises. Additionally, India provided Zimbabwe's technical colleges with machines accounting for \$2.8 million (Beri 2009). The Indian iron and steel company, Essar bought Zimbabwe's Iron and Steel Company in 2011 (ZISCO) (Zengeni 2020).

Outside Asia, Zimbabwe deepened trade relations with countries in the Middle East such as Iran. In this context, Iran supported Zimbabwe's land reform by providing agro-industrial equipment, and it also provided modern communication technology to the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Holdings Corporation in 2004 (Mashingaidze 2006). In 2006, Iran committed to providing aid and direct assistance to the Zimbabwean energy, agriculture, and mining industries (Zengeni 2020). Zimbabwe's relations with Iran were informed by the common hostility that both had received from the West. Similarly, to Zimbabwe, the Islamic Republic of Iran's relations with the West deteriorated as the

country embarked on a nuclear project. As a result, Iran became subjected to sanctions by the USA and its allies (Maphaka 2023b).

The two countries deepened relations with each other based on their united stance to resist Western hegemony, particularly on the rules of arms control and disarmament agreements. Arguing about their common tensions with the West, Mugabe stressed that the two countries were demonised and punished for the principled posture that they had taken at the bilateral and multilateral levels. Iranian President, Ahmadinejad argued that Zimbabwe-Iran relations were driven by the principled stance they had taken against the West. Mugabe further stated that the two countries should come up with a mechanism to defend themselves, while Ahmadinejad stressed the same position and pointed out that both countries were damaged by Western hegemony. In 2009, Mugabe expressed his support for Iran's nuclear project and stressed that only countries with no nuclear weapons were in a good position to make an informed decision with respect to the nuclear project (Chigora & Goredema 2011; Maphaka 2023b).

The two countries developed closer relations because Western countries were trying to effect regime change and install a pro-Western government in both countries. Their closer relationship came against the backdrop of the USA Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs (Walter Kensteiner's) remarks that Mugabe's government was illegal and undemocratic and that his government was putting pressure on Zimbabwe's neighbours to correct the situation project (Chigora & Goredema 2011; Maphaka 2023b). On the other hand, the sanctions imposed on Iran were interpreted by that country as a Western attempt to effect regime change. Zimbabwe and Iran shared a common principle of protection and respect for state sovereignty and non-interference in the domestic affairs of other states. They both had a conviction of defending and protecting their national security and sovereignty. They called for respect for their sovereignty, territorial integrity, and non-interference in their domestic affairs. Hence, the Western criticism of Zimbabwe's indigenisation policies and Iran's development of nuclear weapons was interpreted as a violation of their sovereignty and their right to determine their development path (Chigora & Goredema 2011).

At the multilateral level, the two countries believed that sanctions were motivated by Western imperialist tendencies to reverse their revolutionary path. They viewed

democratic movements in their countries as 'hidden' Western tendencies to reverse the gains made by revolutionary states. Thus, the crises faced by their countries were driven by a Western imperialist conspiracy to remove revolutionary leaders. As such they became united by their disinterest over liberal politics and economics. Zimbabwe and Iran viewed neo-liberalism as a new strategy to recolonise developing countries and exploit their minerals (Chigora & Goredema 2011).

Iran provided support to Zimbabwe in multilateral platforms such as the United Nations (UN) and called for the lifting of sanctions which it considered to be illegal and satanic moves by the West to perpetuate injustice and poverty in Zimbabwe. In support of Iran's nuclear programme, Zimbabwe opened its uranium mines to that country, a move that went against 2006 UNSC Resolution 1737 (2006), which prohibited the sale of materials, equipment, goods, and technology that could boost Iran's nuclear programme (Chigora and Goredema 2011). Zimbabwe and Iran formed a coalition for peace as a response to Western aggression. Specifically, in 2007, they introduced their collaborative 'coalition of peace' after George W. Bush Junior issued a negative statement about their governments. The peace was rooted in their common opposition to the expansionist policies of Western powers and thus called for peace in all oppressed countries of the South. They advanced regional and international peace and stability, as well as the development of developing countries as priorities. The USA and its allies were viewed as being anti-peace and anti-development as well as undemocratic - thus not having any moral grounds to speak about human rights (Chigora & Goredema 2011).

Guided by its stance in promoting development in developing countries, Iran provided Zimbabwe with monetary and non-monetary support such as financial and humanitarian aid as well as moral support. It signed a Memoranda of Understanding (e.g. to renovate Zimbabwe's oil refinery) and agreements with Zimbabwe in areas such as finance, technology, education, tourism, and diplomatic matters. This was followed by Iran's investment in Zimbabwe's industries and energy sector. Iran provided Zimbabwe with technology and technical know-how and further assisted in the modernisation of the country's television and radio services. Zimbabwe gave Iran exclusive rights to mine uranium in return for oil imports which were much-needed to rescue its ailing economy in 2010 (Chigora & Goredema 2011).

In support of Zimbabwe's agricultural sector, Iran also provided 250kgs of maize seed to Zimbabwe. Iran's deputy ambassador, Javad Dehghan, provided food hampers ranging from cooking oil, maize meal, and salt. Beyond that, the ambassador had donated 80 wheelchairs, 25 boxes of vitamin supplementary tablets, maternity kits, and food parcels to nine clinics for disabled people. Zimbabwe received \$25 million from Iran in 2009. In 2010, Iran's President declared that his government banks and financial institutions would provide credit facilities and finance developmental projects in Zimbabwe (Chigora & Goredema 2011).

Over the years, the Policy evolved to include countries outside the Middle East and Western circles, such as Russia. This saw Zimbabwe signing five agreements with Russia to establish projects in areas such as power, aviation, and mining, accounting for a value of \$300 million in October 2006 (Chigora & Goredema 2010; Maphaka 2023b). As part of its new foreign policy outlook, Zimbabwe appointed former Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU)² cadres as ambassadors to Russia to capitalise on the cordial relations between the former liberation movement and Moscow. This in a large part boosted Zimbabwe's survival strategy as the country benefitted from the Russian veto in the UNSC against the Western-sponsored Resolutions for sanctions against Zimbabwe (Guzura & Ndimande 2016).

At the grassroots level, Zimbabwean citizens were encouraged to form business relations with countries from the East, including touring and studying in those countries. It is within this context that many Zimbabweans studied in China, Malaysia, and Russia (Magadza 2021). Because of the deteriorating relations with the West, the Policy became a source of Zimbabwe's new identity championed by the ZANU-PF to legitimise the country's changing foreign policy outlook. In this context, the Asian region was presented as a land of opportunity, while the West was regarded as a region whose dominance was declining (Youde 2007).

² ZAPU is a former liberation movement led by Joshua Nkomo that fought for the independence of Zimbabwe alongside ZANU. ZAPU drew the support from the Soviet Union (now Russia), while ZANU got support from China.

1.3. Formulation of the research problem, research question and sub-questions

1.3.1. Research problem

Zimbabwe's diplomatic relations with China, particularly the Asian giant's penetration into, and trade, with the country, in the context of FOCAC and the Policy remains the subject of scholarly debate. The dominant literature on Zimbabwe's Policy focuses on the challenges brought about by the Policy. The challenges range from unequal trade relations, China's looting of Zimbabwean mineral resources, a disregard for the environment, human rights, and violations of labour laws, and Chinese cloudy and often corrupt relations with Zimbabwean government officials. Chipaike and Bischoff (2019) argue that Zimbabwe has limited agency in its relationship with China because the deals are negotiated by government officials whilst non-state actors (non-governmental organisations) are excluded from such discussions. Equally, Hodzi, Hartwell, and Jager (2012) underscore that the negotiations surrounding deals signed by the two countries are not disclosed to the public.

Marumahoko and Chigwata (2020) call for the reconsideration of the Policy as a suitable step for Zimbabwe to attract investment. In their view, China is benefitting from the relationship by exporting her nationals to Zimbabwe and exploiting the country's minerals. Moreover, wages paid to the Zimbabwean workforce by Chinese companies are outside the scale set by the government and Chinese companies have no regard for the environment.

Considering the above, the existing literature describes the Policy as being a narrow posture that exposes Zimbabwe to Chinese exploitative practices. The Policy is said to perpetuate the trade deficit whilst based on elitist development. However, the literature has ignored the role played by Mugabe as an individual decision-maker in foreign policymaking and implementation. Mugabe has been at the heart of Zimbabwe's political landscape for decades and he was an influential figure who drove Zimbabwe's domestic policies and foreign policy. As such, there is a need to study how his personal experience, characteristics, and ideology have shaped the direction taken by Zimbabwe's foreign policy shift from the West to the East.

1.3.2. Research question

How did Afrocentrism shape Mugabe's articulation of Zimbabwe's unwritten Look East Policy from 2003 to 2017?

1.3.3. Research sub-questions

What was the role played by Mugabe in the formulation and implementation of Zimbabwe's Look East Policy?

What was the Afrocentric nature of Mugabe's thinking in the formulation and implementation of the Look East Policy?

1.4. Definition of key concepts

Afrocentrism is about thinking and acting upon things in a manner through which African interests, principles, and perspectives take precedence (Asante 2007; Maphaka 2024). It can be described as a feature of Pan-Africanism which urges Africans to assert their place in socio-economic and political matters, particularly in the production of knowledge which is dominated by Euro-American perspectives. This should be understood in the context that Pan-Africanism, as a movement, is against the injustice experienced by Africans in every aspect of their lives, including their relegation to the margins of education dominated by Euro-American cultural value systems. The abolishment of the slave trade and decolonisation of Africa was ensued by calls for the liberation of knowledge by Africans on the continent and in the diaspora. Driven by Pan-Africanism which advocated for the total liberation and emancipation of Africa, Africans on the continent and in the diaspora viewed slavery, imperialism, and colonisation as historical developments that have destroyed and distorted the African history, cultural values, heritage, and knowledge systems. In other words, slavery, imperialism and colonialism went beyond the subjugation of Africans and looting of the continent minerals by also destroying its history and heritage. Over the years, this has led to calls for the liberation of knowledge and the view of knowledge from the standpoint of Africans. Consequently, Afrocentrism was established as concept that encourages Africans to view a phenomenon from their own perspective. Arguably, slavery and colonialism have dislocated and de-centred Africans from their standpoint to view the world from Eurocentric perspective (Chawane 2016). In other words,

Afrocentrism is interrelated with de-colonialism because it calls for the relocation of African people, their culture, ideals, values, history, and economies from being at the margins of Euro-Americans (Maphaka & Tirivangasi 2022; Maphaka 2024).

Mugabeism refers to the history, personality, ideology, philosophy, and political life of Robert Mugabe. It entails the controversies, political behaviour, ideas, utterances, rhetoric, and actions taken by Mugabe during his tenure as the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009; Murasi 2019). It is a debatable phenomenon that is viewed by nationalist scholars as a Pan-Africanist ideology that sought to reject all forms of imperialism and colonialism through radical distribution of wealth to address colonial injustice. On the other hand, liberal scholars view Mugabeism as a racial and authoritarian ideology characterised by a hatred towards neoliberal norms (Maphaka 2024; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009). Mugabeism is interrelated with the Afrocentrism advanced by Mugabe as an individual decision-maker who sought to end the marginalisation of African nationals in the mainstream economy. It is premised on Mugabe's rejection of Eurocentric ethnocentricity in development which is advanced through neo-liberal policies. There is also nuance between Afrocentrism and Mugabeism. While Afrocentrism is based on the collectiveness and self-determination of Zimbabweans as a nation, Mugabeism is informed by the self-determination of Mugabe as an individual. This explains why Mugabeism often downplays the inputs of Zimbabweans as a collective as decisions revolved around Mugabe as an individual decision-maker. As an emerging concept, Mugabeism can provide a better understanding of Zimbabwe's foreign policy shift from the East to the West.

1.5. Behaviourism, Afrocentrism and Mugabeism

The study is underpinned by the Behaviourist approach. This approach came into existence in the 1950s and 1960s in Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) advocated by scholars such as Robert Jervis, Harold Sprout, and Margaret Sprout. At the centre of its analysis is the role played by the individual decision-maker and the events that influence the choices taken by the decision-maker (such as a leader) in the formulation and implementation of foreign policy. The significance attached to individual decision-makers in FPA spurred scholars to use psychological and cognitive factors as explanatory sources of foreign policy choice. For instance, Jervis (1976) asserts that

The psychological disposition of a leader, the cognitive limits imposed by the sheer volume of information available to decision-makers, and the inclination to opt for what are clearly second-best policy options, all contribute to imperfect foreign policy outcomes.

Proponents of this approach have a conviction that studying an individual decision-maker would enable researchers to understand human agency which contributes to foreign policy decision-making. It is for this reason that Behaviourists focus on psychological and cognitive factors as the drivers of foreign policy choices (Alden & Aran 2017). They focus on the mind of the individual decision maker, its impact in shaping foreign policy, and results stemming from a certain foreign policy choice. Human agency accentuates the role of individuals in identifying foreign policy issues, making judgements about them, and acting on that information. In other words, individual leaders exert a large influence on the foreign policy-making process because of their experience, outlook, and limitations. In this regard, individual perceptions, cognition, and personality inform foreign policy. With this, foreign policy decisions stem from leaders' perceptions towards other countries and leaders (Alden & Aran 2017; Maphaka 2024).

The personal characteristics of the individual leader can also help researchers to understand foreign policy, and decisions taken by a particular country. For example, authoritarian leaders often handle diplomatic tensions differently relative to those with democratic personalities (Tayfur 1994). Given that individuals perceive the environment around them differently, FPA should focus on the images, perceptions, beliefs, and values espoused by the individual decision-maker. Considering the above, foreign policy choices are not only shaped by the clout of the country, or developments at home and in the international system but also by the leader's perception towards them. While events in the actual environment stand as they are, the psychological environment, or mind of an individual, interprets them based on his or her view (Tayfur 1994; Maphaka 2024).

Behaviourism is connected to Afrocentrism and Mugabeism. As an individual leader who has been at the peak of Zimbabwe's domestic policies and foreign policy, Mugabe has administered the country on the basis of his personal experience, personality and

ideology. Among other things, Mugabe sought to end the marginalisation of Africans in Zimbabwe's mainstream economy. He rejected Eurocentric ethnocentricity in respect of development, which was advanced through neo-liberal policies, and had strove to adopt the development path which was driven by the history and material conditions of Africans. As an emerging concept, Mugabeism is rooted in Mugabe's experience, personality, and ideology, which can provide a better understanding of foreign policy decision-making, particularly Zimbabwe's gravitation from the West to the East.

In this study, Mugabe serves as the unit of analysis. Considering his biographical background as a liberation fighter, his incarceration, and his ultimate ascendancy to Zimbabwe's Presidency, it is pertinent to consider these biographical aspects and their influence when analysing his role as the pioneer of the Policy.

1.6. Purpose of the study

1.6.1. Aim

This study aims to analyse Mugabe's emphasis on Afrocentrism in the formulation and implementation of Zimbabwe's unwritten Look East Policy from 2003 to 2017

1.6.2. Objectives

To achieve the above aim, the study is guided by the following objectives:

- To assess the role played by Mugabe in the formulation and implementation of the Look East Policy.
- To identify Afrocentric thinking undertaken by Mugabe in the formulation and implementation of the Look East Policy.

1.7. Research methodology and design

The study employs a qualitative approach. This research seeks to discover issues, understand a phenomenon, and answer research questions without relying on numerical data. Qualitative research also seeks to explain the data and to generate knowledge from both primary and secondary sources. The approach is adopted in this study because it enables the interpretation of Mugabe's Policy. For this study, data

was collected from open-access primary and secondary sources. Open-access primary sources include policy briefs, Mugabe's media commentaries, speeches, and newspapers. Secondary sources were drawn from books, journals, theses/dissertations, and Mugabe's biography. As such, the researcher was able to use the biography of Mugabe to discern, his worldview, values, opinions, and personality.

Exploratory research was adopted for this study. This refers to research, which is conducted to gain new insights, to discover new ideas, and to increase knowledge about a particular issue or phenomenon. It grapples with the 'what' question of the research. This study sought to explore three questions, namely, how did Afrocentrism shape Mugabe's articulation of Zimbabwe's unwritten Look East Policy from 2003-2017? What was the role played by Mugabe in the formulation and implementation of Zimbabwe's Look East Policy? What was the Afrocentric nature of Mugabe's thinking in the formulation and implementation of the Look East Policy? Based on the above, the desktop literature study was adopted to explore the role played by Mugabe in the formulation and implementation of the Policy.

1.8. Data analysis

The study adopted FPA as an analytical tool by using behaviourism, Afrocentricism and Mugabeism as concepts to inform the understanding of foreign policy. This means focusing on the foreign policy process, rather than the outcomes, and it involves a "closer scrutiny of the actors, their motivations, the structures of decision making and the broader context within which foreign policy choices and formulated ..." (Alden & Aran 2017: 3). In this regard, the study examines Mugabe as an individual decision-maker in the formulation and implementation of Zimbabwe's Look East foreign policy as well as the factors that influenced his decisions.

1.9. Significance of the study

The study contributes to the existing discourse by analysing the role played by Mugabe in the formulation and implementation of the policy. The adoption of a Behaviourist approach complements the concepts of Afrocentrism and Mugabeism which also helps in understanding foreign policy from a different view, thus enriching the literature

on Zimbabwe's Policy. This is so because Mugabeism is about Mugabe as an individual leader who directed Zimbabwe's policy path. His ideology, personality and outlook have shaped the foreign policy posture of the country. The findings which emerge from this study will lay a basis for future studies that seek to use the Behaviourist approach, Afrocentrism and Mugabeism as concepts to understand the Policy. Afrocentrism and Mugabeism will provide new and interesting analytical lenses about the Policy. Afrocentrism and Mugabeism will also deepen evolving scholarly, policy, and public debate on Zimbabwe's foreign policy.

1.10. Ethical considerations

This study had no ethical implications as the researcher drew data from open-access primary and secondary data sources that did not involve interaction with humans and animals.

1.11. Study limitations

One of the limitations is that the study was a desktop research that relied on open-access primary and secondary sources. Due to its confinement to available open-access primary and secondary sources, desktop research provides partial answers to the research questions. The quality of this study is also limited by the absence of a formal document written by the Zimbabwean government about the Policy. To overcome this limitation, the researcher drew data from Mugabe's biography, media commentaries, and speeches as the pioneer of the Policy.

1.12. Chapter outline

Chapter One provides the research theme, research problem, question, sub-questions, and theoretical framework that guides the study. It also presents the research methodology and design as well as ethical considerations. The chapter provides the interlink between the research problem and sub-questions. It provides a detailed explanation of the behaviourist approach, Afrocentrism and Mugabeism as an analytical framework that shapes and guides the study.

Chapter Two provides the literature by scholars who have optimistic views about the policy. By so doing, the chapter reviews the successes of the Policy drawing from its

origin, the nature of its relationship with China, the main players that drove the Policy and the role they have played. The literature reviewed here draws on the socio-economic and political aspects of the Policy as expressed by optimistic scholars who have written about Zimbabwe's foreign policy.

Chapter Three provides the literature by scholars who have been pessimistic about the Policy. By so doing, the chapter reviews the pessimistic literature about the failures of the Policy drawing from its origin, the nature of its relationship with China, the main players that drove the Policy, and the role they have played. In this regard, the literature reviewed here draws on the socio-economic and political aspects of the Policy as expressed by scholars who have written about Zimbabwe's foreign policy from a pessimistic view.

Chapter Four presents a firm engagement of the literature on FPA about aspects that drive individual decision-makers in foreign policy-making and implementation process to lay a basis for the subsequent analysis of Mugabe as an individual decision-maker in Zimbabwe's Look East foreign policy. The chapter also presents the Behaviourist approach, Afrocentrism, and Mugabeism as frameworks that guide the analysis of Mugabe as an individual decision-maker in Zimbabwe's Look East foreign Policy.

Chapter Five analyses the role played by Mugabe as an individual decision-maker in the Policy. The chapter analyse the impact of his personality, experience, perceptions, and cognition on the Policy. The analysis is underpinned by the Behaviourism approach, Afrocentrism, and Mugabeism as concepts to inform the understanding of foreign policy.

Chapter Six presents the conclusion of the study in line with the research problem, questions and its objectives. The chapter provides a summary of findings as responding to the aim, objectives, research questions, and sub-questions advanced by the study. It provides a conclusion on the insights of previous scholars and the view of the researcher.

CHAPTER TWO: OPTIMISTIC VIEWS ON MUGABE'S LOOK EAST FOREIGN POLICY

2.1. Introduction

Chapter One has provided the research theme, research problem, question, sub-questions, Behaviourist approach, Afrocentrism, and Mugabeism as analytical frameworks that guide the study. It also presented the research methodology and design as well as ethical considerations. This chapter provides the literature on scholars that have optimistic views about the Policy. By so doing, the chapter reviews the optimistic literature about the success of the Policy drawing from its origin, the nature of its relationship with China, the main players that drove the Policy, and the role they have played. The literature reviewed here draws on the socio-economic and political aspects of the Policy as expressed by optimistic scholars who have written about Zimbabwe's foreign policy.

2.2. The Look East Policy and the deepening of Zimbabwe-China trade relations

Weighing in on the Policy, Castillo-Morales (2020) mentions that trade between Zimbabwe and China deepened after the Policy's adoption in 2003, with Zimbabwean exports to China reaching 17 percent a year, while imports from China stood at 32 percent. In this context, China became Zimbabwe's largest trading partner (Castillo-Morales 2020). Equally, Nyere (2013) stresses that with these deepening relations, China received contracts to develop Zimbabwe's agriculture, mineral, and hydroelectric resources. The Policy provided China with opportunities to extract mineral resources that Zimbabwe was unable to exploit amid disinvestment by the West. In this regard, Zimbabwe's mineral reserves of platinum, ferrochrome, gold, silver, copper, and diamonds found an alternative purchaser (Nyere 2013).

Fang, Souza, Smith, and Lee (2020) claim that China became a strategic political and economic partner in the face of Zimbabwe's international isolation. Through the Policy, which deepened relations between Zimbabwe's and Asian partners, China has among other things, explored investment opportunities in the cultivation and production of tobacco starting in 2004. Since then, China's National Tobacco Company has been

involved in the cultivation and production of leaf tobacco which had been affected by Western disinvestment, through its subsidiary, Tian Ze Tobacco Company (Fang, Souza, Smith, & Lee, 2020). Through the Policy, Zimbabwe secured Chinese support for its agricultural sector. China supported Zimbabwe's Fast Track Land Redistribution Programme by providing money to the country's government. Among others, the Asian giant had donated agricultural equipment accounting for \$241 million in 2001 and had opened credit lines to the Zimbabwean government to boost the agricultural sector. Specifically, the China Exim-Bank provided loans and aid including the training of officials from Zimbabwe's Ministry of Agriculture (Mdyanadzo 2016).

Gasela (2018) argues that in 2004, China received a contract to farm the 1,000 square kilometres of land expropriated from white farmers. Moreover, the Asian giant granted the Zimbabwean government the machinery (amounting to \$25 million) to boost the agricultural sector. In return, the Zimbabwean government granted China tobacco leaf amounting to \$30 million. The agricultural sector received a boost from Chinese investment. Upon the investment by the Chinese company Tian Ze in 2005, in Zimbabwe's tobacco, the price of the product rose from \$1.61 per kilogram to \$3.32 per kilogram. Chinese investment, along with the rise in the price of the product, brought viability to Zimbabwe's tobacco farming community (Gasela 2018).

In another development, Mvutungayi (2010) stresses that the Zimbabwe Farmers Development Company used the concessional loans it acquired from China to purchase agricultural equipment and tools amounting to \$25 million in 2006. This came after the Chinese government granted its Zimbabwean counterpart \$200 million in August 2006 to acquire various inputs needed by the latter's underperforming agricultural sector. Through these inputs, ranging from fertilisers, pesticides, agricultural tools, and irrigation equipment, Zimbabwe envisaged boosting its agricultural productivity (Mvutungayi 2010). China also supported Zimbabwe to convert tobacco into cigarettes, and to export them as a finished value-added product in 2006 (Besada & Moyo 2008). In 2011, China's Exim-Bank granted the Zimbabwean government a loan amounting to \$340 million to purchase tractors and other farming equipment. For its part, Zimbabwe had to repay the loan over five years through agricultural products (Gasela 2018).

Gasela (2018) asserts that China took a different position to the West by providing Zimbabwe with grants, loans, and technical support (Gasela 2018). However, the barter trade involving the trade of tobacco in exchange for Chinese loans has raised concerns in some sections of Zimbabwean society. In this context, it was believed that Zimbabwe could lose control of its major exports if the practice continued (Mvutungayi 2010). Adding weight to the above arguments, Chun (2014) asserts that the degenerating economy and its political image drove the Zimbabwean government to look for alternative development and political partners from Southeast Asia, the Far East, and Pacific countries. With the focus shifting to China, the FOCAC enabled the two countries to advance their national interests and withstand Western supremacy (Chun 2014).

Mukwereza (2013) indicates that in 2012, China established the Agricultural Demonstration Centre in Zimbabwe as part of its commitments to the African continent made at the 2006 FOCAC Summit. The Centre was set to be administered by the Chinese government for three years and then handed to Zimbabwe after this period. It was also set to be part of the Ministry of Agriculture Centres of Excellence in Research and Extension, including research stations, farm training centres, and agricultural colleges. In 2012, China provided a \$14 million donation to Zimbabwe Emergency Food Aid in the form of 4,910 tons of rice and 9,723 tons of wheat. The donation made 40 percent and, 3 percent, of rice and wheat needed by the country annually by that time. The China Exim-Bank provided the Zimbabwean agricultural sector with a loan facility amounting to \$334.7 million in 2011 to purchase tractors and to boost the country's mechanisation programme in the sector (Mukwereza 2013).

Moreover, Mukwereza (2013) argues that in 2012, China reduced this interest on the loan by 10 percent, and the government was set to repay the loan over five years using agricultural products. The Chinese Provincial Government of Sichuan provided Zimbabwe with agricultural machinery including 10 farm trucks, 30 tractors, and 50 water pumps in 2012. The Chinese government also provided study tours and short courses to officials from the Zimbabwean Ministry of Agriculture (Mukwereza 2013).

In another development, Mukwereza (2013) argues that China provided agricultural experts to the Zimbabwe Agricultural Technical and Extension Service (AGRITEX).

The Zimbabwean government specified the preferred skills that were needed. Experts were coming annually to replace each other. The first ten groups of experts came in 2011. The experts were stationed at the AGRITEX Head Office, and their responsibilities included capacity building at the institution in areas such as land use planning, horticulture, and agribusiness. They formed training programmes and accompanied AGRITEX officials on field visits and other outings. China provided a stipend and was also responsible for maintaining the general well-being of the experts (Mukwereza 2013).

Mukwereza (2013) avers that Zimbabwe's total export earnings of tobacco to China accounted for 26 percent in 2011. Tian Ze had an 11.7 percent stake in the marketing of this crop in 2011. By 2012, China was the top buyer of Zimbabwean tobacco with Tian Ze offering the highest price (\$8.83 per kg rose from \$7.27 recorded in 2011) relative to other foreign buyers. The company provided the farming scheme with inputs and much-needed capital equipment, and it recovered its money during harvesting time. The contract farming agreements and a high number of Chinese buyers boosted Zimbabwe in reviving its tobacco sector (Mukwereza 2013).

In the cotton sector, Mukwereza (2013) demonstrates that China provided farmers with seeds, fertiliser and chemicals, and farmers were expected to repay the loan with the crop during the harvesting period. The Chinese intervention helped because the production of cotton was affected by the Fast Track Land Reform Programme which spitted the country with the West. Over the years, cotton grew to the extent that it provided the country with \$150 million in revenue from exports. A joint venture between the two countries, Sino-Zimbabwe Cotton Holdings (SZCH) was among the companies registered to buy cotton. However, the company was accused of engaging in predatory purchases by not grading the crop when buying. It is also said that the company provided little or no production inputs. Given that cotton was sold at the farm gate - often in remote areas, there were allegations that the company engaged in predatory practices and that it was complicit with politicians. They thus bought any offered crop even those grown by other ginners (Mukwereza 2013).

Mazwi, Chambati, and Mudimu (2020) underscore that the Policy stimulated growth in the agricultural sector. This manifested in the increase in the production and prices of tobacco. In 2017, Zimbabwe had 38,10 A1 tobacco farmers, 7,658 A2 farmers, 46,621

communal farmers, and 6,545 small-scale commercial farmers (Mazwi, Chambati, & Mudimu 2020).

Aljazeera News (2007) asserts that Zimbabwe received a \$58 million loan to boost its agricultural sector in 2007 and in exchange, the country was expected to supply China with tobacco. The then Minister of Agricultural Engineering and Mechanisation Joseph Made, indicated that the money was used to buy agricultural equipment. In return, Zimbabwe was expected to provide 110,000 tonnes of tobacco to the Chinese government (Aljazeera News 2007).

Despite being Zimbabwe's largest trading partner, AFRODAD (2019) shows that the manufacturing sector received a small part of the Chinese investment in Zimbabwe. For AFRODAD, this practice suggests that China was not interested to bring about sustainable development in Zimbabwe. Additionally, limited investment in the manufacturing sector reduced the expansion of investment in sectors such as real estate, agriculture, and infrastructure because most products were imported. Thus Zimbabwe continued to rely on raw materials vulnerable to international vagaries and had consequently experienced low growth and extreme debt distress (AFRODAD 2019).

AFRODAD (2019) points out that between 2003 and 2017, Zimbabwean exports to China rose largely but the trade patterns skewed in favour of China. Zimbabwe exports mainly low value-added raw materials to fuel the Chinese economy and thus drew minimal revenue that was not sufficient to repay its debt. The country also lost revenue that it could have generated from local industries because they faced strong competition from their Chinese counterparts (AFRODAD 2019).

2.3. A well-calculated policy

Forbes (2007) underscores that the Policy has been dubbed as a desperate gamble by the West. However, Forbes also suggests that a closer look shows that this foreign policy outlook was a well-calculated approach. It capitalised on China, Malaysia, and India which have developed closer relations with Sudan, another pariah state like Zimbabwe. The Mugabe-led government took advantage of the economic support that China had provided to Angola (Forbes 2007). Moyo and Yeros (2013) show that the

Policy was a vanguard of redefining the non-alignment posture in the post-Cold War era (Moyo & Yeros (2013).

Chimanikire (2016) states that the Policy represented a strategic foreign policy outlook by Zimbabwe because partners in the East are emerging countries with great potential. However, he argues that the country should have redirected its development trajectory to rehabilitate and attain sustainable economic development. The world has shifted from the days of sloganeering and hatemongering. Even Chinese engagements with Africa are not shaped by the slogans and recollection of the liberation struggles whereby the Asian giant had previously supported African liberation movements. China is in Africa to extract raw materials and minerals which are much-needed to fuel its growing economy. The modern-day China is a capitalist state, whereby many of its companies are state-owned, but driven by a capitalist mode of production (Chimanikire 2016).

Murasi (2019) underscores that the Policy was not adopted because of the tension that arose from the West. Rather it was a policy premised on a solid historical foundation. In 1992, Zimbabwe's Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced this foreign policy posture foreseeing that more trade and investment would come from the emerging market of the East in the future. This development might have influenced Mugabe's remarks in 2005, that the West was not the only provider of development assistance and market on the globe (Murasi 2019).

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2010) traces the Policy to 1992 when the ZANU-PF integrated economic aspects into its foreign policy based on the Look East posture. A gravitation to the East was driven by an anticipation that future trade, investments, joint ventures, and tourists would emerge from the East. At that time, China was emerging as a potential global power that could counter the dominance of the USA and its Western allies. Additionally, Zimbabwe also wanted to form ties with countries such as Malaysia, India, Pakistan, Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, and Iran (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2010).

Tsabora (2014) states that the Policy enabled the government to fast-track its indigenisation programme. After its adoption, the government increased the pace of the indigenisation of the economy through laws and policies that were meant to

transform ownership patterns from foreign private capital to Zimbabwean enterprises. The indigenous people who were previously marginalised and excluded from the mainstream economy became part of the procurement system and thus acquired contracts. Consequently, decisive indigenisation policies opened the space for black-owned companies so that their companies became part of the public procurement system (Tsabora 2014).

Siambombe (2015) shows that the Policy formed part of Zimbabwe's strategic policies, ranging from the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation and Indigenisation, and its Economic Empowerment policy. Just like the two policies, the Policy was undermined by bad implementation and hence was unable to rescue Zimbabwe's ailing economy (Siambombe 2015).

2.4. Zimbabwe's resistance to imperialism and African solidarity

"Look East": the Zimbabwean Reaction to Neo-Imperialism by Magadza (2021) shows the extent to which Zimbabwe utilised the Policy to resist imperialism. According to Magadza, Zimbabwe used Western condemnation to gain domestic support as a state seeking to advance African interests under the leadership and guidance of Robert Mugabe. This move drew the support of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) (except Botswana and Zambia)³ and the broader African Union (AU) wherein the regional organisations saw British condemnation as interference with yesteryear colonisation. For example, African countries such as South Africa (SA) refused to back Britain's policy position on Zimbabwe. With this, the Policy enabled Zimbabwe to develop resistance and agency, as well as to access Chinese aid (Magadza 2021).

Murasi (2019) argues that, when speaking at the World Summit of Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002, Mugabe fashioned his speech to gain support for the land reform policy and he further accused the West, especially the Tony Blair-led British of advancing neo-colonialism. Mugabe stressed that Zimbabwe is an African country that joined efforts with other states on the continent to improve the lives of people and that the process required no intervention as it was designed to

³ Levy Mwanawasa of Zambia and Ian Khama of Botswana criticised Zimbabwe over violation of human rights.

unite Africa. Through this speech, Mugabe sought to receive support and sympathy from other African countries. By describing the land reform policy as the regional agenda that sought to deepen African solidarity, Mugabe was able to draw support from the SADC region and other parts of the continent (Murasi 2019).

Lockwood (2018) argues that when domestic criticism grew despite his rhetoric, Mugabe employed regional organisations to cement his grip on power. Among others, Mugabe used the influence he had in SADC to frustrate the recognition of the MDC as a legitimate party and ultimately to reduce the threat it posed as a potential government at home. After the controversial 2008 elections, Mugabe used the AU to deepen his legitimacy at home. He exploited the questionable legitimacy of other African leaders to contain criticism in the AU. Mugabe's presence at the 2008 AU Summit also enabled him to show continued leadership as the President of Zimbabwe. Additionally, the endorsement of the election results by the organisation made it difficult for the MDC to challenge the legitimacy of the election results, and this reduced the threat faced by the ZANU-PF at home (Lockwood 2018).

Following strained relations with the West, Ndimande and Moyo (2018) stress that Mugabe advanced a foreign policy that sought to emancipate the African continent by calling for a world driven by justice, equality, and fairness. Zimbabwe developed a siege mentality where it viewed Britain, the EU, and the USA as working to bring about regime change. Consequently, Zimbabwe adopted the Policy and advanced Pan-Africanism in international institutions such as the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). The land question and land reform became central to Zimbabwe's international relations and foreign policy. It is within this context that Zimbabwe construed the land as part of the African struggle for liberation and as an unresolved matter. Concurrently, Zimbabwe lobbied the support from SADC member states and the broader AU member states to block purported Western interference and a regime change agenda. Thus, the struggle became Africanised, as Zimbabwe saw itself as sharing the same plight with the African continent and Africans in the diaspora (Ndimande & Moyo 2018a).

Lockwood (2018) notes that having learned during the liberation struggle that international legitimacy is crucial for the government to access aid on the globe,

Mugabe and ZANU-PF officials strove to contain international criticism. This move was meant to keep criticism minimal as severe global criticism could lead to universal sanctions and put more economic strain on the government. In this regard, Mugabe used rhetoric⁴ to draw the support of other developing countries by projecting himself as a leader who fought against the dictates and domination of the West. As such, international organisations such as the UN were unable to subject Mugabe's regime to severe criticism, and his tactics contained the sanctions faced by the country on the globe. At the regional level, in particular, the rhetoric enabled Mugabe to contain criticism from the SADC and the AU by positioning himself as the liberation hero fighting against Western neo-colonialism or coloniality (Lockwood 2018).

Mashingaidze (2016) avers that Mugabe viewed Western sanctions as a longstanding battle between Zimbabwe and its former colonisers to control Zimbabwe's political and economic developments. This development represented a Western domination that Mugabe vowed to reject. In Mugabe's view, allowing such conduct would amount to paving the way for the West to control and recolonise Zimbabwe and its African black people. Mugabe sought to finish the decolonisation process of the African people's attitudes, systems, and way of life. It is within this context that Zimbabwe viewed the Eastern countries as suitable partners willing to support Zimbabwe in defending its sovereignty (Mashingaidze 2016).

At the bilateral level, Ndimande and Moyo (2018a) indicate that Zimbabwe used SA's economic prospects and political clout to boost its ailing economy and to prevent itself at the UNSC. SA backed Zimbabwe with loans, and it frustrated possible military actions from the West by voting against their Resolutions at the UNSC in 2008. Mugabe deployed SA's influence in the SADC region to prop up his regime. The economy became the main instrument in Zimbabwe's relations with SA amid sanctions from the West. Among other fields, SA companies invested in banking, agriculture, mining, retail, and telecommunication sectors. ZANU-PF deepened relations with the African National Congress (ANC)⁵ to facilitate trade between the two countries. Against this backdrop, SA provided Zimbabwe with loans and sustainable credit lines as Harare could not secure loans from the IMF and WB. During his tenure as the

⁴ Mugabe projected as a leader who is being demonised for fighting against imperialism and neo-colonialism which continues to threatened the sovereignty of the developing countries.

⁵ The ANC is the former liberation movement and the ruling party in the Republic of South Africa.

President of SA, Thabo Mbeki provided Zimbabwe with a rescue package of around a billion rands. In this sense, SA was saving Zimbabwe from collapsing. Mbeki also carried out 'Quiet Diplomacy'⁶ as opposed to the Western Megaphone Diplomacy which would have seen SA imposing sanctions against Zimbabwe (Ndimande & Moyo 2018a).

Closely related to the above viewpoint are Chigora and Chisi (2009). Reviewing the eight years of Zimbabwe's interaction with the East to demonstrate achievements, challenges, and the future of this Policy direction, Chigora and Chisi (2009) argue that through the Policy, Zimbabwe demonstrated that development could be attained without the West. The authors go on to caution the West that confrontation, sanctions, threats, and demonisation could not serve their interests in a globalised world. In Chigora and Chisi's (2009) view, such actions would cause more divisions and ultimately drive like-minded states into the hands of China and the broader Eastern world. As such, the authors recommend that the West should let African countries have their independent economic and political policies shaped by their interests. It is within this context that Chigora and Chisi underscore that the Policy was viable and that Asian countries have proven to be suitable partners as opposed to Western states (Chigora & Chisi 2009).

2.5. Zimbabwe-Western relations and multilateral institutions

As Murasi (2019) argues, for Mugabe, Britain had never and would never serve the interests of Africans. He described Britain as a country that sought to protect the needs and interests of its privileged minority descendants as opposed to those of the African majority (Murasi 2019). Ndimande and Moyo (2018a) assert that Mugabe formulated Zimbabwe's foreign policy based on his perceived threat from Britain, the USA, and their allies. The said foreign policy position was shaped by Mugabe's belief and ideology that became known as "Mugabeism". Arguably, Zimbabwe's foreign policy towards the West was shaped by his historical experience, ideology, and personality. In doing so, Mugabe identified and planned against states that were

⁶ Quiet Diplomacy is a kind of diplomacy that is carried out peacefully through secret negotiations to influence the behaviour of other states in the international system. This kind of diplomacy does not involve open criticism and the use of threats such as sanctions (Dlamini 2002).

regarded as the enemies of his country as they posed a threat to its sovereignty and could bring about regime change that would have reversed the gains of the struggle (Ndimande & Moyo 2018a).

Rusere (2015) states that in his address at the UNGA in 2006, Mugabe argued that the West withdrew their development aid to the country and redirected it to support efforts meant to undermine the democratically elected government and remove it unconstitutionally. Mugabe described the move as tantamount to interference in the domestic affairs of the country and further pointed out that the government could only be changed by the people of Zimbabwe, not people from other countries. That right was held by the people of Zimbabwe rather than the USA and Britain. Mugabe concluded that Zimbabwe was colonised by the same countries that sought to effect regime change (Rusere 2015). Mugabe's remarks came in the background of the USA admitting to funding activities meant to effect regime change. Among others, the USA established the Defenders Fund to provide financial support to Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and other actors to facilitate regime change. The Radio Channel called the Voice of American Studio (VOA) was also established to spread information that discredited the Zimbabwean government (Murasi 2019).

Amid tense relations with the West, Ndimande and Moyo (2018a) show that Mugabe placed significance on countries in the East and Far East, self-reliance, and inward-looking policies rather than engaging Britain, the USA, and other countries of the West. It was during this period in 2002 in particular, that Mugabe told the British Prime Minister that he should keep his country and let him keep Zimbabwe. The land question prompted Zimbabwe to turn its back on former Western allies and align itself with rival powers such as Russia and China. The deepened relations with China and Russia helped Zimbabwe to survive criticism and punitive measures at the UNSC as the West tabled Resolutions to effect the adoption of strong measures against the country. In this sense, Russia and China vetoed the Resolutions⁷, and the country's minerals were used to buy support from China (Ndimande & Moyo 2018a).

Further, Ndimande and Moyo (2018a) point out that the personality of Mugabe and his ideological leaning toward Pan-Africanism manifested itself in multilateral forums such

⁷ The Resolutions sought to imposed arms embargo, financial and travel restrictions against Mugabe and other government officials.

as the UNGA, as Mugabe made strong speeches, often criticising the West. Zimbabwe advocated for the reform of multilateral institutions. Specifically, Mugabe advocated for the reform and rearrangement of global institutions such as the UNSC, the WB, and the IMF in such a way that would serve the interests of smaller, weak, and poor developing countries, and equally represent the views of these countries. The call came amid a political atmosphere that posed a threat to multilateralism, as the then USA President, George W Bush (Junior) took the unilateral position in the implementation of his country's foreign policy. This approach was viewed as undermining multilateralism and raising allegations that multilateral institutions advanced the interests of powerful countries. In this sense, Zimbabwe continued to carry a liberation and emancipatory message, as Mugabe challenged the global organisations and financial institutions to desist from imperialism and rallied the countries in the Global South to demand reform and re-ordering of the international system based on the principles of fairness, equality, and justice (Ndimande & Moyo 2018a).

Mugabe used his call for the reform of global institutions as an agenda to bring developing countries, particularly African countries, together. The radical reform of international institutions, along with the political and economic system, became part of the liberation struggle that challenged the division between developed and developing countries created by colonialism and imperialism. Mugabe strongly condemned the unitary actions taken by the West and called for multilateralism rather than unilateralism which was being employed by the West to dominate the globe. In his view, the UN was an undemocratic and unreformed organisation that advanced the interests of powerful countries. He viewed the UNSC as being aligned with Western hegemony and being used as an instrument of the foreign policy of the USA and its allies. For Mugabe, the USA was a destructive superpower that took unitary actions that left disastrous conditions in an attempt to export its liberal democracy (Ndimande & Moyo 2018a).

Rusere (2015) stipulates that the Western condemnation against Mugabe was viewed as an attempt to undermine Zimbabwe's right to self-determination. The colonial experience became a source of legitimacy. Mugabe's rhetoric was used in this regard to determine the direction taken by the government as striving to gain independence

from the coloniser. Consequently, Mugabeism shaped the identity of Zimbabwe as a state that engaged in a campaign against neo-colonialism and imperialism, and which was unfairly isolated by the international community for striving to promote equality on the globe. The said identity was reflected by the country's withdrawal from the Commonwealth in 2003, which was dismissed as an Anglo-Saxon club, and ultimately the country shifted to the East (Rusere 2015).

Murasi (2019), states that Mugabe viewed the IMF and WB as adherents of neo-liberal policies as opposed to socialist policies that provide state intervention in the economy. Arguing about these institutions at the Earth Summit in Johannesburg in 2002, Mugabe pointed out that there are unequal power relations that divide developing and developed countries which are entrenched in multilateral institutions such as the UN. It is for this reason that the IMF was not designed to fund the development of poor countries (Murasi 2019).

2.6. Changing Zimbabwe's international image and identity

Through the Policy, Youde (2007) shows that the Mugabe-led Zimbabwean government sought to regain its declining international status, which had resulted in detrimental effects on its economy. The Policy was utilised to reconnect with the world economy. In this regard, Mugabe grounded the Policy on a shared colonial experience between Africa and Asia (Gasela 2018). The Policy was informed by the Mugabe-led Zimbabwean government to change the perception of the country's image and identity at home and in the international arena. ZANU-PF drew on its image as the freedom fighter, and former liberation movement, to boost its legitimacy in the eyes of Zimbabwean people and utilised the Policy to reassert itself as an influential actor in the international system. The Policy generated material benefits, but also produced mixed results in its quest to redefine Zimbabwe's national identity (Youde 2007).

According to Youde (2007), at the international level, Mugabe reasserted himself as a player in international relations by challenging the policies preferred by the West. He wanted to demonstrate to the West that they could not bully Zimbabwe. Beyond challenging the West in the international arena, Mugabe wanted to redefine Zimbabwe's image as being poor, corrupt, and a pariah state, into a country driven by self-reliance, free from domination, and independent globally. Domestically, Mugabe

sought to gain legitimacy from Zimbabweans by using his liberation credentials. He drew the public attention to his past experiences as a freedom fighter and liberator while discrediting the opposition MDC as the party that has done nothing for the public and that it was backed financially by the former colonisers (the West) who posed a threat to Zimbabwe's independence (Youde 2007).

Counting Mugabe's successes and failures in this regard, Youde (2007) concludes that Mugabe emerged as an international force and that Zimbabwe drew huge attention globally. Mugabe drew the support of his government and its policies from the African leaders. But at home, Youde indicates that the Policy failed, as part of the population was dissatisfied with their country's relations with China. Civil society movements, such as the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions, and Sokwanele, claimed that Mugabe was trading the country's sovereignty, thus replacing former colonisers with China. There was a growing resentment, especially over criminal activities committed by Chinese people. China was also blamed for flooding the local markets with low-standard products (Youde 2007).

2.7. Conclusion

The chapter presented the literature on the optimistic views on the Policy. It emerged that the Policy enabled the country to resist imperialism supported by the Global South, African countries in particular. Equally, the Policy helped Zimbabwe to avoid the total collapse of the economy amid sanctions from the West. The Policy represented a strive by Mugabe to redefine the country's image at home and abroad, but it failed as the general populace developed resentment against China. Arguably, Mugabe who was a central figure that shaped the direction taken by Zimbabwe's domestic policies and foreign policy has been neglected by the dominant literature. This constitutes a knowledge deficit as Mugabe was influential in the Zimbabwean political landscape with his historical experience, personality, ideology, and perception shaping the policies adopted by Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER THREE: PESSIMISTIC VIEWS ON MUGABE'S LOOK EAST FOREIGN POLICY

3.1. Introduction

The preceding chapter has provided the literature on the optimistic views on Mugabe's Look East Foreign Policy. By so doing the chapter reviewed the literature on the socio-economic and political aspects of the Policy as expressed by scholars who held optimistic views about Zimbabwe's foreign policy. This chapter provides the literature on scholars who have been pessimistic about the Policy. In this regard, the chapter reviews the pessimistic literature about the failures of the Policy drawing on its origin, the nature of its relationship with China, the main players that drove the Policy, and the role they have played. The literature reviewed in this chapter draws on the socio-economic and political aspects of the Policy as expressed by scholars who have written about Zimbabwe's foreign policy from a pessimistic view.

3.2. Retaliation and a miscalculated policy

Masunungure (2011) avers that the Policy was adopted by Mugabe to spite traditional Western partners. This is mirrored by Mugabe's remarks "We have turned east where the sun rises, and given our backs to the West, where the sun sets". China became a suitable partner in this policy outlook because its non-interference policy in the affairs of other states made it uninterested in democratic and human rights principles (Masunungure 2011). Weighing in on the Policy, Tinarwo and Bubu (2022) argue that the policy is ambiguous and lacks clarity in its intended purpose because it came about as a reactive stance to the strong economic relations which were severed unexpectedly by Western Europe and America. They conclude that Zimbabwe should craft a vibrant and solid foreign policy and strategy to engage in mutually beneficial cooperation with India and China. A comprehensive, coherent, and targeted foreign policy strategy for engaging these Asian countries was needed because they have enormous interests in Zimbabwe and the African continent at large (Tinarwo & Bubu 2022).

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2011) regards the Policy as a fatal mistake committed by Zimbabwe in implementing a harsh foreign policy against the West. The Policy was pursued at the wrong time as the country had no capacity to deal with its impact on domestic

development and growth. It took place at the time when the Soviet Union had collapsed, and the Socialist Republics of Eastern and Central Europe had disintegrated, which suggests that there was no country with an economic clout from the East. Conversely, the Western capitalist countries occupied a hegemonic status as the main actors shaping the global economy and politics. On the other hand, countries such as China, Cuba, and Vietnam had warmed themselves up to draw more investment from the Western capitalist world. The contradictory posture taken by Zimbabwe in looking to the East was a miscalculation strategically and tactically. This is so because at the time it was impossible to bring the socialist and anti-imperialist forces as a counterweight to Western capitalist states (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2011).

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2011) concludes that the country ended up in isolation and faced several international challenges that could not be escaped by the government. Zimbabwe had to work to avoid the deterioration of social and economic conditions that were likely to reverse the gains brought about by the National Democratic Revolution. It became clear in 2000 that Zimbabwe's social, economic, and political conditions were degenerating. Between 1997 and 2003, ZANU-PF killed the national project by trembling on its national basic human rights. The country chose to govern militarily and through opposition to democracy and a disregard for human rights (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2011).

3.3. The policy delinked from Zimbabwe's strategies

Ncube (2015) points out that Mugabe's gravitation to the East was an emotional gut-instinct response. But the Policy also demonstrates political astuteness by the Zimbabwean government given that not many in the world thought that China could be a suitable partner in the context whereby the West was hit hard by the 2008/2009 global economic crisis. However, according to Ncube (2015), a remedy to Zimbabwe's political and socio-economic crisis should have developed internally rather than relying more on Chinese economic assistance. Beyond that, Zimbabwe's Policy was not informed by specific and realistic strategies. While China's economic development strategy relied on the Chinese diaspora to boost industrialisation, investment, and export markets, Zimbabwe was not exploiting its diaspora to stimulate economic growth and development (Ncube 2015).

Considering the above, Ncube (2015) states that Zimbabwe ought to develop policies and strategies that will create an enabling environment for its diaspora to cooperate with the government and to support the country with the management and industrial skills that they have acquired abroad. Arguably many of the country's diaspora have been able to acquire economic knowledge, skills, and experience, and are in a good position to invest in their country to rehabilitate and stimulate industrial development. The author also observes that China developed close cooperation with the private sector at home and abroad and that this was largely absent in Zimbabwe despite the much-celebrated Policy. If Zimbabwe did not join efforts with the private sector and its diaspora, it would be difficult for the country to realise development (Ncube 2015).

Ncube (2015) further underscores that the country ought to use the little resources at its disposal judiciously to stimulate growth and development rather than generating political support which was not accompanied by development. It was illogical to look for development from the East or West while ignoring the domestic economic development stimulus. Further, Ncube (2015) states that the Policy should have gone beyond drawing foreign direct investment (FDI) and that it should have developed values, as well as attracting skills, systems, and technology. Zimbabwe's partnership with other partners should have focused on drawing knowledge and technology, as opposed to being confined to attracting FDI. In essence, the development of brains and values for Zimbabwe and its people should have been an apex priority. If Zimbabwe failed to draw knowledge and technology, the country would fall into the same trap of being a net exporter of raw materials as was the case in its relations with traditional Western partners (Ncube 2015).

3.4. A rhetorical and desperate policy

Cited in the Standard-Zimbabwe Newspaper (2015), Ibbo Mandaza described the Policy as rhetorical, given that Zimbabwe remained tied to the West economically and historically. Mandaza argues, among other things, that the country has had loan agreements with the IMF and Paris Club, and that it was benefitting from Western aid. In this context, the country was undergoing economic reforms and implementing the

Staff Monitored Programme⁸ that could draw debt relief. In agreement, the Standard-Zimbabwe Newspaper shows that Zimbabwe had trade relations with the EU, with the country recording a trade surplus of \$156,3 million at the beginning of 2013 from \$85 million recorded in 2012 (Standard-Zimbabwe 2015). In agreement, Dzirutwe (2014) argues that Zimbabwe was determined to undertake economic reforms and to compensate white farmers for their expropriated land to draw the support of international financial institutions. Mugabe called for re-engagement with the West, including their assistance in the Zimbabwean economy, and the deepening of relations with international institutions such as the IMF and the WB (Dzirutwe 2014).

Kufakurinani (2021) regards the adopted Policy as rhetoric and as a sign of desperation because it came after Mugabe had tried other policy options. With this, gravitating towards China became an obvious option to reawaken relations with the East which coincided with China's economic expansion and the decline of Western hegemony on the globe (Kufakurinani 2021).

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2010) points out that the Policy was preceded by various policies attempted by the Zimbabwean government. The country employed the Policy posture which was driven by nationalists, rooted in hostility and arrogance towards the USA and its Western allies, and in an attempt to take a going-it-alone path. Having unsuccessfully exhausted this position, Zimbabwe adopted the Policy. In this sense, this Policy position demonstrates desperation on the part of the government. The post-2000 foreign policy was based on nostalgia. Zimbabwe returned to the Chinese of the past period of non-alignment, a phenomenon that represents backwardness and poverty of ideas. Nevertheless, this has paid dividends, as China vetoed the Resolutions in the UNSC tabled by the West against Zimbabwe in exchange for access to various sectors of the country's economy (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2010).

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2010) further states that Zimbabwe failed to understand that the post-1990 China-Africa Policy was not anchored on the ideology and sympathy that used to guide China's relations with African liberation movements. In this sense, Zimbabwe was viewed more as an economic partner rather than a friend. Hence,

⁸ Staff Monitored Programs are informal arrangements made between the central government and the IMF to monitor the economic program of a particular state.

China had no intention of providing additional loans to Zimbabwe until the latter country repaid its debt. It is for this reason that the prospects of a Policy that was based on the close comradeship of the liberation struggle and old leftist ideology raised reservations. However, Zimbabwe regarded the Chinese Going Out Global Strategy⁹ as being diverged from the economic engagements with the USA and its Western allies, which it described as a hidden imperialism and colonialism. Chinese economic expansion and development aid was viewed as benefitting both the lender and the borrower in keeping with the win-win principle (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2010).

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2010) also asserts that the Policy was used by the ZANU-PF to negate an attempt by the MDC to re-engage with the West and the USA. This explained why the government signed an \$8 billion investment agreement with China-Sonangol in 2009 without the knowledge of the MDC splinter parties that formed part of the Government of National Unity (GNU). The agreements signed covered areas such as gold, platinum refining, oil and gas exploration, fuel purchase, and distribution, as well as the establishment of infrastructural projects such as houses and roads. The announcement of the agreement came through the office of the ZANU-PF to project its successful effort in drawing investors to the country as opposed to the collective efforts of the Inclusive Government. As such, the MDC political formations learned about the deal from the state-aligned newspaper, Herald, announced by then Minister of Defence, Emmerson Mnangagwa without the knowledge of the MDC-affiliated Minister of Finance, Tendai Biti (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2010).

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2010) argues that the deal represents politicking by the ZANU-PF in an attempt to replicate the strategy adopted by Angola when it turned to China after the IMF and the WB declined to extend the credit lines to that country. This strategy could not work in Zimbabwe because the country was heavily indebted to China, and the Asian giant had silently imposed sanctions for credit lines against the African country. Just like other investors, China's engagements with Zimbabwe were driven by profit rather than friendship, and the Asian country wanted repayment for its loans. On the other hand, Zimbabwe was unable to repay the loans and its politics was not favourable to business (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2010).

⁹ The Go Out Global Strategy refers to China's foreign policy initiative adopted to encourage Chinese companies to invest abroad (Wang 2016)

Africa Confidential (2013) states that Chinese development projects were stagnant because of the delayed payment by the Zimbabwean government. A deal between the Zimbabwe Power Company and China's Sinohydro which was signed in 2012 to add 300MW to Kariba South Hydropower station to boost Zimbabwe's energy production was held-up due to non-payment. The China Export-Import Bank was unable to release the \$400 million needed for the project until the government repaid a debt of \$27 million in March 2012 (Africa Confidential 2013).

For Stuart (2018), the Policy was adopted to constrain the effects brought about by Western sanctions. However, he argues that its implementation saw Zimbabwe becoming a beggar to China (Stuart 2018). Adding to Stuart's arguments, Youde (2007:5), shows that the opponents of the Policy described it as a cynical attempt by Mugabe to protect the regime which had lost domestic legitimacy. It came at a time when the government received a backlash from various segments of society which provided a favourable environment for the opposition MDC (Youde 2007).

Ndimande and Moyo (2018b) argue that the Policy was guided by politics as opposed to economic interests. Hence, in its implementation, Zimbabwe adopted inward-looking policies such as the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act in 2008 which pushed investors out of the Zimbabwean economy. It was a confrontational, hostile, and conflictual foreign policy which saw Mugabe challenging the Western-sponsored liberal global order (Ndimande & Moyo 2018b).

Mbiba and Ndubiwa (2006) describe the Policy as the ZANU-PF restoration of the political old guard, a militarised and uncompromising approach to domestic politics, and as a bitter anti-imperialistic stance in the international arena. They further argue that the Policy has deepened Zimbabwe's relations with its former allies in the struggle for independence. However, this foreign policy outlook has failed to rescue the country's ailing economy, and the country needed to complement Chinese investment with those of the former traditional Western partners, particularly in the extractive and manufacturing sectors. Beyond that, Zimbabwe should have striven to constrain the capital flight as manifested by its nationals who took their investment elsewhere on the continent and outside the African region (Mbiba & Ndubiwa 2006).

Gerald (2019) views the Policy as rhetoric by the Zimbabwean government to reshape the country's foreign relations in an endeavour to align Zimbabwe with countries that

were against the hegemonic and imperialist tendencies of Western powers. Mugabe took a strategic step to reawaken the historical ties that the country had built with China and Russia during the colonial struggle. Consequently, the Policy responded to the wishes of the ruling elites, whilst deepening Mugabe's Pan-Africanist stance on the globe (Gerald 2019).

Pigou (2016) avers that the prospects of the Policy in bringing economic recovery were negated by deteriorating economic conditions. Pushed by desperation for new credit lines, the government tried to reconnect international creditors by introducing a Staff Monitored Programme (SMP) with the IMF. Through this posture, the government sought to restore the relations damaged by payment defaults and correct its financial non-compliance (Pigou 2016).

3.5. Opened the country for looting

Magaisa (2016) points out that corruption, plunder, and looting of Zimbabwean resources took place under the Policy. In this regard, Magaisa says that Mugabe complained about the smuggling of diamonds and the swindling of money by Chinese companies because the country's revenue collected from the mine did not even exceed \$2 billion of the \$15 billion estimated to have earned from Marange mine. But reports by CSOs on the corruption that had been going on for years in the Chiadzwa diamond mine, involving the country's government officials, and Chinese companies, were ignored by Robert Mugabe. During his tenure as the country's Finance Minister (under the Government of National Unity in 2012) Tendai Biti's office received \$43 million in revenue from the mine while expecting \$600 million. An investigation Report by the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Mining and Energy in 2013, shows that there were discrepancies between the tax reports from the diamond companies and the revenue received by the state (Magaisa 2016).

According to Murori (2016), Madzimore, of the opposition People's Democratic Party (PDP), indicates that China is aiding a corrupt and repressive government to loot the country's minerals to boost its economy. The desperation from Mugabe saw China being given unlimited access to the Zimbabwean economy in return for protecting ZANU-PF in the international arena. In this context, China penetrated the Zimbabwean economy to siphon profits to Shanghai, Beijing, and Hong Kong. By propping up

Mugabe's regime and siphoning billions of dollars from Zimbabwe, China was killing the country twice. China's conduct was the worst kind of imperialism that should be opposed by Zimbabweans because it disempowered and disinherited present and future generations (Murori 2016). Equally, Regier, Wazzi-Moukahal, Osborn, and Arraïs (2020) argue that the East-Asian investment brought about by the Policy prompted the extraction of resources in a predatory manner. They also talk about the siphoning off of diamonds accounted for \$15 billion from the Zimbabwean Chiadzwa Mine in the Marange area as well as tax avoidance from Chinese companies (Regier, Wazzi-Moukahal, Osborn, & Arraïs 2020).

In agreement with the views that the Policy paved the way for the looting of Zimbabwe's minerals, Huda, Ruf, and Muchatuta (2022) argue that China's investment is confined to sectors from which it would reap more rewards than what it has devoted to the project. Its intention is not to rescue Zimbabwe's ailing economy but to loot the country's minerals to repay its loans. If anything, the Policy has left Zimbabwe in a deep economic crisis, in 2019, the country's arrears to international financial institutions, and its external debt, including the loans from China, exceeded \$10,7 billion (Huda, Ruf, & Muchatuta 2022).

Mwatwara and Kufakurinani (2019) assert that the Policy served as a replication of colonial exploitation and dependency. Building on their shared history of being exploited by colonial Western powers, China has successfully used their past friendship to perpetuate a colonial-like relationship which was passed off as a friendly gesture (Mwatwara & Kufakurinani 2019).

Kufakurinani, Kvangraven, Santana, and Styve (2017) regard the Policy as a quest by Zimbabwe to seek a better patron or donor. It reflected an admission by the Zimbabwean government that the country was still depending on donors and that it could not stand on its own. The gravitation to the East was meant to change the character and form of dependency from the traditional Western partners, but the logic essentially remained the same. They claim that the terms of dependency have changed because China has drawn a lesson from Western engagements with Zimbabwe, particularly, with respect to how their behaviour was described as interference in the affairs of Zimbabwe. The African Country's President remained the

greatest beggar carrying a begging bowl to Asia (Kufakurinani, Kvangraven, Santana, & Styve 2017).

Africa Report (2006) indicates that the government claimed that the Policy could rescue the country's ailing economy, and it cited the agreement it entered into with China National Machinery and Equipment Import and Export Corporation to establish thermal power stations. While the details surrounding the deal were covert, it came to the public's knowledge that the government financed the project by supplying chrome to China. As a result, the public feared that the government was mortgaging resources as a source of payment to China. Thus, the Zimbabwe-China relationship could only survive if the country was able to provide resources to the Asian giant (Africa Report 2006).

Nyarota (2015) indicates that the Zimbabwe Federation of Trade Unions (ZFTU), a labour movement affiliated with the ZANU-PF, dismissed the Policy as having a biased path to stimulate economic growth. This Policy posture suggested that the government colluded with China to loot diamonds at Chiadzwa mines. The foreigners siphoned the diamond revenue because there was no oversight from the government. Among other things, private planes, carrying diamonds to Dubai and Hong Kong, were not searched (Nyarota 2015).

According to Mwatwara and Kufakurinani (2019), the legislators of the Zimbabwean government decried the fraud and exploitative practices of Chinese companies. In 2016, the Chinese company, Yufan Import and Export Trade Company, was found to have imported dishes to Zimbabwe for two or four cents, whilst selling them for \$6 and \$13. It was also found that this Chinese company had no bank account in Zimbabwe, raising reservations about how it paid for its imports from China. This should have been done through the import licenses issued by the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe. Given that the company did not have a bank account, it was also not paying corporate tax (Mwatwara & Kufakurinani (2019).

Mapping the evolution of the Policy, Ojakorotu and Kamidza (2018) argue that it has enabled the country to develop closer relations with countries of the East in the face of Western sanctions. However, the narrow posture undertaken by the Policy through

the exclusion of Western powers made the country vulnerable to Chinese exploitative practices, as Zimbabwe had no powerful alternative development partners (Ojakorotu & Kamidza 2018).

East Africa News (2022) asserts that China Exim-Bank granted Zimbabwe \$200 million loan to purchase agricultural equipment in 2006. In return, the platinum reserves at the Northfields were purported to be used as a collateral damage. At that time, it was not clear whether the mining of platinum will be carried out by Chinese or Zimbabwean companies, but it is said that China demanded 50 percent stakes on the platinum reserves as a collateral damage for the loan and the stake was set to be freed when Zimbabwe had finished repaying the loan (East Africa News 2022). AFRODAD (2019) indicates the smuggling of goods such as diamonds deprived the country of the much-needed revenue and had further deepened Zimbabwe's debt crisis (AFRODAD 2019).

3.6. Sloganeering and survival strategy

Chinayama (2015) describes the Policy as a mirage. For Chinayama, a serious and effective policy should have a policy document. But the Policy had no documentation, except being mentioned in statements of government officials, and by their travel patterns to countries in the East. The Policy was more of a slogan, as opposed to being a formal foreign policy. This was an indication of the lack of commitment from the Zimbabwean government in its ties with Eastern countries. A glance at the Policy shows that it had no qualities, was largely designed to make individuals, policymakers and investors hope that Zimbabwe would attain economic development through limiting relations towards the East. This foreign policy posture was not sustainable, and would not last for long, as future generations will gravitate the country towards the West. The implementation of the Policy was not focused on the provision of services that would address the needs of the public, but to equip the political elites with military equipment. The author recommended that Zimbabwe move beyond cheap politics by developing a well-coordinated approach to engage all regions of the world (Chinayama 2015).

Stiftung (2004) dismisses the Policy as a ZANU-PF slogan, as opposed to a genuine foreign policy, grounded in a formal policy document. It was a mere strategy meant to move away from Western dominance and to establish a new relationship with the East.

The Policy represented a regime survival strategy led by Robert Mugabe's ZANU-PF. In the face of economic isolation, and the diplomatic onslaught from the West, ZANU-PF found refuge in the East (Stiftung 2004). Pambuka (2019) stresses that financial backing from China prevented the total collapse of the Zimbabwean economy and ultimately provided regime security to the government (Pambuka 2019). In agreement, Chipaike and Mhandara (2013) say that because of its diplomatic fallout with the West, and the USA in particular, Zimbabwe was unable to benefit from the AGOA which was established by the former to deepen trade relations with Africa. Hence Zimbabwe, as a punished state, established relations with China, a historical ally, with strategic interests in Africa, to close the gap left by the West (Chipaike & Mhandara 2013).

Chipaike and Mhandara (2013) argue that against the backdrop of Zimbabwe's isolation, the country desperately needed a powerful partner to fill the vacuum left by the West, and ultimately prevent the possible demise of ZANU-PF. The realities on the ground reduced it to a party slogan since the Policy was tied to the survival of the ZANU-PF. It is within this context, that during its political campaigns, ZANU-PF projected China as a suitable partner to aid the country to defeat imperialism, against ulterior Western motives for regime change. Another development that reduced the Policy to a slogan, is that the opposition parties and civil society groups were not consulted in designing the Policy. Hence the policy received a backlash from local industries who were concerned with cheap Chinese goods flooding the markets (Chipaike & Mhandara 2013).

Chipaike and Mhandara (2013) further point out that the significance of the Policy was also questioned by opposition parties which formed the GNU with the ZANU-PF in 2009. In their view, Zimbabwe should have drawn investment and aid from all corners of the world, rather than confining itself to the East. Arguing on this, the Deputy Prime Minister of the GNU, Arthur Mutambara, remarked that the days of the Policy are over, and the country should look to all parts of the world. Consequently, the GNU established a re-engagement committee to bargain with the EU to remove sanctions and restore cordial relations with Zimbabwe in 2012. Thus, the opposition parties in the GNU were willing to remove the short-sighted posture in Zimbabwe's foreign policy to make it more comprehensive in its outlook (Chipaike & Mhandara 2013).

Mahandara and Chipaike (2013) stress that beyond investment, trade, and infrastructural development, which was needed by Zimbabwe, Chinese diplomatic support was of great importance to the country in international institutions such as the UN. In this regard, China, along with Russia, protected Zimbabwe from Western-sponsored sanctions in the UNSC. The support China granted to Zimbabwe in the form of weaponry to the security forces aligned to ZANU-PF shielded the party from possible regime change. This should be understood in the context that security agencies were loyal to the party, and commanders of the Zimbabwe Defence Force expressed their support to the ruling party and condemned any possible regime change (Mhandara & Chipaike 2013). For example, amid the highly contested Presidential elections in 2008 between ZANU-PF, and the opposition MDC, which was marked by violence, a Chinese ship carrying military weapons was denied permission to dock in SA. While these weapons were dubbed to be part of the normal military trade relations between Zimbabwe and China, they came at a time when the MDC posed as a threat to ZANU-PF (Alao 2014).

Asuelime (2018) points out that a shift to the Policy was a survival strategy. Not that Mugabe loved the Chinese, or that China was altruistic towards Zimbabwe. In this context, China used her non-interference policy to gain an economic grip across the continent including Zimbabwe, whilst Zimbabwe needed a new partner in the face of strained relations with the West. The Mugabe-led government engaged China to save the country from collapsing and to consolidate the ZANU-PF rule (Asuelime 2018).

Mudavanhu (2014) examines the potential of the Policy to stimulate economic growth and development. He concludes that the Policy had no proper grounds and was largely premised on the politics of the ZANU, thus making it a slogan as opposed to a formally adopted foreign policy. The Policy was also constrained by the predatory characteristics of the Zimbabwean state and the self-serving practices of government officials who use their positions to enrich themselves with state resources while neglecting much-needed growth and development (Mudavanhu 2014).

Gasela (2018) shows that China provided the Mugabe-led government with arms and other security equipment because the army remained a source of legitimacy in the face of the declining trust and confidence in his government from the general

populace. Gasela stresses that Mugabe required military equipment to prevent the eruption of violence that could culminate in a coup-de tat which subsequently happened in 2017 even though the literature refers to it as a 'soft Coup'. In another development, the Zimbabwean government purchased a Chinese military jet without informing the country's Parliament or the government procurement board in 2006 (Gasela 2018).

Gasela (2018) also states that before the controversial shipment, China provided the Zimbabwean government with arms whilst disregarding the political developments on the ground, such as the unleashing of violence against the opposition MDC. In the period between 2005 and 2007, China provided Zimbabwe with armaments amounting to \$28 million. The shipment came at the same time as the ruling party was unleashing violence on the opposition MDC following the 2005 elections. The acquisition of Chinese military equipment raised questions of morality and legitimacy as the country was facing serious economic woes. For a country that was facing serious economic woes, the acquisition of food and medicine would have been more moral and legitimate (Gasela 2018).

According to Mvutunyayi (2010), Chinese military equipment, and the weapons provided to Zimbabwe' fuelled the country's authoritative machinery, as the government threatened to use any means to clamp down on the opposition. It was also questionable for a country that was not at war or facing any external security threat. Domestically, Zimbabwe was confronted with an unstable political environment ahead of the 2005 parliamentary elections (Mvutungayi 2010). Chipanga and Mude (2015:303) argue that the West views the Policy as a desultory, face-saving political gambit crafted out of desperation by a group of power-hungry despots (Chipanga & Mude 2015:303).

In the same line of argument, Kufakurinani (2021) states that the Policy was political rhetoric meant to protect Mugabe's government and that China was complicit in preserving the ZANU-PF rule. Thus, the Policy was a survival strategy adopted by Zimbabwe amid tense relations with the West. The state embarked on a survival mode amid the degenerating economy, endemic corruption, and growing opposition. In this case, the country's foreign policy, and economic development policies, were mainly

designed to protect the ruling party and its officials. The realignment with the East brought more political gains to the detriment of economic benefits. China gained a grip on the country's mines, retail industries, and other sectors to take profits to its home, and dried up much-needed investment (Kufakurinani 2021).

Lockwood (2018) argues that Zimbabwe's foreign policy objectives were based on the domestic goal of the government, notably, the survival of state officials. To preserve the ZANU-PF regime, Zimbabwe's foreign policy was driven by three objectives, which were accessing foreign aid and investment, limiting international criticism, and reducing the threat from the opposition party. The regime's survival gained precedence in foreign policy as the government was in a difficult position. This compelled it to use any opportunity at home, and in the international arena, to remain in power. Amid the deteriorating economy, foreign policy was designed to access foreign aid and investment to sustain the security of the regime. This is so because the declining economy had put a strain on the governing party and thus threatened its rule. At that time, there was widespread public discontent over the cost of living and unemployment which led to the emergence of opposition parties, such as the MDC (Lockwood 2018).

Lockwood (2018) further states that the international financial institutions' reluctance to provide funds to the government meant that the ZANU-PF had no money to sustain its grip on power. China was also unwilling to provide funds to the government in exchange for the minerals. As a result, through his position in the African Union (AU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Mugabe was able to boost Chinese clout and its access to other partners in the region (Lockwood 2018).

Hovel, Ndawana, and Nhemachena (2020) stress that the Policy had mainly helped to prop up Mugabe's regime but that its economic benefits on the ground were absent. Alternative trade partners have benefitted the political elites. However, many Zimbabwean nationals were largely affected by the sanctions and became victims of their dehumanising effects. There was a lack of basic needs such as water, sanitation, health, and education, and food production also declined. Given that many nationals did not have the financial capacity to send their children to education facilities, shop in friendly countries, and receive medical services, they became victims of the sanctions while elites continued to benefit from the Policy. On the other hand, political elites were

able to send their kids to educational facilities abroad, receive medical services in friendly countries, and to shop abroad. The investment brought by China and other friendly countries in various sectors, particularly in mining, was benefitting government officials, their friends, and their families. Thus, China and other emerging countries were instrumental in protecting the regime from collapsing at the expense of human security (Ndawana, & Nhemachena 2020).

Kebele (2007) points out that the Policy came after the government had tried many policy initiatives that had failed. Starting with the country's relations with Libya and Malaysia, these policy postures were meant to draw support for the government. However, Zimbabwe had little to offer. On the other hand, China was unwilling to give more support and it dismissed Zimbabwe's claim that it would provide support to many of its development initiatives such as building steel mills (Kebele 2007).

Peta (2006) describes the Policy as empty political sloganeering that was set to bring no tangible investment to rescue Zimbabwe's ailing economy. In 2006, six major Chinese companies put their work on hold in key projects citing non-payment from the Zimbabwean government (Peta 2006).

Similarly, Lockwood (2018) stresses that Zimbabwe's foreign policy was meant to deepen ZANU-PF's domestic legitimacy and to reduce threats at home. Mugabe employed rhetoric and language around race and anti-imperialism to silence domestic criticism. He emphasised ZANU-PF's liberation credentials and blamed colonialism for the problems faced by the country. Additionally, Mugabe dismissed the criticism levelled against him as being informed by imperialism and racism, and he described opposition parties as being puppets of Western countries that continued to interfere in the country's domestic affairs. This stance contained domestic criticism and made it difficult for opposition parties to make any influence (Lockwood 2018).

3.7. Ushering in a threat to democracy, peace and security

Mhandara and Chipaike (2013) describe the Policy as a means to draw support from China which often came at the expense of democracy, peace, and security in Zimbabwe. While China's support for Zimbabwe in the context of its non-interference policy enabled the country to survive the Western onslaught, the move also posed a

threat to the democratisation process in Zimbabwe. Without China, Zimbabwe could have heeded Western calls for economic and political reforms. Given the absence of conditions for good governance, and the promotion of human rights in Chinese aid, Zimbabwe normalised authoritarian practices. Human security came under threat as the security forces unleashed violence against citizens (Mhandara & Chipaike 2013).

Taylor (2008) underscores, that armed with Chinese military weapons, the Zimbabwe National Defence Force entered politics, which should have remained a terrain for civilians, pushing Zimbabweans to cast their votes for the ZANU-PF. For example, in 2006, Mugabe indicated that those who might have covert plans to turn against his government should know that there are armed men and women ready to pull the trigger (Taylor 2008).

Ramani (2016) stresses that China relied on the ZANU-PF as opposition parties have expressed their disdain towards the country's relations with China. During his campaign for the 2014 Presidential elections, the then MDC leader, Morgan Tsvangirai pledged to crack down on Chinese investors who violated Zimbabwean laws and turn down investment projects that do not generate growth. Considering the growing anti-Chinese sentiments, China deepened its support for Mugabe as Xi Jinping described Mugabe as an "all-weather friend" during his visit to the country in 2016. At that time, China's deepening investment in Zimbabwe along with its rhetorical support was significant in boosting its Go Out Global Strategy through economic expansion to the African continent (Ramani 2016). Amid a 90% unemployment rate, the government faced constant strikes and opted to unleash violence against protestors (Xinsong 2016).

3.8. China undermines Zimbabwe's investment and trade regulations

Alao (2014) shows that while the Zimbabwean government had introduced the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act in 2008, its implementation under the Policy was undermined, as Chinese companies became exempted. Under the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act, foreign companies, with shares of more than \$500,000, were compelled to give 51% of their shares to local investors. During the negotiation of the \$700 million loan deal between Zimbabwe and China in

2011, the Chinese Vice Premier, Wang Qishan hinted at Zimbabwe exempting Beijing's companies from such a nationalisation policy. Consequently, the Chinese-owned alluvial diamond mine became exempted from the nationalisation policy (Alao 2014).

Hodzi, Hartwell and de Jager (2012) indicate that Chinese-tied development assistance also interfered with Zimbabwe's trade and investment regulatory framework implemented under the Policy. As such, Chinese companies received preferential treatment as they became the contractors as well as the suppliers of materials for the projects built by China in Zimbabwe. This among other things, violated World Trade Organisation law for competitive bidding in procurement, and it also provided a breeding ground for corruption because of the lack of transparency. As such, the discrepancies between Zimbabwe's domestic policies and their implementation were not sustainable and beneficial to the average Zimbabwean (Hodzi, Hartwell & de Jager 2012).

Mudyadzo (2016) indicates that the decision to exempt Chinese companies came to haunt the Zimbabwean government as it ultimately had to reconsider the Marange deal¹⁰ that excluded the Asian giant companies. The Zimbabwean government's decision to take control of all mining rights at Chiadzwa diamonds in March 2016 infuriated Chinese investors. Consequently, the Chinese developed a dissenting view against Zimbabwe's Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act. Mudyadzo stresses that not all Chinese companies were exempted from Zimbabwe's Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Policy. It was only a handful of Chinese companies that were excluded from the Policy, including Tian Ze which had supported black farmers in growing tobacco (Mudyadzo 2016). In this sense, the author suggests that the exemption was only granted to Chinese companies engaging in corporate social responsibility.

¹⁰ This is an agreement signed by the governments of Zimbabwe and China for the latter countries to mine diamond in the African country.

3.9. Look East to look the least

According to Moyo and Modlongwa (2015) the Policy made Zimbabwe 'look the least'. Among other things, the average Zimbabweans who were the critical recipients of the Policy found themselves buying substandard Chinese products that were short-lived. Moreover, Zimbabwe's gravitation to the East made the country 'look the least' because China failed to rescue the country's economy as was demonstrated by the collapse of business and skyrocketing unemployment (Moyo & Mdlongwa 2015). Moreover, the Policy failed to revive Zimbabwe's ailing economy. The country's gross domestic product fell sharply, and the unemployment rate stood at 80 percent in 2005. Inflation also rose sharply with the Zimbabwean dollar devaluing by 25, 000 percent relative to the USA dollar. Amid these crises, Mugabe sought help from China in 2007 to settle the country's IMF debt arrears, but the Asian giant offered only \$ 600 000. At that time, the financial assistance provided by China could only give hunger relief for Zimbabweans from August to October of the same year, while 11 million people were in dire need of food (IWPR, 2008).

Chinyama (2015) says that Chinese capital investment, technology, and skills were not intended to capacitate the country to process its minerals, but rather to extract Zimbabwe's minerals cheaply. As such, the country formed part of a broader strategy by China in Africa of sourcing minerals to sustain its own economy. Zimbabwe should have fostered a win-win cooperation with the East by lobbying China to establish companies that would process raw materials into finished goods locally (Chinyama 2015).

Chipaike and Mhandara (2013) assert that Chinese investments were skewed in the Zimbabwean extractive sector to fulfil the Asian giant's appetite for raw materials needed to fuel its growing economy. Regrettably, in its engagement with Zimbabwe, China did not capacitate the country to produce value-added products. While Zimbabwe praised China, the Asian giant's engagement with the country was exploitative because it exported raw minerals as opposed to turning them into value-added products locally. The latter development suggests that Zimbabwe was handing itself to a new player in the new scramble for African resources. Zimbabwe should

have balanced its need for a global diplomatic partner with the needs and interests of its citizens (Chipaike & Mhandara 2013).

Chimanikire (2016) stipulates that China was attracted by Zimbabwe's large reserves of minerals, and the country's inability to extract such minerals, since Zimbabwe was engulfed by poverty in the face of its isolation by the West. Among others, Zimbabwe has large reserves of ferrochrome, gold, silver, and copper. It also has the second-largest platinum reserves on the globe estimated to have a value of over \$500 billion but these have remained untapped due to the country's limited resources to mine them (Chimanikire 2016).

Matahwa (2007) avers that Mugabe continued to mortgage the country's resources to China to evade international isolation. This was viewed in a poor light as the country could ultimately pay a huge price because of the government's uncontrollable appetite for cheap loans from purported friendly countries such as China. Many of the deals between the country and China came in the form of barter trade, whereby cash-strapped Zimbabwe surrendered minerals or agricultural crops to China in exchange for loans and other development assistance. In this regard, Zimbabwe became the loser because it gave away resources that would serve as a source of revenue through a barter system. The foregoing development suggests that Zimbabwe was heavily indebted to China. To receive immediate assistance from the Asian giant, the country had put its natural wealth on the line. Consequently, the mortgaging of minerals would affect the country's uranium, platinum, copper, and gold reserves as well as the well-performing tobacco production sector (Matahwa 2007).

According to the 2008 Institute for War and Peace Reporting, this demonstrates that Zimbabwe was a desperate ally of China. Among others, the Chinese telecommunication company, Huawei demanded a share in Zimbabwean mines and tobacco in exchange for supplying the country's telephone network with equipment amounting to \$160 million in 2008. Considering the above, Zimbabwe was an economic 'small-fry' to China, whilst for the Mugabe-led ZANU-PF the Asian giant was the only available option to get out of a deep hole. The Zimbabwean government relied heavily on China to draw much-needed investment to rehabilitate the economy, to assist in improving the infrastructure, and to support agricultural production to reduce

food insecurity. China also served as a suitable ally to prop up the Mugabe-led ZANU-PF in the context where its legitimacy had declined both at home and abroad (IWPR 2008).

Vhumbunu (2018) points to the trade deficit that was skewed against Zimbabwe in her relations with China since the adoption of the Policy. The author underscores that Zimbabwe's exports to China were largely constituted by unprocessed raw materials and agricultural commodities, whilst her imports from China were mainly in the form of value-added manufactured goods (Vhumbunu 2018).

3.10. China flouting labour laws

Mapure (2014) mentions that Chinese businesses operating in Zimbabwe under the Policy were also flouting labour laws. Due to unfair labour practices, the influence of China in Zimbabwe was largely negatively felt by the workforce (under the Policy). For example, the Zimbabwean workers working at the Military College were dismissed by the Chinese company, Anhui Foreign Economic Construction Company, for striking against low wages (\$4 per day) amid allegations of beatings by Chinese managers in 2010. In another development, Anjin Investment mining company, dismissed 1 500 Zimbabwean workers after they engaged in a strike demanding higher wages and better working conditions in a diamond mine. An alarming development was that some Chinese employers argued that they had protection from the government and thus nothing would happen to them (Mapaure 2014).

Similarly, Gasela (2018) mentions that China exploited its exemption from Zimbabwe's immigration laws which prohibits the importation of labour. For example, the Chinese Anjin Investment Company employed 10% of low-skilled Chinese nationals to work as security guards. The wages paid to the local workforce at this company were lower relative to other companies operating at the Marange Fields. This is so because the workers were getting \$300 relative to the \$1000 given to employees of other companies. Moreover, it has been shown that the violation of labour practices is a norm, as the company used corporal punishment, workers were working long hours (12 hours per shift), workers were not paid for overtime, and were often called for duty, while off-duty, without notice. In view of the above, this practice was against

Zimbabwe's labour Act which underscores that workers should have at least one day to rest per week (Gasela 2018).

Further, Gasela (2018) emphasises that Chinese operations in Zimbabwe's mining industry had brought detrimental effects to the country. Boosted by their proximity to Mugabe, Chinese companies depleted Zimbabwe's minerals, particularly in the Eastern part of the country. The communities that had formerly resided in the mining areas were evicted because they engaged in illegal mining practices at the Marange Fields. Mining Companies such as Anjin Investment did not provide workers with protective clothing, a phenomenon which suggests that China was exporting its bad human rights practices abroad (Gasela 2018).

Going against Zimbabwe's Constitution and its Labour Act, Chinguno, Mereki and Mutyanda (2015) point out that the Anjin company employed Zimbabweans on a contract basis, and there was no permanent workforce. The workforce with the trade unions not affiliated with the ZANU-PF were either dismissed or retrenched. Moreover, the ever presence of the police and the Zimbabwean Defence Force guarding the mines meant that independent unions were unable to recruit employees at the mine (Chinguno, Mereki & Mutyanda 2015).

3.11. Chinese businesses taking Zimbabwe's informal and formal market

According to Chakanya and Muchichwa (2009), following the collapse of Zimbabwe's retail industry, which was prompted by the influx of Chinese retailers, many Zimbabweans moved into the informal economy to sustain their livelihoods. However, their Flea Markets, which were destroyed during the government-led 'Operation Restore Order' in 2005 were renovated and subsequently given to Chinese businesses. In the formal market, Chinese products were affordable to consumers who could not afford to buy goods sold in the non-Chinese market. Nevertheless, the presence of such products displaced local products, and money earned from Chinese products was exported to China as opposed to being invested in the local economy (Chakanya & Muchichwa 2009).

Arguing on the same issue, Nyere (2013) indicates that the penetration of Chinese big business, along with small-scale business, has since pushed their Zimbabwean counterparts out of business. Among other things, Chinese entrepreneurs have entered the property sector. As a result, these enterprises have become major importers of Chinese products and goods ranging from sanitary ware, detergents, electrical goods and appliances, power generators, and telecommunication equipment. There was also a concern from the public about short-lived Chinese products. Additionally, some sections of society viewed China as a neo-coloniser which seeks to exploit African natural resources while dumping its cheap manufactured goods on the continent and thus adding little value (Nyere 2013).

Mudyadzo (2016) underscores that the Zimbabwean government should have guarded against its appetite for Chinese loans as it could pay a huge price in the future. Despite the deepening relations between Zimbabwe and China, Zimbabwe's economy continued to descend into crisis, and Chinese substandard products were flooding the country's market. These developments constrained the relationship from bearing fruit, and ultimately rescue Zimbabwe's ailing economy. Thus, the development of Zimbabwe could be delayed by China (Mudyadzo 2016).

Mudyadzo (2016) further states that Chinese counterfeit products were flooding the Zimbabwean market. For example, light electronic counterfeit brands such as Novia (Nokia), Sansang (Samsung), and Sorny (Sony) were found in the Zimbabwean market. In areas of clothing and shoes, the Chinese have counterfeited Nike with Mike and Adidas with Abibas. Hence, Zimbabweans were labelling Chinese goods and products as 'Zhing-Zhong' (Mudyadzo 2016).

As a result, Mvutungayi (2010) avers that China worsened unemployment in Zimbabwe. Among other things, the substandard products dumped in Zimbabwe could not compete anywhere in the world. Therefore, China created employment for its citizens by displacing Zimbabwean businesses in the retail sector. As such, the penetration of Chinese goods had collapsed the Zimbabwean manufacturing industry. Chinese products sold in the Zimbabwean market were of lower quality and they were cheaper than their local counterparts. Hence, most Zimbabweans preferred them in the ailing economy (Mudyadzo 2016). While Zimbabwe's manufacturing industry was

hit hard by the sanctions, Chinese penetration worsened the situation by collapsing the clothing sector, among others. A large number of Chinese small entrepreneurs entered the sector, following the introduction of the Policy, and vied with local infant industries in the country's market (Mvutungayi 2010).

In agreement, Marukutira (2015) states that the Zimbabwean government has made a terrible mistake in negotiating the terms of trade with countries of the East, particularly China. Before the Policy, Zimbabwe had a flourishing textile industry, which employed more than 24,000 people. The Policy opened the textile industry to Chinese entrepreneurs who traded in different kinds of textile products cheaply. Given that China, and countries in the Far East, have advanced industries and sold their products at lower prices, local industries were unable to compete with them. For example, a face towel sold at \$5 by local entrepreneurs was found at \$1 from Chinese retailers. Hence the Policy saw 83% of the Zimbabwean workforce losing their jobs in the textile sector between 2003 and 2015. The Policy has had spill-over effects on the production of cotton too. The increase in Chinese textile imports led to a decrease in the demand for cotton and its prices. Consequently, rural small-scale farmers who relied on cotton to sustain their lives witnessed a decline in production. On the other hand, China benefitted from the Zimbabwean market through its cheap textiles. Through cheap textiles, China created jobs for its nationals at home, and in Zimbabwe. The Zimbabweans who used to work in textile industries in Midlands, Masvingo, and Matebeleland migrated to SA to look for employment (Marukutira 2015).

However, Mudyadzo (2016) says that the problem of substandard goods and products cannot be attributed to China alone. The Zimbabwean government had room to regulate the quality of imports from China. It is worth mentioning that Chinese exports to the USA and Europe were constituted by-products of high quality. Thus, the Zimbabwean government's predatory tendency has provided fertile ground for the dumping of lower-quality Chinese goods (Mudyadzo 2016).

Assessing the impact of the Policy in addressing Zimbabwe's economic challenges, Kushata (2017) argues that the Policy has unlocked the country's economy, but has failed to reawaken the country's collapsed industries which were critical to growing the economy and creating jobs. Moreover, the Policy has opened the door for cheap, and

lower-quality, Chinese goods, which drove local industries out of business. Consequently, the author recommends that China should have created employment for local people and desist from importing its labour and equipment to build projects in Zimbabwe. For its part, Zimbabwe should have considered re-engaging with the West as relations with China, through the Policy was tantamount to putting all the eggs in one basket (Kushata 2017).

Mugumisi (2014) underscores that Chinese imports, amongst other factors, led to the collapse of Zimbabwe's textile and clothing sectors. As a result, the collapse of this segment of the manufacturing sector, which was labour-intensive, employing women and low-skilled labour, constrained the country's efforts at accelerating industrialisation and reducing unemployment (Mugumisi 2014).

3.12. Fails to replicate the Chinese development model

Ganda (2020) interrogates the extent to which Zimbabwe has been able to emulate the Chinese development model through the Policy, as a development path that other African countries can adopt. The author concludes that the implementation of the Policy undertook a political posture meant to boost ZANU-PF amid international isolation, strategic planning and the replication of the Chinese development model development was neglected. Thus, the failure of the Chinese development model in the context of Zimbabwe's Policy could not only be attributed to China's self-serving practices. Rather Zimbabwe has failed to plan beyond political interests. As such, the Policy recorded no success other than enabling Zimbabwe to frustrate the international pressure that could bring about a regime change (Ganda 2020).

Ganda (2020) further indicates that Zimbabwe has attempted to replicate the Chinese model by deepening the role of ZANU-PF in state affairs, and by entrusting its cadres to serve in government. For example, Zimbabwe's Central Committee, and the Politburo, mirrored that of the Chinese Communist Party. Moreover, Zimbabwe has adopted an authoritarian posture in the implementation of policies ranging from land reform and indigenisation to its economic empowerment policy. However, in the case of Zimbabwe, development was undermined by corrupt political elites, nepotism, and economic stagnation. There was no innovation and experimentation in the country, hence the Policy has not yielded tangible benefits at the grassroots (Ganda 2020).

3.13. Impact on Zimbabwe's infrastructure

Assessing the presence of Chinese companies working on Zimbabwe's infrastructure projects, Mapiko (2016) argues that these companies have had positive and negative impacts on the Zimbabwean people and the environment. The author outlines that the positive impact outweighs the negative impact brought by Chinese construction companies. The author points out that the benefits yielded for hospitals and schools built by China, as well as mining machinery, have provided the country with benefits which were significant to the nation. Chinese construction companies have created employment for local communities. For example, communities were employed as drivers of tipping trucks, excavators, and graders, and as sources of general labour. Many of these people have managed to pay tuition fees for their children from the income they received from Chinese companies. The employment of doctors, nurses, and teachers in the newly established schools and hospitals contributed to the reduction of unemployment. Small-scale businesses have been opened alongside newly established institutions like hospitals and schools. Among other things, there were food outlets, and communities commended the initiatives as being beneficial. The establishment of new, and the renovation of old water treatments, has contributed to the reduction of waterborne diseases. For example, the renovation of the Morton Henry water treatment plant in Harare reduced water shortages and facilitated the provision of clean water (Mapiko 2016).

Besada and Moyo (2008) point out that China constructed three coal-fired thermal power stations to boost Zimbabwe's power utility in 2007. The construction of the power station came at a time when the Zimbabweans were facing load-shedding of over 7 hours a day. The deal for the construction of the coal power stations was done with the Chinese Machine-Building International Cooperation in exchange for coal (Besada & Moyo 2008). China has also helped Zimbabwe's technological sector by providing computers, telecommunication equipment, and other forms of media infrastructure. Zimbabwe's mobile telecommunication companies have benefitted from this development (Chipaike & Mhandara 2013).

Voanews (2017) shows that China has funded and built the new parliament in Zimbabwe at a cost of \$46 million in 2016. China Jiangsu International also built the \$150 million expansion project of Victoria Falls International Airport in 2016 funded by China Exim-Bank. The airport capacity rose from 500,000 to 1.5 million passengers (Voanews 2017).

According to Mapiko (2016), some Chinese companies failed to complete projects in time and brought stagnation to the development of the country. Additionally, some Chinese projects were constructed on the wetland against the warning from the Zimbabwe Environmental Management Agency. The Long Cheng Plaza was established by Chinese companies in the wet land. Belvedere suburb was constructed against orders from the Zimbabwe Environmental Management Agency. The land on which the Mall was constructed is a wetland so that no structure can be built on it (Mapiko 2016).

Additionally, Kambudzi (2022) postulates that the China Jiangxi Corporation for International Economic and Technological Cooperation, received a tender to construct Kunzyi dam without following normal processes in May 2005. This development raised concerns, as five capable local companies were ignored in favour of the Chinese company. Moreover, the project was later marred with controversy as the Chinese company failed to complete the project thus leaving the city of Harare in a serious water crisis (Mudyandzo 2016). Zimbabwe's District Development Fund purchased equipment amounting to \$8 million for the development, maintenance, and upgrading of road infrastructure with a loan from China Exim-Bank in 2001 (Mvutungayi 2010). The Zimbabwean communities living close to the Chinese-owned Nyamakope mines complained about the cracks on the houses built by China as compensation for the eviction from the site in which the mine was operating. In another development, the Chinese granite mining companies were leaving open pits uncovered, resulting in a risk posed against communities adjacent to the mines and the animals (Kambudzi 2022).

Kambudzi, Mumma-Martinson, and Amadi (2023) show that the Chinese mining companies operating in Marange, Mutoko, Gweru, and Mutorashanga failed to comply with corporate social responsibility as they violated environmental rights through the

illegal dumping of mining waste. The Chinese companies mining granite stone in Mutoko District left open pits that posed a threat to villagers and their livestock. As a result, a 12-year-old child died after falling into an open pit left by Chinese companies in 2015. Villagers in Mutoko have raised concerns that Chinese companies have dumped toxic waste in their waterways. The 2012 Zimbabwe Environmental Law Association Report also reported that there was chemical and heavy metal pollution in the waterways (Kambudzi, Mumma-Martinon & Amadi 2023).

Kambudzi, Mumma-Martinon and Amadi (2023) further indicate that the water that was previously safe for consumption caused skin itchiness among the villagers and contributed to miscarriages encountered by women. The mine waste also blocked rivers and dams, thus reducing the amount of water needed by villagers for cultivation and livestock. As a result, the part of the Save River that flows from the centre of Zimbabwe through Mozambique and into the Indian Ocean ran dry. Beyond that, the blockage and contamination of water led to the death of livestock and decreased the quantity of fish (Kambudzi, Mumma-Martinon & Amadi 2023).

Kurebwaseka (2022) notes that the discovery of diamonds in the eastern part of Zimbabwe became a jackpot for China as Zimbabwe could not mine, process, and refine the mineral. Thousands of people were displaced from their ancestral land with China, and the Zimbabwean government, failing to provide them with water and shelter. According to Kurebwaseka (2022) the needs of average Zimbabweans were neglected in favour of a close economic relationship between China and Zimbabwe's political elites (Kurebwaseka 2022).

Vines (2017) states that China provided the technical support to the ruling party, ZANU-PF as well as state security and the Presidency. Chinese state-owned construction firms have been involved in the construction of the National Defence College accounting for \$100 million (Vines 2017). Ramani (2016) points out that China provided Zimbabwe with a \$5 billion financial rescue package to fund agriculture and housing projects in 2016 (Xinsong 2016). Beyond deepening trade with Zimbabwe, China provided the country with the money to improve its medical equipment in inner-city hospitals (Ramani 2016).

Eisenman (2016) asserts that through Credit lines from Chinese banks, China had provided support to Zimbabwe's small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). It is through this financial development aid that Zimbabwe's Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises set aside \$12 billion for disbursement to Small and Medium Enterprises. Zimbabwe's small industries such as textile, soap, tile, and fiberglass manufacturers benefitted from the funds (Eisenman 2005).

Among others, China Exim-Bank provided Zimbabwe with \$320 million to expand the Kariba South. But the money exchange hands between Chinese companies because the project was constructed by Sino Hydro and the materials were sourced from China. This conflicted with Zimbabwe's development objectives because, the arrangement also applied even in a situation where the local companies can provide the materials (AFRODAD 2019).

Inferring from the above, AFRODAD (2019) states that projects funded by Chinese were not efficiently linked to other sectors of the Zimbabwean economy. This development raises the Zimbabwean debt and placed the country into a debt distress. It also raised questions and reservations about China's win-win principle that is purported to help other countries to become self-sufficient. Moreover, the energy projects that were targeted by China, were not generating enough revenue much-needed to repay the loans due to structural constraints and the pricing model employed. As such, the country's debt crisis went up (AFRODAD 2019).

3.14. A debt-trap

Al-Fadhat and Prasetio (2022) point out that Zimbabwe became heavily indebted to China as loans were much needed to rescue the country's economy. China therefore accounted for 34% of Zimbabwe's \$18 billion debt recorded in 2018. Zimbabwe's debt deepened to the extent that the country was trapped and kowtowing to China. The rise of Zimbabwean debt has deepened as the country used Chinese loans to pay its debt to other countries (Al-Fadhat & Prasetio 2022). The Zimbabwean Ministry of Finance shows that the country recorded \$247 million in arrears from Chinese loans (Laura, German, Schoneveld, Wertz-Kanounnikoff, & Gumbo 2011).

Mukwereza (2013) states that the country's indebtedness to China increased heavily in 2013. While development aid from China was imperative, it drew the country into

deeper debt. Zimbabwe defaulted on \$200 million owed to China in 2013. He concludes that Zimbabwe should re-engage with the West to complement its relations with emerging countries such as China and Brazil (Mukwereza 2013).

AFRODAD (2019) indicates that the Policy ushered in a shift from multilateral and bilateral creditors to the deployment of China as the major creditor. This came against the background of Zimbabwe being credit unworthy as the country had defaulted in many debt payments since the mid-1990s. The country's credit worthy and capacity has been eroded over the years by its defaulting. As a result, Zimbabwe was unable to access credit from the international financial institutions such as the WB and the IMF. Apart from international financial institutions, Zimbabwe was indebted to its traditional Western partners. Consequently, China played an integral role in Zimbabwe's trade, finance, and investment. The Chinese share of external stock rose to 34 percent in 2017, suggesting that China has an impact on Zimbabwe's debt development. However, the debt came with the pros and cons as transparency, accountability and good governance were being ignored (AFRODAD 2019).

Additionally, AFRODAD (2019) points out that Zimbabwe experienced a shift from concessional sources of financing to non-concessional sources of financing. This had an impact on interest's payments, the maturity period and placed a burden of debt on the country. The debt dynamics are closely linked to macroeconomic policies and debt strategies. For Zimbabwe, the Policy had a huge bearing on the debt development of the country. Following the adoption of this Policy, China became the key actor in the debt development of Zimbabwe. They country received \$billion in aid, investment, and grants between 2015 and 2017 (AFRODAD 2019).

As a result of a high indebtedness, Zimbabwe was unable to attain the millennium development goals (MDGs) and the country served as a barrier for the continent to reach sustainable development goals (SDGs) and an envisioned prosperous Africa supported by the AU Agenda 2063. China as the non-Western country accounted to 97% of Zimbabwe's debt. The endemic corruption and abuse of funds contributed to the defaults (AFRODAD 2019).

Multilateral institutions and some foreign governments had reservations about Zimbabwe as the country was unable to repay long-overdue loans dating back to the early days of independence. In 2008, Zimbabwe was still owing \$7 billion of the \$7.7

billion it took in 1980. The country had managed to pay only \$11.4 billion of its debt (AFRODAD 2019).

The closure of international credit lines coincided with the rise of China as the second largest economy experiencing an exponential growth. Between 2005 and 2017, Zimbabwe received more than \$9 billion from China. Among others, Zimbabwe received \$320 million to fund the expansion of the Kariba South Project. The loan came with a five years' grace period, twenty years' maturity and an interest rate counting for two percent. These conditions were also extended to other projects such as \$150 million Victoria Falls. Given that, Chinese loans are accompanied by low interests relative to those provided by Western traditional partners and international financial institutions, this facilitate investment into projects that were aimed at stimulating growth and development (AFRODAD 2019).

However, Chinese loans had no transparency and thus it became difficult to evaluate their impact. The loans that were extended to Zimbabwe's state-owned enterprises were flawed with corruption scandals, suggesting that the funds are not used for their intended purposes. Thus, the secrecy surrounding the loans made them vulnerable to corrupt activities as leaders had a chance to use them for self-serving purposes. The benefits of Zimbabwe from the loans were also questionable because China dominated the contraction, procurement, and the implementation process through its institutions. This is so, because the funds are often exchanged between Chinese aid providers and constructors. This practice inhibited fair competition and creation of the much-needed employment (AFRODAD 2019).

The loans targeted the state-owned companies and local governments. This explains the intervention by the Zimbabwean government to ensure that Telone and Harare City Council repay their debt. Loans provided to state-owned enterprises were not directed to services that could enable the government to repay the money. Among others, the Harare City Council purchased expensive cars with \$144 million of the funds provided by China and it thus delayed the completion of the project. The financing and expansion of the Victoria Falls Airport, the Mugabe International Airport, Kariba South Hydro-power Station, and Hangwe Power Station had improved the infrastructure, economic and social development in Zimbabwe (AFRODAD 2019).

Since 2000, Zimbabwe underwent a change in terms of public debt. The Zimbabwean government had defaulted in many loans and was ultimately blocked by the international financial institutions and Western traditional partners. These developments increased the public debt. In 2006, Zimbabwe's external debt amounted to 4.1 billion. The closure of the international credit coincided with the rise of China and its subsequent provision of credit to Zimbabwe (AFRODAD 2019).

Somali Times Newspaper (2021) avers that Zimbabwe's public debt rose to an extent that it reached \$11 billion and makeup 51 percent of its GDP. Part of the reasons for the country to be on this state is a decision by Mugabe to stop repaying the country's debt in the early 2000s. Mugabe blamed the Western sanctions for crippling the country's economy. The creditors did not cancel the debt and it ultimately rose to the level that the country is unable to reduce it. Considering the above, Zimbabwe became credit unworthy, and the international financial institutions closed its credit lines (Somali Times 2021).

Ncube (2014) stresses that the African Development Bank suggests that Zimbabwe needed \$14 billion to repay creditors in 2014 and become eligible for debt that had stopped due to arrears in 1999. At that time, the country financial arrears stood on \$11 billion (Ncube 2014).

East Africa News (2022) stresses that amid the skyrocketing debt, China turned down a request for a loan by the Zimbabwean delegation led by Minister Patrick Chinamasa in 2014. Chinese officials stressed that Zimbabwe should offer bankable projects rather than promises. The delegation sought to secure \$4.5 billion funding to supporting the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-economic Transformation, an economic plan designed to revive the country's economy (ZimAsset). Chinamasa tried to bargain for the loan using the minerals as collateral damage, but China strongly wanted to know the timeframe for the project and the repayment plan, and the delegation had no answers (East Africa News 2022).

The Epoch Newspaper (2018) demonstrates that in recent times, Sri Lanka had lost its international airport to China, Hambantota, after failing to repay Chinese loans accounting for \$6 billion provided through China's One Belt One Road Initiative (The Epoch 2018).

Fisher (2011) says that the military compound was constructed with the Chinese loan accounting for \$98 billion. This loan extended to an already indebted country that had no terms and conditions about repayment. Inferring from the above, Fisher argues that the military compound was set to be owned by China. Given that Mugabe depended on oppression to sustain his rule, the facility was destined to provide little part of the Zimbabwean sovereignty to China. The Asian giant focuses on increasing its economic clout, but in the future China could exert its influence on African countries domestic and foreign policies. As to when China would subsume its African beneficiaries as proxies to its foreign policy, only time will tell (Fisher 2011).

Zulu (2014) argues that in 2014, the then Minister of Finance, Patrick Chinamasa disclosed that China put pressure on Zimbabwe to repay the loans or risk being cut out. The Minister underscored that the country had to pay millions of dollars to avoid China. The minister during the first six months of that year, managed to repay unbudgeted \$180 million to China. At that time, the country owed \$9 billion debt and most of the Zimbabwean loans were provided by China (Zulu 2014).

3.15. Crime and localisation of Mandarin

As the crimes against the Chinese rose, Mugabe created a Chinese language desk at Harare's central police station and introduced a Minister of Chinese Affairs in his cabinet. However, such efforts did not curb tensions between the local and Chinese nationals. Some police had also expressed disdain over the learning of Mandarin (Ramani 2016). Adding weight to the foregoing arguments, Marawanyika (2006) indicates that China was funding a new department at the University of Zimbabwe to provide courses on the Chinese language (Mandarin) and culture (Marawanyika 2006).

3.16. Conclusion

This chapter presented pessimistic literature written about the Policy. The Policy is described as a move by the Zimbabwean government to spite the West in the face of sanctions. It has emerged from the literature that the Policy was ambiguous, lacked clarity, and was largely designed to draw FDI as opposed to developing Zimbabwe's human resource development with the technology and skills drawn from the countries

of the East. The literature also described the Policy as an enabler for corruption and looting of Zimbabwean resources while advancing hatemongering and sloganeering in an interdependent world that makes it hard for a small country to survive with a narrow foreign policy outlook. The Policy saw the state of governance degenerating as the ZANU-PF perpetuated the violation of democracy and security of the average Zimbabwean with support from China. Under the Policy, China violated Zimbabwe's trade and investment regulations and collapsed the country's formal and informal market. It emerges from the above that the literature in this terrain has neglected Mugabe as an individual decision-maker in Zimbabwe's Look East Foreign Policy.

CHAPTER FOUR: FOREIGN POLICY ANALYSIS AND THE INDIVIDUAL DECISION-MAKER

4.1. Introduction

The preceding chapter has provided the pessimistic literature on Mugabe's Look East Foreign Policy. By so doing, the chapter reviewed the literature on the socio-economic and political aspects of the Policy. Scholars in this terrain conclude that the Policy was adopted to spite the West. The Policy was ambiguous, lacked clarity, and was largely designed to draw FDI as opposed to developing Zimbabwe's human resource development with the technology and skills drawn from the countries of the East. The Policy saw the state of governance degenerating as the ZANU-PF perpetuated the violation of democracy and security of the average Zimbabwean with support from China. Under the Policy, China violated Zimbabwe's trade and investment regulations and collapsed the country's formal and informal market. This chapter engages FPA literature written about the aspects that drive individual decision-makers in foreign policy-making and implementation processes to demonstrate that Zimbabwe's foreign policy decision-making was informed by Mugabe as an individual decision-maker. In this regard, the chapter advances the relevancy of the individual decision-maker ignored by the preceding literature. The chapter also presents the Behaviourist approach, Afrocentrism, and Mugabeism as analytical concepts that guide the study.

4.2. Foreign Policy Analysis

As a subfield of International Relations (IR), FPA seeks to explain how and why decisions came about in relations between states. It is premised on a conviction that individual decision-makers acting singly or collectively are at the centre of international relations. Despite many actors being involved in foreign policy, ultimately leaders are the ones that make decisions (Breuning 2007). They are the ones that direct the state, and resources at its disposal, to take a particular foreign policy position. While the ultimate outcome may not be what they had anticipated, this does not take away the leaders' responsibility for their decisions. This is so because the outcomes often depend on an interplay of factors including decisions taken by leaders of different countries and are often the opposite of what those leaders have expected (Breuning 2007; Hudson 2005).

In other words, the outcomes are often beyond the capacity of leaders to control them. However, leaders often commit blunders that become costly to foreign policy. Among other things, they rely on historical events, bureaucratic agencies that distort information, and in some instances, leaders fail because of faulty intelligence or bad service. Nevertheless, it is the decisions of leaders that drive the actions of countries across the globe (Breuning 2007).

To gain an understanding of foreign policy decisions, researchers should study the personalities and perceptions of leaders including their advisors and agencies that support their functions. They should also study the domestic and international constraints in terms of foreign policy decision-making. These factors will help researchers understand how and why leaders make certain decisions. Given that the decision-makers and decision-making are at the heart of foreign policy behaviour; they are the two areas that should draw the focus on FPA. An effort to understand the two areas is driven largely by a need to generate knowledge that would enhance the practice of foreign policy decision-making (Breuning 2007).

Considering the above, FPA is devoted to understanding the choices made by leaders, and how and why domestic and international developments limit, but also provide opportunities for their choices. Arguably, leaders are surrounded by advisors and bureaucracy, and their decisions are also influenced by citizens. The decisions taken by leaders also depends on the power and influence of their countries on the globe. Hence the foreign policy choices of states are based on one or interplay of the preceding factors (Breuning 2007).

Considering the multiple individuals who are involved in foreign policy decision-making, a need may arise to study the predisposition and worldviews of individuals to determine how their views match the actions taken by their countries on the globe in order to understand a certain foreign policy choice. The outcome of foreign policy decision-making does not only depend on the decision taken by the leaders but the reaction of other actors too. It is for this reason that great decisions may not produce good results because decision-makers do not control the reaction of the leaders of other states (Breuning 2007).

However, gaining insight into the personality and motivations of the leaders of other states may improve the outcomes. This suggests that individuals, and the decisions

they take, are the key determinants of foreign policy. Therefore, there is a need to understand leaders, their personalities, perceptions, and motivations. Depending on the nature of the political system, political institutions and public opinion may also contribute to the foreign policy choice of a particular country (Breuning 2007).

laydjiev (2011) points out that the political system has an impact on foreign policy because it determines the decision-making process. In an autocratic, authoritarian, and dictatorial regime, foreign policy-making and decision-making processes are dominated by the individual leader who becomes the predominant decision-maker (laydjiev 2011). Similarly, Mintz and DeRouen (2010) underscore that democratic leaders are constrained by groups and institutions such as opposition parties, members of the public, mass media, and parliament. However, authoritarian leaders are not facing any constraints (Mintz & DeRouen 2010).

Scholars who analyse individuals as sources of foreign policy decision-making focus on their personalities, and perceptions. In this regard, personality traits, beliefs, and values are assessed to determine the factors that have motivated the leader to take a particular decision (Breuning 2007).

While decision-makers draw knowledge from their experiences, they often interpret situations inaccurately. Thus, they make incorrect comparisons of the past and present situations and ultimately reach conclusions on the basis of little commonalities while overlooking huge differences (Breuning 2007).

In both democratic and authoritarian states, leaders play a significant role in the international relations of their countries, and they have an impact on foreign policy decision-making. They balance between international imperatives and domestic developments. Given that leaders shape the motives, strategies, and policies carried out by their states, they are at the heart of their countries' diplomatic activities. Based on their perceptions and interpretations, leaders identify the international and domestic constraints. The importance of personality in foreign policy decision-making is not confined to authoritarian systems. Even in democratic systems such as the Presidential and Parliamentary systems, leaders make foreign policy decisions that are shaped by their personalities or perceptions (Kaarbo 2017).

In this study, the influence of historical experience, personality, perceptions, worldviews, predispositions, beliefs, and values are used to analyse the role played by Mugabe in the formulation and development of the Policy as an individual decision-maker.

4.3. Analytical framework

As indicated previously, the analysis in this study is underpinned by the Behaviourist approach. This approach stresses that the role played by the individual decision-maker and the events that influence the decision-maker should be at the heart of analysis. A focus on the individual decision-maker would enable researchers to understand human agency which contributes to foreign policy decision-making. Foreign policy decision-making is shaped by the experience, outlook, and limitations of the individual leaders' including their perceptions, cognition, and personality. The personal characteristics of the individual leader can provide a better understanding of the foreign policy decisions undertaken by a particular country. This is so, because authoritarian leaders address diplomatic tensions in a way that is different from their democratic counterparts (Alden & Aran 2017).

Considering that individuals perceive the environment around them differently, FPA should focus on the images, perceptions, beliefs, and values espoused by the individual decision-maker. This suggests that foreign policy choices are not only driven by domestic and global developments and the influence of a country. Rather, foreign policy choices are shaped by the leaders' perception of these developments (Tayfur 1994).

Behaviourism complements the concepts of Afrocentrism and Mugabeism which also helps in the understanding of foreign policy from a different viewpoint. The two analytical concepts are connected to Behaviourism which emphasises the use of the individual decision-maker as a unit of analysis for the foreign policy decision-making of a particular country. In keeping with Afrocentrism, Mugabe has administered Zimbabwe based on his personal experience, personality, and ideology. He strove to end the marginalisation of Africans in Zimbabwe's mainstream economy. Mugabe rejected Eurocentric ethnocentricity in respect of development which was advanced through its neo-liberal policies, and he strove to adopt the development path which

was driven by the history and material conditions of indigenous Zimbabweans. Similarly, to Afrocentrism, Mugabeism is premised on Mugabe's rejection of Eurocentric ethnocentricity in development which is advanced through neo-liberal policies. As an emerging concept, Mugabesim is premised on Mugabe's experience, personality, and ideology, which can provide a better understanding of foreign policy decision-making, particularly Zimbabwe's gravitation from the West to the East.

4.4. Personal characteristics and beliefs

laydjiev (2011) indicates that the personal beliefs of individual decision-makers shape foreign policy decision-making. Their ideas play a significant role in their foreign policy position, as opposed to factors such as structural constraints, the changing dynamics on the globe, and domestic pressures. For example, in case of a crisis, there is a need for a quick response and thus the time to search for solutions becomes very limited. This development prompts the leader to make decisions based on their predispositions and beliefs (laydjiev 2011). As mentioned previously, the Policy arose in a time of crisis when Zimbabwe was facing a possible economic meltdown due to Western sanctions.

Mintz and DeRouen (2010) indicate that the personal characteristics of individual decision-makers influence how their beliefs shape foreign policy options. In this case, a goal-driven leader acts on the basis of their belief as opposed to responding to developments that prevail in a particular context. Additionally, little training, and a low interest in matters of foreign affairs, might make them use fewer options such as predispositions and simple analogies to deal with situations. Personality determines how the leader assesses his or her preferences and responses to developments in the international arena. In this regard, personality in foreign policy decision-making manifests itself through leaders who are driven by nationalism, a belief in their ability to control events, and a distrust of other nations (Mintz & DeRouen 2010).

Smith (2012) underscores that the personality of leaders can be described as aggressive and or conciliatory. An aggressive leader is usually suspicious, and paranoid, and adopts nationalism in the implementation of foreign policy. On the other hand, a conciliatory leader tends to value affiliation and cordial ties with other

countries. This kind of leader values interdependence and is largely disinterested in nationalism (Smith 2012).

Adding weight to the argument above, Hermann (1980) notes that an aggressive leader does not consider many alternatives and tends to preserve national identity and sovereignty. In turn, their foreign policy becomes independent in style and content. In this case, a leader seeks to sustain the individuality of their nations and they strive to position their countries apart from other states because interaction may lead to heavy interdependence. They encourage their governments to be suspicious of the motives of other countries' leaders. Consequently, these leaders believe that there should be necessary interaction on their own terms (Hermann 1980).

According to Hermann (1980), a conciliatory leader seeks to form and sustain cordial ties with other nations and weigh in on the alternatives. This kind of leader is not suspicious of his or her counterpart's motives. As a result, the foreign policy of a conciliatory leader is not confined to the prioritisation of national identity and sovereignty. Considering the above, they advance a participatory foreign policy. Among other things, this is manifested through the interaction with other states as well as drawing lessons from their counterparts as part of the remedies to address problems facing their nation and those of their partners (Hermann 1980).

According to Mintz and DeRouen (2010), the individual leader's belief system refers to the preferences made by the leader about himself or herself and other states over policy directions. This influences the strategies, tactics, moves, and decisions undertaken by the leader (Mintz & DeRouen 2010). Martini (2012) states that an ethnocentric individual becomes suspicious and thus adopt a foreign policy that is less cooperative (Martini 2012).

4.5. Political system

Hermann (1980) stresses that an element of personality is more prevalent in developing countries than in their developed counterparts. In many developing countries, the institutional positions and policy-making process are largely individualised and ethicised. Given that the political environment is characterised by a lack of robust institutions, foreign policy decisions in developing countries are guided

and shaped by the thinking patterns, personal characteristics, belief systems, and values of incumbent leaders. The predominantly authoritarian, monarchical, and dictatorial regimes of the Middle East, have leaders who administer the country based on their instincts without being restricted by bureaucracy, opposition parties, and civil society organisations (Hermann 1980).

Mintz and DeRouen (2010) argue that the countries' interactions with their counterparts abroad are premised on the personal characteristics of leaders such as Fidel Castro of Cuba, Mao Zedong of China, and Joseph Stalin of the Soviet Union (Mintz & DeRouen 2010). Smith (2012) points out that a region such as the Middle East provides a clear picture of the expression of personality in foreign policy decision-making. Regimes in this region operate based on the personality of particular leaders without being constrained by bureaucracy and opposition parties. Individual decision-makers such as King Fahd of Saudi Arabia have been predominant leaders who are responsible for foreign policy decisions undertaken by their countries (Smith 2012).

Hermann, Preston, Korany, and Shaw (2001) state that as the predominant leader who is vested with the authority to make decisions, an individual decision-maker channels the country's resources, and his or her decisions cannot be overturned or reversed. The leader alone controls the foreign policy agenda and shapes the actions taken by the country abroad (Hermann, Preston, Korany & Shaw 2001).

4.6. Images

Mintz and DeRouben (2010) argue that images refer to the categorisation of people and events. They further note that, while images are significant in simplifying the complicated world, they often make the decision-maker overgeneralise and become biased. In this regard, the individual decision-maker may perceive another state as a suitable partner that presents opportunities or a threat (Mintz & DeRouben 2010).

Hermann (1980) stresses that the interpretation of the environment and strategies adopted by leaders is influenced by their motives. Individual decision-makers administer their governments in keeping with their images. The images lay a framework that guides their country's foreign policy decision-making (Hermann 1980). In this regard, Hermann (1998) argues that individual leaders view the constraints of

the state on the globe based on their perceptions, and they thus develop strategies that direct their governments (Hermann 1998).

4.7. Worldviews

Hermann (1980) underscores that foreign policy decision-making is also premised on leaders' worldviews. Their worldviews are shaped by the generation that they have been born into. In this sense, foreign policy decision-making would be guided by the political developments that the individual decision-makers and their cohorts have been faced with (Hermann 1980). Louis Halle cited by George (1969) shows that a state's foreign policy responds to the individual decision-makers image of the world rather than the external world. It is driven by the mind of the decision-maker (George 1969).

By identifying the perception of individual decision-makers towards the world, researchers will understand the reason behind foreign policy decisions of particular countries. The focus should not only be placed on the merits or demerits but on understanding how and why the decision-maker has reached a particular decision. A decision that appears unreasonable may be reasonable once the researcher understand the view of the leader at the time, she or he take a decision (Breuning 2007).¹¹

4.8. Emotions

Pre-existing positive and negative feelings about other states and their leaders influence judgements about such countries' foreign policies. The impact of emotions on foreign policy decision-making is not totally different from the impact of personality. Hence, in studying individual decision-makers, scholars assess the tendency of

¹¹ For example, While Britain is known to support the US foreign policy position in many issues across the globe, the country's alignment with the US during the latter's invasion of Iraq in 2003, was largely driven by the perceptions of Tony Blair towards Saddam Hussein. Beyond the Middle East, the characteristics of major political figures are attributed to have shaped foreign policy of European countries such as Britain. Blair has been supporting a possible action against Saddam before the US could propose the invasion of Iraq. Dating back to 1998, Blair had expressed doubt about Saddam and he described him as an evil brutal dictator that has not changed. Additionally, Blair was the proponent of interventionist policy before the invasion. During his speech in Chicago in 1999, Blair argued that the principle of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other states should not be treated as an insuperable restriction and should be qualified. In his view, the international community should have identified the circumstances in which they could be involved in conflicts with states. The sovereignty and the rights of dictatorial regimes forfeit when they harm their citizens and pose a threat to others (Dyson 2007).

leaders to distrust their counterparts. Trust, distrust, positivity, and negativity are all rooted in personality. Consequently, leaders tend to distrust or trust their counterparts as well as being optimistic or pessimistic. Their foreign policy decision-making towards such leaders will follow the same patterns (Breuning 2007).

4.9. **Early life**

The early life of a leader tends to affect the kind of persons they become when they are grown up and become leaders. Joseph Stalin and Saddam Hussein who were brutal leaders and engaged in an aggressive foreign policy, have a history of having abusive fathers. Their biographies demonstrate that they had abusive fathers who abandoned their families while they were still at a tender age. Psychologists claims that children who had abusive fathers are likely to become abusive when getting to adult age. As a result, their childhood experience resonates with their behaviour as leaders of their respective countries (Breuning 2007).

4.10. **Conclusion**

This chapter provided the literature written about the aspects that drive individual decision-makers in foreign policy-making and the implementation processes. It argues that individual decision-makers turn to distrust and become paranoid about other states on the globe. Their worldviews, images, emotions, and beliefs shape the direction of their country's foreign policy and its interactions with other states on the globe. Guided by these aspects, the next chapter analyse the role played by Mugabe as an individual leader in the formulation and implementation of the Policy.

CHAPTER FIVE: BEHAVIOURISM, AFROCENTRISM, AND MUGABEISM IN MUGABE'S FOREIGN POLICY

5.1. Introduction

This chapter analyses the role played by Mugabe as an individual decision-maker in the Policy. In doing so, the chapter analyses the impact of his personality, experience, perceptions, and cognition on the Policy. Given that the personality of an individual plays a role in foreign policy decision-making, the focus is placed on the extent to which personality, historical experience, perceptions, worldviews, predispositions, beliefs, and values of Mugabe have shaped Zimbabwe's foreign policy posture between 2003 and 2017. The analysis is underpinned by Behaviourism, Afrocentrism, and Mugabeism as concepts that inform the understanding of foreign policy decision-making.

5.2. Behaviourism

Foreign policy-making, as the result of human agency, or individual decision-makers is influenced by leaders' cognitive processes, background, personal traits, motives, and beliefs. By examining leaders' habits, characteristics, and personalities, foreign policy predictions can be made because these aspects provide possible predictions about personal behaviour. Through a retrospective design, these aspects are drawn to analyse the role played by Mugabe in the Policy. The structure of individual cognition relies on her or his background, previous experiences, role, and belief. This has an influence on how the leader perceives things, the world, and himself or herself and other leaders. To draw conclusions about individual traits, there is a need to assess their responses to questions posed by the media, statements, speeches, and comments about other leaders. Additionally, there is a need to assess their political positions, and records of their childhood and youth. Significantly, the impact of personality on foreign policy is determined by the individual, their decisions, and the environment (Smith 2012). These aspects were used to analyse the role played by Mugabe as an individual decision-maker to inform the understanding of Zimbabwe's Look East Foreign Policy. The central argument advanced in this chapter is that Zimbabwe's Look East Foreign Policy was informed and driven by Mugabe as an individual decision-maker.

Murasi (2019) says that Mugabe had a strong hold on the domestic and foreign policy of Zimbabwe. With this, his personal beliefs and perceptions shaped foreign policy formulation and implementation. Significantly, Heads of State across the world have control over the international relations of the country at the bilateral and multilateral levels. Hence, Mugabe's perceptions, attributes, and beliefs form part of the variables that shaped Zimbabwe's foreign policy (Murasi 2019).

Sevenzo (2019) states that Mugabe grew up in an African generation that experienced colonialism, and which assumed nationalism after independence. Mugabe encountered Pan-Africanist liberation heroes such as Kenneth Kaunda, Julius Nyerere, and Jomo Kenyatta during his time as a student at Fort Hare University in SA. These leaders became the champions of African independence in the 1960s. After returning to Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia), Mugabe embarked on resistance campaigns and a call for independence. This saw him being incarcerated for treason by Ian Smith's regime, from 1964-1974. Thereafter, Mugabe fled to Ghana in the 1970s, and upon his return to Zimbabwe, he resumed the struggle for independence using Kwame Nkrumah's success in the liberation of Ghana as an epitome. Mugabe demonstrated his preference for the one-party state, and he aligned himself with like-minded states such as Cuba, China, and the Soviet Union (Sevenzo 2019).

Arguably, Mugabe's personal experiences shaped his view of the world and ultimately informed Zimbabwe's foreign policy position-particularly his shift to the East. His shift from the West to the East was driven by his experience as a former African nationalist who fought for the independence of his country. Ideologically, the first generation of African nationalists advanced Pan-Africanism which called for total liberation and emancipation of Africa and its people from being the subordinates of the colonisers. The condemnation from the West in the 2000s reawakened the old memories of colonial oppression when Mugabe engaged in a struggle for independence and self-determination of Zimbabwe from colonial rule. On the other hand, China's support for Zimbabwe's colonial struggle, along with the broader developing world of the East, that have equally suffered colonialism, made them preferable partners rather than the West. Speaking at the National Heroes Day celebration in 2005, Mugabe

stressed that the Policy was premised on Zimbabwe's struggle. He stressed that the country and its people should not forget that the monetary and non-monetary

assistance that helped them liberate their country was provided by China. The former Zimbabwean leader pointed out that it was the Red World that helped them to attain freedom and regain their liberties, not the Pretentious Free and Christian World (BBC Monitoring International Service 2005).

In an interview with Xinhua newspaper (2006), Mugabe stated that the rationale behind Zimbabwe's gravitation to Asia was that the region had a huge population on the globe. China and India, along with other states in that region, have large populations. Mugabe further underscored that those countries were the allies that Zimbabwe relied on during its struggle and fight against colonialism. When Zimbabwe went to China, it was going to its second home (Xinhua 2006).

In this regard, Mugabe's personal experience of colonialism shaped his perception of the world and Zimbabwe's interaction with countries from the East and the Far East. Thus, the preference for the policy was in keeping with his history. Unlike the West, which had a bad experience with Mugabe during his time as the liberation fighter, he had cordial relations with China dating back to the time of struggle when the Chinese Liberation Army provided weapons to ZANLA, ZANU-PF's military wing. Among other things, the West supported Ian Smith who had incarcerated and tormented Mugabe as a liberation fighter against his colonial administration.

Speaking at the UNGA in 2007, Mugabe indicated that he spent eleven years in the jail of Ian Smith, whom he promoted and protected his freedom and well-being after Zimbabwe's independence. Mugabe further pointed out that he lost fifteen years fighting injustice in his country. According to Mugabe, Ian Smith was responsible for the death of more than fifty thousand of indigenous Zimbabweans. He carried the scars of his tyranny which was condoned by Britain and America. Mugabe also stressed that he met the victims of Ian Smith every day, but he walked free. He farmed freely on a farm of five hundred hectares. He talked and associated freely as indigenous Zimbabweans taught him democracy and restored his humanity. He would have faced a different fate if the people he killed were Europeans. Unlike Europe, Africa has not called for Nuremberg Trial against Europeans who have committed grave crime against its humanity. It did not haunt down the perpetrators of genocide and many of them were still alive. Africa had also not received reparations from those who had offended it, but the continent was in the dock. It was Mugabe in the dock

rather than the British Prime Minister to face trial from the world that persecuted Africans for centuries. Mr Bush should have realised that in his personal capacity and as a representative or President of the US he represents a civilisation which incarcerated people, occupied, and colonised other nations (Mugabe's Speech at the 62nd UNGA in 2007). In his speech cited by Aljazeera (2007) at the official ceremony with Jia Qinglin of the Chinese Communist Party, Mugabe indicated that the People's Republic of China was assisting Zimbabwe to sustain its sovereignty (Mugabe's Speech cited by Aljazeera 2007).

Mugabe's personality had an impact on Zimbabwe's foreign policy shift from the West to the East. Personality refers to attributes, behaviour, temperament, emotions, and the mental traits of an individual (Smith 2012). Murasi (2019) says that Mugabe's cousin, James Chikerema, described Mugabe as a person who was stubborn from a young age. If he had a disagreement with anyone while herding, he would isolate himself from the group. Mugabe would select his cows and head them to the mountains away from the other boys. He never wanted to reconcile or compromise in a quest to reconnect with those around him. His reaction to criticism was that those people would remember him one day (Murasi 2019). In agreement, Sevenzo (2019) argues that Mugabe grew up as a person who was detached from other people and hated socialising. At a tender age, he was the kind of a person who rarely changed his mind once he took a certain decision or position. Once he took a certain position, no one could influence him. Among other things, Robert Mugabe developed a strong hatred towards his father, and he never changed that position (Sevenzo 2019).

Given that individuals vary in values and beliefs; they also have strange personalities that affect their decisions (Smith 2012). For his part, Mugabe had misperceptions and biases that affected his decision to Look East. As highlighted above, he had serious stubbornness that left no space for negotiation and compromise. This personal characteristic influenced how he processed information and reacted towards it. The Mugabe, who at a tender age, isolated himself from other boys when there was tension, who made no attempt to negotiate and compromise, is replicated by his insistence to Look East, even when the country's economy was collapsing. The authoritarian Mugabe persisted with the Policy while ignoring diverging voices from his Deputy President (Emmerson Mnangagwa), MDC splinter parties, CSOs, and the

public at large. The foregoing individuals and groups had expressed the flaws of this Policy and advised the government to restore relations with the West¹²¹³. Because of his stubbornness, Mugabe was reluctant to negotiate with the West who at the time represented the major markets on the globe, and instead traded with countries that were targeted by his narrow Policy. Arguably, stubbornness prompted Mugabe to opt for a Second-Best and imperfect foreign policy that limited Zimbabwe's prospects for development and growth in a globalised world. At that time, the USA and its Western allies represented the major investment destination on the globe. Many countries across the globe signed the Trade Agreements provided by the USA and its Western allies to exploit investment opportunities.

Mugabe's stubborn personality which has affected his foreign policy decision-making was demonstrated by the speech he made in 2004. In his speech which was cited in Aljazeera Newspaper (2004), Mugabe argued that Zimbabwe cannot mourn and bemoan the sanctions imposed on them, it should instead find a way to survive. He pointed out that there were countries such as Cuba, that were operating under severe sanctions relative to those imposed against Zimbabwe. But they continue to function and their ordinary nationals on the ground were united (Aljazeera Newspaper 2004). This suggests that the decision to gravitate to the East was largely shaped by Mugabe as an aggressive leader who saw no need for conciliation with the West.

It is worth mentioning that biography may be subjective and influenced by the author's biases and intentions. Considering that Mugabe was a controversial leader, whose political behaviour remain the subject of debate between those holding pessimistic and optimistic view about him, autobiography would have been more useful.

5.3. Afrocentrism

The Policy was also informed by Mugabe's Afrocentric conviction that African countries and their nationals are relegated to the margins of the world economy.

¹² Chipaika and Mhandara (2015) indicate that other partners in the GNU were not consulted in the formulation of the Policy and opposition leaders such as Mutambara called on Zimbabwean government to trade and invest with all regions on the globe.

¹³ Nyangani (2015) shows that during his tenure as deputy President, Mnangagwa had expressed that Zimbabwe could not succeed in isolation. The country should restore relations with the West.

Afrocentrism suggests that Africans should revive their culture, ideals, values, and history to elevate their economies from the margins to the centre of the globe (Maphaka & Tirivangasi 2022). It can be described as a feature of Pan-Africanism which urges Africans to assert their place in socio-economic and political matters, particularly in the production of knowledge which is dominated by Euro-American perspectives. This should be understood in the context that Pan-Africanism, as a movement, is against the injustice experienced by Africans in every aspect of their lives, including their relegation to the margins of education dominated by Euro-American cultural value systems. The abolishment of the slave trade and decolonisation of Africa was ensued by calls for the liberation of knowledge by Africans on the continent and in the diaspora. Driven by Pan-Africanism which advocated for the total liberation and emancipation of Africa, Africans on the continent and diaspora viewed slavery, imperialism, and colonisation as historical developments that have destroyed and distorted the African history, cultural values, heritage, and knowledge systems. In other words, slavery, imperialism and colonialism went beyond the subjugation of Africans and looting of the continent minerals by also destroying its history and heritage. Over the years, this has led to calls for the liberation of knowledge and the view of knowledge from the standpoint of Africans. Consequently, Afrocentrism was established as concept that encourages Africans to view a phenomenon from their own perspective. Arguably, slavery and colonialism have dislocated and de-centred Africans from their standpoint to view the world from Eurocentric perspective (Chawane 2016).

In essence, Afrocentrism resonates with the debates on African agency because it stresses that Africans should assert their space in the production of knowledge and cease to be the subordinate to the Eurocentric world view. It is against the Eurocentricity which perpetuates ethnocentricity by projecting itself as a universal view and downplaying other world views or cultural experiences. Thus, Afrocentrism asserts its agency in the intellectual space by viewing, interpreting and understating the world from an Afrocentric perspective (Chawane 2016; Maphaka 2023a; Schreiber 2000).

Building on Afrocentrism, Mugabe used the Policy to advance the redistribution of the economy to the previously disadvantaged indigenous people who were still excluded from many sectors, including agriculture. He used the historical and material

conditions of Zimbabwe to redistribute national wealth, and as a former African nationalist, who witnessed the dispossession of the land of African indigenous people and their marginalisation in the mainstream economy. In this regard, the Policy became a viable option and gained momentum because countries of the East were supporting the country's affirmative action policies.

In his speech at the Earth Summit in 2002 in Johannesburg, Mugabe stressed that the poor should use their sovereignty to fight poverty. Zimbabwe understands that sustainable development cannot be attained without agrarian reform that acknowledges that land takes precedence and that everything comes from the land. The land is an asset that not only defines Zimbabwe's identity and divides its sovereignty, but also carries the fortunes of the poor and their potential to realise sustainable development and empowerment. Agriculture as the mainstay of the Zimbabwean economy made access to land a significant issue. He underscores that poverty, food insecurity, and underdevelopment in Zimbabwe were caused by inequitable access to land. Mugabe pointed out that Zimbabwe was still economically colonised after 22 years of its independence. Hence, his government decided to do justice by reclaiming and restoring the land to the indigenous black owners who had lost it to colonisers. He stressed that the process was carried out within the parameters of the country's Constitution and legislation. It was done to advance justice and thus Zimbabwe had no obligation to make apologies to anyone. Significantly, there was a need for a paradigm shift from the globalised corporate model to a people-centered paradigm that puts people first in the advancement of sustainable development (Mugabe's Speech at the Earth Summit in 2002).

Mugabe's speech at the 69th UNGA in 2014 pointed out that social justice, political stability, and sustainable development on the African continent could be attained through genuine support and a commitment to redistribute the means of production that favoured the poor majority of Africans. In Zimbabwe, the government has laid down a basis for a sustainable food production programme. Mugabe argued that many rural residents have been empowered through the Land Reform and contributed to their household and national food security. The ownership and exploitation of land transformed them into drivers of their own destiny, had therefore demonstrated a sense of the country's independence and indisputable sovereignty (Mugabe's Speech at the 69th UNGA in 2014).

Cited in the News24 Newspaper (2004), the then chair of the standing committee of the National People's Congress of China Wu Bangguo, indicated that, China was against the interference by foreign countries in Zimbabwe's land issue. The then Chinese Premier indicated in December 2003, that China respects and backs Zimbabwe's strive to bring about justice through land reform (News24 2004).

Moreover, the Policy was premised on Afrocentrism's rejection of Eurocentric ethnocentricity in non-Europeans (Chawane 2016; Maphaka and Tirivangasi 2023). Through the Policy, Mugabe sought to advance development that was centred on African views, and driven by Africans in line with their historical and material conditions. This was represented by Mugabe's disdain for neo-liberal policies which view and understand development from a Eurocentric perspective which is market-driven. These policies did not consider the historical and material conditions that perpetuated the marginalisation of indigenous Zimbabweans, and they thus advanced market-driven development that ignored the past injustice. Consequently, Mugabe gravitated to the East to join the like-minded state (China) that rejected the universalisation of neoliberal policies that advanced Eurocentric ethnocentricity on development. China's no-strings-attached policy and common rejection of the neoliberal policies prompted Mugabe to use it as alternative development partner and friend that could support him against the Western criticism of his policies. Thus, the Policy was spurred by Mugabe's preference for policies that are rooted in Afrocentrism as an African liberation fighter that experienced the dispossession, exclusion, and marginalisation of Africans in Zimbabwe's mainstream economy.

Speaking at the 2002 Earth Summit held in Johannesburg, Mugabe said that the multilateral programme of action was ignored, side-lined, and replaced with a unilateral agenda of a globalisation that served the multinational corporations from developed countries. Mugabe stressed that the aim was to make a profit instead of servicing the poor in the process of globalisation. The unilateral agenda of globalisation was not meant to advance sustainable development and its main objective was exploitation rather than liberation. Mugabe argued that sustainable development failed because of a neo-liberal model of development advanced by market forces and defended through globalisation. As opposed to putting the interest of ordinary people first, Mugabe underscored that the model perpetuates inequality, advocates for the privatisation of public enterprises, and drives the state out of the public sphere in order to benefit big

business. In Zimbabwe there was a clear mind and vision to end the neoliberal model (Mugabe Speech at the Earth Summit in 2002).

Mugabe further stated that from the Zimbabwean perspective, sustainable development must be driven by a vigorous, democratic, and progressive interventionist state with a public sector that has the capacity to advance a developmental role. He stressed that Zimbabwe was ready to defend the agenda of the poor and also frank that it was only possible if the country did not respond to foreign interests or answer to rules that were not only foreign and against the interests of the poor who mandated the government to lead them, but that were also hostile to the envisaged sustainable development agenda (Mugabe Speech at the Earth Summit in 2002).

Mugabe stressed that Zimbabwe had aligned itself with its brothers and sisters in the Third World to totally reject manipulation and intimidation from some countries and regional blocks that sought to subordinate their countries' sovereignty to serve their hegemonic ambitions and imperialist interests' pretext as the rule of law, democracy, and good governance. Sustainable development and empowerment of the poor cannot be attained in an environment where democratic national sovereignties are frequently undermined and demonised (Mugabe Speech at the Earth Summit in 2002).

In his speech cited in Aljazeera Newspaper (2004), Mugabe said that the time had arrived for Zimbabwe and the developing world at large to notice that the sun rises in the East. Mugabe called on the developing world and Africa to look to the East. The East has a huge population and provides support to Africans because it is also the Third World. He stressed that the East sees things the way Zimbabwe and other parts of the developing regions see them. Mugabe further pointed out that the East are great friends because they think and dream like Zimbabwe and Africa (Aljazeera 2004).

In his speech at the FOCAC Summit in Ethiopia in 2003 reported by the Mail & Guardian (2003), Mugabe indicated that it took long for the African business community to realise that the biggest market and fastest growing economies are in the East with China being the largest economy. It took many years for the African business community to realise that the thousands of years the continent had spent with the West did not produce fair trade terms, technological transfer, or development. Comprehensive partnership with the friendly states in the Third World and emerging

economies such as China and other states of the Far East should take precedence and be stressed in the efforts taken by African countries. Mugabe stressed that Zimbabwe could not collapse, the country's struggle could not fail, and it would never be colonised again (Mail & Guardian 2003).

Echoing Mugabe's concerns about globalisation and neo-liberal policies cited by the Mail & Guardian Newspaper (2003), Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao at the 2003 FOCAC Summit, argued that global stability depended on the development of the poorest developing countries. The global peace and development cannot be sustained if a gap between North-South grew wider and Third World countries became even poorer. He said that while globalisation brought development opportunities, it also came with the unprecedented challenges to the Global South. Considering the above, China would genuinely provide support to Africa with no-strings attached (Mail & Guardian 2003).

Mugabe used the Policy to reclaim the space for policy-making, encroached upon by the West. The adoption of this Policy was shaped by his perception of Western countries and international institutions as actors who wanted to dictate the development agenda of developing countries. It became a viable option for Mugabe to protect Zimbabwean wealth and resources by establishing a relationship with the country (China) that treated it as an equal member state.

In his speech at the Earth Summit in Johannesburg in 2002, Mugabe stated that Africans should come first in the development of Africa as sovereign people rather than puppets and beggars (Mugabe's Speech at the Earth Summit in 2002).

Arguing during his speech at the 62nd UNGA in 2007, Mugabe stated that the West prioritises economic interests and racial and ethnocentric considerations over adherence to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. He pointed out that the West still undermined African countries' sovereignty by controlling their resources and thus turning Africans into objects in their own land and mere promoters of global interests. He further pointed out that in his country and other states in Southern Africa, colonial control is manifested by the inequitable ownership over land which has been dispossessed from Africans by British colonisers (Mugabe's Speech at the 62nd UNGA in 2007).

5.4. Mugabeism

Murasi (2019) underscores that Mugabe had been at the peak of the Zimbabwean political discourse for over four decades. Starting from the days of his time as a guerilla leader, to his ascendancy to the Presidency, Mugabe was projected as an influential figure in Zimbabwe's political history. Foreign policy keeps the legacy of the head of state, particularly a leader like Mugabe, who had a strong interest in international relations and foreign policy. Mugabe's rule was inseparable from Zimbabwean politics, and it gave Zimbabwe a unique identity that set it apart from other small states. Authoritarian political leaders have the prerogative to shape the identity of their states which is reflected by their foreign policies. For his part, Mugabe was the main policymaker and he had autonomy over foreign policy (Murasi 2019).

Hence, scholars such as Ndlovu-Gatsheni, came up with the term "Mugabesim" to denote Mugabe's history, personality, and ideology that shaped the direction taken by Zimbabwe during his tenure as the President of that country (Murasi 2019). Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009) describes Mugabesim as a collection of political controversies, political behaviour, ideas, utterances, rhetoric, and actions that revolve around the personality of Mugabe, as the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe. It is a debatable phenomenon that is viewed by nationalist scholars as a Pan-Africanist ideology that sought to reject all forms of imperialism and colonialism through radical redistribution of wealth to address colonial injustice. On the other hand, liberal scholars view Mugabeism as a racial and authoritarian ideology characterised by a hatred towards neoliberal norms (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009).

The nationalist scholars such as Moyo and Yeros (2007) argue that Mugabeism represents a rejection and a replacement of neoliberal convention with a dissenting economic plan. The heterodox economic plan emerged against imperialist sanctions which were spurred by a need to bring about a regime change. At the heart of the heterodox plan was crisis management and strategic planning. The plan included deliberate defaulting on foreign debt, and the implementation of anti-imperialist foreign policy. It also included high state intervention, regulation of business and the pursuit of the fast-track land reform programme. Moyo and Yeros (2007) conclude that Mugabeism must be described as the revolution advanced by a radical state

interrupted between 2000 and 2003. Specifically, they blame sanctions for the collapse of the Zimbabwean economy in the early 2000s (Moyo & Yeros 2007).

Adding weight to these arguments, Mamdani (2008) views Mugabeism as an ideology that had advanced justice for Africans who were previously subjected to injustice by the colonial administration. He commended Zimbabwe for embarking on the highest transfer of property on a swift rate relative to other states in the Southern African region since the demise of colonialism. In the same line of arguments, the author blames sanctions for crippling the Zimbabwean economy (Mamdani 2008).

Raftopoulos and Phimster (2004), and Raftopoulos (2006) dismiss the position held by nationalist scholars about Mugabeism. They point out the authoritarianism and violence were perpetrated under the guise of Pan-Africanism and anti-imperialist rhetoric. Significantly, Raftopoulos (2006) stresses that matters of democracy and human rights should not be overlooked in the analysis of Mugabeism. He recommends the use of multi-layered and multi-pronged perspectives in the analysis of Mugabeism. He also negates the view that Mugabeism enjoying the popularity of the peasants. He points out the violence that prevailed in the rural areas of Mashonaland and Manicaland in 2008. This suggests the nationalist disregard the citizens who were murdered by the regime. Alternatively, the author recommends that the analysis of Mugabeism should go beyond the structuralist political economy and consider democratic and human rights matters (Raftopoulos 2006).

Campbell (2008) negates the purported democratic and revolutionary posture of Mugabeism articulated by nationalist scholars. He stresses that progressive scholars must devote their resources to support Zimbabweans as they needed different emancipatory politics amid world capitalist crisis. Just like other nations, Africans in Zimbabwe and across Africa seek to live a decent life with dignity and basic human rights (Campbell 2008).

Mamvura (2020) underscores that Mugabeism is commonly used in a negative sense by liberal scholars. But his admirers view the term as demonstrating the revolutionary tradition that rejected colonialism and imperialism. It is an ideology that demonstrates Mugabe's role in the Second Chimurenga¹⁴ and Third Chimurenga. This personality

¹⁴ Chimurenga derives from Shona word which means revolutionary struggle. In the case of Zimbabwe, the word is used to describe different stages of the Zimbabwean struggle. The first Chimurenga refers

cult ensued after Mugabe ascended to the leadership of ZANU and gained control of its military wing, ZANLA in 1977 (Mamvura 2020). Maraerike and Mtapuri (2018) state that Mugabeism is premised on the resistance to white domination and oppression, and the reawakening of black consciousness and value. As an ideology, Mugabesim seeks to promote equality among people, a fight against colonialism and neo-colonialism, and the promotion of African values and unity in striving for self-determination. It rejects political agents and promotes patriotism, the ZANU-PF, and the country (Maraerike & Mtapuri 2018).

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009) and Mlambo (2015) point out that Mugabeism was shaped by history which emotionally informed the actions of a generation of nationalists who went through a traumatic colonial period and who bear the pain and scars they seek to ease by taking frustration at everything that they attribute to being a source of previous suffering. Mugabe grew up with a generation that advanced anti-colonial struggle premised on a nativist framework where the main goal was to push European foreigners out of the African continent so that indigenous people can govern themselves (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009; Mlambo 2015).

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009) and Mlambo (2015) further attribute Mugabeism to the ideological views that informed the debate of African policies during the early independence era when Mugabe and other African leaders became nationalist leaders at the helm of post-colonial governments and liberation movements. These leaders were informed by Kwame Nkrumah's neo-colonialism¹⁵ theory, Pan-Africanism¹⁶, Third World radicalism, and dependency theory¹⁷. Mugabe became exposed to Nkrumahism during his time as a teacher in Ghana. The generation of Mugabe also

to the struggle or resistance against land dispossession, the second Chimurenga denotes struggle for political independence, and the third Chimurenga refers to the struggle for economic freedom.

¹⁵ Khrumah's neo-colonialism theory is a lens that believed that former colonies remained controlled by their former colonisers. They are merely independent in theory as their economic and political system is dictated by former colonisers.

¹⁶ Pan-Africanism is a movement and philosophy that seeks to liberate Africa along with its people from imperialism and colonialism so that the continent can partake in the international community on equal terms.

¹⁷ Dependency theory is a theoretical lens that describes a dependence situation where the economy of a particular country or countries is determined by the economic growth and development of another economy which subsumes the dependent country.

took part in the debates of the developing world that called for a New International Economic Order (NIEO) in the 1970s. Zimbabwean nationalists of his generation were proponents of Pan-Africanism influenced by the integral role played by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in the liberation struggle. These intellectual outlooks shaped the thinking of the post-colonial Zimbabwean government and were at the heart of Mugabeism (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009; Mlambo 2015).

Inferring from the above, there is a close link between the concept of Mugabeism and the tenets of the Behaviourism Approach adopted in this study. Mugabeism covers the personal experience of Mugabe, his personality, ideology, and history as a revolutionary leader who fought against colonialism and imperialism. These developments have largely shaped the behaviour of Zimbabwe at home and in international relations with Mugabe leading as an influential figure and an ultimate decision-maker that has been at the centre of that country's political discourse from his days as a liberation fighter and during his Presidency (1980-2017). Similarly, Behaviourism uses the individual decision-maker as a unit of analysis to understand foreign policy. In so doing, the researchers should focus on the experience of the individual decision-maker, personality, worldview, ideology, and mind. Murasi (2019) shows that Zimbabwe's foreign policy was centred on Mugabe who acted as the main decision-maker and actor in foreign policy. This role was largely shaped by his experience as a nationalist and his Pan-Africanist ideological outlook. His interest in foreign policy-making and implementation was also informed by his personality as an intellectual. Under Mugabe's incumbency, Zimbabwe was vigorously protecting its sovereignty in the midst of its diplomatic tussle with the West prompted by the Fast-track Land Reform Programme and gravitated to the East (Murasi 2019).

Additionally, the Policy was driven by Mugabe's personal tensions with the West and his personality as an authoritarian leader who provided no room for divergent views. Mugabe's personality as an authoritarian leader made his identity synonymous with the identity of the country. The Policy became part and parcel of his tension with the West rather than a policy designed through general consensus. This is captured by Rusere's (2015) arguments that Mugabeism denotes the personality of Mugabe as a political actor who determined what was acceptable for Zimbabwe. Mugabeism suggests that Mugabe was the only leader of the nation with no room for plurality or

opposing views in the Zimbabwean political environment. It perpetuated the dual identities of Mugabe and Zimbabwe with no alternative or different identities. Secondly, Mugabeism represented an ideological position that resisted Western domination and clout from former colonisers when it was convenient to the leader. This is so because initially, Mugabe was not hostile towards the West, but as time continued, he projected Western Europe as enemies of the African imagination and emancipation (Rusere 2015).

In democratic states, matters of foreign affairs, including diplomatic tensions, are addressed through broad consultation with sub-national actors such as opposition parties, non-state actors such as CSOs, and members of the public. Conversely, in undemocratic or authoritarian states, the power is concentrated in one leader as an individual decision-maker. As an authoritarian leader, Mugabe made a unilateral decision to gravitate the country to the East without consulting opposition parties, CSOs, and Zimbabwean citizens. As mentioned in chapter two, the Policy was subjected to an extreme backlash by opposition parties, CSOs, and ordinary Zimbabwean citizens. These groups called on government to make a rapprochement with the West, but Mugabe, as an individual authoritarian decision-maker, ignored their inputs in foreign policy.

As an authoritarian leader, Mugabe was a predominant individual decision-maker in foreign policy decision-making and he faced no constraints from opposition parties, members of the public, mass media, and parliament. It is noteworthy to mention that under Mugabe's authoritarian regime, the voice of opposition parties was suppressed, and ordinary people were excluded from matters of foreign affairs. The mass media was censored as the private media outlets faced attacks from the government for reporting dissenting views, while the public media became the mouthpiece of the government.

Arguably, the collectivism principle of Afrocentrism was overshadowed by Mugabe as an individual decision-maker. This is so because Mugabe as an individual decision-maker dominated foreign policymaking and implementation and overshadowed the self-determination of Zimbabweans as a collective nation.

The Policy was also influenced by Mugabe's Afrocentric thinking in multilateral relations. Building on his Pan-Africanist view and Afrocentrism, Mugabe viewed China as a suitable partner that could join efforts with Zimbabwe and other African countries to end the marginalisation of the continent in multilateral institutions such as the UN and its organs. In this sense, Mugabe's shift to the East was intended to facilitate the reform of the global governance institutions, he perceived as undemocratic institutions that needed to be reformed. China as equally dissatisfied with the global governance institutions was seen by Mugabe as a suitable partner that could facilitate the reform and integration of African countries in the UNSC as stipulated by the AU Ezulwini Consensus¹⁸ adopted in Swaziland (now Eswatini) in 2005.

During the 2015 FOCAC Summit held in SA, and as the then Chairperson of the AU, Mugabe praised Xi Jinping, as a leader who represent a country that was once known to be poor. Mugabe mentioned that China had never colonised Africa but was doing things that were expected to be done by countries that had formerly colonised Africa. The President articulated that the 2015 FOCAC second Summit mirrored a friendship, mutual respect, and understanding between China and Africa. Mugabe expressed that although China-Africa relations had been tested over the years, they were destined to flourish. China and Africa, as two important players, would make a huge contribution to facilitating the democratisation of global governance. The continued historic injustice in the global governance particularly the UNSC and the Bretton Woods Institutions¹⁹ is unhealthy and undesirable. Together with China, the African continent fights for a shift to genuine democracy at the UN. The continent relied on China's support and solidarity to remedy the situation. China and the African continent advanced a shared vision for peaceful development, mutual respect, and win-win cooperation (SABC News 2015).

In his speech at the 2016 AU Summit in Addis Ababa, Mugabe stressed that African countries were supposed to be free and independent. He said that African countries go to the UN every year and pay a lot of money to go and make speeches at the

¹⁸ AU Ezulwini Consensus refers to the agreement reached by the African countries which calls for the reform and integration of two African countries as permanent veto members to the UNSC.

¹⁹ Bretton Woods institutions refer to the institutions established in 1944, after the World War II to rebuild the global economy and promote cooperation such as the World Bank and the International Monetary. The said Institutions were created at the Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, USA in 1944.

UNGA. However, the states that predominate the UNSC say that African countries shall never have powers that they have as permanent members. The continent has been asking for the reform of the UNSC. Africans will fight for their own identity, integrity, and personality. At some point, Africa will decide and say down with the UN because it is not the real member of the organisation, but others are the real members of the organisation. The African continent is an artificial member of it and cannot continue to be an artificial member of the organisation. How can only a few people particularly the Americans and Europeans, say that other nations shall not have the power, strength, and integrity like them? For the UN to survive, Africa must be equal members of the organisation. Equal members can go to the body and speak as genuine members that can be understood, respected, and honoured. Mugabe argued that it was not the case (SABC News 2016).

Zimbabwe's economic crisis prompted Mugabe to swiftly gravitate to the East in line with his belief that Western countries were historical enemies. It was also in keeping with his tendency and belief that countries of the East were Zimbabwe's long-term friends. Despite being the most educated President on the globe, Mugabe had not acquired a qualification in matters of foreign affairs. Basopo (ND.) shows that Mugabe had a bachelor's degrees in arts (History & English), Administration, and Education, Science, and Laws, and Master of law and Master of Science. Arguably, Mugabe relied on simple analogy by using historical ties as a justification to gravitate to the East (Basopo ND).

Additionally, Mugabe's foreign policy approach was shaped by Pan-African nationalism. Guided by Pan-African nationalism, Mugabe sought to preserve the identity, values, and economic development interests of indigenous Zimbabweans who in his view were threatened by the continued Western interference. This saw Mugabe distrusting Western countries as external actors that posed as a threat to the Zimbabwean identity, values, and economic development interests.

Speaking at the 69th UNGA in 2014, Mugabe stressed that Zimbabwe was a victim of Western countries that imposed unilateral and illegal sanctions against his country as a foreign policy tool to advance their short-term political objectives, especially regime change. He said that regime change amounted to an illegal policy of interference in the internal affairs of his country, there was nothing good that could come from

undermining Zimbabwe's economy or depriving its citizens the basic needs of life (Mugabe's Speech at the 69th UNGA in 2014).

Mugabe's projection of the East as countries that are friendly and alternative partners goes back to the generations of African nationalists that fought against colonialism, largely assisted by countries in the East. They viewed the West as enemies that have historically interrupted African development and continued to advance their imperialist and neo-colonial practices in African countries. This generation of leaders leaned themselves to the East by adopting policies that were based on the socialist and Marxist ideological outlook. The African leaders such as Julius Nyerere and Kwame Nkrumah have adopted a 'Socialism with African characteristics and their foreign policies were largely guided by the Non-Alignment Movement which stressed that African states should not partake in the War between the East and the West. Mugabe's view of the West as enemies that sought to bring about a regime change can be traced back to the leaders of Mugabe's generation that have experienced regime change largely sponsored by the West. Hence, he relied on countries of the East to prevent the purported regime change.

As an aggressive leader, Mugabe was suspicious and paranoid towards the West and had advanced nationalisation policies that put the interests of Zimbabwe at the expense of its trade partners. The adoption and implementation of the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act represent nationalism on the part of Mugabe as the policy advanced cooperation that favoured Zimbabwe in trade and investment relations. The nationalisation of 51% stake meant that the cooperation was dictated by Mugabe without the consideration of international investors. Arguably, Mugabe confined himself to the Policy as he strove to preserve the national identity and sovereignty of Zimbabwe. Mugabe sought to advance the individuality of Zimbabwe by shifting the country from the West to the East so that it could develop self-reliance and some level of independence rather than being heavily dependent on the West.

In his speech at the public rally during the annual Defence Forces Day in Zimbabwe cited by the BBC Newspaper (2013), Mugabe underscored that Zimbabwe will do everything in its power to ensure that the objective for total indigenisation, empowerment, development, and employment is attained. He described the

indigenisation policy as the “final phase of the liberation struggle” and “final phase of total independence” (BBC News 2013).

Mugabe encouraged his government to be suspicious about the motives of the USA and its Western allies who in his view sought to bring about a regime change. Speaking at the 62nd UNGA in 2007, Mugabe stressed that he was called a dictator by Western leaders such as Bush. He further pointed out that this was because he had rejected the supremacist view and frustrated the neo-colonialists in their attempt to perpetuate the enslavement of Zimbabweans in their country (Mugabe’s Speech at the 62nd UNGA in 2007).

Foreign policy decision-making undertaken by Mugabe also demonstrates overgeneralisation and biases because, except for China, countries of the East had no capacity to rescue Zimbabwe’s ailing economy. Most countries of the East targeted through the Policy were still the recipients of development assistance. But Mugabe projected them as alternative development partners that could help to rehabilitate Zimbabwe’s economy. This is well captured in Ndlovu-Gatsheni’s (2011) argument that countries such as China, Cuba, and Vietnam had warmed themselves up to draw more investment from the Western capitalist world (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2011).

5.5. Conclusion

This chapter analysed the role played by Mugabe as an individual decision-maker in the Policy to demonstrate the extent to which his personality, personal experience, perceptions, and cognition informed the decision to gravitate Zimbabwe from the West to the East. The chapter established that the decision to adopt the Policy was informed by Mugabe’s personal experience as a former African nationalist who fought for the independence of Zimbabwe from British colonial rule. The condemnation from the West reawakened old memories of colonial oppression experienced by Mugabe. On the other hand, China’s support for Zimbabwe’s colonial struggle, along with the broader developing world of the East, that have equally suffered colonialism, made them preferable partners in the face of Western condemnation. These countries formed part of the 1955 Bandung Conference that convened in Indonesia to mobilise African and Asian nations against colonialism and imperialism (e.g. China, India, Indonesia and Pakistan). They called for unity and solidarity and also wanted to bring about justice,

peace and development among Third world countries. These sentiments were carried over and subsequently informed the Non-Alignment Movement which was created in September 1961 at the Belgrade Summit, Yugoslavia. Under NAM auspices, developing countries insisted that the bipolar world be transformed and warned against taking sides in the Cold War rivalry (Mohan & Power 2008; Enuka 2010).

In this regard, Mugabe's personal experience of colonialism shaped his perception of the globe and Zimbabwe's interaction with countries from the East and the Far East. Unlike the West which had an unpleasing historical experience with Mugabe during his time as a liberation fighter, he had cordial relations with China dating back to the time of struggle against colonialism. It was during this period that the Chinese Liberation Army provided weapons to ZANLA, ZANU-PF military wing.

Given that Mugabe was stubborn, this personality prompted him to leave no room for negotiation or compromise in foreign policy decision-making. He opted to Look East even when the country's economy was collapsing. As an individual authoritarian leader, Mugabe ignored the inputs of his deputy, opposition parties, CSOs, and the public at large. The foregoing individuals and groups had expressed the flaws of the Policy and had advised the government to make a rapprochement with the West. Due to his stubbornness, Mugabe was reluctant to negotiate with the West who at that time represented the major markets on the globe, and instead he promoted relations with countries targeted by his narrow Policy. Arguably, stubbornness prompted Mugabe to opt for Second-Best and imperfect foreign policy that limited Zimbabwe's prospects for development and growth in a globalised world. At that time, the USA and its Western allies represented the major investment destination on the globe. Many countries across the globe including those in the East were targeting the investment opportunities provided by the American and Western Trade Agreements.

The adoption of the Policy is also attributed to Mugabe's ideology as an Afrocentrist. Mugabe used the Policy to redistribute the economy in favour of the previously disadvantaged indigenous people. He used the historical and material conditions of Zimbabwe as a former African nationalist who witnessed the dispossession of the land of indigenous people and their marginalisation in Zimbabwe's mainstream economy. Considering the above developments along with the support provided by countries of the East to the country's affirmative action policies, the Policy became a suitable option

for Mugabe. Thus, the Policy was spurred by Mugabe's preference for policies that are rooted in Afrocentrism as an African liberation fighter that experienced the dispossession, exclusion, and marginalisation of Africans in Zimbabwe's mainstream economy.

The Policy was also premised on Mugabe's promotion of an Afrocentric development and disdain towards neo-liberal policies which view and understand development from a Eurocentric view that is market-driven. These policies overlooked the historical and material conditions that perpetuated the marginalisation of indigenous Zimbabweans, and they thus advanced market-driven development that ignored the past injustice. In light of the above, Mugabe gravitated to the East to join the like-minded state (China) that rejected the universalisation of neoliberal policies that advanced Eurocentric ethnocentricity on development. China's no-strings-attached policies and common rejection of neoliberal policies made it an alternative partner to support Mugabe against Western criticism of his policies.

Additionally, the Policy was driven by Mugabe's personal tensions with the West and his personality as an authoritarian leader who made his identity synonymous with the identity of the country. As such, the Policy became part and parcel of his tension with the West rather than a Policy designed through a consensus. The Policy was also influenced by Mugabe's Afrocentric thinking in multilateral relations. Building on his Pan-Africanist view and Afrocentrism, Mugabe viewed China as a suitable partner that could join efforts with Zimbabwe and other African countries to end the marginalisation of the continent in multilateral institutions such as the UN and its organs. In this sense, Mugabe's shift to the East was intended to facilitate the reform of the global governance institutions, which he perceived as undemocratic institutions that needed to be reformed. China as equally dissatisfied with the global governance institutions was seen by Mugabe as a suitable partner that could facilitate the reform and integration of African countries in the UNSC as stipulated by the AU Ezulwini Consensus adopted in Swaziland (now Eswatini) in 2005.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

6.1. Introduction

The aim of this study was to analyse Mugabe's emphasis on Afrocentrism in the formulation and implementation of Zimbabwe's unwritten Look East Policy from 2013-2017, to assess the role played by Mugabe in the formulation and implementation of the Look East Policy and identify Mugabe's Afrocentric thinking undertaken by Mugabe in the formulation and implementation of the Look East Policy. It was underpinned by the Behaviorist, Afrocentrism, and Mugabeism as framework of analysis. Beyond serving as the framework for the analysis of Mugabe's Look East foreign policy, these analytical lenses examine the Policy from a different view. With this, the study analysed the extent to which Mugabe's personality, personal experience, and ideology, and perceptions, beliefs, and worldview have shaped Zimbabwe's Look East foreign policy.

The aim of the study led to the main research questions: How did Afrocentrism shape Mugabe's articulation of Zimbabwe's unwritten Look East Policy from 2003-2017? This question yielded two supplementary questions namely, what was the role played by Mugabe in the formulation and implementation of Zimbabwe's Look East Policy?; and what was the Afrocentric nature of Mugabe's thinking in the formulation and implementation of the Look East Policy? Responding to the main question, the study argued that the Policy was used to complement Mugabe's rejection of neoliberal Eurocentric ethnocentricity on development by using like-minded states of the East to advance the development centred on African history and material conditions.

The theoretical and conceptual framework of analysis were explained in detail, and their application went beyond analytical approach to provide the structure of the research. The analysis focuses on Mugabe's personal experiences, ideology, worldviews, and perceptions. The Policy has received a considerable attention of both optimistic and pessimistic scholarly literature. In terms optimism, scholars describe the Policy as a well-calculated strategy, changing Zimbabwe's international image and identity, enabling it to resist imperialism and deepen trade relations with China. Regarding the pessimistic view, scholars point out that it was retaliation and a miscalculated Policy, delinked from Zimbabwe's development strategies, rhetorical

and desperate, sloganeering and survival strategy. The pessimistic literature also indicates that the Policy ushered in a threat to democracy, peace, and security, and China undermined Zimbabwe's investment and trade regulations. The Policy made Zimbabwe look the least because China had collapsed Zimbabwe's formal and informal businesses, had also debt-trapped the country, and flouted its laws.

Considering the above knowledge deficit, the study focused on Mugabe as an individual decision-maker to examine the extent to which his personality, ideology, perception, personal experience, and worldview have shaped his foreign policy decision to gravitate to the East. It emerged that the Policy was the product of Mugabe's Afrocentric ideology and his personality. The Policy was shaped by Mugabe's personal history, his personality, and ideology. Mugabe's stubbornness at a tender age was reawakened during his time as the President of Zimbabwe, he thus became an authoritarian leader who left no room for negotiation and compromise with the West and did not listen to the opposition parties that expressed the flaws in the Policy. The Policy was also informed by Mugabe's personal experience as a former African nationalist who witnessed the oppression, exclusion, and dispossession of Africans during his time as a liberation fighter. Condemnation from the West reawakened the old memories of a bad history he had with the West and the harmonious relationship he had with China when the Asian giant supported ZANU's struggle against colonialism.

The Policy also represented Mugabe's rejection of the Eurocentric ethnocentricity on development that is advanced through neoliberal policies that ignored the historical injustice perpetrated against indigenous Zimbabweans in favour of market-driven development. It should be understood from an Afrocentric perspective as a strove by Mugabe to administer the country based on its historical and material conditions to change the living standards of indigenous Zimbabweans who were marginalised in the mainstream economy. China's rejection for neoliberal-driven Eurocentric ethnocentricity development provided Mugabe with an ally that could defend his policies against the Western criticism.

The Policy represented a good strategy but it was undermined by the bureaucratic constraints during Mugabe's regime. Mugabe's predominant role in foreign policy decision-making inhibited the prospects of this Policy as other stakeholders were

either silenced or co-opted to follow his views. The suppression of the media and civil society and other organisations along with opposition parties reduced the Policy to a strategy that is designed to benefit the few elites at the expenses of the majority of citizens.

In this case, the self-determination of Zimbabweans as a nation to make and shape their development policies was undermined by the individualistic approach of Mugabe who advanced the Policy based on his preferences and wishes. This suggests that the collective views of Zimbabweans were often undermined in the implementation of this Policy by individualistic approach undertaken by Mugabe.

Beyond what is being said by the existing literature, the Policy could be described as a strategic posture adopted to advance Zimbabwe's agency in international relations. China became a suitable partner to advance the reform of the global system which was undemocratic and also abused by the USA and its allies to undermine Zimbabwe's agency. Mugabe used South-South Cooperation as a stepping stone to change the global governance that had placed Zimbabwe and the broader developing world at the margins of global decision-making.

The Policy became a strategy used by Mugabe to boost his call for the reform of global governance so that Zimbabwe along with other developing countries could shape their destiny. This is so because the non-reformed global governance made it difficult for a small state such as Zimbabwe to survive while advocating a different development path to those championed by the West. In essence, Mugabe placed himself not only as a leader of the African continent, but a champion of the agenda of the broader Global South which was disadvantaged by the unreformed global system.

The Policy was used to reawaken the agenda of the Global South which advances the alternative development perspective that differed from those promoted by the West. Mugabe exploited the inequities of the global system to remind the Third World that many of their challenges are largely prompted by the current global system. In this regard, Mugabe's perception of the unequal global system saw him trying to use the concentration of developing countries in multilateral institutions such as the UNGA to call for a new world order that could have seen small states such as Zimbabwe prospering through a development that is people-centered and driven by ordinary

people as the main beneficiaries. With this, the Policy projects Mugabe as an individual leader who lobbied the support from the multilateral institutions of the Global South and individual like-minded states to promote tolerance and acceptance of his policies by the West who in their view his policies were against the rules and regulations of the global trade and investment. The South-South Global forums such as the FOCAC and universal platforms such as the UNGA, became alternative platforms used by Mugabe to prevent Britain from turning its bilateral tensions with Zimbabwe into a multilateral concern that warranted a universal action from the international community.

The Policy could also be described as the globalisation of the Pan-Africanist development policies. In a world that saw the decline in the significance of the neo-liberal policies, Mugabe sought to position the African development perspective amongst other perspectives such as the Beijing Consensus²⁰ which rejected the Western view of development. Consequently, Mugabe used the Policy to champion the globalisation of the African view on development so that the continent and its people could experience sustainable development that was largely undermined by the Western market-driven development policies. By taking the Zimbabwean development policies such as the land reform and indigenisation Policy to multilateral institutions, Mugabe was not only able to draw sympathy and support from the Global South, but this also attracted the support of the African-centered development agenda by countries of the East.

The Policy should also be understood as an attempt by Mugabe to reclaim his yesteryear position as the revered African leader who drove the development agenda of the continent and presided over a country that was then the breadbasket of the continent. Mugabe tried to revive his faded fame eroded by the ailing economy and skyrocketing unemployment which saw many Zimbabwean nationals fleeing to SA and other neighbouring countries. By singling out countries of the East, China in particular, as alternative development partners that Africa should gravitate to and snub the West, Mugabe sought to lead Africa on a new development path that is driven by Africans and advanced based on their material and historical conditions. This should be understood in the context that the Policy coincided with the Mbeki-led neo-liberal

²⁰ Beijing Consensus refers to no-strings attached Chinese economic development model which serves as an alternative to traditional Western development model that is attached conditions rooted in neoliberal political and economic policies (McCall, M., 2018).

driven New Partnership for Africa's Development. To many Africans, this was the replication of the Structural Adjustments Programmes that have left the devastating effects in some parts of the continent.

As such, Mugabe used the Policy to project an alternative development model that the African continent could imitate and possibly abandon the Western development model which had failed to alleviate poverty and underdevelopment across Africa. Based on his experience as the longest-serving African leader who had witnessed the suffering of Africans through various historical stages, Mugabe viewed the West as being self-serving actors that the African continent should view with suspicious as former colonisers who had no intention to help Africa, but instead wanted to use the continent to provide for their descendants and nationals.

In his speech at the UNGA in 2007, Mugabe indicated that Britain and its Western allies insisted on controlling the Zimbabwean resources. The economic rights of the Zimbabweans are overlooked and violated in the process, and thus the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is overshadowed by Western economic interests and racial and ethnocentric interests. As a result, Africans are reduced to chattels in their own land and promoters of global interests. Consequently, the Western conception of human rights neglects the right of Africans to take ownership of their God-given mineral and natural resources which in their view should be controlled by their descendants (Mugabe's Speech at the 62nd UNGA in 2007).

In this regard, he promoted the collective effort by African countries and their Eastern counterparts to challenge the status quo using international institutions such as the UNGA.

During his speech at the UNGA in 2007, Mugabe advanced that Zimbabwe called for the UN that recognise the sovereignty of nations and people, irrespective of being big or small. He expressed Zimbabwe's rejection of the UN which has economically and militarily powerful states that conduct themselves like bullies by undermining the rights of the small and weak states as happened in Iraq. In his view, the organisation should have examined the essence of its authority and the manner in which its power was challenged. For Mugabe, the events in Iraq amounted to a challenge to the UN and its

Charter that necessitated the revitalisation of the UNGA as the most representative organ of the UN (Mugabe's Speech at the 62nd UNGA in 2007).

In essence, the Policy represented an attempt by Mugabe to draw support from the East and use the UNGA which serves as the global parliament to address his tensions with the USA and its Western allies. Mugabe's consistent condemnation of Western sanctions and his call for their immediate removal at the UNGA along with his calls for Africa and other parts of the developing world to look east suggest that the Policy was an attempt by Mugabe to internationalise his diplomatic rift with the West.

In conclusion, the Policy is a strategy used by Mugabe to internationalise Zimbabwe's diplomatic tussle with the West. Through the Policy, Mugabe wanted the world to know about the myriad challenges faced by Zimbabwe as a result of its economic isolation by the West. It became a tool used by the weaker state, Zimbabwe, to boost its diplomatic bargaining that had declined because of the Western isolation.

In view of the above, the Policy had produced mixed results which project Zimbabwe as a victim, weak state, and leader of the African continent. In terms of being a victim and a weak state, Mugabe's stubbornness influenced his decisions over the country's relations with the West. Rather than striving to reconcile to the demands of the West such as political reforms, Mugabe opted to project himself as a historical victim of the West who continued to victimise him for taking a defiant stance like he did during the colonial era. With regard to being a leader of the African continent, Mugabe used the Policy to champion the African-centred development policies which were diluted by the Western neo-liberal policies. He wanted to restore the policies after he had displaced the neo-liberal market-driven policies with the affirmative action policies such as the land reform and the indigenisation and economic empowerment policies.

6.2. Recommendations for further research

- 6.2.1 Future research should focus more on the significance of the role of the individual decision-maker in foreign analysis and its application in the Policy.
- 6.2.2. Further studies should draw scholarly arguments against Behaviourist approach and rebuttal of such views to deepen the relevancy of this theoretical framework in FPA.

6.2.3. The other research should provide insights on Zimbabwe's leadership structure and how Mugabe as an individual decision-maker had interacted with other leaders such as Xi Jinping to deepen the significance of leaders in foreign policy decision-making.

6.2.4 New research on the subject should demonstrate correlation between changes of the decision-makers behaviour and foreign policy patterns.

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