

THE RATIONAL ACTOR MODEL ANALYSIS OF DONALD TRUMP'S PERCEPTION TOWARDS THE TRAVEL BAN POLICY

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ABSTRACT

Received: 05-09-2025

Accepted: 28-03-2026

Keywords:

Foreign Policy, Immigrant, Decision-making process, Perception, Travel Ban, Rational Actor Model

The United States is one of the countries that immigrants move to. The economic, political, and social aspects are one of the reasons why the migration process occurs. Although the arrival of immigrants has become part of the development of the United States, the large number of immigrants entering has caused problems so that the Travel Ban policy was formed to protect the interests of its citizens from immigrant threats. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, this research aims to describe how Donald Trump's perception in making the Travel Ban policy. Through the decision-making theory of the rational actor model, the results show that the views on immigrants and the political environment influence Donald Trump as a main actor in his decision-making process. Thus, through the calculation of profit and loss, making the Travel Ban policy is considered a rational and profitable choice for his country.

1. INTRODUCTION

The human population on earth is growing, it triggers a process of immigration from one place to another (Rizky & Supriyadi, 2021). The population itself is a resource or asset of a nation, including The United States (Trisnasari & Nasution, 2023). The United States has become one of the best places for immigrants to seek refuge (Taufik & Pratiwi, 2021). *International Organization for Migration* (IOM) (2024) stating the United States has been a destination country for international immigrants since 1970. *United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs* (UN DESA) (Reyes, 2025) also revealed that this has not changed from mid-2020 to the last year. With a population percentage of 74%, this growth is the largest, amounting to more than 1.9 million migrants from 2020 to 2024 (Reyes, 2025).

The United States is a country with close ties to migration, being the world's largest recipient of immigrants seeking asylum and safety. (Rizky & Supriyadi, 2021). However, the large number of immigrants arriving has caused troubles for the United States citizens. (Taufik & Pratiwi, 2021). The presence of these immigrants posed a threat that could disrupt the security of the United States, prompting Donald Trump to take steps to protect his country by issuing a Travel Ban in 2017. (Aulia, Susiatiningsih, & Paramasatya, 2022).

Currently, the Travel Ban policy is back into force during Trump's second term after being suspended during Joe Biden's administration. The Travel Ban is a policy that prohibits individuals from entering the United States, regardless of whether they are immigrants or not. (Aulia et

al., 2022). The previous policy only targeted seven Muslim-majority countries (Rizky & Supriyadi, 2021). Meanwhile, the current Travel Ban is more extensive, with most of the affected countries located in Africa. In addition, several countries in South America and Asia are also included. All countries targeted by the new Travel Ban list number 43 countries and are divided into three categories according to each country's level of poor screening processes that do not meet the United States security and intelligence standards. (The Feed, 2025).

As with previous policies, the new Travel Ban is also intended to address threats to the national security and public safety of the United States. (Malenfant, 2025). It is said that Trump promised during his campaign to ban Palestinians from Gaza to entering the United States, as well as followers of Marxism, Socialism, and Communism. (Narea, 2025). Critics argue that the current policy remains as discriminatory as the previous one. (Al-Badawi, 2025). Furthermore, this policy can become an obstacle and increase tensions in establishing cooperation.

Putri et al. (2020) revealing how the policies issued by Trump were often criticized during his presidency and how it differed greatly from previous policies, so that the changes had a major impact on society and immigrants. However, it should be noted that the decision to implement the Travel Ban was made after careful consideration of the pros and cons. By placing Trump in the position of a decision-maker, it can be understood that a decision is born through a choice that is considered most rational for Trump.

Previous studies have focused on idiosyncrasies towards past policies, so this study attempts to fill the gap by

analyzing Trump's perception of the Travel Ban policy. By using Graham T. Allison's rational actor model, this study is expected to provide new insights into understanding Trump's perception of the Travel Ban policy issued during his first and second terms in office.

This research uses Graham T. Allison's decision-making model in his book entitled "Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis" (1971). The foreign policy-making process is important. In this model, Allison identifies three models that explain how a decision can be made, namely the Rational Actor Model, the Organizational Process Model, and the Governmental or Bureaucratic Politics Model.

In the rational actor model, this model places state leaders as the most dominant decision-making actors. Through this model, foreign policy decisions are made based on rational considerations of whether the decision will benefit or harm the country. Therefore, in the decision-making process, an actor needs to consider all options and act rationally to maximize profits (Hara, 2011).

Then, for the second model, namely the organizational process model, it attempts to address the shortcomings found in the rational model. Mas'ood (1990) reveals that this model describes foreign policy as the result of the work of a large organization that functions according to a pattern of behavior. Meanwhile, the third model is the government or political bureaucracy model. Foreign policy emerges from normal political processes such as bargaining, compromise, adjustment, and so on among bureaucratic actors. This model describes the processes of each actor attempting to act rationally, which often appear inconsistent with the objectives that the government should be pursuing (Mas'ood, 1990).

In International Relations studies, individuals are also considered to play an important role as variables that influence the policy-making process, and are important for explaining international phenomena (Mas'ood, 1989). Mas'ood (1989) argues the importance of observing individual behavior, because understanding the political world means understanding the reasons behind actions through the behavior of individuals themselves. Individual behavior can also be observed as leaders who act on behalf of the nation-state they lead, because individual involvement in the decision-making process can produce different outcomes depending on who is involved in a situation (Mas'ood, 1989).

During his campaign, Donald Trump consistently grouped American citizens with other immigrants as "us" and "them," and viewed them as aliens (Aulia et al., 2022). The behavior exhibited by each leader can indicate different forms of policy. Trump's closed attitude towards other countries can influence the foreign policy that has been established by the United States. In addition, the Travel Ban policy established by Trump is discriminatory, as reflected in how he views immigrants as a threat to the country (Padmi & Yulianti, 2021). This is also evident in how Trump considers himself and white people in the United States to be a far better and superior race (Taufik & Pratiwi, 2021). Using the rational actor model, this study is useful in analyzing the perceptions underlying Trump's reasons for acting as an individual actor in shaping the Travel Ban policy as a rational decision for his country.

2. METHODS

This research was conducted using a qualitative research approach with a descriptive model that focused on searching for sources and analyzing secondary data. Qualitative research is considered an investigative process that can understand the meaning and explore social and humanitarian issues (Creswell, 2009). When searching various literature sources, it is necessary to consider the unit of analysis, time and place, data collection, sampling methods, and specific issues or topics covered in the data in order to make comparisons that support the research (Neuman, 2014).

Using the rational actor model, this study aims to describe how Donald Trump's perceptions influence decision-making on the Travel Ban as an immigration policy in the United States in 2025. Data was collected from various types of literature, such as books, government reports, news, and scientific articles. This study focuses on Trump as a major actor in the formulation of the United States' foreign policy during his first and second terms in office.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Immigrants as a Threat

Since the founding of the United States in 1776, policies regarding immigrants in the United States have existed (Baxter & Nowrasteh, 2021). It is undeniable that immigrants have had a significant impact and have become part of the United States. Most immigrants have shaped the culture, built the economy, and contributed to the growth of the United States. There are three main principles for obtaining United States citizenship. The first is *jus soli*, whereby anyone born in the United States will obtain citizenship. Second is *jus sanguinis*, whereby anyone born to parents who are the United States citizens will also obtain the same citizenship, regardless of the country in which they were born. And finally, there is the Pledge of Allegiance for immigrants who voluntarily wish to move to the United States to obtain citizenship (Baxter & Nowrasteh, 2021).

However, as time went by, more immigrants arrived and more challenges had to be faced due to the dynamics of immigration policy, which continued to change with each change of the United States presidential administration. Especially in 2001, which was marked by the tragic attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington DC on September 11. This incident shocked the entire American public and constructed an excessive fear of terrorists, especially radical Islam. George Bush, who was in charge at the time, responded to these incidents by passing the USA Patriot Act, which increased the number of personnel guarding the the United States borders and expanded their ability to monitor suspects. This law also imposed heavier penalties on perpetrators of terrorism (Park, 2021).

A year later, the Homeland Security Act was passed to establish the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to replace the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) (Baxter & Nowrasteh, 2021). It is divided into three federal agencies; namely Customs and Border Protection (CBP), Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) (Baxter & Nowrasteh, 2021); This department was established with the aim of tightening security in the United States by improving the process of disseminating information

to detect terrorist threats (Park, 2021). The George Bush administration strengthened border security and immigration screening, marking the beginning of a new immigration policy in the contemporary era.

The wave of immigrants arriving and the tragedy of 9/11 caused sentiment and fear to spread among the United States citizens, increasing their fear that could threaten the security of the United States society (Dostál, 2025). The presence of undocumented immigrants is often seen as a threat to the security and economy of the United States. The United States government actively deports individuals with criminal records to protect public safety, as reflected in a report by U.S. ICE. Although the contributions of immigrants are recognized, some citizens remain concerned about the impact of crime and damage caused by immigrants. As a result, the issue of immigration continues to be a dilemma between the economic needs and sense of security of the United States citizens. Immigrants are often perceived as poor and lacking resources, making them vulnerable to suspicion from local residents. Portraying immigrants in this way creates discomfort in immigrant-receiving countries and hostility among native residents (Chaudhury & Ghosh, 2021).

Research from Aulia et al. (2022) revealed that Trump's victory in the the United States presidential election was proven by his success in constructing his citizens' fear of foreign immigrants, especially Muslim immigrants. Inspired by Ronald Reagan's slogan "Let's Make America Great," Trump came up with the slogan "Make America Great Again" for his first campaign, with the hope that the United States could return to its glory days by expelling foreign immigrants and prioritizing white supremacy (Putri et al., 2020). He did not stop there. Even after being elected as president, Trump signed the Travel Ban, which was considered discriminatory. This reflects how the presence of immigrants in the United States created a negative image in Trump's eyes, leading him to form the Travel Ban policy on the grounds of protecting his citizens.

The growing fear of immigrants, accompanied by negative perceptions of them as usurpers of land, jobs, security, culture, and control of local communities, is also linked to psychological and behavioral effects such as strong anxiety, uncertainty, and a perceived lack of control. This then prompted Trump, as a main actor, to formulate the Travel Ban policy as the most rational reason.

Donald Trump as a Rational Actor

In 1987, Trump decided to enter politics and joined the Republican Party (Putri et al., 2020). Trump has changed parties five times, then in 2001 he switched to the Democratic Party because he was not elected at the party convention and said that people in the Republican Party were the dumbest group of voters (Putri et al., 2020). However, it did not last long because in 2009 he chose to rejoin the Republican Party (Akbar, 2024).

The year 2016 was marked by his victory over Hillary Clinton in the United States presidential election as the 45th President, who campaigned under the slogan "Make America Great Again" (MAGA) (Akbar, 2024). This campaign slogan is about restoring national pride and economic strength (Rhodes, Eichen, Rice, Wall, & Nteta, 2025). Republicans believe this slogan represents the dream of the United States. Playing issues is the aspect that is considered to have quite potential influence. Therefore, Trump has a big influence and

strength at determining decision process (Setiawan, Erison, & Choirunnisa, 2024).

With the goal of restoring the glory of the United States, this campaign emphasizes strict prohibition and restrictions on the entry of immigrants, especially illegal immigrants who enter through the border, as well as building a strong military (Rhodes et al., 2025). This campaign movement is more geared toward extreme hatred of immigrants, black people, Muslims, and the LGBTQ community. As a result, Trump's campaign has attracted many supporters who tend to believe that the United States citizens are far superior to others (Rhodes et al., 2025). This can also be seen in the tendency to discriminate, such as racism, Islamophobia, and homophobia.

Difference of the Travel Ban Policy

The Travel Ban Policy 2017-2021

The issue of immigrants is quite sensitive in Western countries because it can disrupt a country's foreign policy stability (Rizky & Supriyadi, 2021). This phenomenon became the main focus in shaping of the United States foreign policy based on domestic issues, making this issue debated due to Trump's efforts to issue a policy that had a negative impact on immigrants, especially targeting the majority of Muslim immigrants in the United States at that time.

The reason for the establishment of this Travel Ban policy is based on concerns about immigrants and terrorist attacks in the United States. There were 50,000 immigrants who entered the United States in 2017 as a result of The United States Refugee Admissions Program for 120 days (Trump, 2017). This issue has sparked concern among the citizens, who are reminded of the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., on September 11, 2001 (Padmi & Yulianti, 2021). As a result, Muslim immigrants are always associated with a dark history of crime and terrorism in the United States. (Aulia et al., 2022).

The travel ban policy was also established based on the high crime rate committed by immigrants, especially illegal immigrants. Research from Taufik dan Pratiwi (2021) revealed that Trump made statements justifying high crime rates such as murder, theft, and other forms of crime committed by immigrants who do not have permanent jobs.

During his campaign, Trump stated that he would not accept immigrants into the United States and would not make his country a place of refuge (Padmi & Yulianti, 2021), This is his promise if he is elected president, which is very much against the democratic values embedded in the United States. Trump's efforts to enact a discriminatory travel ban policy have made the United States an unsafe place for immigrants to live. His efforts were not only conveyed through speeches, but also stated on his social media accounts. With that function, the media is able to supply the information needs of the public (Wahyudi, 2023).

After his inauguration as President of the United States, Trump signed Executive Order 13769 entitled "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States." (Executive Office of the President, 2017) on January 27, 2017. This policy contained a ban on refugees entering the United States, which became known as the Travel Ban. The policy was implemented with the aim of preventing citizens from seven countries to entering the country for 90 days, namely Syria, Sudan, Somalia, Iraq, Iran, Libya, and

Yemen. The fact that many Muslim-majority countries were targeted by the Travel Ban led to the policy becoming better known as the Muslim Ban.

These countries have been identified as threats because their alarming conditions could affect the security stability of the United States. This is evidenced by several countries that have been involved in terrorist activities to the extent that they have become state sponsors of terrorism, such as Iran and Syria (Trump, 2017).

The enactment of the Travel Ban as an Executive Order underwent a complicated and long process. It can be seen that this policy has undergone several changes since it was implemented. Executive Order 13769 was rejected by a federal court in the United States, requiring the executive order to be revised. On March 6, 2017, Trump reissued an executive order called Executive Order 13780. Referred to as Travel Ban 2.0, this policy contains orders to revise the list of countries whose citizens are not allowed to enter the United States, namely removing Iraq from the list because the country has agreed to improve its security and has allied with the United States to build a military base (Susilowati, Hakiem, Sudirman, Sulistyawati, & Nurcahyani, 2024). In addition, the ban on refugees from Syria has also been lifted.

On September 24, 2017, the Travel Ban policy underwent another change, which was issued in the form of a presidential proclamation. This presidential proclamation is an official announcement made by the President but does not have the same identification as an executive order (Rizky & Supriyadi, 2021). Under the name Presidential Proclamation 9645 "Enhancing Vetting Capabilities and Processes for Detecting Attempted Entry into the United States by Terrorists or Other Public-Safety Threats," this proclamation is commonly known as Travel Ban 3.0 and states that Trump removed Sudan from the ban list only to then include new countries in the Travel Ban policy, such as Chad, North Korea, and Venezuela (Susilowati et al., 2024).

The entry of immigrants has caused concern among the United States citizens, which could lead to a disruption of the country's national security. Trump's approval of the Travel Ban policy, which targets most Muslim-majority countries, has given rise to Islamophobia among the the United States public towards these immigrants. Research from Padmi and Yulianti (2021) stating that the immigration policies issued by Trump caused negative impacts in the form of discrimination against immigrant communities, both those in the United States and those intending to visit it.

The travel ban policy, which was supposed to be a preventive measure, has instead sparked violence and hatred. Some people have expressed concern about public sentiment. The immediate impact has been a widespread perception that reflects a certain fear of foreign visitors and how this could affect their experience of living in the United States (Molina, Yuran, & Edwards, 2020). In fact, wearing the hijab is often labeled as racism, and some members explicitly link this xenophobia to their adherence to the hijab (Albahsahli et al., 2023).

The rise in Islamophobia and anti-Muslim sentiment is evidenced by several acts of violence directed at Muslim immigrants in the United States as a form of discrimination and hatred towards them. This is demonstrated by the destruction of places of worship, insults and bullying, and even direct attacks on Muslim immigrants themselves (Melati, 2020).

Table 1. Refugee Arrivals in Fiscal Years 2017-2021

Country of Nationality	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Iran	2575	41	198	135	182
Iraq	6857	140	462	541	500
Somalia	6122	257	230	149	196
Sudan	962	74	376	258	510
Syria	6566	62	560	486	1255
Yemen	23	0	3	0	7

Source: (Office of Immigration Statistics, 2021)

The implementation of the Travel Ban policy also had an impact on the decrease in the number of refugees entering the United States from 2017 to 2021, as shown in Table 1. The number of refugees from Iran decreased from 2,575 refugees in 2017 to 182 refugees in 2021. Iraq had the highest number of refugees among the countries targeted by the policy, with 6,886 refugees in 2017, decreasing to 500 refugees in 2021. Somalia also experienced a drastic decrease from 6,122 refugees in 2017 to 196 in 2021. Sudan experienced a very drastic decrease in the number of refugees in 2018 but increased again in the following year, while Syria still had many refugees arriving from 2017, numbering 6,577, to 1,255 in 2021. The acceptance of refugees from Yemen was the lowest, with a total of 21 refugees, decreasing further to 7 refugees.

In response to this, the Travel Ban policy sparked reactions from demonstrators who opposed the Travel Ban policy. These protests were carried out en masse in several major cities in the United States, such as New York, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Houston, Boston, Atlanta, Louisville, and Detroit (Padmi & Yulianti, 2021). In addition, four US states, namely New York, Massachusetts, Virginia, and Washington, have also filed lawsuits against the Travel Ban policy enacted by Trump (Padmi & Yulianti, 2021).

Not only domestically, but international reactions have also been affected by this issue. Several world leaders have opposed Trump's decision, which seems to be attempting to disrupt peace between countries by implementing such policies (Padmi & Yulianti, 2021). Even condemnation came from countries targeted by the policy, Mexico being one of them. Trump's plan to build a border wall between the United States and Mexico sparked controversy and criticism. This is a form of insult to immigrants, and the construction of the border wall is considered an act of extremism and intolerance (Padmi & Yulianti, 2021).

The Travel Ban Policy 2025-2029

Immigration remains a debated issue in the United States (Padmi & Yulianti, 2021). During his second term, Trump reimposed travel restrictions by renewing the Travel Ban policy. The policy was enacted on January 20. Named "Protecting the United States from Foreign Terrorist and Other National Security and Public Safety Threats," it is Executive Order 14161 (The White House, 2025) which aims to protect U.S. citizens from terrorist attacks, threats to U.S. national interests, adherence to or promotion of ideologies of hatred that could threaten the United States, or exploitation of immigration laws for malicious purposes (Trump, 2025).

This Travel Ban policy is an extension of his previous failed policy. Reviewing the Travel Ban policy that was implemented during Trump's first term, there is a possibility that countries that were previously included in the ban list

will be selected again for the new Travel Ban policy. Now Trump is acting more cautiously in drafting the new ban policy so as not to repeat the same mistakes as before (Narea, 2025). This can be seen in its current policy, which includes 43 countries on its ban list, unlike the first ban, which only targeted seven Muslim-majority countries.

The 43 countries are divided into three categories: red, orange, and yellow. Countries in the red category are subject to a complete ban, with 11 countries claimed to be unable to enter the United States due to a complete suspension of visas. Countries in the orange category are subject to a partial suspension, with 10 countries required to undergo a face-to-face interview to obtain a visa. Meanwhile, 22 countries in the yellow category will be given 60 days to respond to the issue and improve their security systems and screening processes. If they fail to respond to the warning, these countries will be considered for inclusion in the red or orange categories (Schneid, 2025).

This travel ban policy mostly targets countries on the African continent, although some of them also target countries in Asia, South America, and other small island nations. In fact, only a few immigrants have been arrested for committing violent crimes. The immigrants who have been arrested do not have serious criminal records (Tolan, Devine, Alvarez, Kamp, & Abou-Ghazala, 2025).

Table 2. List of Countries Committing Crimes in the United States

Categories	List of Countries	Number of Fatalities
Countries that are included in the Travel Ban and have committed crimes	Cuba	5.0
	Egypt	160.8
	Kyrgyzstan	5.0
	Pakistan	17.0
	Sudan	1.0
Countries that are included in the Travel Ban but not committing crimes	Afghanistan, Bhutan, Iran, Libya, North Korea, Somalia, Syria, Venezuela, Yemen, Eritrea, Haiti, Myanmar, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Belarus, Laos, Russia, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Turkmenistan, Burundi, Togo, Angola, Antigua & Barbuda, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Dominica, Gambia, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Republic of the Congo, Saint Kitts & Nevis, Lucia, Sao Tome & Principe, Vanuatu, Zimbabwe, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Egypt, Gabon, Ghana, Tanzania, Tonga, Tuvalu, Uganda	0.0
Countries that are not included in the Travel	Armenia	1.0
	Bahamas	1.0
	Great Britain	6.0
	Kuwait	6.0

Ban and have committed crimes	Kyrgyzstan	5.0
	Croatia	3.0
	Lebanon	157.8
	Egypt	160.8
	Saudi Arabia	2,354.8
	Taiwan	1.0
	Trinidad & Tobago	1.0
	United Arab Emirates	313.6
	Uzbekistan	8.0
	Jordan	1.0

Source: (Nowrasteh, 2025)

Table 2 shows that countries included in the Travel Ban list have fewer victims of crime compared to countries not included in the Travel Ban list. These countries pose a low threat of committing crimes that could threaten the security of the United States. There were only 188.8 out of 3,046.0 deaths caused by terrorism, and these deaths were committed by only five countries, namely Cuba, Kyrgyzstan, Egypt, Sudan, and Pakistan, which occurred at least a decade ago (Nowrasteh, 2025).

Table 3. List of Countries by Category

Categories	List of Proposed Countries	List of Countries Effective as of June 4	List of Countries Considered for 60 Days Starting June 16
Red (Full visa suspension)	Afghanistan, Bhutan, Cuba, Iran, Libya, North Korea, Somalia, Syria, Venezuela, Yemen	Afghanistan, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Eritrea, Haiti, Myanmar, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea	—
Orange (Partial visa suspension. Requires a face-to-face interview process)	Belarus, Eritrea, Haiti, Laos, Myanmar, Pakistan, Russia, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Turkmenistan	Cuba, Laos, Sierra Leone, Turkmenistan, Burundi, Togo	—
Yellow (60-days trial period)	Angola, Antigua & Barbuda, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominica, Equatorial Guinea, Gambia, Liberia,	—	Angola, Antigua dan Barbuda, Benin, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia,

Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Republic of the Kongo, Saint Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia, Sao Tome & Principe, Vanuatu, Zimbabwe	Ghana, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Malawi, Saint Lucia, Sao Tome dan Principe, Senegal, South Sudan, Syria, Tanzania, Tonga, Tuvalu, Uganda, Vanuatu, Zambia, Zimbabwe
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Source: *(Savage, Bensinger, & McCann, 2025),
(Billings, 2025), *(Savage & Wong, 2025)

Table 3 shows several countries that had been suspended under the previous Travel Ban, such as Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, and Yemen, which were again suspended for the same reasons. Then, on June 4, Trump again decided to add seven countries to the full suspension and seven countries to the partial suspension. in Executive Order 14161 (Trump, 2025) states that these countries are Afghanistan, Myanmar, Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, and Haiti. These countries were decided to be fully suspended and restricted from entering the United States due to several reasons, such as the surge in illegal immigrants from Haiti during the Biden administration, the high rate of visa overstays by citizens of these countries, and their refusal to take back citizens who had been deported. As for the countries included in the partial suspension list, which reduces the validity period of non-immigrant visas issued to their citizens, the reasons are not significantly different from those for full suspension (Trump, 2025).

Shortly thereafter, the Department identified 36 countries to be included in the Travel Ban list. If they cannot meet the specified requirements within the 60-day deadline, these countries will be further considered for full or partial suspension (Savage & Wong, 2025).

Trump reiterated this ban during his campaign, saying that the United States should not accept immigrants who could threaten the country's national security, such as those who are hostile toward the United States citizens, culture, government, institutions, and fundamental principles (Narea, 2025). He revealed in his campaign in October 2024 that he would once again ban refugees from terror-stricken areas such as the Gaza Strip and close the border (Gooding, 2025).

Not only that, the new Travel Ban policy also seeks to protect the country from terrorism and radical Islam. (Mansfield & Chambers, 2025). This is considered incredible, as the reasons given by Trump and his objectives in creating the Travel Ban policy are irrelevant to the data described above. However, by observing Trump's views and environment, we can understand the perception and basis behind the creation of this policy.

This behavior can be observed in his speeches, where Trump always refers to immigrants with hate speech. In his 2024 campaign, Trump always associated immigrants with criminals, as a threat that must be watched out for and feared because they could endanger the United States citizens (Dostál, 2025). The presence of immigrants is considered destructive and disruptive to the comfort of residents, as

Trump stated that cities in the United States that were once beautiful are now destroyed due to the actions of these illegal refugees (Dostál, 2025). Therefore, Trump repeatedly expressed his intention throughout his campaign to deport immigrants, criminals, and refugees because the increase in crime was always associated with the entry of illegal immigrants into the United States (Dostál, 2025). Now, many responses are coming. Many students have voiced their concerns about the ban, which could also threaten universities that are filled with international students.

Criticism came from a civil rights organization called the American-Arab Anti Discrimination Committee (ADC), which expressed its opposition to Trump's signing of Executive Order 14161 (American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, 2025). Prohibitions based on stigma will only cause division and mistrust among communities. The United States Senate then urged the government to review the Executive Order. They also sought to prevent the Travel Ban policy by introducing the National Origin-Based Antidiscrimination for Nonimmigrants (NO BAN) Act (Chu House, 2025).

Refugee aid organizations and advocacy groups are also working to enable immigrants to enter the United States. (Luce & Williams, 2025). This also poses a challenge for workers and may disrupt the recruitment process for prospective employees. Employees from countries affected by the Travel Ban may find it difficult to adjust their status or may be unable to travel outside the United States for work, which could hinder business operations in the United States (Boundless Immigration, 2025).

Reactions often come from other parties expressing deep disappointment with the implementation of the Travel Ban policy, while others respond by calling for negotiations to resolve the issue (Al Jazeera, 2025). Several small island countries such as Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Saint Lucia stated that they had not received any information or warning about Trump's travel ban (TRT Global, 2025).

Analysis of Donald Trump's Rational Action

This study attempts to explain the reasons Trump made the Travel Ban policy as a rational actor through the subchapters mentioned earlier. Using Graham T. Allison's Decision-Making Model theory, specifically the Rational Actor Model, it is explained that a leader is said to be the most dominant decision-maker because he is considered capable of acting rationally to make the right decision for the interests of his country (Allison, 1971). Therefore, with careful consideration, this decision-making process was influenced by factors such as trust and conservative political orientation, based on his position in the Republican Party, as well as views that influenced Trump by identifying immigrants as a threat that disrupts and undermines the security of the United States.

The large number of immigrants in the United States is considered to pose problems and threats in terms of security and the economy. A number of countries included in the ban list have been identified as sponsors of terrorism or as having beliefs or ideologies that are harmful to the United States (Taufik & Pratiwi, 2021). The large number of immigrants also has the potential to displace the United States citizens in the job market, creating fierce competition as many immigrants who settle in the United States have the opportunity to take their jobs.

By calculating the pros and cons, Trump, as a policymaker, was faced with a choice that required him to consider which option was best for the interests of his country. In this case, the disadvantage of implementing the Travel Ban policy was the response of hatred expressed by other countries and condemnation from the international community (Padmi & Yulianti, 2021). Through this consideration, the Travel Ban policy is far more beneficial because it can protect the security of its citizens and prevent terrorism from entering the country, and the losses incurred do not have a significant impact on the political stability of the United States. Thus, Trump's choice as a decision-maker fell on the implementation of the Travel Ban policy, which is considered the most rational choice in maximizing profits in his country.

4. CONCLUSION

This study explains Donald Trump's perception of decision-making in the form of the Travel Ban policy in the United States in 2025. The researcher concludes that Trump's goal of protecting the security of his citizens in the United States comes from the potential threat posed by immigrants entering the United States. Using Graham T. Allison's decision-making model theory, the results prove how Trump's political environment within the Republican Party influenced his policy-making process, accompanied by his conservative campaign. Thus, considering the advantages and disadvantages of this decision, Trump, as the dominant decision-maker, considered that forming the Travel Ban policy to protect his citizens was a rational action.

The findings of this study have contributed to knowledge in the field of International Relations, particularly in identifying how political views and factors can influence the policies that are formed. Although this study found several interesting points, there are still some limitations in terms of sources and time. Therefore, this study suggests further research in the future to obtain more complete and detailed data sources, thereby producing more accurate research..

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