

The Impact of Trump's Policies and Rhetoric on U.S. International Relations and Domestic Politics (2016-2024)

O Impacto das Políticas e da Retórica de Trump nas Relações Internacionais e na Política Interna dos EUA (2016-2024)

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Abstract

Donald Trump's tenure as the 45th President of the United States from 2017 to 2021 was marked by a series of controversial policies and rhetoric that significantly impacted both the nation's international relations and domestic political landscape. This paper provides an in-depth exploration of the multifaceted effects of Trump's presidency on global affairs and internal political dynamics from 2016 to 2024. Through a comprehensive analysis of his foreign policy actions, economic decisions, and rhetorical strategies, the study aims to elucidate the broader implications of his leadership on the world stage and within the United States. Incorporating a rigorous review of significant policy shifts, international agreements, economic reforms, and public opinion data, the research seeks to assess the lasting influence of Trump's tumultuous presidency on the country's global standing and internal cohesion.

Keywords: Trump's presidency, domestic policies, rethoric, international relations, comprehensive analysis.

Resumo

O mandato de Donald Trump como 45º Presidente dos Estados Unidos, de 2017 a 2021, foi marcado por uma série de políticas e retóricas controversas que tiveram um impacto significativo tanto nas relações internacionais da nação, como na paisagem política interna. Este artigo explora em profundidade os efeitos multifacetados da presidência de Donald Trump nos assuntos globais e na dinâmica política interna, de 2016 a 2024. Através de uma análise abrangente das suas ações de política externa, decisões económicas e estratégias

retóricas, o estudo visa elucidar as implicações mais amplas da sua liderança no cenário mundial e dentro dos Estados Unidos. Incorporando uma revisão rigorosa de mudanças políticas significativas, acordos internacionais, reformas económicas e dados de opinião pública, a investigação procura avaliar a influência duradoura da tumultuosa presidência de Trump quanto à posição global e coesão interna do país.

Palavras Chave: presidência de Trump, políticas domésticas, retórica, relações internacionais, análise abrangente.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background and Significance

The election of Donald Trump in 2016 marked a seismic shift in American politics, ushering in an era of unprecedented disruption and controversy. Trump's unconventional approach to governance, marked by a blatant disregard for political norms and a penchant for inflammatory rhetoric, reverberated across the globe, straining long-standing alliances and altering the trajectory of the United States' international relations. Simultaneously, his divisive policies and polarizing persona deeply fractured the domestic political landscape, exacerbating partisan divides and challenging the foundations of American democracy.

As the reverberations of Trump's presidency continue to ripple through the nation and the world, it is imperative to conduct a comprehensive analysis of his tenure's impact. By scrutinizing his foreign policy decisions, economic strategies, and rhetorical tactics, this study aims to shed light on the profound and lasting effects of his leadership, both on the global stage and within the United States' borders.

1.2. Objectives and Research Questions

The primary objective of this research is to provide a comprehensive assessment of the impact of Trump's policies and rhetoric on U.S. international relations and domestic politics during his presidency and in the years that followed. Specifically, the study seeks to address the following research questions:

1.2.1. How did Trump's foreign policy decisions, such as his stance on globalism, NATO burden-sharing, and withdrawal from international agreements like the Paris Climate Accord, shape the United States' global standing and relationships with allies and adversaries?

1.2.2. How did Trump's policies and rhetoric influence the domestic political landscape, including public opinion, approval ratings, and the polarization of the electorate?

1.2.3. What role did media coverage and public narratives play in shaping perceptions of Trump's presidency, both domestically and internationally?

1.2.4. What were the economic implications of Trump's trade policies, including

the withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), the renegotiation of NAFTA into the USMCA, and proposed border taxes on companies relocating operations abroad?

1.2.5. What were the legal and constitutional challenges surrounding Trump's policies, particularly about the 14th Amendment and allegations of insurrection?

1.3. Overview of Methodology and Sources

To address these research questions, this study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative analysis of primary sources, such as policy documents, speeches, and media reports, with quantitative analysis of public opinion data and polling statistics. The research draws upon a diverse range of sources, including academic literature, government publications, reputable news outlets, and authoritative databases.

Qualitative data sources include official government websites, transcripts of Trump's speeches and remarks, news articles from reputable national and international publications, and legal documents related to constitutional challenges. Quantitative data sources encompass public opinion polls from organizations like FiveThirtyEight, Gallup, and the Wall Street Journal, as well as economic indicators and trade data from government agencies and international organizations.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, the study employs a rigorous analytical framework grounded in established political science theories and methodologies. The research acknowledges potential limitations, such as inherent biases in media coverage and polling data, and addresses these through triangulation of sources and critical evaluation of data.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Existing Research on Trump's Foreign and Domestic Policies

The academic literature on Trump's presidency is vast and diverse, reflecting the intense scholarly interest in this unprecedented era of American politics. Numerous studies have examined various aspects of Trump's foreign policy, including his "America First" doctrine, his skepticism toward traditional alliances and international institutions, and his transactional approach to diplomacy (Smith, 2019; Brands, 2020; Goldgeier & Smeltz, 2021).

On the domestic front, researchers have explored the polarizing effects of Trump's rhetoric and policies, the erosion of democratic norms and institutions, and the rise of populist and nationalist sentiments within the electorate (Levitsky & Ziblatt, 2018; Norris & Inglehart, 2019; Mutz, 2022).

2.2. Theoretical Framework for Analyzing Political Impact

This study employs a multidisciplinary theoretical framework to analyze the

impact of Trump's presidency on international relations and domestic politics. Drawing from political science, international relations, and communication studies, the research incorporates the following theories:

2.2.1. Agenda-Setting Theory: Explores how media coverage influences public opinion and policy priorities (McCombs & Shaw, 1972; Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007).

2.2.2. Constructivism: Examines the role of identity, norms, and social construction in shaping political behavior (Wendt, 1992; Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998).

2.2.3. Polarization and Affective Partisan Identity Theories: Investigates the psychological and emotional factors driving political divisions (Iyengar et al., 2019; Mason, 2018).

2.2.4. Realism and Neorealism: Emphasizes the pursuit of national interests and power dynamics among states (Waltz, 1979; Mearsheimer, 2001).

By integrating these theoretical perspectives, the study aims to provide a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between Trump's policies, rhetoric, and their impact on international relations and domestic politics.

2.3. Key Debates and Gaps in the Literature

While the existing literature offers valuable insights into various aspects of Trump's presidency, several key debates and gaps remain:

2.3.1. The durability of domestic political polarization and the erosion of democratic norms were exacerbated during the Trump era.

2.3.2. The legal and constitutional implications of allegations of insurrection and the potential invocation of the 14th Amendment to bar Trump from future office.

2.3.3. The long-term implications of Trump's "America First" foreign policy and its impact on the United States' global standing and leadership role.

2.3.4. The role of social media and alternative media sources in shaping public narratives and perceptions of Trump's presidency.

2.3.5. This study aims to contribute to these ongoing debates and address existing gaps by providing a comprehensive analysis that synthesizes diverse perspectives and incorporates the latest developments and data.

3. Methodology

3.1. Data Collection Methods

3.1.1. Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative component of the study involves a thorough examination of primary sources, including:

3.1.1.1. Legal documents and court rulings about constitutional challenges and allegations of insurrection.

3.1.1.2. News articles and op-eds from reputable national and international publications, providing a range of perspectives on Trump's presidency.

3.1.1.3. Official government documents and policy papers related to Trump's foreign and domestic policies.

3.1.1.4. Transcripts of Trump's speeches, press conferences, and public remarks.

These sources are analyzed using techniques such as content analysis, discourse analysis, and critical rhetorical analysis to identify key themes, narratives, and rhetorical strategies employed by Trump and his administration, as well as the media and legal institutions.

3.1.2. Quantitative Analysis

The quantitative component of this study relies on public opinion data and polling statistics from reputable sources to analyze the impact of Trump's policies and rhetoric. Key data sources include:

3.1.2.1. FiveThirtyEight's Aggregate Polling Data

FiveThirtyEight provides comprehensive aggregate polling data on Trump's approval ratings and the 2024 Republican primary race. This data is essential for understanding trends in public opinion and voter behavior.

- FiveThirtyEight. (2024). 2024 National Republican Primary Polls. Retrieved from <https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/president-primary-r/2024/national/>

3.1.2.2. Gallup Polls and Surveys

Gallup polls and surveys offer valuable insights into public opinion on Trump's policies and performance over time. These data sets help track changes in approval ratings and public sentiment.

- Gallup. (2024). Presidential Approval Ratings — Donald Trump. Retrieved from <https://news.gallup.com/poll/203198/presidential-approval-ratings-donald-trump.aspx>

3.1.2.3. International Dynamics Review

The International Dynamics Review provides analysis and data on global perceptions of Trump's presidency, offering a broader international perspective on his impact.

- International Dynamics Review. (2024). [LinkedIn Newsletter]. Retrieved from <https://www.linkedin.com/newsletters/7075235432388521984/>

3.1.2.4. The Wall Street Journal and Other Reputable Media Outlets

The Wall Street Journal and other reputable media outlets conduct polls on voter preferences and perceptions of Trump's presidency. These sources contribute additional data for comprehensive analysis.

These data sources are analyzed using various statistical methods, including regression analysis, time-series analysis, and cross-sectional comparisons. These techniques help identify trends, patterns, and correlations between Trump's policies, rhetoric, and public opinion, providing a robust quantitative foundation for the study.

3.2. Analytical Approach and Framework

The study employs a mixed-methods analytical approach, integrating qualitative and quantitative data to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of Trump's presidency on international relations and domestic politics.

The qualitative data analysis is guided by the theoretical frameworks of realism, constructivism, and agenda-setting theory, allowing for an in-depth exploration of the underlying motivations, narratives, and power dynamics shaping Trump's foreign and domestic policies, as well as the media's role in framing public discourse.

The quantitative data analysis draws upon statistical techniques and models to identify significant trends, correlations, and causal relationships between Trump's policies, rhetoric, and public opinion indicators.

3.3. Sources and Limitations

This study draws upon a diverse range of sources, including academic literature, government publications, reputable news outlets, legal documents, and authoritative databases. However, it is essential to acknowledge the potential limitations and biases inherent in these sources.

3.3.1. Academic Literature, while subjected to peer review and rigorous scholarly scrutiny, may still reflect the ideological leanings or theoretical biases of individual researchers.

3.3.2. Government Publications and Official Documents provide valuable insights into policymaking processes but may be influenced by political agendas or selective reporting.

3.3.3. News Media Sources, while striving for objectivity, can be shaped by editorial biases, commercial interests, and the personal perspectives of individual journalists.

3.3.4. Legal Documents and Court Rulings are grounded in constitutional principles and jurisprudence but may be subject to differing interpretations and ideological differences among judges.

3.3.5. Public Opinion Data and Polling Statistics provide quantitative measures

of attitudes and preferences but can be influenced by factors such as question-wording, sampling biases, and respondents' potential misunderstanding or misrepresentation of their true beliefs.

3.3.6. Mitigating Limitations: To mitigate these limitations, the study employs a triangulation approach, cross-referencing multiple sources and seeking corroboration from diverse perspectives. Additionally, the research acknowledges and addresses potential biases and limitations through critical analysis, transparency in reporting methods, and a commitment to objectivity and impartiality.

4. Findings and Analysis

4.1. Trump's Foreign Policy and Globalism

4.1.1. Analysis of Trump's 2019 UN Address Denouncing Globalism

In his 2019 address to the United Nations General Assembly, Trump delivered a scathing rebuke of globalism, a stance that marked a significant departure from the United States' traditional role as a champion of international cooperation and multilateralism. His rhetoric, which included statements such as "The future does not belong to globalists. The future belongs to patriots" and "Wise leaders always put the good of their people and their own country first," was widely interpreted as a repudiation of the post-World War II international order and a shift toward an "America First" foreign policy doctrine.

Trump's denunciation of globalism was not merely rhetorical; it was accompanied by concrete policy actions that strained relationships with long-standing allies and international institutions. His administration's skepticism toward organizations like the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) signaled a profound shift in the United States' approach to global affairs.

This rhetoric and policy stance resonated with Trump's base of supporters, who viewed globalism as a threat to American sovereignty and a force eroding the nation's economic and cultural identity. However, it also drew sharp criticism from proponents of international cooperation and those who viewed the United States' global leadership role as essential for maintaining stability and advancing shared interests.

4.1.2. Impact of NATO Burden-Sharing Rhetoric

One of the most contentious aspects of Trump's foreign policy was his persistent criticism of NATO allies for what he perceived as their inadequate financial contributions to the alliance. Throughout his presidency, Trump repeatedly asserted that NATO members were not meeting their agreed-upon defense spending targets,

accusing them of owing “massive amounts of money” to the United States.

This rhetoric not only strained relations with key allies like Germany and France but also raised concerns about the United States’ commitment to the principle of collective defense enshrined in the NATO treaty. Trump’s transactional approach, which seemed to view NATO as a financial transaction rather than a strategic partnership, clashed with the alliance’s traditional emphasis on shared values and mutual security guarantees.

While Trump’s criticisms highlighted legitimate concerns about defense spending imbalances within NATO, his confrontational rhetoric, and threats to withdraw support for the alliance alarmed many in the international community. Critics argued that such rhetoric undermined NATO’s deterrent power and emboldened adversaries like Russia, which sought to exploit divisions within the alliance.

4.2. U.S. withdrawal from the Paris Agreement

In 2017, Trump announced the United States’ withdrawal from the Paris Agreement on climate change, a landmark international accord aimed at mitigating the effects of global warming. This decision, which fulfilled a campaign promise to undo what Trump perceived as a bad deal for American workers, drew widespread condemnation from environmental advocates, scientists, and many of the United States’ closest allies.

The withdrawal from the Paris Agreement was symbolic of Trump’s skepticism toward multilateral agreements and his prioritization of domestic economic interests over global concerns. It also represented a significant departure from the United States’ traditional leadership role in addressing environmental challenges and a repudiation of the scientific consensus on climate change.

While Trump and his supporters framed the withdrawal as a necessary measure to protect American jobs and industries, critics argued that it abdicated the United States’ moral and environmental leadership on the world stage. The decision also prompted concerns about the potential long-term economic consequences of ceding ground to other nations in the rapidly growing renewable energy sector.

4.3. Effects on International Alliances and Global Perception

Trump’s “America First” foreign policy, which prioritized narrow national interests over multilateral cooperation, had far-reaching implications for the United States’ global standing and relationships with allies and adversaries alike. On the one hand, Trump’s willingness to confront traditional allies over trade imbalances, defense spending, and other contentious issues resonated with his domestic base, which viewed such assertiveness as a long-overdue recalibration of American foreign policy. However, this approach also strained long-standing partnerships, alienated many in the international community, and contributed to a perception of American unreliability and unpredictability.

Adversaries like Russia and China sought to capitalize on these dynamics, positioning themselves as alternative global leaders and attempting to erode the United States' influence in various regions. The vacuum left by America's perceived retreat from its traditional leadership role created opportunities for rival powers to expand their spheres of influence and challenge the post-World War II international order. Furthermore, Trump's rhetoric and policies, particularly his skepticism toward international institutions and agreements, fueled concerns about the future of global cooperation on issues ranging from climate change to nuclear non-proliferation. The United States' withdrawal from certain multilateral frameworks raised questions about the durability of existing international norms and the ability to address global challenges through collective action.

5. Economic Policies and Trade Agreements

5.1. Withdrawal from the TPP and Implications for U.S.-China Relations

One of Trump's earliest economic policy decisions was to withdraw the United States from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a proposed trade agreement between twelve Pacific Rim nations. Trump framed the withdrawal as a necessary step to protect American jobs and industries from unfair competition, aligning with his "America First" economic nationalism. However, the withdrawal from the TPP had significant implications for the United States' strategic position in the Asia-Pacific region and its relations with China. By abandoning the TPP, the United States effectively ceded economic and geopolitical influence in the region, allowing China to advance its trade initiatives and strengthen its ties with neighboring countries.

The vacuum left by the United States' absence from the TPP also raised concerns about the future of global trade rules and standards. The agreement was designed to establish a comprehensive framework for trade and investment in the Pacific region, incorporating provisions on labor rights, environmental protection, and intellectual property. Without the United States' participation, the ability to shape and enforce these rules was diminished, potentially benefiting countries like China that have been criticized for their trade practices.

Moreover, the withdrawal from the TPP was seen by many as a missed opportunity for the United States to counterbalance China's growing economic clout in the Asia-Pacific region. The agreement was envisioned as a strategic counterweight to China's influence, promoting American economic interests and values in a region of vital importance to the global economy.

5.2. Replacement of NAFTA with the USMCA

Another significant economic policy shift under the Trump administration was the renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) with Canada and Mexico. The resulting United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement

(USMCA), which replaced NAFTA in 2020, aimed to address what Trump perceived as unfair trade practices and to bring manufacturing jobs back to the United States.

The USMCA included several notable changes from its predecessor, such as tighter rules of origin for automobiles, increased access for American dairy farmers to the Canadian market, and stronger labor and environmental protections. While supporters hailed the agreement as a win for American workers and a necessary modernization of trade rules, critics argued that its impact on job creation and economic growth would be marginal at best.

The renegotiation process itself was contentious, with Trump frequently threatening to withdraw from NAFTA altogether and imposing tariffs on Canadian and Mexican imports. This combative approach strained relations with the United States' closest neighbors and trading partners, raising concerns about the long-term stability of the North American economic bloc. Furthermore, the USMCA's provisions on digital trade, intellectual property rights, and investment protections were met with criticism from various stakeholders, who argued that the agreement favored corporate interests over those of consumers and workers.

5.3. Border Tax Proposals and Economic Impact

Throughout his presidency, Trump floated the idea of imposing border taxes or tariffs on companies that relocated operations abroad, framing it to incentivize domestic production and protect American jobs. This proposal drew sharp criticism from major corporations, who warned of potential disruptions to global supply chains and increased costs for consumers.

Economists also raised concerns about the potential for retaliatory tariffs from trading partners, which could spark a trade war and imperil the American economy's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. While the proposal never materialized into concrete policy, it contributed to an air of economic uncertainty and strained relations between the Trump administration and the business community.

5.4. A Comprehensive Assessment of Trump's Economic Legacy

In retrospect, Trump's economic policies yielded a mixed legacy. On the one hand, his tax cuts and deregulatory efforts were credited with bolstering the economy in the early years of his presidency, leading to solid growth, low unemployment, and a booming stock market. However, critics argued that these gains were offset by mounting federal deficits, rising income inequality, and the long-term consequences of his trade policies.

The true impact of Trump's economic agenda may not be fully realized for years to come, as the reverberations of his trade wars, corporate tax cuts, and immigration policies continue to ripple through the global economy. Nonetheless, his willingness to challenge long-standing economic orthodoxies and disrupt established trade relationships left an indelible mark on the United States' economic landscape and its positioning in the world.

6. Domestic political landscape

6.1. Examination of Trump's Influence on U.S. Domestic Politics

Trump's presidency had a profound and polarizing effect on the domestic political landscape, exacerbating existing divisions and challenging the foundations of American democracy. His combative rhetoric, coupled with his controversial policies and governing style, galvanized both ardent supporters and fierce opponents, leaving little room for moderation or compromise.

One of the most enduring legacies of Trump's tenure was the deepening of partisan tribalism and the erosion of shared democratic norms. His frequent attacks on the media, the judiciary, and the integrity of the electoral process sowed doubts about the legitimacy of democratic institutions and contributed to a growing sense of societal polarization.

Moreover, Trump's embrace of populist and nationalist narratives tapped into deep-seated anxieties and resentments within segments of the American electorate, fueling the rise of a more confrontational and anti-establishment brand of politics. His ability to mobilize a fervent base of supporters, often through incendiary rhetoric and divisive messaging, challenged the traditional boundaries of political discourse and raised concerns about the long-term implications for the nation's civic fabric.

6.2. Public Opinion and Polling Data Analysis

Despite the intense polarization surrounding his presidency, Trump maintained a remarkably stable base of support throughout his tenure. According to FiveThirtyEight's aggregate polling data, his approval rating among Republicans consistently hovered around 90%, reflecting the unwavering loyalty of his core supporters. However, his approval ratings among independents and Democrats remained stubbornly low, seldom rising above 40% over the course of his presidency. This stark partisan divide in public opinion was unprecedented in modern American politics and underscored the challenge of governing a deeply divided nation.

As Trump geared up for a potential 2024 presidential run, polling data suggested a deeply fractured electorate. While he maintained a commanding lead in the Republican primary race, with 61% support according to FiveThirtyEight's data, his prospects in a general election remained uncertain. A Wall Street Journal poll conducted in late 2023 found Trump leading President Biden by a narrow margin of 47% to 43%, reflecting the nation's enduring political fissures.

6.3. Trump's Tax Policies and Their Socioeconomic Effects

One of the most significant domestic policy initiatives of the Trump presidency was the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, which overhauled the federal tax code and slashed corporate tax rates. While proponents hailed the legislation as a boon for businesses and job creation, critics argued that it disproportionately benefited the wealthy and exacerbated income inequality.

Empirical studies conducted in the years following the tax cuts painted a mixed picture of their socioeconomic effects. While corporate profits and stock buybacks surged, wage growth remained sluggish, and the promised surge in business investment failed to materialize fully. Furthermore, the tax cuts contributed to a ballooning federal deficit, potentially constraining the government's ability to invest in critical areas like infrastructure, education, and social safety nets.

The long-term implications of Trump's tax policies remain a subject of intense debate among economists and policymakers. Some argue that the cuts provided a necessary jolt to the economy, while others contend that their benefits were heavily skewed toward the affluent, exacerbating existing inequalities and undermining the nation's fiscal sustainability.

6.4. Comparative Analysis of Trump's Approval Ratings Over Time

Throughout his presidency, Trump's approval ratings were marked by a remarkable degree of stability, both in their overall level and in the stark partisan divide they reflected. From his inauguration in January 2017 to his departure from office in January 2021, his approval rating never exceeded 50% in Gallup's polling, a historic anomaly for a sitting president.

While his base of supporters remained unwavering, with approval ratings consistently above 80% among Republicans, his numbers among independents and Democrats languished in the 30-40% range. This entrenched polarization persisted even in the face of momentous events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 election, and the January 6th Capitol riots.

Comparative analyses of Trump's approval ratings with those of his predecessors revealed a striking divergence from historical norms. While most presidents experienced fluctuations in public support over the course of their terms, often in response to major events or policy initiatives, Trump's numbers remained remarkably static, seemingly impervious to external factors.

This phenomenon underscored the depth of the nation's political divisions and the extent to which public perceptions of Trump had become deeply entrenched along partisan lines. It also raised questions about the capacity of future presidents to bridge these divides and restore a sense of national unity in an era of heightened polarization.

7. Media representation and public perception

7.1. Media coverage and public narratives about Trump

Trump's presidency was characterized by an unprecedented and adversarial relationship with the media, which he frequently decried as "fake news" and the "enemy of the people." This rhetoric, coupled with his embrace of social media as a primary communication platform, profoundly shaped public narratives, and perceptions of his administration.

Traditional media outlets, both in the United States and abroad, grappled with the challenge of covering a president who routinely dismissed unfavorable coverage as biased and who relied heavily on unfiltered communication through platforms like Twitter. These dynamics fueled allegations of media bias from Trump's supporters while raising concerns about the erosion of trust in established journalistic institutions.

At the same time, the proliferation of alternative and partisan media sources, both online and on cable television, contributed to the fragmentation of the media landscape and the entrenchment of competing narratives. These outlets often reinforced the perspectives of their respective ideological camps, further polarizing public opinion and undermining the notion of a shared set of facts.

7.2. Analysis of the Guardian's and TRT World's Perspectives

International media outlets like The Guardian and TRT World provided valuable insights into the global perception of Trump's presidency and its impact on the United States' standing on the world stage.

The Guardian, a prominent British newspaper, was overly critical of Trump's "America First" foreign policy, his withdrawal from international agreements like the Paris Climate Accord, and his combative rhetoric toward allies. Its coverage often portrayed Trump as an isolationist and a threat to the post-World War II international order, raising concerns about the erosion of American leadership and the implications for global cooperation.

TRT World, a Turkish state-run news outlet, offered a more nuanced perspective, acknowledging Trump's populist appeal and his ability to tap into the grievances of segments of the American electorate. However, it also highlighted the legal challenges and allegations of insurrection surrounding Trump's presidency, particularly the events of January 6, 2021.

These divergent perspectives underscored the complexity of global reactions to Trump's tenure and the varying lenses through which his actions and rhetoric were interpreted. They also reflected the enduring influence of the United States on the world stage, with Trump's presidency garnering intense scrutiny and analysis from media outlets around the globe.

7.3. The Role of Media in Shaping Political Discourse

The media's role in shaping political discourse and public opinion during the Trump era was both profound and contentious. On the other hand, the media's watchdog function and commitment to holding power to account remained essential in a democracy, particularly in the face of a president who routinely attacked the press and challenged established norms.

However, the fragmentation of the media landscape and the rise of partisan and ideological echo chambers also contributed to the entrenchment of polarized

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Furthermore, the proliferation of social media and the president's direct communication with the public via platforms like Twitter challenged traditional media gatekeepers and disrupted the flow of information. This shift in the media ecosystem had far-reaching implications for the way news was consumed, interpreted, and disseminated, further complicating the media's role in shaping political discourse.

8. Constitutional and legal considerations

8.1. Examination of the Fourteenth Amendment in Contemporary Politics

The legal and constitutional challenges surrounding Trump's presidency came to a head in the aftermath of the January 6, 2021, Capitol riots, which were widely condemned as an insurrectionist attack on American democracy. In the wake of these events, some legal scholars and policymakers invoked the Fourteenth Amendment's provisions on insurrection, raising the possibility of barring Trump from holding future office.

Section 3 of the Fourteenth Amendment states that "no person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress, or elector of President and Vice President... who, having previously taken an oath... to support the Constitution of the United States, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same." This clause, originally intended to address the legacy of the Civil War, gained renewed relevance in the aftermath of the Capitol riots.

In the years that followed, several state courts, including the Colorado Supreme Court, ruled to remove Trump from their Republican primary ballots, citing the Fourteenth Amendment's insurrection clause. These rulings set a precedent for interpreting the amendment in the context of contemporary politics and raised broader questions about the constitutional mechanisms for safeguarding democracy.

8.2. Legal Challenges and Implications of Trump's Policies

Beyond the Fourteenth Amendment debate, Trump's presidency was marked by a litany of legal challenges and controversies, ranging from immigration policies like the travel ban to environmental deregulation efforts. These legal battles played out in federal courts across the country, with judges grappling with the constitutionality of Trump's actions and the limits of executive power.

The implications of these legal challenges extended beyond the immediate policies at stake as they shaped the broader jurisprudence surrounding presidential authority and the separation of powers. The court's rulings, whether upholding or striking down Trump's policies, established precedents that would reverberate through the judicial system for years to come.

Moreover, the legal battles surrounding Trump's presidency highlighted the enduring importance of an independent judiciary in a democracy, serving as a check on executive overreach and safeguarding the rule of law. The intensity of these legal challenges underscored the depth of the nation's political divisions and the extent to which even fundamental constitutional principles had become sites of partisan contestation.

8.3. Future Outlook for Constitutional Debates

As the nation grappled with the aftermath of the Trump presidency, it became clear that the constitutional debates ignited during his tenure would have far-reaching implications for the future of American democracy. The invocation of the Fourteenth Amendment's insurrection clause, while historically unprecedented, raised fundamental questions about the mechanisms for holding political leaders accountable and preserving the integrity of the democratic process.

Beyond the specific legal challenges surrounding Trump, his presidency exposed broader vulnerabilities in the nation's constitutional framework, particularly about the limits of executive power, the independence of the judiciary, and the role of Congress in providing oversight and accountability.

These debates are likely to continue shaping the nation's political discourse for years to come as policymakers, legal scholars, and the public grapple with the enduring legacies of the Trump era. The outcome of these debates will have profound implications for the resilience of American democracy and the nation's ability to navigate future challenges while upholding its constitutional principles.

9. Conclusion: The Impact of Trump's Presidency on U.S. Global Standing and Domestic Politics

9.1. Trump's foreign policy posture, characterized by an aversion to globalism, demands for increased NATO burden-sharing, and withdrawal from multilateral agreements like the Paris Climate Accord, precipitated a seismic shift in the

United States' global standing and relationships. This muscular unilateralism marked a decisive departure from the postwar multilateral order, fostering skepticism among traditional allies who began questioning America's reliability as a partner. Concurrently, it emboldened adversaries to challenge U.S. influence more assertively, perceiving vulnerabilities in the fraying alliance architecture. Trump's emphasis on NATO allies contributing more financially strained the alliance, sowing doubts about Washington's commitment to collective security. The U.S. abdication of global leadership on climate change by withdrawing from the Paris Accord undermined environmental diplomacy efforts. Cumulatively, these actions cultivated a perception of an insular, transactional U.S. increasingly indifferent to ally concerns, compelling partners to hedge by diversifying partnerships while adversaries exploited perceived retrenchment.

9.2. Domestically, Trump's provocative rhetoric and disruptive policies profoundly reshaped the political landscape, accentuating polarization and reshaping public attitudes. His pugilistic style galvanized his base while simultaneously alienating opponents, exemplifying the phenomenon of negative partisanship, wherein hostility towards the outgroup predominates. Polling data illustrates these stark divides, with Trump's approval ratings fluctuating based on responses to issues like immigration, the economy, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Policies perceived as favoring the wealthy or undermining social justice calcified partisan entrenchment, fueled by affective polarization, wherein group identities became viscerally antagonistic. The emotional undercurrents of this schism posed an existential challenge to democratic norms predicated on civility and shared foundational beliefs.

9.3. Media coverage and competing public narratives were pivotal forces shaping perceptions of Trump's presidency, both domestically and internationally. Domestically, the partisan media's agenda-setting function ensured controversies surrounding Trump dominated public discourse, with ideological framing casting his actions in starkly divergent manners conducive to furthering sociopolitical polarization. Globally, international portrayals of Trump's bellicose rhetoric and mercurial policies colored perceptions of the U.S. as an erratic and unreliable partner, complicating bilateral relations. These diametrically opposed narratives highlighted the media's power in shaping public consciousness regarding political leadership in an era of fragmented informational ecosystems lacking a shared truth.

9.4. Trump's mercantilist trade policies, including withdrawing from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), renegotiating NAFTA into USMCA, and proposing punitive tariffs on firms offshoring production, carried significant economic implications while endeavoring to rebalance globalization's asymmetries in America's favor. Abandoning TPP ceded economic influence on China in the Asia-Pacific but sought to protect domestic industries. The USMCA introduced

stricter labor and environmental standards than its NAFTA predecessor, though long-term impacts remain uncertain. Proposed border taxes aimed to disincentivize offshoring but risked disrupting integrated supply chains and raising consumer costs. These policies highlighted tensions between protectionist impulses and the complexities of 21st-century interdependence while refocusing trade relationships on narrow reciprocity.

9.5. Legally and constitutionally, Trump's tenure was replete with challenges centered on alleged violations of 14th Amendment equal protection guarantees through policies like the travel ban and family separations at the southern border. The nadir was the January 6th insurrection at the Capitol and subsequent impeachment proceedings, which interrogated whether inflammatory rhetoric constituted incitement exceeding free speech protections and the boundaries of executive power. These issues underscored the enduring relevance of constitutional safeguards in curtailing potential authoritarian overreach amidst institutional stress tests.

Accordingly, Trump's disruptive presidency reshaped America's global orientation and domestic political realities in profound ways that are still being grappled with. His administration's renunciation of traditional alliance hierarchies and values like multilateralism left an indelible legacy, prompting geopolitical realignments. Domestically, caustic populist rhetoric exacerbated sociopolitical polarization, straining democratic norms predicated on restraint and consensus-building. As the political aftermath is navigated, rigorous analysis illuminating the interplay between elite cues, media narratives, and mass attitudes will be essential in safeguarding democratic resilience.

10. Moving Beyond the Trump Era

The presidency of Donald Trump represented a seismic shift in American politics, both on the global stage and within the nation's domestic landscape. His "America First" foreign policy, characterized by a repudiation of globalism and a transactional approach to international relations, strained long-standing alliances and challenged the United States' traditional leadership role in the world.

Domestically, Trump's polarizing rhetoric and divisive policies exacerbated existing political fissures, galvanizing ardent supporters and fierce opponents alike. His embrace of populist and nationalist narratives tapped into deep-seated anxieties within segments of the American electorate, fueling the rise of a more confrontational and anti-establishment brand of politics.

The economic implications of Trump's tenure were equally complex, with his trade policies and tax reforms yielding a mixed legacy of corporate windfalls, sluggish wage growth, and mounting federal deficits. The long-term impact of these economic shifts remains a subject of intense debate among policymakers and economists.

Perhaps most significantly, the Trump presidency raised profound constitutional and legal questions about the limits of executive power, the mechanisms for holding leaders accountable, and the resilience of American democracy itself. The invocation of the Fourteenth Amendment's insurrection clause in the aftermath of the January 6th Capitol riots set a precedent for interpreting the Constitution in the context of contemporary politics, with implications that will reverberate for years to come.

As the nation moves forward, grappling with the enduring legacies of the Trump era, policymakers, scholars, and the public must engage in a thoughtful and nuanced examination of this tumultuous period. Only through a rigorous and impartial analysis can we fully understand the impact of Trump's policies and rhetoric and chart a course toward a more unified and resilient American democracy.

While the Trump presidency left an indelible mark on American politics and global affairs, the nation must not become mired in a perpetual cycle of recrimination and partisan rancor. Instead, this pivotal moment in history should catalyze reflection, reform, and a renewed commitment to the democratic principles that have underpinned the nation's success.

To move beyond the divisiveness of the Trump era, several key steps must be taken:

10.1. Addressing Socioeconomic Disparities: The populist fervor that fueled Trump's rise to power was rooted, in part, in the economic anxieties and grievances of certain segments of the population. Policies aimed at promoting economic opportunity, reducing inequality, and addressing the root causes of societal discontent can help mitigate the appeal of divisive, anti-establishment rhetoric.

10.2. Bridging the Partisan Divide: While political differences are inevitable in a vibrant democracy, the deep polarization and tribalism that characterized the Trump era pose a threat to the nation's social fabric. Efforts to foster dialogue, compromise, and a shared sense of national identity are essential for healing the divisions and restoring a spirit of unity.

10.3. Promoting Civic Engagement and Media Literacy: The proliferation of misinformation and the fragmentation of the media landscape during the Trump era underscored the importance of an informed and engaged citizenry. Initiatives to promote civic education, critical thinking, and media literacy can empower the public to navigate complex political discourse and make informed decisions.

10.4. Recommitting to Global Leadership: The United States' retreat from its traditional role as a global leader during the Trump presidency created a vacuum that was exploited by rival powers and undermined the efficacy of international cooperation. A renewed commitment to multilateralism, robust diplomatic engagement, and a values-based foreign policy can help restore the nation's standing on the world stage.

10.5. Strengthening Democratic Institutions: The events of the Trump presidency exposed vulnerabilities in the nation's system of checks and balances,

highlighting the need for robust safeguards against executive overreach and the erosion of democratic norms. This may involve reforms to enhance congressional oversight, strengthen the independence of the judiciary, and reinforce the integrity of the electoral process.

Ultimately, the path forward requires a collective commitment to uphold the principles of democracy, foster civic engagement, and promote a shared sense of national identity that transcends partisan affiliation. By learning from the tumultuous lessons of the Trump era and embracing a spirit of unity and renewal, the United States can emerge stronger, more resilient, and better equipped to navigate the challenges of the 21st century.

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