

**IBN HALDUN UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

MASTER THESIS

**AN ALLIANCE OF THE CENTURY:
DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN THE
KINGDOM OF ESWATINI AND THE
REPUBLIC OF CHINA (TAIWAN)**

BUKELWA MAPHANGA

**THESIS SUPERVISOR
ASSOC. PROF. DR. ALI ASLAN**

ISTANBUL, 2023

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by

BUKELWA MAPHANGA

**A thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Political Science and International Relations.**

**THESIS SUPERVISOR
ASSOC. PROF. DR. ALI ASLAN**

ISTANBUL, 2023

APPROVAL PAGE

This is to Certify that we have read this thesis and that, in our opinion, it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Political Science and International Relations.

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I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

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ÖZ

YÜZYILIN İTTİFAKI: ESVATİNİ KRALLIĞI İLE ÇİN CUMHURİYETİ (TAYVAN) ARASINDAKİ DİPLOMATİK İLİŞKİLER

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Uluslararası ilişkilerde "sadık müttefik" terimi tam olarak ne anlama geliyor? Bu, sıklıkla atıfta bulunulan ancak kavramsallaştırılması genellikle daha az araştırılan bir kavramdır. Bu tezin görevi, ne kadar iddialı olursa olsun, uluslararası ilişkilerde sadakat kavramına, çoğu ana akım teorisyenin "*kuralın istisnası*" etiketini yapıştırmakta acele ettiği bir vaka çalışması merceğinden bakmaktır. 2022 yılında Esvatini Krallığı ve Çin Cumhuriyeti (Tayvan), mevcut jeopolitik bağlamda bile zamana meydan okuyan bir ittifakın yıldönümü olan, kendi deyimleriyle elli beş yıllık 'dostluğu' kutladılar. Çin Halk Cumhuriyeti'nin (ÇHC) yükselişi uluslararası sistemde birçok değişimi beraberinde getirmiştir; bunlardan en önemlilerinden biri de Afrika kıtasındaki ittifak kurma faaliyetleridir. Çin'in tüm girişimlerine rağmen Esvatini, Tayvan'ın terk ettiği bir avuç bölgesel komşusu Çin Halk Cumhuriyeti'ne (ÇHC) bağlılıklarını bildirdiklerinde bile Tayvan'a olan bağlılığını sürdürmüştür ve asıl soru neden? Bu araştırma, düşünsel birim düzeyinde bir faktör olarak sadakat kavramını bu vakaya uygun ve daha fazla odaklanmayı hak eden ana akım teorik çerçevelere tamamlayıcı bir açıklama olarak sunmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu tez, tematik bir analiz çalışması yaparak, iki devlet arasındaki çeşitli etkileşimlerde yer alan ve aralarındaki sadakati gösteren kalıpları ve anlatıları ortaya çıkarmaktadır. Bu çalışma, uluslararası ilişkiler alanında akademik ve analitik olarak araştırılmaya şiddetle ihtiyaç duyulan iki alan olan küçük devlet dış politika teorilerine ve Esvatini'nin siyasi çalışmalarına bir adanmışlık ve katkıdır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Diplomatik İlişkiler, Esvatini Dış Politikası, İttifak Oluşturma, Uluslararası İlişkilerde Sadakat, Küçük Devlet Dış Politikası.

ABSTRACT

AN ALLIANCE OF THE CENTURY: THE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI AND THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA (TAIWAN)

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What exactly does the term “*loyal ally*” mean in international relations? This is a concept that is often referred to, but whose conceptualization is often less explored. The task of this dissertation, ambitious as it may be, is to take a look at the concept of loyalty in international relations through the lens of a case study that is baffling to many mainstream theorists who would be quick to assign to it the label of “*exception to the rule.*” In the year 2022, the Kingdom of Eswatini and the Republic of China (Taiwan) celebrated fifty-five years of ‘friendship,’ as they dubbed it, an anniversary of an alliance that has stood the test of time even in the current geopolitical context. The rise of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) has come with many transitions in the international system, one of the most significant being its alliance formation activities within the continent of Africa. Despite China’s overtures, Eswatini has maintained its allegiance with Taiwan, even when the handful of its regional neighbors that Taiwan had left switched their allegiance to the People’s Republic of China (PRC), and the question is why? This research seeks to submit the concept of loyalty as an ideational unit-level factor as fitting to this case and as a complementary explanation to mainstream theoretical frameworks that deserve further focus. By engaging in an exercise of thematic analysis, this thesis reveals the patterns and narratives within various interactions between the two states that indicate the loyalty between them. This body of work is a dedication and contribution to small-state foreign policy theories

and to the political studies of Eswatini, two fields that are in dire need of being academically and analytically investigated in the field of international relations.

Keywords: Alliance Formation, Diplomatic Relations, Eswatini Foreign Policy, Loyalty in International Relations, Small State Foreign Policy.



DEDICATION

To Smangele and Sphiwe, two women who faced life's greatest challenges head-on and emerged victorious, and the people from whom I learned resilience and to whom I owe my very existence.



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Bukelwa Maphanga
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LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ROC	Republic of China (Taiwan)
AGOA	Africa Growth and Opportunity Act
ANC	African National Congress
CDC	Commonwealth Development Corporation
FOCAC	Forum on China- Africa Cooperation
INM	Imbokodvo National Movement
KoE	Kingdom of Eswatini
NAM	Non-aligned Movement
NNLC	Ngwane National Liberty Congress
OAU	Organization of African Unity
PRC	People's Republic of China
SACU	Southern African Customs Union
SNL	Swazi National Land
SRDF	Swaziland Royal Defense Force
UN	United Nations
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
URDF	Umbufo Royal Defense Force
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The diplomatic relations between the Kingdom of Eswatini and Taiwan (ROC) are about as old as the number of years that Eswatini has been independent. On the very same date of its independence from the British Empire, 16 September 1968, Eswatini recognized Taiwan (ROC) over the People's Republic of China and has not budged 55 years on.¹ The matter of which "China" to recognize between the Republic of China (Taiwan) and the People's Republic of China (PRC) has been a point of contention since the end of the second world war. The UN Resolution 2758, signed in the year 1971, coincided with the rise in economic prowess of the People's Republic of China (PRC). The African region, just like the Pacific Islands and Latin America, has been a sphere of diplomatic competition between Taiwan and the PRC (Atkinson, 2010), with most states within the African region recognizing the People's Republic of China increasingly from the 1960s. States such as Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, the Gambia, and Chad, have switched allegiance from China to Taiwan and back to China multiple times (Lim & Fei, 2022), yet the Kingdom of Eswatini has remained an ally of Taiwan, in the same way as the Vatican City and Guatemala have remained since the Kuomintang fled the Chinese Communist revolution in the late 1920s. Eswatini is the last remaining ally of the Republic of China (Taiwan) as of the year 2018 (Madowo, 2019).

The bulk of international relations theorists have focused much of their scholarly works on the application of 'dollar diplomacy' strategies of the two competing "Chinas" (Rich & Dahmer, 2022; Atkinson, 2010) in attempts to explain how allies across the globe are being weaned to recognize or otherwise stick with one China over the other. This indicates that the existing explanations of the rivalry for recognition have primarily been approached at a structural level of analysis in attempts to achieve

¹ This piece of information was derived from the information about the host page on the Taiwanese embassy website in Eswatini. For more information, please visit <https://www.taiwanembassy.org/sz/post/5736.html>.

a certain level of parsimony and generalizability in uncovering why specific states recognized one China and not the other. Structural approaches have proven effective in revealing the broader systemic context that outlines certain international trends by highlighting the economic, political, and strategic considerations that influence states' decision-making processes. Factors such as trade relationships, economic incentives, regional security dynamics, and the influence of major powers have all been identified as key drivers in shaping the recognition of one China over the other. Although employing the structural approach to research inquiry has its merits, the limitations, especially in cases such as this, cannot be ignored. Such outlying cases challenge the ability of structural theories to fully explain why specific states make choices that show divergence from the expected pattern by ruling them out as mere exceptions to the rule. Structural approaches have led to the relations between Eswatini and Taiwan being described as a trade-off of foreign aid in exchange for political support in international institutions. This explanation fits the historical context of how these two states first initiated their relations but has not held up in exposing the endurance of the ties between what is now dubbed an odd couple in international relations. This necessitates an approach to inquiry that illuminates the contextual factors at play at the unit level of analysis and offers an in-depth analysis of the diplomatic ties that is case-specific and catered to the internal validity of the research as a whole. Focusing on agency in the study of diplomatic relations between Eswatini and Taiwan offers a valuable perspective that, in fact, complements the structural approach. While the structural approach emphasizes measurable factors like material capabilities and strategic considerations, an agentic approach sheds light on the intangible aspects of state behavior, such as honor, esteem, and values. Agentic approaches help gain a deeper understanding of certain motivations, beliefs, and intersubjective factors that influence state decisions. Constructivism in international relations has served as a window to intersubjectivity within state behavior by attempting to build a bridge between the system and the unit by giving an account of how they co-constitute or construct each other. The agent-structure debate has led to criticisms of constructivist theories as being successful in showing how certain intersubjective elements of states- norms, identities, beliefs, and values- are shaped by the structure but have fallen short in giving an account of how exactly these same intersubjective elements shape the wider structure in return. This indicates limitations in the theory as it stands and exposes the need for a new constructivist approach that deals with intersubjectivity from a unit-

level analysis approach in order to avoid the inconsistencies borne within structural constructivism (Lebow, 2008). It is one of the main objectives of this research to explore the intersubjective elements at play in the relations between Eswatini and Taiwan to understand their longstanding ties from a different perspective that offers insights into the underlying factors within the foreign policy decision-making process itself. Employing a systemic- level of analysis would, without a doubt, lend a hand to understanding the broader and more tangible factors, such as power and interest, that influence certain decision-making processes. This approach, however, makes the main assumption of states being rational actors, which results in its limitation as far as this case study is concerned. The unit-level of analysis, on the other hand, goes a step further in providing deeper insights into the underlying factors behind every decision taken by states by allowing the researcher to delve into the beliefs, motives, and values held by the key individual actors that influence how they make decisions in certain circumstances. It explains cases in international relations that are usually deemed as puzzling exceptions to the dominant trend by accepting that state behavior is characterized by more than just rationality. An agentic approach recognizes that states are not mere monolithic entities driven by strategic interests or economic incentives alone, but instead, states are also composed of individuals and institutions with their own values, aspirations, and perceptions.

This dissertation aims to uncover the factors that have contributed to the enduring diplomatic relations between Eswatini and Taiwan by applying a unit- level of analysis with a particular focus on the role of loyalty in international relations. Loyalty, as an ideational or intersubjective factor at the unit-level holds significant implications for understanding the internal dynamics of the diplomatic alliance. It goes beyond transactionalism and economic incentives by shedding light on the motivations and long-term commitments between states. Through examining the concept of loyalty as in the context of Eswatini and Taiwan's alliance, this research aims to uncover how it has influenced their decision-making processes, their interactions over time, and the sustainability of their diplomatic ties. It aims to accomplish this in the following two chapters beginning with the review of literature in chapter two, which will show the existing conceptual frameworks within the scope of the case study at hand. The review of literature sets out to define the positioning of the concept of loyalty in international relations by showing its link to constructivism and offering an account of why loyalty

explains the endurance of the relations between Eswatini and Taiwan. It also provides a historical analysis of Eswatini's applied foreign policy considerations. Through certain insights from the historical context of Eswatini's foreign policy strategies, key themes and driving factors that have shaped the nation's approach to international relations are explored. Understanding the historical backdrop of Swazi foreign policy will provide a crucial context for comprehending the factors that have influenced Eswatini's decision to maintain its alliance with Taiwan. In Chapter Three, the research design and methodology employed in this case study are presented. It outlines the mixed-method approach taken to investigate the concept of loyalty and its impact on Eswatini and Taiwan's diplomatic relations. Furthermore, this chapter consists of the analysis of the data collected. It examines the evidence gathered and analyses it in light of the conceptual framework of loyalty. The indicators of loyalty identified in the collected data are outlined in this chapter, and themes and patterns are qualitatively drawn from the data to provide insights into how certain interactions between Eswatini and Taiwan have resulted in the reinforcement of loyalty between them and have thus shaped the enduring alliance between the two states. The fourth and final chapter is the conclusion to the dissertation, which will outline the key learnings drawn from the study and touch on the limitations, as well as the future implications of the findings of this research.

The overarching objective of this thesis is to contribute to the limited body of scholarly works that have been conducted on the Kingdom of Eswatini and its political affairs. It hopes to contribute to the study of small states in international relations by delving into the significance of intersubjective factors in shaping state behavior, and it aims to offer the concept of loyalty as a complementary argument that deserves further focus in the scholastic literature of international relations in the future.

CHAPTER II

SMALL STATE FOREIGN POLICY AND LOYALTY IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

2.1. Introduction

The literature in focus for this topic has, at best, been documented within the bounds of mass media and has rarely been academically inquired. This signals the exploratory approach employed in the investigation of literature, which focused on the broad concepts at play within the context of the Kingdom of Eswatini (KoE) and Taiwan (ROC) alliance case. This section provides the main concepts at hand within this particular case study by outlining the main literature focus areas within state recognition theory, deep diving into analysis levels in social science theories, providing context to the foreign policy undertakings of the KoE, as well as alliance formation theory within small states, and finally giving a basis as to why unit-level ideational factors provide a better explanatory framework in comparison to unit-level material factors for the case of Eswatini and Taiwan. All the most significant scholarly works on the above concepts are outlined in the following sections of this chapter, concluding with a discussion of the literature that identifies the main gaps present within the scope of this case study.

2.2. The Paradox of State Recognition in the Case of Taiwan

Theorists of international law are always quick to point out that there exist major contradictions in the practice of states' recognition in the international system. This can be seen quite clearly, as pointed out by Gezim Visoka, Edward Newman, and John Doyle (2020), in the ever so differentiated UN categorization and criteria of its member states. Visoka et al. (2020) identify that the number of sovereign states tends to be associated with the 193 UN member states registered as of August 2019. This suggests that in order for a nation to be recognized as a *de facto* state, it must have full

membership or, at least, partial membership in the UN. This presents us with a problem because there exist states which enjoy observer member status to the UN, such as Palestine, states that are neither members of the UN nor enjoy observer status, yet are interacted with as though they are actual states, such as Taiwan, and a number of independent territories which have not exactly proclaimed independence but are considered to have autonomous status, as well as non-self-governing territories such as the Falkland Islands, which are described as potential candidates for independent statehood (Visoka et al., 2020). Since the process of recognizing states is complex, to say the least, then it begs the question of how a state is defined in its essence. The classic Montevideo Convention of 1933, in its first article, lays out the four basic criteria under which an entity becomes a state as follows:

- i) A permanent population
- ii) A defined territory
- iii) A government
- iv) The capacity to enter into relations with other states

Most disputed territories seem to pass at least two of the above criteria, with some passing all the above, thus deeming them the title of “unrecognized states .”But why then, even with the above criteria of statehood having been met, is the process of recognition a hindrance to the achievement of de facto status? The Montevideo Convention of 1933 article 3, the Badinter Commission of 1991 opinion one, and the American Law Institute of 1987 part 202 all seem to accord that a state’s existence is independent of ‘recognition,’ and that it is essentially the criteria above which determine the existence of a state. The current international relations atmosphere seems to suggest otherwise because the very existence of disputed territories worldwide hinges on recognition by other states. Thomas Grant (1999) defines the term recognition as an acknowledgment by a state that another entity is also a state. Recognition is important because it represents the very process that actors come to exist as actors within the international system.

When we put the case of Taiwan (ROC) in perspective, we find that it meets the common prerequisites of statehood, such as those outlined in the Montevideo Convention of 1933, yet many states to date are not willing to forego relations with

the People's Republic of China (PRC) by fully recognizing Taiwan. "Arguing that Taiwan does not qualify as a state ignores the unmistakable evidence" (John Bolton, 2000, p. 23). Thomas Rich and Andi Dahmer identify that Taiwan maintains unofficial relations with over 50 states worldwide, with every major power other than the PRC included (the United States of America, of course, being at the forefront of these). In addition to this, Taiwan currently has more embassies in non-recognizing countries than many states have embassies abroad in total, and there exists an Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement between the PRC and Taiwan, despite the contention of recognition against each other (Rich & Dahmer, 2019). It seems pretty clear that even though Taiwanese recognition appears to only be limited to smaller states, great powers interact with Taiwan in a formal way that should have won Taiwan's 'de facto state' status by now. The very fact that Taiwan increasingly enjoys unofficial diplomatic relations with other states, including having de facto embassies and even state visits, among others, shows the paradoxical nature of the case of Taiwan's recognition.

2.3. The Peculiarity of the Kingdom of Eswatini

The positioning of Eswatini's foreign policy orientations in international relations must be understood within the context of its geographically contentious position, sandwiched between two historically conflicting states, Mozambique and South Africa. South Africa borders Eswatini on the North, West, and South and Mozambique on the East, which means the country's economic sustenance is undeniably linked to the ports and infrastructure of its giant regional neighbors. Throughout its history, Eswatini has been faced with the challenge of making foreign policy decisions that were heavily influenced by the looming threat of the neighboring Apartheid government in South Africa. During the era of Apartheid (1940s- 1990s), Eswatini had to navigate its diplomatic relations cautiously by balancing its regional security concerns with the need to assert its own sovereignty and independence. The proximity to South Africa and the potential for spillover effects from the apartheid regime's policies meant that Eswatini had to carefully manage its interactions and maintain a certain balance in its foreign policy approach. Eswatini, together with Botswana and Lesotho, have always been territories of interest for the expansionist apartheid government, whose motives pushed all three states in proximity to South Africa into

the hands of the British protectorate system (Stevens, 1967). The imminent threat of being subsumed into the apartheid government, coupled with having comparably small economic and military capabilities to that of its neighbors, meant that Eswatini had to avoid confrontation with South Africa at all costs by seeking external assistance.

Eswatini, together with Botswana, Lesotho, and Namibia, signed the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) agreement in 1910 (Gibb, 2006), and Swaziland further entered into an informal agreement that deemed its economy dependent on Pretoria's ports for trade with the rest of the world (Bischoff, 1988) and put its political position into stark scrutiny by other countries. It is important to note here that the pre-independence period leading up to the 1960s also came with certain domestic challenges to the Kingdom of Eswatini's royal regime. A land act of 1907 dispossessed the common *Emaswati* of landownership, monopolizing the ownership rights of the land in the hands of the ruling monarch and his *petit bourgeoisie*, as well as the white settlers in Eswatini. This gave rise to factionalism and saw the establishment of the Ngwane National Liberation Congress (NNLC), a pro-multiparty democracy party founded in 1963 which opposed King Sobhuza II's rule (Bischoff, 1986).

The external context at this time is not to be ignored, as decolonization was a trend across the continent propelled by the non-aligned movement (NAM) and the Cold-war_ capitalist vs. communist atmosphere. Pan- Africanist movements, coupled with the wave of post-independent socialism, swept across the continent and in Eswatini's neighbors, which had implications on the Kingdom's foreign policy undertakings, especially with regard to its regional neighbors (Kuper, 1978). These external waves of influence had stark effects on the domestic context of the small Kingdom's position as the monarch was not only faced with having to ward off being subsumed into South Africa through 'shelter' from Britain, but the anti-colonial and anti-apartheid movements instigated internal opposing movements against the monarch and his establishment (Bischoff, 1988). Christian Potholm (1972) and Paul Bischoff (1988) explain how the dominance of British capital in Eswatini's economy led to the monarchy embracing a free-market economic policy at the point of independence. This is significant, seeing as the emerging states, post-independence in the 1960s, tended to socialist or communist economic policies as a result of the influence of the Soviet Union and the PRC. The presence of British companies such as Turner and Newall

and Courtaulds, as well as the Commonwealth Development Corporation (CDC), who all operated within the monarchy-administered Swazi National Land (SNL), brought about a situation whereby negotiations with King Sobhuza II led to agreements by which the Royal House's Lifa Fund gained limited access to the capitalist economy (Bischoff, 1988: 460). This British capital context was somehow able to propel recognition of the Swazi state and provide it with the capacity to leverage negotiation power during the decolonization process. It also gave Eswatini an edge over its British colonizer in the sense that Britain could not unilaterally make a decision in the matter of transfer to South Africa, resulting in Eswatini remaining a British protectorate, safe from the clutches of the Apartheid regime. In addition to this, Eswatini was quick to embrace free-market economic policies (Selwyn, 1975), different from its regional counterparts who, as part of the influence of the NAM, were strongly opposed to building their economies through capitalist policies. It is important to note here that due to the above foreign policy decisions made by the Swazi monarch in the time leading up to independence in 1968 and shortly after independence (the 1970s), Eswatini was taken to be a pro-Western-leaning state in the region, strikingly different from its regional counterparts.

This pro-Western reputation that Eswatini had been marked with, which was built in the years leading up to independence, began to change in 1969 when Eswatini began to distance herself from Britain by a show of support for the independence of Southern Rhodesia (modern-day Zimbabwe), and South Africa by being a signatory to the 1969 Lusaka Manifesto.² (MacMillan, 1985). Shifting to foster cordial relations with its regional counterparts post-independence had massive effects on Eswatini's domestic affairs, as the pro-multiparty democracy party (NNLC) was heavily influenced by the Pan- Africanist movements sweeping across the continent. This posed an internal threat to the Swazi monarchy, which led to backsliding in 1973, where King Sobhuza II banned all political parties, including his own party, which had led the decolonization project in the Kingdom- the Imbokodvo National Movement (INM), and disbanded the Westminster- style constitution which had operated during colonization (Harmondsworth, 1965: Bischoff, 1988). The independence of

² The Lusaka Manifesto was signed in 1969 by 13 African state leaders at the 5th Summit Conference of Eastern and Central African states. It was a manifesto drawn up to reaffirm an earlier resolution made by African states to boycott South Africa.

Mozambique, which coincided with the invasion of Angola by the South African Defense Force (S.A.D.F) in 1975, meant that there were a number of ANC freedom fighters, as well as refugees having to use Eswatini as a safe base for operations, or a transit route into other countries. This increasingly concerned Sobhuza II and resulted in the expulsion of the Pan- Africanist Congress (P.A.C) and the South African refugee community in 1978 and a signing of a secret security agreement with Pretoria further down the line in 1982, which imposed penalties on the ANC activists operating within Eswatini for the illegal possession of arms (Bischoff: 1988). The period of the 1940s -1980s came with a bevy of strategic political considerations within the Kingdom of Eswatini, which led to several foreign policy decisions which isolated Eswatini from its Pan- Africanist neighbors and different from Botswana, Angola, Mozambique, and even Zimbabwe, resulted in the regional hegemony of South Africa being extended to Eswatini with a certain degree of success.

What the above historical account of Eswatini's domestic and foreign affairs shows is that Eswatini used a 'quiet diplomacy' strategy to avoid confrontation with South Africa, as well as to ensure the survival of the monarchical establishment at the expense of cordial relations with its Pan- Africanist neighbors. This mixed bag of foreign policy applications pre- and post-independence can thus be summarized as follows:

- *Rationalism and realpolitik*: Eswatini's foreign policy decisions were influenced by the looming threat of the apartheid regime in South Africa and the need to avoid confrontation. The country's initial pro-Western stance was a matter of survival- more pragmatic than ideological.
- *Regionalism*: Following independence Eswatini sought to rebuild relations with its neighboring countries by showing support against the continued colonization of Southern Rhodesia and against the Apartheid regime in South Africa. This was an effort to cooperate with the common vision held by the Pan- Africanist states in order to build back its reputation.
- *A Pragmatic economic policy*: Eswatini's free-market economic policies differentiated it from its neighboring countries, which primarily adopted socialist or communist economic policies. This practical economic approach which focused on market-oriented strategies in Eswatini's agricultural sector

resulted in a comparatively tremendous post-independence economic growth, not seen within states such as Botswana and Lesotho, which gained their independence around the same time.

- *Neutrality and Non- interference*: Although highly contestable, given the pro-Western leaning stance that seemed to take hold in Eswatini at the time, this foreign policy strategy deserves to be enlisted on account of Eswatini's clear motives of national security, coupled with the desire to assert sovereignty and guarantee the survival of the Swazi monarchic regime. Eswatini was neither here nor there, but rather everywhere in its efforts to foster relations with its neighboring countries on one end and external powers such as Apartheid South Africa and Britain on the other end.

The historical context of Eswatini's foreign policy decisions in the period leading up to independence- and shortly afterward, zooms into the complex nature of small-state foreign policy motives, as described by Hu Shaohua (2015) and Alyson Bailes et al. (2016). The threat of invasion by the Apartheid government pushed Eswatini to protect its sovereignty and assert its independence in international relations by developing relations with states outside of the Commonwealth of Nations. Eswatini's reputation as a somewhat pro-imperialist-leaning state made it an attractive player to states who were, at the time, *intermediate powers* and were themselves seeking to assert their sovereignty in international relations. In efforts to consolidate security in the early years of her independence, Eswatini entered into relations with Israel, South Korea, and Taiwan, who all provided military assistance to the Swazi Royal Defense Force (SRDF) in its efforts of counterinsurgency against the ANC's *Umkhonto we Sizwe* (Bischoff, 1986). The motives of these overtly anti-communist and pro-imperialist states at the time are easy to decipher; as the consequence of Western imperialism in the Middle East- Israel; and as the products of the cold war in far east Asia- South Korea and Taiwan; these states sought the political support of Eswatini in the UN, the OAU, and other emerging international organizations. Israel actively pursued relations with Eswatini in the early 1970s by first providing developmental aid through a rural development program and then later providing assistance in the building up of the Ubutfo Royal Defense Force (URDF) by setting up a youth military training program in Eswatini (Bischoff, 1986). It is important to note here that Israel's policy towards Africa at the time was to divide the OAU, of which its rival Egypt was a member

(Laufer, 1968), and it saw Eswatini, with its pro-Western leaning policies, as a potential ally to be an anti-Egyptian voice within the OAU. Israel's hopes for Eswatini's political support fell short when Eswatini voted to recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), together with its OAU counterparts, in 1975. Eswatini- South Korean relations were largely of a diplomatic nature but began picking up momentum in the 1970s when South Korea noticed that Eswatini- USA relations were beginning to build up as well. As a member of the NAM since 1968, Eswatini could not actively lobby for the South Korean position in the UN, and it typically did this by abstaining from voting in Korean-related resolutions in different international organizations. The ties Eswatini had with South Korea and Israel showed a stark difference when the PRC was officially recognized at the UNGA's 26th session in 1971 when Eswatini actively pursued the interests of Taiwan by voting against the recognition of the PRC in favor of Taiwan (ROC).

Eswatini's position in international relations as a newly independent state was unique and thus required unique foreign policy considerations during this period of decolonization. Furthermore, its international political standing in the ideologically divergent international and regional organizations, such as the NAM, the UN, and the OAU, meant that Eswatini had to make carefully placed decisions to ensure its survival, not only as an independent state but also as an independent monarchy in a rapidly changing world. Paul Henri- Bischoff termed Eswatini's early post-independence strategies as 'Swazi neutralism,' which was neutrality that could only be employed with a unique set of circumstances posed by the small Swazi Kingdom in the 1960s- 1980s era.

2.3.1. Eswatini's Relations with the USA

During the Nixon administration in the 1970s, the USA sought to extend its influence in Southern Africa as a response to the Lusaka Manifesto of 1969. The decline of the Portuguese empire, coupled with the increase in national liberation movements, saw the United States fostering friendly relations with the leaders of the *Bantustan* nations in a show of support against the racist policies of the Apartheid regime, as well as the imperialism of Western European powers (Davidson et al., 1977; Coker, 1982). President Nixon's foreign policy preached non-confrontation, peaceful resolution, anti-

racism, and anti-colonialism at the time- a neo-imperialist stance dedicated to neutralizing the influences of communism within the region. Eswatini's pro-Western leaning policies served as grounds enough for the USA to actively pursue diplomatic ties with the small Kingdom, and it did this initially by providing security intelligence support to the INM pre-independence, which slowly grew into cooperative activities in the areas of education and trade. By the end of the 1970s, the USA was providing Eswatini with aid, loans, and Peace Corps assistance quite favorably through USAID, in comparison to the anti-imperialist USAID recipients- Botswana and Lesotho (Frankel, 1975). The early 1980s came with a change in leadership in the US, with the Reagan administration showing support to the Apartheid government's violent counterinsurgency campaign aimed at suppressing the diplomatic presence of *Umkhonto we Sizwe* within all OAU member states. This meant that the USA could no longer be trusted as an ally to support Eswatini against the threat of the Apartheid government, thus resulting in the signing of the secret security agreement between Mbabane and Pretoria in 1982.

These shifting trends of adopted foreign policies by a change in administration in the USA have had dire implications on its reliability as an ally as far as Eswatini is concerned; following the Reagan administration, Eswatini-USA bilateral relations have been reduced to indirect modes of association where the USA interacts with Eswatini as a mere member of a collective region (e.g., SADC) in its trade dealings, and also as one of the countries it provides assistance to in Southern Africa primarily in the issues of HIV/AIDS. This is illustrated in contemporary times by the suspension of Eswatini from the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) by the Obama administration in January 2015 as follows:

The withdrawal of AGOA benefits is not a decision that is taken lightly... We have made our concerns very clear to Swaziland over the last several years, and we engaged extensively on concrete steps that Swaziland could take to address the concerns. We hope to continue our engagement with the Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland on steps it can take so that worker and civil society groups can freely associate and assemble and AGOA eligibility can be restored." _ Froman, M., USA government spokesperson, press statement, (2015)

And the reinstatement of Eswatini's eligibility for AGOA benefits by the Trump administration in December 2017 by citing that Eswatini had "met a series of benchmarks on political freedom, making it eligible to regain the preferential trade

status (Beech, 2017). Such developments indicate that the relations between Eswatini and the USA have become less reliable and, to some degree, more transactional in nature, with the USA engaging with Eswatini primarily within the broader regional context and only on specific globally contentious issues such as HIV/AIDS. The historical shifts in USA foreign policy have shaped the current dynamics of the bilateral relationship, impacting Eswatini's perception of the USA as an ally and its level of engagement with the country overall.

2.3.2. Eswatini's Relations with China

Given the status of the PRC as a global exporter, it is no surprise that Eswatini has trade relations with the PRC, but these are not described as bilateral cooperation between the two countries, as is described with Taiwan (ROC). In September 2018, the PRC hosted the Forum on China- Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) and extended an invitation to Eswatini as follows:

We, of course, welcome Swaziland to join the family of China-Africa cooperation at an early date, and hope that by the time the China-Africa cooperation forum Beijing summit happens, we can have a happy picture of the whole family, - Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hua Chunying, press statement (2018)

Eswatini opted out of FOCAC and has opted out of other Chinese diplomatic overtures on many other occasions by repeatedly and expressly stating that, “there is no change of heart or position on our ties with Taiwan. Whoever spreads rumors that we will ditch Taiwan can be referred to as a fake news peddler.” (Eswatini government spokesperson, press statement, 2018). Seeing as Eswatini could not be swayed from Taiwan, even after the switch of the last handful of its diplomatic allies within the region, Sao Tome and Principe, the Gambia, and Burkina Faso, the PRC exerted pressure on Eswatini by making certain overt threats as follows:

On 1 February, the Chinese ambassador to South Africa, Lin Songtian, issued a press release threatening that Eswatini would only access further business benefits from trade with China if it withdrew its diplomatic recognition of the Republic of China (Taiwan) and switched it to the People's Republic of China (PRC). (Economist Intelligence, 2020)

One would expect that such pressures and incentives might have swayed Eswatini's political support away from Taiwan. However, Eswatini's continued commitment to Taiwan suggests that the relationship between Eswatini and Taiwan extends beyond

mere trade-offs of aid and political support in international political institutions. It implies that there are strategic considerations and shared values that have influenced Eswatini's decision to maintain its relationship with Taiwan, despite the potential economic benefits offered by the PRC.

What all the above illuminates are the glaring fact that the foreign policy considerations of Eswatini, both pre-and post-independence, were shaped by a complex set of factors. Eswatini's pre-independence period had domestic challenges that included land ownership disputes between locals and colonial settlers, as well as the emergence of factionalism. In addition to this, the external context of decolonization and the influence of Pan-Africanist and socialist movements in neighboring countries also had implications for Eswatini's foreign policy. In the post-independence context, Eswatini sought to rebuild relations with its neighboring countries by a show of support to anti-colonial and anti-Apartheid movements. Its embrace of free-market economic policies not only contributed to significant economic growth but also made the small Kingdom an attractive potential ally to a certain brand of pro-imperialist and anti-communist states, such as Israel, South Korea, and Taiwan. Even though these relationships labeled Eswatini as a pro-Western leaning state, it still managed to pursue a unique foreign policy of neutrality and non-interference to ensure its national security and the survival of the monarchy.

In contemporary times, Eswatini's foreign policy orientations continue to be shaped by its historical peculiarities, albeit in a different format. The changing foreign policy dealings with Eswatini due to changing administrations have led to increased unreliability of relations with the United States. Moreover, the overtures from China have not swayed Eswatini from its relations with Taiwan. What this tells us is that the survival of the Swazi state as a monarchy has been the guiding principle that has shaped its foreign policy since its independence because although the looming threat of being subsumed into South Africa has disappeared, Eswatini actively pursues policies that assert the political legitimacy and authority of the monarch; thus those who are allies of the regime and do not criticize it, have Eswatini's undivided political support.

2.4. The Level of Analysis Problem and Small States in International Relations

The total number of states that recognize Taiwan as of March 2023 is 13.³ The fact that Taiwan's diplomatic allies are comprised of small states is a factor that is quickly pointed out by several East-Asian international relations experts (e.g., Hu, 2015; Lee, 1995; Tubilewicz et al., 2011). Wivel and Thorhallsson (2006: 654) draw the distinct line of what exactly is to be considered a small state' by emphasizing the fact that to be 'small' has more to do with a specific spatiotemporal context of a state than it has to do with the actual physicality or size of a state. This is because state influence changes with relational context, and this, more often than not, has more to do with power distribution dynamics within interactions with other states than it has to do with how physically big or small a state is, in essence. This leaves an epistemological question on how to deal with small states within the stages of research inquiry, as small states tend to have a different set of circumstances that determine how they ultimately behave within the international system. Small states' foreign policies have often received far too little scholarly attention, with the bulk of scholarly works being preoccupied with great power politics (Keohane, 1969; Baehner, 1975; Kassimeris, 2009). The Kingdom of Eswatini (KoE; formerly known as Swaziland) and Taiwan (ROC) are by definition 'small states,' and in order to understand the phenomenon of their long-enduring diplomatic relations, one must explore the paradigms that exist to explain small-state alliance formation, and even more importantly one must account for the most appropriate epistemological approach when studying such small state alliances by drawing out the most fitting level of analysis.

The answer to the question of why states align in general has been broadly theorized by many scholars, the most notable being in the works of John Mearsheimer (2001), Randall Schweller (1997), Stephen Walt (1985), and Kenneth Waltz (1979). For such neo-realist theorists, states align either to 'balance' against a threatening power (Waltz) or to bandwagon by aligning with a threatening power (Walt), which strongly suggests that alliance formation is simply driven by the presence of a 'threat,' the orientations of 'interest' and the possession of 'power' (Schweller). Neoliberalists such as Robert Keohane (1969) and Joseph Nye (2003) emphasize the presence of competition and

³ This Data was retrieved from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Taiwan website <https://en.mofa.gov.tw/AlliesIndex.aspx?n=1294&sms=1007> Date accessed: 07.03.2023.

interests among states but have a much more optimistic view of cooperation between states and the role played by institutionalism in creating and maintaining this cooperation. The main critics of neorealism and neoliberalism, the constructivists, argue that neoliberalism and neorealism tend to ignore the actual social fabrics of global politics and do not account for the sources of state interests as a whole. Alexander Wendt (1989), Martha Finnemore (1996), and Peter Katzenstein (1996) are among the constructivists who are primarily concerned with the underlying conceptions of how the political and social interact, thus state alliance formation for them has more to do with certain dynamics within identity, culture, and norms. What is important to note within these rivaling mainstream theories is that their explanations are quite focused on, or at least give a nod to, the structural forces present within the international system; the main contemporary approaches to theorizing often begin and sometimes end with the systemic level of analysis.

The level of analysis problem, or the structure-agency debate, is an age-old tale that all social science theorists have had to grapple with when seeking to build theories that are all-encompassing or empirically sound (Singer, 1961, p. 78). The significance of which level of inquiry is specifically more relevant within the case at hand for the simple reason that traditional alliance theory fails to capture the nuanced alliance motivations and needs of small states (Bailes et al., 2016, p. 9). Classical theories, particularly that of realism and, to some extent, liberalism, tended to employ the unit level of analysis, which seeks to theorize about the characteristics of the 'unit' (the state or individuals in power within a state) in particular. This, of course, was, in an analytical sense, logical given that social scientists and thinkers like Michel Foucault, Hans Morgenthau, Thomas Paine, etc., were deep within the developmental stages of societal and political theory. The emergence of wars, and concomitantly the establishment of certain agreements or pacts between state actors, later necessitated a certain brand of inquiry that had to account for the environment within which the actor (or unit) operated. To explain the concepts of 'conflict' and 'cooperation' in society, those considered to be the 'fathers' of the social sciences discipline –Durkheim, Kant, Weber, and even Marx– saw the social system and even the international political system, as one being comprised of both agents and structures who were interrelated at one level or another. This opened up the Pandora's box of social inquiry and left scholars vouching either for one level of analysis over the other or for a hybrid-

analytical approach that put forward a 'middle ground' theory as a solution. The hybrid-analytical approach has particularly gained prevalence, especially among recent scholarship, one of the most distinct being that of 'the ecological triad' (Sprout & Sprout, 1969, p. 45), which sought to address the relationship between agency and structure by outlining that a social system is constituted of an entity (unit or actor), its environment (structure) and the relationships between the two. Similarly, Anthony Giddens' structuration theory aimed to resolve the structure-agent problem by putting forward the fact that neither one of these approaches to social inquiry alone was sufficient (Giddens, 1989). As Harvey Starr and Gil Friedman (1997) are quick to point out, the advantage of the ecological triad is derived from its applicability to any number of levels of analysis. Contemporary scholarship has also tended to employ an approach that attempts to formulate a multilevel method of inquiry that 'brackets' each level of analysis (Klotz, 1995; Shaohua, 2015).

Given that the case of the alliance of Eswatini and Taiwan is one between 'small states,' it is important to look through small-state foreign policy or alliance formation literature and find which method of analysis approach it tends to utilize. Hu Shaohua (2015) puts forward that international phenomena are best explained through three levels of analysis (bracketing), namely, systemic, domestic, and individual. Robert L. Rothstein (1968) gives an example of a systemic level approach as he defines three main types of international systems which determine small-state alignment behavior:

i) The conservative 'balance of power system,' seen mainly after the years 1815 and 1919 specifically, where great powers were much too preoccupied with maintaining what they already had.

ii) The fluid and competitive 'balance of power system' was seen mainly between the decades of 1850s and 1860s, when there was a rise in nation-states, particularly in Europe.

iii) The bipolar bloc's balance of power system is characteristic of the Cold War era. Within this framework, the influence or opportunities of small states are identified as being more prevalent in the 'bipolar bloc balance of power system' mainly due to the scramble for allies on the part of the two great powers (Rothstein, 1968). This provides us with a sort of scale of the alliance behavior of small states where we are to expect that a multipolar system presents even more opportunities for influence. If a

multilateral alliance is unavailable, small states should choose a small power alliance in preference to an unequal bilateral one, particularly if there is no fear of an immediate threat, but if fear of an imminent attack exists, the best option is a bilateral alliance with a great power (Rothstein, 1968, p. 177). The above description provided by Rothstein seems to fit the Taiwanese case impeccably. Taiwan is certainly in fear of an imminent attack by the PRC, which explains its quasi-formal relations with the United States of America and other Western great powers. In contrast to this, Taiwan is deep within a small state alliance system which reflects a decision that is purely politically motivated against the PRC. In the case of Eswatini, there are considerable systemic factors at play as well. The very fact that it is a former British protectorate may influence its foreign policy orientations, as illustrated in the section above. Within the period of Southern African British colonialism, Eswatini fits Rothstein's description of small states allying with a Great Power for protection, as the Apartheid regime of South Africa was an imminent threat to the Kingdom of Eswatini at the time (Bischoff, 1988). In the absence of the imminent threat, post-independence, and especially post-apartheid, Eswatini has been more oriented to small power alliance foreign policy in the case of Taiwan and also with its allies with certain small Kingdoms in the Middle East, such as the United Arab Emirates and Qatar (Bischoff, 1988).

What the body of work done by scholars such as Robert Rothstein (1968), Robert Osgood (1969), and George Liska (1968) suggests is that small state foreign policy behaviors are undeniably determined, first and foremost, by the foreign policy behaviors of larger states. For them, the systemic factors take precedence within a small state context. The aforementioned point is illustrated in the descriptive marker that has termed Taiwan and the Kingdom of Eswatini as the "Captive states of China and South Africa" by Ian Taylor (1997). Here Taylor (1997) aligns his view with that of Hu (2015), who sees structural factors as the most dominant determinants of small-state foreign policy. Bailes, Thayer, and Thorhallsson (2016) put forward the fact that small states' foreign policy behaviors, or better yet, alignment motivations, are better understood and explained by the concept of 'alliance shelter.' Alliance shelter is broadly defined as the diplomatic, economic, societal, and political alignment response of structurally weak states (Bailes et al., 2016, p. 9). The recognition of the fact that small states are generally more vulnerable than larger states is necessary, but the

definitions of what small states are in essence, and especially in relation to their environment or the structure within which they operate, too often rest upon this vulnerability, thus resulting in the neglect of the 'agency' of small state actors. While the main objective of small states (and states in general) as 'survivability' cannot be denied; their strategic impulses, preferences, and domestic dynamics that shape and orient these preferences cannot be ignored. Alliance formation is drawn out from foreign policy orientations, which Charles Hermann (1978: 34) defined as a discrete purposeful action that results from the political level decision of an individual or a group of individuals. Hermann (1978) does well to distinctly define foreign policy, not as the decision itself but rather as the product of the decision instead. Walter Carlsnaes (2013) and Phillip Zelikow and Graham Allison (1999: 2-3) all agree about the purposiveness of foreign policy actions and go further to suggest that when attempting to explain the 'puzzles' in foreign affairs, the puzzlement is usually as a result of a particular state's action or set of actions. When faced with the question of why the United States unilaterally invaded Iraq or why the Hutu- Tutsi conflict extended into the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) following the harrowing genocide in Rwanda, and still continues to this day, for instance, there is a specific approach to inquiry that reveals the context of the unit in a way that illuminates the dynamics at play within certain puzzlements, that simply cannot be accounted for at systemic level. Mohammed Ayoob (1995) represents this quite eloquently in his multidimensional conceptualization of security in the third-world context by his emphasis on an approach that is "firmly rooted in the political realm while being sensitive to variables in other realms of societal activity that may have an impact on the political realm and may filter through into the security calculus of Third World states because of their potential to influence political outcomes" (Ayoob, 1995, p. 12). The point he tries to illustrate here is that states in the third world (which, according to Wivel and Thorhallsson (2006) is comprised primarily of small states) may have less of an influence at the systemic level (although this is highly debatable) but hold much more power and authority within the unit level of analysis. This is because, as Ayoob (1995) puts it, the line of distinction between 'state' (political apparatus) and 'regime' (the decision-making elites) is blurred within third world context due, in part, to the unchecked power held by the regimes within such states. Agent-centric theoretical approaches offer perspectives to foreign policy inquiry that range from cognitive and psychological perspectives (Rosati, 1995; Hudson, 2007; Holsti, 1970), bureaucratic

politics (Allison & Zelikow, 1999), 'new liberalism' (Moravscik, 1997), and even interpretative actor perspectives (Hollis & Smith, 1991). Two such perspectives are worth mentioning in the exercise of inquiry for this case: i). the cognitive and psychological perspectives, and ii). the interpretative actor perspectives.

Kal Holsti's (1970) role theory posits that the method of analysis approaches political phenomena through a systemic lens, i.e., "views the world as primarily polar and composed of the national roles and functions of bloc leaders, allies, satellites, and nonaligned states, may be meaningful for some types of investigation, but it seems inappropriate and lacking in detail for many other purposes (Holsti, 1970, p. 234). Known as the era of 'cognitive revolution,' the 1970s emerged with theorists that purported that the individual actor was not just an entity malleable to the constructs of its environment as in rational choice theory, but that the individual was to a certain degree impervious to the effects of structural constraints because of the 'stickiness' of their underlying beliefs, as well as the personality and cognitive traits that have an impact on how they perceive and process information. With the cognitive revolution came an emergence of scholastic attention to how the characteristics of leadership, i.e., beliefs, motivations, decisional and interpersonal styles, affected the pursuit of foreign policy (Hermann & Preston, 1998). Similar to this, interpretative actor perspectives have dedicated much focus to the thinking and actions of actors involved in the decision-making processes in particular. The foreign policy behavior of states depends on how individuals with power perceive and analyze situations (Hollis and Smith 1991: 74). What the above perspectives make a striking contribution to within the literature of alliance systems and foreign policy analysis is that although states operate within an environment of systemic forces that may orient them towards one political outcome or another, states themselves (or the individuals within them that make the primary decisions of policy orientations) also have certain values and belief systems, certain policy preferences and motivations, that orient them towards one political outcome or another, and that it is within the unit level of analysis that such elements can be revealed indisputably. Helen Milner (1992) and David Singer (1961) both make a case for the unit-level analysis approach to political science phenomena by highlighting the fact that structural or systemic level arguments serve a sound function for purposes of generalizability, i.e., building theories from identified patterns of social trends. Neglecting domestic politics in political inquiry weakens explanatory power

(Milner, 1992). The systemic level of analysis may present us with a more comprehensive and total picture of International Relations, thus serving a great purpose for parsimony, but there seems to be little doubt that the sub-systemic or actor orientation is considerably more fruitful, permitting a more thorough investigation of the processes by which foreign policies are made (Singer, 1961). Two key learnings can be drawn from the above debate:

- First, the level of analysis problem within the studies of international politics, or social sciences in general, seems to be heavily dependent on the question of the research inquiry at hand. The question determines the degree of explanatory power that one must employ. If the researcher seeks to generalize and create a patterned framework of theorizing, then the systemic approach serves better here. But if the aim is to open the black box that normally exists in puzzling cases, then the unit-level of analysis approach is more fitting and should appeal to any empiricist for its attention to detail.
- Second, employing an agent-centric (unit-level analysis) approach reveals the underlying causes and aims to get a good grasp of the actual sources of social outcomes. Within the scope of international politics, it allows the researcher to explore other factors that determine certain foreign policy outcomes, such as the ever-so-criticized yet still influential ideational factors.

2.5. The Role of “Loyalty” in International Relations

After having made a case for the unit-level analysis approach, it is important to explore one of the most compelling unit-level explanations for alliance behavior in third world context. Steven David (1991) puts forward an omnibalancing theory that explains third-world alignments as a consequence of leaders seeking to counter internal and external threats to their rule (David, 1991, p. 233). After having contextualized Eswatini’s foreign policy in history, it is safe to say that the pre-and early post-colonial Eswatini government was indeed faced with the task of balancing both internal and external threats, which explains its alliance with the USA in the period shortly after its independence. The key characteristics of omnibalancing necessitate an internal context of instability and insecurity- riddled with coups and insurgencies, and an external context that threatens the security of a state. This means the main motive behind

allying with particular states is so that those states help protect the leaders' rule. Examples of omnibalancing can be seen in the alliance between Egypt and the Soviet Union during the Cold War and the alliance between Iran and the USA during the 1950s. As can be seen in the above examples, omnibalancing is characteristic of a weaker state entering into an alliance with a great power to ensure its security against internal and external threats. The initial relationship between Eswatini and Taiwan in the 1960s indeed holds up to this omnibalancing theory. Eswatini allied with not only great powers but with intermediary powers such as Taiwan, South Korea, and Israel, too, to counter the threat of being subsumed into apartheid South Africa and the internal wave of democratic political parties such as the NNLC within the country. The current external context of Eswatini is not one that can be characterized as under threat as its South African neighbor is no longer ruled by the apartheid regime. Likewise, the prohibition of all political parties in 1973 reshaped the internal dynamics, consolidating power into the hands of an unchallenged centralized and absolutist regime. Steven David's theory might find success within small, vulnerable states possessing certain types of electoral governance systems. However, the evaluation of threats takes a different trajectory within the context of absolutist regimes like the Kingdom of Eswatini. What this suggests is that the case of Eswatini and Taiwan does not only necessitate a unit-level approach but also requires an investigation that zooms into the intersubjective factors at play that inform certain material preferences and security calculations.

A broad definition of 'ideational' as being related to or consisting of ideas or thoughts of objects not immediately present to the senses shows us the cognitive and psychological traits that ideational factors are built upon. Many international relations theorists steer clear of utilizing such factors when engaging in the exercise of theory building because of the abstract nature of ideational explanations that conjures more skepticism because of their unobservability and immeasurability, thus bringing about the question of validity. Mainstream constructivism is quick to criticize materialistic brands of theory-building by emphasizing that ideational factors do, in fact, have an effect on many decision-making processes, thus determining certain outcomes. Constructivists' focus on ideational factors has not, in any way, made them immune to the plight of the agent-structure debate, even with the 'metatheoretical' approach brought forward as a solution to the debate. Highly influenced by Anthony Giddens's

structuration theory, Alexander Wendt's (1987, 1992) approach underlines the role of identity in state behavior. He puts forward that states are not simply rational actors but are also shaped by their identities, beliefs, and values. Martha Finnemore (1996) argues that state interests come from systemic norms brought about by international institutions. Similarly, Audie Klotz (1995) highlights that the emergence of certain social justice norms, such as racial equality set at the systemic level, led to the redefinition of specific state interests. The core idea posited by this brand of constructivism is that agents and structures are in constant interplay with one another. Thus they 'co-construct or co-constituted each other, but, as Jeffery Checkel (1998) notes, mainstream constructivists have undoubtedly figured out how structures shape state actions but have not quite accounted for how state actions reproduce structures in return. Constructivism has made a considerable contribution empirically by providing valuable interpretations of a range of puzzling issues in international relations, but just as Jeffery Checkel (1998) explains, the lack of attention to agency and the lack of theorizing at the domestic level has left the theory building ambition of constructivism unrealized as it has not outlined the 'mutual constitutive' trait it supposes. Mainstream constructivists have successfully accounted for how state behavior is shaped by systemic norms but have not quite been successful in accounting for how systemic norms are shaped or constituted by agents themselves. The level of analysis problem, although not immediately obvious but well pointed out by Jeffery Checkel (1998), also manifests itself in a different form within the constructivist discipline. Ted Hopf (1998) draws a distinction between conventional and critical constructivists by highlighting that although both brands may share the core tenets of the impact of intersubjective factors within political and social outcomes, the distinction between the two is really shown in their approach to matters of 'identity.' 'Conventional constructivists wish to discover identities and their associated reproductive social practices, and then offer an account of how those identities imply certain actions' (Hopf, 1998, p. 183). Critical constructivists, on the other hand, account for the origin of the identities themselves by emphasizing the inseparable link between agents and their social environment. The variance in constructivism has also been categorized into three distinct strands, positivist, interpretivism, and postmodernist (Fearson & Wendt, 2005). What the different constructivist approaches above suggest, especially for this case study, is that:

- State behavioral patterns are determined, in part, by strategic interests, but the very interests that inform certain decisions are themselves determined by, or even sourced out from, certain values, belief systems, preferences, and perceptions held by the decision-makers themselves.
- The intersubjective or ideational aspects of decision-making processes in international politics, although criticized for lacking the epistemological external validity that positivism allows, deserve attention as they have a considerable amount of explanatory power in puzzling cases, and can thus expose certain causal mechanisms that materialistic explanations in some cases, cannot.

What exactly explains formal state recognition of commonly unrecognized territories even when there are no substantial strategic gains in such actions? What explains the maintenance and even endurance of specific alliances even in periods of power shifts in the international and even regional systems? How can we adequately account for the unilateral invasion of Iraq but not of North Korea, or the decades-long regional rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran, or how about the abandonment of Srebrenica in the 1990s? Materialistic factors rooted in rationalist theory can indeed be seen to play a role in some of these puzzlements, but ideational forces, especially at the unit level, seem to provide explanations that not only complement certain materialistic accounts but go even further in understanding the sources of certain materialistic impulses held by foreign policy decision-makers. Turning to the case at hand, Hu Shaohua (2015) is one of the only scholars who have carried out a study that illuminates certain domestic contextual factors at play in state foreign policy in the case of Taiwanese recognition. In analyzing various aspects of data from the allies of Taiwan, Hu (2015) outlined three categorizations within the domestic factors at play in the case of Taiwan as follows:

- i) Ideational Factors:* where Taiwan's allies, due to colonial and historical experiences, were found to sympathize and, in some sense, identify with Taiwan's national identity.
- ii) Economic Factors:* Taiwan's allies are an assembly of characteristically developing nations who are recipients of economic aid, with the exception of Vatican City.

iii) Geographic Factors: Taiwan's allies are significantly far away, geographically, from an impending threat from the PRC in the form of an invasion or anything that could threaten their security.

In addition to the above elements, Hu (2015), just as Ayoob (1997), posits that in many different developing countries, foreign policy is contingent on leaders' roles, value systems, beliefs, preferences, and perceptions, and this can be said to apply also in the case of Taiwan's allies. This is evidenced in the notable game of ping pong that some states have done by recognizing, as well as strengthening or weakening relations with either Taiwan or the PRC at different tenures of different leaders in office. The Central African Republic, known to have had a significant number of coup attempts and shifts in government administrations, has switched recognition five times (Rich and Dahmer, 2020: (28)368). The Gambia is also a prominent example of this shift in alliance with change in leadership. The above examples of materialistic factors (economic and geographical factors), outlined so eloquently by prominent scholars and experts on the Taiwanese struggle for recognition, give an exemplary explanation, without a doubt, of the strategic influences at play in making the decision to recognize either party. The decision to continue recognizing one party over the other, even when circumstances comparatively favor the unrecognized opposing party, however, deserves further investigation, to say the least. This all begs the question of which explanation – materialist or ideational– is an overall better approach to matters of state behavior in foreign affairs. In attempts to study what underlies the formations of threat perceptions within states, May Darwich (2016) notes the prominence of material factors in shaping threat perceptions in some cases, whereas ideational factors seem to be the determinants in other instances. She uses the case of Syria and Saudi Arabia during the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988), where she argues that 'whereas Syria perceived Iraq as an emerging military threat and allied with Iran, Saudi Arabia perceived Iran's new identity narrative as more threatening and allied with Iraq' (Darwich, 2016, p. 142). Inspired by Katzenstein and Sil (2010), Darwich (2016) views an approach of 'analytical eclecticism,' which informs which factor –material or ideational– is best to use when. Paul Kowert and Jeffery Legro (1996) emphasize that identity (as an ideational factor) should be treated analytically differently from material interests. Just as states can hold particular identity narratives because it is within their material interest to do so, they can equally also maintain certain identities that contradict what

would be considered materialistically in their best interest to uphold (Darwich, 2016, p. 145). Analytical eclecticism in the material-ideational debate serves the purpose that Jeffery Checkel's (1998) and David Singer's (1961) contributions bring to light in the agent-structure debate, the unmistakable fact that it all depends on the research question and objectives. The case of Eswatini and Taiwan's alliance, given the current global and regional context, necessitates a unit-level approach that seeks to expose the agents' (state leaders or decision-makers) motivations to remain in alliance with each other. Characteristics such as *rational*, *credible*, *accountable*, and *trustworthy* are ones often attributed to state behavior, so it is not impossible to apply theories that are used for 'individual behaviors' on 'collective individual behaviors, such as states, because states are, after all, constitutive of individuals. This tells us that state relations can also be explained by descriptive markers which invoke social identity and characteristic elements. Richard Lebow's (2008) work is one of the most prominent in the exercise of showing certain overlooked intersubjective influences that shape state behavior. Lebow (2008) puts forward four basic drivers of the human psyche: spirit, appetite, reason, and fear. Appetite takes precedence in liberalism and Marxism, with a conception of politics as being driven by the pursuit of material interests. The vision of anarchy in the realist world emphasizes fear while simultaneously focusing on material interests after security (Lebow, 2008, p. 15). Lebow posits that a novel constructivist paradigm, different from the critical constructivist brand, is necessary that- "A new form of constructivist paradigm that builds on the motive of the spirit and the human need for self-esteem and describes the ways in which strivings for honor and standing influence, if not often shape, political behavior." (Lebow 2008: 35).

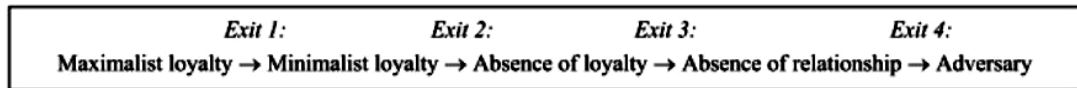
The presence of elements of intersubjectivity, such as the need for esteem and honor, has important implications for state behavior in relation to other states. Within diplomatic relations, the need for esteem and honor can significantly influence foreign policy choices. Firstly, the desire for esteem and honor motivates states to maintain a positive reputation among their counterparts because states, like individuals, want to be perceived as reliable and trustworthy actors on the international stage. This can influence their foreign policy choices by guiding them to act in a manner that upholds their reputation and reinforces positive perceptions of their reliability. States may prioritize fulfilling their commitments, honoring agreements, and consistently

engaging in cooperative behavior to maintain a positive image and earn the esteem of other states.

Secondly, the concept of honor and esteem can influence state behavior within alliances and partnerships. States seek alliances not only for strategically inclined reasons but also for the honor and recognition that comes with forming strong and enduring relationships. The 'spirit,' as outlined by Richard Lebow, highlights the emotional and symbolic dimensions of state alliances. A sense of shared values, mutual respect, and emotional attachment can also contribute to the formation and maintenance of alliances. Loyalty plays a crucial role in sustaining alliances, as states demonstrate their commitment and reliability to their partnerships with other states. Loyalty, as a unit-level ideational factor, is closely related to constructivism, which, as seen above, posits that states' identities, norms, and ideas shape their behavior and interactions. Loyalty itself reflects these shared beliefs, trust, and emotional connections that states develop with one another; it can be seen as a manifestation of the shared norms, values, and identities that exist between state actors.

Albert Hirschman (1970) is a notable scholar that applies the concept of Loyalty in investigating organizational behavior. Loyalty is broadly defined, in Oxford dictionary terms, *as the quality of being constant in your support of somebody or something*, and many scholars assert an additional dimension to this by emphasizing that loyal actors remain loyal even through unfavorable circumstances (Wintrobe, 1998; Baron, 1984; Hirschman, 1970; Royce, 1995). Josiah Royce (1995), with his philosophical lens to the concept of Loyalty, notes that Loyalty is a moral idea that involves the giving up of one's life to the service of, not individuals as such, but rather of 'causes.' 'For a cause is a tie binding a number of individuals into a unity through their struggle for or possession of a common object' (Royce, 1995, p. 409). Such causes, as Royce points out, are determined by preferences, abilities, and circumstances. 'Loyalty is the willing, practical and thoroughgoing devotion of an individual to a cause, a cause that the individual supposes to be worthy of his devotion' (Royce, 1995, p. 409). Lauge Poulsen (2020) and Iain Henry (2020) are examples of the handful of scholars that have attempted to apply the concept of loyalty to international relations theory. 'What does it mean to say actor X is loyal to actor Y? (Poulsen, 2020: (4)1156). Within the context of International Relations, Poulsen (2020) defines Loyalty as a behavioral type

pursued by one actor towards another (persistent partiality), which is driven by a particular attitude (affective attachment) (Poulsen, 2020: (4)1157). Poulsen (2020) applies Hirschman's (1970) loyalty and the continuum of exit theory, which maps four exit stages involved within organizational behavior, is summarized in the illustration below:



**Illustration 2.1. An Illustration of Loyalty and the Continuum of Exit, From
Poulsen, L. N. S. (2020)**

Loyalty in world politics. *European Journal of International Relations*, 26(4), 1163.

According to Poulsen (2020), Loyalty can be categorized into two main types:

- i) Minimalist Loyalty:* where an actor chooses not to harm another actor by simply displaying acts of neutrality in situations of alignment.
- ii) Maximalist Loyalty:* where an actor actively promotes the interests of the actor which they are in alliance with.

Within the scope of the continuum displayed in *Illustration 2.1.*, states can shift from being in a state of maximalist Loyalty through formal pledges and agreements with other states to minimalist Loyalty illustrated by acts of neutrality and non-aggression agreements (*exit 1*). Loyalty can also reduce to the extent that it is removed (*exit 2*) and even to the extent that relations are completely severed (*exit 3*). In some cases, Loyalty can shift completely away from an alliance to a point where actors become adversaries (*exit 4*) (Poulsen, 2020: (4)1163). The above exits are triggered by different modes of interactions between allied parties, which can either strengthen the Loyalty or vitiate it. Iain Henry (2020) aims to show how alliance interdependence works by examining the role of Loyalty between allies. He uses Glenn Snyder's (2007) alliance halo concept, which purports that alliances create a norm that the states "ought to give each other mutual support on certain issues, and this establishes mutual expectations that they will each support, or at least avoid damaging each other's interests (Henry, 2020, p. 51). Henry (2020) distinguishes that Loyalty should not be seen as an overall 'moral character' of a state actor, as no state can be innately loyal, but rather that the

‘action’ or state behavior itself is what should be considered as driven by Loyalty. ‘When a state is confident that its ally's interests align with its own, and therefore the alliance poses no risk of either abandonment or entrapment, then the ally is reliable. Observed reliability, not innate Loyalty, is what states want from allies (Henry, 2020, p. 52). What this suggests is that there are patterns of interactions that create specific perceptions among states that can either reinforce or diminish the presence of Loyalty in state actions.

In line with the scope of this section, it is crucial to highlight the linkage or define the placement of the concept of 'loyalty' within constructivism, as well as to outline the reason why this loyalty approach, compared to other approaches, fits appropriately in the context of Eswatini and Taiwan relations. Loyalty, as already highlighted above, aligns closely with constructivism in international relations theory, and as already broadly defined, constructivism emphasizes the role of ideas, norms, and identities in shaping state behavior and interactions. Seeing as the political identity of the Kingdom of Eswatini is a monarchy, while that of Taiwan is a democracy, it cannot be said that the two states share the same political identity and norms, which suggests that the diplomatic relations between them are sustained by something more than what mainstream constructivist approaches would suggest. The concept of Loyalty in cases of diplomatic relations pays special attention to how a set of shared beliefs, values, and emotional connections can foster trust, reliability, and commitment between states. What this suggests is that despite a divergence in political identity, Loyalty as an ideational factor enables Eswatini and Taiwan to bridge their political differences and maintain enduring diplomatic relations. This Loyalty is not solely based on political identities or ideological alignment per se but rather on the trust and emotional connections that have been cultivated through interactions over time.

2.6. Discussion of Literature Review

The concept of Loyalty, when applied in state relations, offers an explanation that illuminates the dynamics happening within cross-state behavioral mechanisms. The existing literature that tends to approach a vast number of cases at a systemic level in pursuit of generalizability and parsimony leads to the dominance of materialistic explanations that are useful for theory building but ignore certain nuances that

ideational factors at the unit level through the elaboration of internal dynamics, have the explanatory power to reveal. Former British Prime Minister Henry Palmerston, while addressing the British Parliament in 1848, said, "*We have no eternal allies, and we have no perpetual enemies; only our interests are eternal.*" Although strikingly true, Palmerstone's statement ignores the fact that behavioral patterns are not merely shaped by interest but are also shaped by individual identities, values, and preferences from which said 'interests' are usually derived. What the theory of Loyalty in international relations puts emphasis on is also the role of the style of interactions (Poulsen, 2020; Hirschman, 1970) that states have among each other that trigger certain perceptions, thus directing state relations towards or away from Loyalty. What one state actor does in relation to another state actor is what truly informs the direction of their relations towards a lasting friendship or perpetual enmity. Erik Ringmar (1996:11) notes that 'to have a specific type of identity recognized by one's interlocutors can often provide a far more compelling explanation of state behavior than traditional explanations that focus only on material factors. This suggests that the complexities that exist when states interact with one another ultimately mean that state behaviors cannot simply be motivated by material factors alone and that identifying oneself in the other, through Interaction, determines certain preference outcomes, thus playing a key role in states' decision-making processes; strategic and otherwise.

The implications, therefore, that can be drawn out from the scholarly works on state behavior can be summarized as follows:

- Structural or systemic factors are useful for an exercise of strengthening the external validity of research through its attempt to build theories that can form generalizable conclusions parsimoniously. It is for this reason, then, that certain measurable or quantifiable, and often materialistic variables such as power dynamics, strategic interests, economic activities, military capabilities, developmental statuses of states, etc., serve as prominent variables that form easily observable explanations to international relations trends.
- It is for the researcher who seeks to strengthen internal validity, expose causal chains and build a detailed framework of explanations that ideational factors, especially at the unit-level of analysis, such as beliefs, norms, values, preferences, and identities that states uphold, although difficult to empirically

track and analyze, can provide explanations that transcend simplistic materialistic elements and go in-depth into the dynamics that motivate and inform nuanced state behavior.

The case of Eswatini and Taiwan is puzzling, to say the least, and explanations for it often dwell on materialistic foundations based on the ‘dollar diplomacy’ logic ascribed to how Taiwan is combatting its struggle for recognition. Seeing as UN Resolution 2758 (1972)⁴ came as a direct result of the rise of China in the 1970s, it follows that the majority decision to recognize the PRC as the one governing authority of China had an element of materialistic motivations on the part of the states that voted ‘for’ and not ‘against’ in the matter. Approaching the question of the alliance between Eswatini and Taiwan in this way would suggest that the ties between the two are purely transactional and that if that is the case, then expectations are that the Kingdom of Eswatini should, like its regional neighbors, have jumped ship by now or may jump ship in the future. This leaves us with an impasse of sorts because the Kingdom of Eswatini has shown no evidence of an ‘exit,’ as shown in *Illustration 2.1.* in the previous section of Hirschman's (1970) theory. If the diplomatic ties between Eswatini and Taiwan are merely transactional and driven by interest, then why is Eswatini not yielding to the overtures made by the PRC, which certainly has the capacity to offer much more than its ‘*Kuomintang*’ counterpart? Why has Eswatini not succumbed to recognizing the PRC, given that its regional neighbors and counterparts have all unquestionably done so?

The existing literature, as reviewed above, signifies two main gaps which this dissertation attempts to address:

- i. There exists a bias in the approach to the question of state-to-state relations within the scope of diplomatic recognition, which tends to conduct research at the systemic level of inquiry, thus resulting in a materialistically inclined set of theories that attempt to explain state alliance behaviors.

⁴ UN Resolution 2758 of 1972 titled, ‘the restoration of the lawful rights of the People’s Republic of China in the United Nations, retrieved from: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/192054?ln=en> Date accessed: 13.03.2023.

- ii. Small state foreign policy orientations are in dire need of much more dynamic formulations of theory, catered to their unique status in international relations trends, which is demonstrated in the lack of documented literature in the case of Eswatini and Taiwan diplomatic relations. What is more, applying the unit-level of analysis approach in small state affairs opens the doors to exploring the intersubjective contextual factors provided by ideational forces for in-depth explanatory power.

I submit that in attempts to fill the gap in research within the case of Eswatini and Taiwan, the application of the concept of Loyalty, as outlined by Poulsen (2020) and his counterparts, serves as a promising explanation better suited to untangle the puzzling endurance of ties between the two countries.

2.7. Conclusion

The international legal framework, having outlined the criteria of what is constitutive of a state, does not address the ever-present ambiguity in state recognition practices. The paradoxical case of Taiwan illustrates this exact point and calls for more in-depth analyses of the conceptualization of small state alliances and foreign policy behaviors. Structural factors are useful for understanding surface-level motivations of state behavioral trends within alliance formation systems and serve as a more systematic way to achieve generalizability. The historical context of Eswatini's foreign policy exemplifies the real influence of structural factors in individual foreign policy orientations, as the presence of an external imminent threat informed Eswatini's quest for survivability during both the decolonization period and the era of apartheid. The absence of such a threat post-independence, however, necessitates an in-depth analysis of the influences that exist at the state/ unit- level. The status of diplomatic relations between Eswatini and Taiwan, as they currently stand, means that structural factors fall short in accounting for the nuances that exist in small-state foreign policy orientations. It follows that a unit-level of analysis opens the door to exploring more explanations that do not solely dwell in materialistic foundations but also illuminate underlying ideational factors from which a variety of motivations are sourced. This serves as a promising framework for explaining this case that shows an 'alliance system puzzle within the small state foreign policy orientations' and leads to the

application of more detailed theoretical concepts such as that of 'loyalty' in international relations –a propitious theory, that has the potential to better explain the case overall.



CHAPTER III

DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI AND THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA (TAIWAN)

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter of my dissertation, my main objective is to provide an analysis of data by first outlining the chosen research design and methodology, detailing the theoretical framework of the concept of Loyalty, and presenting the findings. The central hypothesis of this case study is that the enduring diplomatic relations between the Kingdom of Eswatini and the Republic of China (Taiwan) are based on Loyalty. To investigate the indicators of Loyalty within the context of this research, I initially give an outline of the constituent elements or indicators of Loyalty as presented within the collected data. This breakdown aims to identify specific interactions in diplomatic relations that can serve as indicators of Loyalty. After delineating the indicators, I present the findings for each indicator. These findings will be supported by significant quotations extracted from collected news reports, agreements, speeches, and memoranda of understanding. Furthermore, to highlight the main themes and patterns within the findings, I use Sankey diagram visualizations. These diagrams will effectively demonstrate the co-occurrence levels of the main themes identified in the data. By following this systematic approach, I aim to provide a comprehensive analysis of the data, offering insights into the indicators of Loyalty between Eswatini and Taiwan. This analysis will contribute to a deeper understanding of the enduring diplomatic relations of these two nations and will contribute to the studies on the factors that sustain Loyalty in international relations as a whole.

3.2. Research Question and Operationalization

As highlighted in the Introduction, Eswatini became Taiwan's last African ally in 2018, following the change in the alliance of other countries such as Sao Tome and Principe and Burkina Faso. Despite the explicit efforts made by the PRC to sway the monarchy, Eswatini has remained steadfast in its support of Taiwan. While conventional explanations often attribute diplomatic recognition and relations to structural factors, usually driven by materialistic interests, the review of the literature sheds light on some of the limitations of such explanations. The diplomatic relations between Eswatini and Taiwan cannot only be attributed to a transactional interest where Eswatini recognizes Taiwan in exchange for economic aid. While this perspective may partially explain the initial recognition, it fails to address the crucial question of why Eswatini, despite China's overtures and changing geopolitical dynamics, continues to maintain its allegiance to Taiwan. This dissertation aims to delve into the underlying factors and motivations that have contributed to Eswatini's enduring recognition of Taiwan as its sole ally in the African region. Understanding why Eswatini remains committed to Taiwan amidst the PRC's advances requires an exploration of the historical, cultural, political, and emotional dimensions at the unit-level, which contribute to shaping state behavior and explaining certain policy outcomes. It necessitates an analysis of the complex web of factors such as historical friendship, shared values, trust, and the intangible aspects of diplomatic relations that go beyond transactional interests.

The research question, as outlined above, suggests a puzzle presented by the alliance between the two small states of Eswatini and Taiwan. The approach taken in this study adopts a unit-level analysis, aiming to offer a complementary explanation to the prevailing trend of materialist explanations rooted in a systemic-level analysis approach. While systemic-level arguments often overlook the nuances present in puzzling cases, dismissing them as exceptions, this research seeks to provide a more contextual understanding that offers insights into the endurance of Eswatini- Taiwan relations. The central hypothesis of this dissertation asserts that the enduring diplomatic relations between Eswatini and Taiwan can be attributed to economic activities and Loyalty. Loyalty and economic activities are both conceptualized as independent variables, while the dependent variable is the diplomatic relations or recognition between the two states. Building on the implications highlighted in the

literature review chapter, this study submits the second independent variable of economic activities as one that serves as a catalyst, positively influencing the dependent variable by reinforcing Loyalty and thereby strengthening the existing diplomatic ties. In order to provide a more robust theoretical framework for this deviant case, the theory of Loyalty in world politics, as proposed by Lauge Poulsen, will be applied. This theory offers a more insightful explanation that takes a step further in capturing the complexities and unique intersubjective dynamics that underpin the Eswatini-Taiwan alliance.

By incorporating the theory of Loyalty, this research aims to shed light on the multidimensional nature of diplomatic relations in general by recognizing the significance of Loyalty as a driving force in shaping state behavior and forging lasting alliances. The study also aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of Loyalty and its role in international relations by complementing existing paradigms and providing valuable insights into the dynamics of state interactions.

3.3. Methodological Approach and Data Collection

As the previous section has provided a clear understanding of the research question and variables, the selection of an appropriate methodological approach is underway. Given the presence of an intervening variable, namely economic activities, an approach that can capture the causal chain between the variables is necessary. To examine the display of Loyalty between Eswatini and Taiwan, data will primarily be collected from news reports, bilateral agreements, and speeches made by leaders from the year 2010 to 2023. These sources will then be analyzed using a content/discourse analysis method, which involves the coding of relevant information from the collected data. This method allows for a systematic examination of language, narratives, and themes in the collected data, enabling researchers to identify patterns and extract meaningful insights. The news reports collected for this study will be qualitatively analyzed using software called ATLAS.ti. This software offers valuable support in coding and thematically categorizing the data, specifically through the use of thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a well-established method that aims to identify and analyze patterns, themes, and meanings within qualitative data sets (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It achieves this by revealing the most salient patterns and themes related to the

research question and hypothesis of a study. The software assists researchers in the creation of codes, which are labels or tags that capture specific concepts or themes present in the data. These codes can be applied to relevant sections of the news reports, allowing for systematic categorization and retrieval of information. ATLAS.ti also has the capability of visualizing the co-occurrence of codes through diagrams. These visual representations, such as Sankey diagrams or co-occurrence matrices, illustrate the relationships and connections between different codes. This feature is particularly valuable in understanding the interplay and associations between various themes and concepts from qualitative data sets. The process of finding code co-occurrence involves several preliminary steps in the coding process before extracting a code co-occurrence matrix as follows:

- *Data collection*: This involves gathering the relevant data sources for analysis and ensuring that they cover the necessary time frame and capture the required information for the research.
- *Initial coding*: This is the first round of coding, where the researcher identifies the initial core themes or concepts present in the data. This step involves interpretively assigning codes to specific segments or sections of the data that represent these themes.
- *Code refinement*: This is an exercise of reviewing and refining the initial codes by merging repetitive or similar codes. This process helps consolidate the codes and focuses the prevailing themes and patterns in a more comprehensive manner by reducing redundancy such that the analysis is streamlined and only captures the key dimensions of the data relevant to the research question.
- *Code co-occurrence analysis*: With the refined set of codes, a systematic analysis of code co-occurrence can be conducted. This step involves examining the Frequency and patterns of codes appearing together within the dataset. By identifying the relationships and associations between codes, insights into the connections between different themes or concepts can be revealed.
- *Code co-occurrence matrix*: This is a visual representation of the relationships between the codes. The matrix displays the Frequency of co-occurrence between different pairs of codes chosen by the researcher and highlights the strength of their association.

- *Interpretation:* An analysis of the code co-occurrence matrix helps interpret the findings within the context of the research question. These findings can help uncover hidden relationships, shared characteristics, or recurring themes within the dataset.
- *Reporting and visualization:* The results of the code co-occurrence analysis can be presented in a clear and visually appealing manner. Visualizations such as code co-occurrence matrices, Sankey diagrams, or even charts can effectively communicate the patterns and associations discovered.

The insights drawn out with the help of this qualitative analysis tool and its code co-occurrence generation capabilities will enhance the rigor and Depth of the study's findings. In addition to the qualitative analysis, data on trade volumes (exports and imports) and investments between Eswatini and Taiwan will be collected and presented graphically in charts. This quantitative data will give an account of the economic interactions between the two states and provide empirical evidence to test the effects of economic activities on their diplomatic relations.

Given the current time frame coupled with resource constraints, obtaining direct and personal contact with relevant actors proves to be challenging. Thus, a content/discourse analysis method serves as the most suitable data collection strategy. This approach allows researchers to understand the thought processes, beliefs, and positioning of actors in specific situations, even in the absence of personal contact (Halperin & Heath, 2012 pp. 177-180). Analyzing documents, speeches, agreements, and news reports can help examine the language, rhetoric, and narratives employed by key actors, such as government officials, diplomats, and leaders. This method allows for the identification and interpretation of underlying themes, discursive strategies, and patterns of communication that shape the perceptions and behavior of these actors. One of the major advantages of content/discourse analysis is its ability to capture the nuances and complexities of diplomatic relations. It goes beyond surface-level information and delves into the underlying meanings, intentions, and emotions expressed through language, thus contributing to enhancing the internal validity of the research at hand. By studying how actors position themselves and how they articulate their beliefs and communicate their interests, a researcher can gain valuable insights into the motivations, values, and priorities that drive their actions.

This mixed method approach is a combination of both qualitative and quantitative elements. The qualitative analysis takes an interpretive approach which aims to derive meaning from the collected and coded data, while the quantitative analysis focuses on compiling empirical data to identify the numerical patterns and trends in the economic interactions between Eswatini and Taiwan. Blending a qualitative analysis with a quantitative examination of economic activities offers a well-rounded exploration of the concept of Loyalty in the context of Eswatini and Taiwan's diplomatic relations, as it provides a holistic assessment of the complex dynamics at play within the interactions by systematically tracking and presenting the relevant indicators that ultimately prove the existence or lack thereof, of Loyalty.

3.4. Decoding Loyalty Between States

In Lauge Poulsen's concept of 'loyalty' in international relations, the boundaries of what constitutes Loyalty and what does not constitute Loyalty are laid quite clearly. Loyalty may initially begin as a way to generate material benefits between actors, yet the core behavioral component of Loyalty is when one actor continues to side with another actor even when they expect it will involve material costs to themselves (Hirschman, 1970). This is defined as 'persistence' (Poulsen 2020: (4) 1161). Another important element of Loyalty, highlighted by Poulsen (2020), is that Loyalty is usually more than a dyadic relationship (Poulsen 2020: (4) 1160). This is to say that when one actor is loyal to another because of shared ideas and norms, then the same actor is not loyal to a third actor because of the mismatch of ideas and norms. This can be seen in the way democratic states may be loyal to each other and not loyal to communist states, for instance. This is known as 'partiality,' which Poulsen describes as being an inherent and inescapable aspect of Loyalty (Poulsen 2020: (4) 1160). The above descriptions of what is constitutive of Loyalty signify that the concept within itself is highly contextual and that it comes in many forms. Lauge Poulsen outlines two main types of Loyalty:

i) Loyalty as motive: Loyalty is when actor A persistently sides with actor B due to a particular attitude held by both parties, an attitude that motivates them to remain loyal to each other.

ii) Loyalty as a norm: Actor A may find it inherently 'right' to stay put in times of difficulty, in which case loyalty takes the form of a principled belief, understood as 'normative ideas' (Poulsen 2020: (4) 1164- 1165).

Poulsen acknowledges that in some cases, actors may be 'obliged' to remain in alliance with each other, which is demonstrated in contractual agreements with strict terms and conditions that, when defaulted upon, may cause stringent costs. Poulsen's (2020) theory asserts that 'obligation' is, in fact, not Loyalty but rather coercion (Poulsen 2020: (4) 1165). Loyalty necessitates a particularly affective dimension that is absent in rule-driven behavior (Shklar, 1993). There are two drivers of affective attachments in Loyalty:

i) Identity: An actor's identification with another makes it more likely that any attractive 'exit' options can be foregone and that both actors are actively committed to remaining in alliance with each other.

ii) Interaction: a sense of shared identity is a necessary but insufficient condition of Loyalty, which means that two actors engaging in various interactions with each other are, in fact, what produces and/or reinforces Loyalty. (Poulsen 2020: (4) 1166- 1168)

Many other scholars have emphasized the importance of 'interactions' between states and have highlighted the fact that such interactions provide information that generates trust and leads to a special relationship embedded within a shared history of relations with each other (Scheffler, 2010; Hardin, 2004; Burgess; 1999). As highlighted in Chapter II, small states exist in a world where great power politics determine the status quo. This is to suggest that Loyalty can be affected by certain dimensions of power. Poulsen (2020) makes an assessment of how Loyalty relates to power by asserting that Loyalty can be both vertical and horizontal (Poulsen 2020: (4) 1169). If we take a business organizational structure, for instance, subordinates are loyal to their business manager within the organizational hierarchy but are also loyal to their fellow subordinate colleagues as well, and the business managers can be equally as loyal to their subordinates too. Such an illustration provides us with a framework that demonstrates that Loyalty exists even in power relations, which is different from a traditional view of said power relations which often emphasizes the relationship between the powerful and the weaker as being coercive.

Within the purview of this case study, Lauge Poulsen's theory not only gives a significant conceptualization of an ideational factor (Loyalty) in world politics, but it also provides a detailed description of what and how exactly Loyalty is beyond the scope of transactionalism, and how transactional interactions can, in fact, lead to Loyalty. This suggests that in an investigation of the research question, i.e., to find out the 'why.' in the puzzle of Eswatini-Taiwan relations, it is useful to investigate the nature of the interactions the two states have had for the past decades.

The reasons why Loyalty as a concept in international affairs has received little to no attention is quite a glaringly obvious endeavor, given the emphasis on what scholars like Richard Lebow have termed 'the prioritization of 'appetite' on the part of dominant theories of international relations' (Lebow, 2008: 15). This is, of course, logical if you are to take a systemic approach of inquiry into international events because, as has been established in the review of literature of this research, systemic views almost always require generalizability, which is achievable mostly with tangible variables displayed by strategic or material interests and capabilities of states. Lebow's (2008) view of the four basic drivers of the human psyche, namely, appetite, spirit, reason, and fear, zooms into the 'spirit' driver, which Lebow contends to be a driver necessary to explain state behavior, that other theories (realism, liberalism, Marxism, etc.) simply cannot (Lebow, 2008, p. 35). In line with Richard Lebow's (2008:34) definition of 'spirit' as the agent's desire for honor and standing, it is then feasible to assume that a state motivated by the 'spirit' is more so preoccupied with their reputation and standing in the world than anything else and thus shows traits of taking risks in order to defend their honor. Such a state can almost certainly not be described as a 'flip-flopper,' i.e., one whose foreign policy decisions and alignments seem to change with global and regional trends, but rather should display a certain degree of 'consistency' and 'reliability' in its interactions with other states. With this in mind, and within the scope of this chapter that intends to give the analysis of the collected data, it is important to outline what exactly this dissertation intends to delineate as 'loyalty.' Lauge Poulsen (2020) defines Loyalty as a behavioral type pursued by one actor towards another, which is driven by a particular attitude (Poulsen, 2020, p. 1157). Poulsen (2020) describes this behavioral type as 'persistent partiality,' which in political science and international relations is usually seen as the tendency of states to favor certain countries or groups over others, even when allegiance to those countries or groups is

not necessarily in their best interest. Such persistent partiality can be illustrated by the USA- Israeli relations, which are, in a sense, counterintuitive as they put the USA's standing in the Middle East into question, given its relationship with one of Israel's staunch enemies- Saudi Arabia. This persistent partiality is, as Poulsen (2020) suggests, driven by 'affective attachments,' which in political science and international relations can be taken to be emotional ties between states that are normally based on shared history, culture, or religion or simply a sense of affinity or kinship. Illustrations of these can be seen in the relationship between the USA and the United Kingdom, which have a long history of shared values, language, and even certain aspects of culture and religion. A similar sentiment can be outlined when we look at the relationship between EU member states. What the above descriptions display is that 'loyalty' is, in its essence, an ideational entity applicable only at the unit level and highly contextual. It also reiterates the fact that because Loyalty can present itself in a bevy of ways, depending on the context, then it can lead to varying perceptions of what exactly it is.

In the theoretical framework subsection of this dissertation, Poulsen (2020) gives us two main driving factors of affective attachments in Loyalty, namely, 'identity' and 'interaction.' 'Identity' here is to be taken as 'identification,' which in sociological and psychological terms is a process by which people come to see themselves as members of a particular group or social category through shared experiences, beliefs, or values and a process by which one person ascribes to oneself the qualities or characteristics of another person (Mead, 1934; Tajfel & Turner, 2004). We see this process of identification playing out among states through the way in which they tend to form alliances with other states that hold shared goals and values as them, thus leading them to cooperate with each other in a variety of aspects. Such can be said when taking the alliance systems in the Western hemisphere, whose states define themselves as democratic and staunch supporters of free-market capitalism and work together to preserve these values whilst positioning themselves against autocratic and/ or socialist states. Of course, the identification with those with whom there are shared values immediately signals a common interest, which cannot be reduced to merely having 'strategic' and 'transactional' inclinations but should rather take into consideration the presence of affective attachments which complement and, in some cases, go beyond strategic interests. The second driving factor of Loyalty, which Poulsen (2020) puts

forward as a necessary condition that, in fact, reinforces Loyalty, has to do with the interactions between states. This point is reiterated by Henry (2020), who views Loyalty, not as an innate character trait of states but rather as an action strictly derived from 'observed reliability' (Henry, 2020, p. 51). This is to say that there are certain modes, or even types of interactions between states, that, if presented with consistency, can produce either a state of lasting friendship or lasting enmity. We see this also in Hirschman's (1970) loyalty and the continuum of exit theory. These driving factors, as put forward by Poulsen (2020), help give a real sense of what sorts of observable behaviors of states can be taken to indicate Loyalty. With this in mind, and in line with the findings from the data collected from news reports that documented the interactions between the Kingdom of Eswatini and Taiwan (ROC), as well as official statements, memoranda of understanding, and agreements between the two states, I suggest five different indicators or variables that can be used to assess the degree of Loyalty in state relations and interactions as follows:

- i) Frequency of contact: This is more often indicated by state visits or even by the participation and diplomatic engagement of state officials in certain activities within the hosting state.
- ii) Depth of cooperation: This delineates the extent of collaboration between states, often illustrated by intergovernmental cooperation in various activities with each other, and can even extend to the wider population of the states, amassing a variety of stakeholders in collaboration.
- iii) Shared goals and values: These are, in a sense, a product of the process of identification between states, which often leads to a high level of association with one another and advocacy for the other's goals. A sense of pursuing the other's goals as if they were their own.
- iv) A history of positive relations: The concept of 'observed reliability' is rooted in the consistency of positive interactions between states. It maximizes the degree of Loyalty between the states.
- v) Positive perceptive inclinations: These are illustrated by positive affirmations and reinforcements in addressing one other; such perceptions are not limited to the state officials; they can even extend to the general public of a country depending on the Depth of cooperation between the states.

These indicators are observable elements of interactions between states that can be used to identify whether states have a good rapport with each other or not. In his book, "The Evolution of Cooperation" (1981), Robert Axelrod and William Hamilton outline important conditions that can promote trust, reciprocity, and Loyalty among states. Axelrod argues that repeated interactions between states provide an opportunity for trust and reciprocity to develop and that these repeated interactions are also influenced by the state's ability to recognize and remember each other's past actions. He conducted a computer tournament in which he outlined a 'tit-for-tat' strategy which shows how one cooperative move is mirrored and reciprocated with another, and subsequently, a defective move is equally mirrored with a defective move in response (Axelrod & Hamilton, 1981, p. 30). Although Axelrod's theory may not be directly addressing Loyalty among states, it identifies the conditions for trust, reciprocity, and cooperation, which are relevant in understanding the factors that can contribute to Loyalty between states in international relations. What Poulsen, Hirschman, and Axelrod's theories all emphasize is the fact that tracking interactions between states serves as the best way to determine whether a degree of Loyalty exists amongst them or not.

3.5. Bilateral Relations Between Eswatini and Taiwan

In order to provide a comprehensive understanding of the bilateral relations between the Kingdom of Eswatini and Taiwan, it is essential to establish the broader context before delving into the thematic analysis of the identified indicators. A Sankey diagram and a code co-occurrence matrix have been presented below, which show the associations and patterns reflected in the news reports referencing the relations between Eswatini and Taiwan. The Sankey diagram visually represents the flow and distribution of codes in the news reports, offering insights into the interconnectedness and interplay of various themes. It serves as a helpful tool for understanding the dynamics and prominence of different aspects within the bilateral relations of Eswatini and Taiwan. In combination with the Sankey diagram, the code co-occurrence matrix provides a detailed overview of the specific code associations observed in the reports. Examining the Frequency and co-occurrence of codes enables a more nuanced analysis of the prevalent themes and patterns.

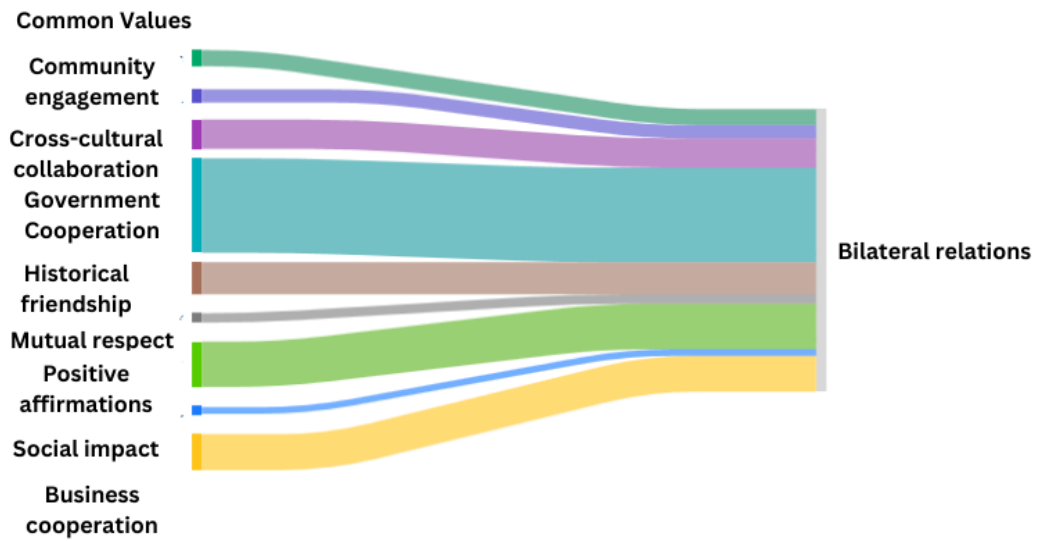


Figure 3. 1. A Co-occurrence Sankey Diagram Showing the Main Themes That Were Associated With the Mentions of Bilateral Relations From News Reports

Table 3.1. The Code Co-occurrence Matrix Showing the Quotations (") as Well as the Co-occurrence Themes Associated with Bilateral Relations in Numbers

Bilateral Relations Code co- occurrence Matrix	Bilateral Relations "197"
● Business cooperation "58"	11
● Common values "32"	5
● Community engagement "73"	4
● Cross- cultural collaboration "69"	9
● Government cooperation "240"	29
● Historical friendship "47"	10
● Mutual respect "35"	3
● Positive affirmations "167"	14
● Social impact "42"	2

The code co-occurrence matrix sheds light on the significant code associations related to bilateral relations, as evident from the considerable number of quotations (197) captured in the matrix. Among the identified codes, government cooperation emerged as the highest code co-occurrence, with 29 associated quotations underscoring the importance of collaborative efforts between the two nations. Following were positive affirmations with 14 associated quotations, highlighting the mutual appreciation and

positive perceptions between Eswatini and Taiwan. Another noteworthy code association was business cooperation, with 11 associated quotations indicating the presence of economic collaboration and trade relations. The matrix also revealed the relevance of historical friendship, as indicated by ten associated quotations, emphasizing the long-standing and enduring bond between the two countries. Cross-cultural collaboration, denoted by nine associated quotations, further highlighted the significance of cultural exchanges and mutual understanding. Additionally, the code co-occurrence matrix unveiled the presence of common values (5 associated quotations) shared between Eswatini and Taiwan, reinforcing the alignment of their principles and objectives. Community engagement (4 associated quotations) demonstrated the involvement of local communities in further strengthening the bilateral ties. Mutual respect (3 associated quotations) underscored the importance of respectful interactions and recognition between the two nations. Lastly, social impact (2 quotations) indicated the positive influence and transformative outcomes resulting from the bilateral cooperation activities held in collaboration with each other. These findings from the code co-occurrence matrix provide valuable insights into the diverse dimensions of bilateral relations between Eswatini and Taiwan. They highlight the significance of government cooperation, positive affirmations, business collaboration, historical friendship, cross-cultural exchanges, common values, community engagement, mutual respect, and social impact as key elements shaping the relationship between the two nations.

3.5.1. The Frequency of Contact Between Eswatini and Taiwan

One way to assess the degree of Loyalty displayed by the mode of interactions between states is to track the Frequency of contact that they have with each other. This can be done by tracking the state visits between country A and country B. Meetings involving heads of state convey messages to the global community regarding the connection between the host country and the visiting nations. Some theorists have indicated that such meetings have an impact in various aspects, including influencing deterrence strategies (McManus, 2018), contributing to the survival of regimes (Malis & Smith, 2020), and shaping trade patterns (Nitsch, 2007). State visits are more so indicators of the level of engagement and Interaction between states; even though they may not directly signify Loyalty, they certainly demonstrate a commitment to maintaining

relations and engagement with one another. News reports that have documented state visits between the state leaders of Eswatini and Taiwan have reported a total of 18 visits on the part of the King of Eswatini- Mswati III and a total of 3 state visits by three separate presidents of Taiwan. “King Mswati III of Eswatini, Taiwan's only diplomatic ally in Africa, will be visiting Taiwan later this week for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic erupted and the 18th time overall.” (Focus Taiwan, October 2022).

In an analysis interview by the Taiwan News channel, African politics expert Yen Chen- shen was asked the reasons why King Mswati III frequented Taiwan to this extent, to which he responded:

The King and his entourage come to Taiwan every year or two, this time because of Covid, maybe four years now, but I think he will be received very well, visiting some of the Eswatini students, including some of them from his family...also we will provide him with very good medical care as well in having a health check-up here... and also reassure Taiwan that the Kingdom of Eswatini will remain a diplomatic ally with Taiwan” (Taiwan News interview with Yen Chen-shen, October 2022)

The frequent visits on the part of the King of Eswatini, King Mswati III, since his ascension to the throne in 1986, not only indicate a strong and enduring relationship between Eswatini and Taiwan but also highlight the King's personal affinity and trust towards Taiwan. Since these visits serve both official and personal purposes, as illustrated by political analyst Yen Chen-shen above, this implies friendly relations that reinforce the alliance between the two nations. A significant aspect of these visits is the official display of alliance. King Mswati III's visits to Taiwan are marked by ceremonial events, city tours, and diplomatic meetings, which signify the close ties and cooperation between the two countries (Taipei Times,2022). These official displays of alliance emphasize that there exists mutual respect and support between the King of Eswatini and his counterparts in Taiwan. In addition to official engagements, the personal reasons behind the King's visits demonstrate a deeper level of affinity with Taiwan. It has been reported that members of the royal family of Eswatini are studying in Taiwanese institutions of higher learning (Strong, 2020) and that the King himself seeks medical care in Taiwan (Agence France- Presse AFP, 2021). This indicates a personal connection and trust that the King and his family have developed with Taiwan, choosing it as a preferred destination for education and

healthcare. The fact that the Frequency of these visits has only been hindered by the global Covid-19 pandemic, as Yen Chen-shen points out, demonstrating the King's commitment to maintaining ties with Taiwan. This consistency not only conveys 'reliability' but also demonstrates the Depth of trust and confidence that the King of Eswatini has in Taiwan, as these visits were not contingent upon changes in presidential administrations in Taiwan but rather driven by a long-standing partnership with the Taiwanese "state." Furthermore, the reciprocal nature of the relationship is evident in the visits made by the three presidents of Taiwan to the Kingdom of Eswatini during their respective terms: Chen Shui-bian (2000-2008), Ma Ying-jeou (2008-2016) and President Tsai Ing-wen (2016-present).⁵This illustrates the importance placed on the bilateral relationship by both nations, as well as the shared commitment to strengthening diplomatic ties.

According to reports from The Times of Swaziland, Swazi Observer, and Taiwan Today, the year 2012 witnessed a significant increase in state visits between Eswatini and Taiwan, reflecting the growing diplomatic ties between the two nations. Her Royal Highness Princess Sikhanyiso visited Taiwan in June 2012 (Taiwan Today, 2012), and His Majesty King Mswati III visited Taiwan in October of the same year (Swazi Observer, 2012). In addition to that, the Eswatini Police Commissioner visited Taiwan on a technical mission in November 2012 (Times of Swaziland, 2012), and the Prime Minister of Eswatini at the time visited Taiwan in May 2012 to represent the King at the 13th term inauguration ceremony of President Ma Ying-jeou (Nzimandze, 2012). Notably, President Ma Ying-jeou concluded his first Africa tour with a visit to Eswatini in April 2012 (Chan, 2012). During this visit, President Ma delivered a speech at a state banquet held in his honor, expressing the following remarks:

Forty-four years ago, our countries formed diplomatic ties, and when you ascended to the throne in 1986, the relations still continued. You have already made 12 visits to the Republic of China (Taiwan). You were there at my inauguration and centennial celebrations. So, I felt a little guilty that I still had not visited your country _ Ying-jeou M. (2012, 18 April). State banquet speech. Times of Swaziland

During the state banquet, an endearing gesture took place as President Ma Ying-jeou presented the King of Eswatini with an early birthday cake. The timing of the visit

⁵ For more information on the list of Taiwan state leaders, visit the presidential office website of the ROC here <https://english.president.gov.tw/Page/81> date retrieved: 28.05.2023

meant that President Ma would not be able to attend the birthday celebrations scheduled two days after his departure; thus, in a thoughtful act of goodwill, President Ma wanted to ensure that His Majesty King Mswati III could partake in the birthday festivities in his absence. As the cake was presented, His Majesty King Mswati III was invited to make three wishes before cutting the cake (Simelane, 2012). This thoughtful gesture reflected the existence of genuine rapport between the two leaders.

The King's wishes during this delightful moment were as follows:

The King's first wish was to always see good relations between Swaziland and Taiwan growing. The second wish was for both countries to remain peaceful and become more prosperous, while the third wish was for the dreams of both Swazi and Taiwanese people to one day come true. (Simelane, 2012, p.10)

These wishes expressed by His Majesty King Mswati III indicated an appreciation for the friendship and support extended by President Ma Ying-jeou and Taiwan. The act of making wishes before cutting the cake represented a shared moment of goodwill and further indicated a commitment to strengthening ties between the two countries. The images below can be taken to illustrate the good rapport between King Mswati III and President Ma:



Illustration 3.1. Two Heads of State Embracing During President Ma's Visit to Eswatini

Source: Times of Swaziland. (2012, 16 April)

Diplomatic etiquette prescribes that due to cultural norms and personal preferences, 'hugging' during state visits is atypical in formal settings and may be more common in informal settings instead. Handshakes, nods, or other formal greetings are usually more customary during official state visits; thus, instances where state leaders may engage in informal greetings, including hugs, signals that the leaders have developed a particularly close rapport or friendship. This close rapport can also be seen to be illustrated by the so-called 'sport diplomacy' images showing King Mswati III and President Ma engaging in physical fitness activities together below:



Illustration 3.2. Two Heads of State Exercising Together at the King's Palace During President Ma's Visit to Eswatini

Source: Times of Swaziland. (2012, 16 April)

Frequent contact in the form of state visits plays a significant role in shaping and strengthening diplomatic ties between nations. These visits provide a space for leaders to engage in high-level discussions, exchange ideas, and even foster mutual understanding. They serve as a tangible demonstration of the importance placed on bilateral ties, signaling a commitment to cooperation, partnership, and friendship. State visits also facilitate the establishment of personal connections (affective attachments) between leaders, promoting trust and goodwill. As noted by Koliev and Lundgren (2021), state visits have the potential to influence not only political and economic relations but also cultural and social exchanges between states. Through symbolic gestures, such as the exchange of gifts and participation in local traditions, state visits contribute to the promotion of cultural diplomacy and the deepening of personal connections that produce affective attachments.

3.5.2. The Depth of Cooperation Between Eswatini and Taiwan

Measuring the Depth and extent of cooperation between states should be taken as a multifaceted endeavor that involves evaluating various aspects of collaborative efforts between those states. Within the scope of the available data collected from news reports and official documents on this specific case study, several key indicators have been identified to assess the level of cooperation. These indicators encompass government cooperation, memoranda of understanding and agreements, cultural and educational exchanges, as well as trade and economic activities. Government cooperation is usually taken to be a fundamental indicator of collaboration between states. This entails examining the Frequency and nature of high-level meetings, diplomatic engagements, and joint initiatives undertaken by the governments involved. The level of coordination, dialogue, and joint decision-making reflects the Depth of cooperation between the two states. Below is a Sankey diagram that illustrates a code co-occurrence analysis of which elements of collaborative activities have been constitutive of the government cooperation between Eswatini and Taiwan.

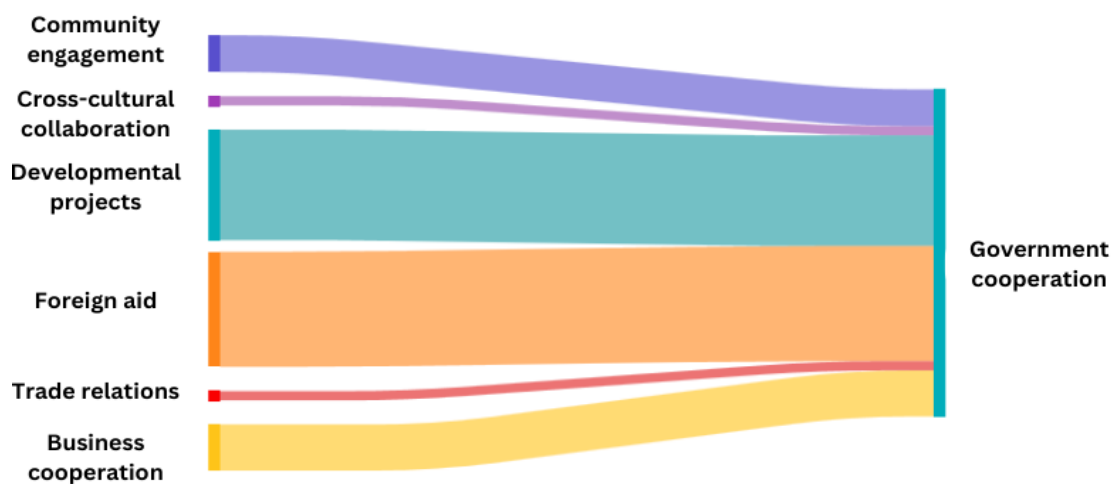


Figure 3. 2. A Co-occurrence Sankey Diagram Showing the Main Themes That Were Associated With the Mentions of Government Cooperation From News Reports

Table 3.2. The Code Co-occurrence Matrix Showing the Quotations (""') as Well as the Co-occurrence Themes Associated With Government Cooperation in Numbers

Government Cooperation Code co-occurrence Matrix	Government cooperation "240"
● Business cooperation "58"	10
● Community engagement "73"	8
● Cross- cultural collaboration "69"	2
● Developmental projects "240"	24
● Foreign aid "133"	25
● Trade relations "25"	2

The Sankey diagram above provides a good visual representation of the distribution of codes in the news reports that co-occurred with government cooperation. In analyzing the co-occurrence matrix, out of 240 quotations indicating government cooperation, foreign aid (133 quotations) from Taiwan to Eswatini exhibited the highest number of code co-occurrences (25). This indicates a strong association between government cooperation and foreign aid specifically. Additionally, developmental projects (24), business cooperation (10), community engagement (8), cross-cultural collaboration (2), and trade relations (2) followed in descending order, further highlighting the various elements of government cooperation identified through the code co-occurrences. These code co-occurrences shed light on the specific dimensions of government cooperation in the context of the analyzed news reports. The prevalence of foreign aid suggests a focus on financial support and assistance from Taiwan to Eswatini, which emphasizes the importance of economic cooperation and development assistance within their bilateral relations.

3.5.2.1. Developmental Projects

Taiwan's aid assistance to Eswatini has primarily been directed towards a range of developmental projects, which have been formulated by the government of Eswatini in collaboration with its ministries.

The Embassy of the Republic of China on Taiwan (ROC) provided financial support for various projects in different ministries to the tune of USD 3 585 810, about E36 million... ministries that benefited include the Ministry of Health, which received about 10 million, the Ministry of Education E2 069 140 and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Energy which received about E6 million... Ambassador Chen said he was very pleased to present the financial assistance of the various projects under the different ministries. The projects include the Biotechnology Park infrastructure, rural electrification project, purchase of computers and printers for the government, water supply for rural schools, and the procurement of medical equipment for government hospitals and health centers. (Hlatshwayo, 2014, p.8)

These developmental projects are underscored by the memoranda of understanding (MOU) signed between the Kingdom of Eswatini and the Republic of China (Taiwan) on various aspects of cooperation, namely, the MOU on fair trade competition (Focus Taiwan, 2018), the MOU on healthcare improvement (Taiwan Today, 2019), the MOU on cooperation on women's economic empowerment (Taiwan Embassy press release, 2019), etc. The above listed are only but recent examples; Memoranda of understanding between Eswatini and Taiwan, especially on various sectors of technical cooperation (education, agriculture, tourism, and health), date back as far as the 1970s.

⁶ The existence of memoranda of understanding and agreements further signifies the commitment to cooperation with each other. These documents outline specific areas of collaboration, delineate shared objectives, and provide a framework for joint initiatives. The number and scope of such agreements demonstrate the breadth and depth of cooperation between the states.

3.5.2.2. Business Cooperation

Business cooperation initiatives were cited in several collaborative efforts between Eswatini and Taiwan, and the leaders of the two countries frequently expressed the importance of business cooperation as another channel to strengthen bilateral relations. During His Majesty King Mswati III's visit to Taiwan in October 2012, it was reported that over E100 million worth of investments were expected to flow into Eswatini over the following two years (Times of Swaziland, 2012, p.9).

The project investments are as follows:

- Tex-Ray, Jojia Biotech, and Taipei Medical University intend to set up a pharmaceutical plant with an anticipated investment of USD 3 million (E25.5 million)

⁶ This information was retrieved from the Laws and Regulations Database of the Republic of China (Taiwan) website <https://law.moj.gov.tw/ENG/Law/LawSearchAgree.aspx?TY=D2200300000000> date retrieved: 29.05.2023

- Jojia Biotech and Tex-Ray are to embark on a USD 1.25 million (E10.6 million) food processing plant within the next 12 months
- Jojia Biotech will set up a bottled water plant worth USD 2. Million (E21.3 million)
- Jojia Biotech and Tex-Ray will also set up a cosmetics plant in an investment worth USD 1.25 million (E10.6 million)
- In a granite and marble venture, Tibiyo TakaNgwane and the government of Swaziland are expected to partner with IGM and Tex-Ray in a USD 3.6 million (E30.6 million) investment _ (Times of Swaziland, 2012, p.9)

The Bureau of Foreign Trade Taiwan describes the business investment or cooperation between Taiwan and Eswatini as follows:

As for investment, Taiwanese businesses (mostly small and medium-sized enterprises) in Eswatini have long-established roots. Around 20 Taiwanese companies operate in Eswatini, with total investments amounting to about USD 66.3 million. These companies are in the sectors of textiles and garments, plastic woven bags, cartons, toilet paper, and castor-oil- plants. _ (Bureau of Foreign Trade of the ROC, 2023)

3.5.2.3. Community Engagement

In addition, to aid in developmental projects, the Embassy of Taiwan to Eswatini was cited for having been providing assistance for projects that involved community engagement for job creation, especially in the agricultural sector, as well as technical assistance in the health and education sectors.

Ambassador Liang said the two governments have established close cooperation in agricultural development since 1969 and completed quite a few projects for the benefit of emaswati. “For instance, we have been helping emaswati to set up the whole seed potato propagation, inspection, certification as well as supply systems and increase the amount of production under the seed potato production project launched in 2013. Now, the yearly production quantity of all-generation seed potatoes has reached a new high at 550 tons! _ (Liang J., 2019, Seed potato production project handover and fruit tree production and marketing project closing ceremony, Embassy of the ROC events)

The agricultural projects involved engaging local community farmers to produce the crops outlined above through technical assistance. In addition to agricultural projects, the Taiwan Medical Mission has been providing free medical care in different local communities:

The Taiwan medical mission brought doctors who specialize in different fields, such as general surgeons, rheumatologists, infectious disease specialists, anesthesiologists, and medical officers... a majority of people cannot go to clinics or hospitals due to many obstacles like transport costs and proximity but with the assistance of the mission our people are able to access these services without paying a cent (Maziya, 2012)

3.5.2.4. Cross-Cultural Collaboration

Cross-cultural collaboration and cultural exchange have been identified as one of the components of government cooperation between Eswatini and Taiwan. Notably, the provision of scholarships by the Taiwanese government and Taiwan ICDF (International Cooperation and Development Fund) to the youth of Eswatini, along with the dispatching of Taiwanese youth ambassadors to Eswatini, exemplify an effective cultural exchange strategy.

A nine-member delegation, which includes students and two officials from the University of Ping Tung of Taiwan International Youth Ambassadors are in the country on a cultural exchange program conducted by the Republic of China on Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Mavuso, 2011, p.26)

In 2023, the Embassy of the Republic of China (Taiwan) made an announcement regarding the availability of 147 scholarships, fellowships, and grants for Emaswati (Swazi people). These opportunities provided by Taiwan signify a commitment to supporting the educational aspirations and development of individuals from Eswatini (Thwala, 2023). This is in addition to the Taiwan ICDF Scholarships, which are awarded to an average of 30 to 40 students every year. In 2011, the University of Swaziland signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the provision of scholarships and student exchange programs with four Taiwanese Universities (Ngwenya, 2011).

Cultural and educational exchanges contribute to the depth of cooperation by fostering people-to-people connections and mutual understanding by encompassing activities such as student exchanges, academic collaborations, joint research projects, and even cultural events. The extent and variety of these exchanges reflect the willingness of both states to engage in deeper levels of cooperation beyond mere political and economic spaces.

3.5.2.5. Trade Relations

The agreement on economic cooperation, signed on the 8th of June, 2018,⁷ marked a significant milestone in the bilateral trade relations between the Kingdom of Eswatini and the Republic of China (Taiwan). Prior to this agreement, trade relations between the two nations existed, but they lacked a formalized framework to enhance and regulate economic cooperation. One of the key objectives of the agreement was to promote increased market access and facilitate the exchange of goods and services between Eswatini and Taiwan by establishing a bilateral free trade agreement. As has been highlighted in the review of the literature of this dissertation, in the pursuit of finding an explanation for the enduring diplomatic relations between the Kingdom of Eswatini and the Republic of China (Taiwan), existing attempts to solve the puzzle usually use the factor of aid assistance as the primary driver and motivator on the part of Eswatini, in exchange for international advocacy for recognition of Taiwan. However, an examination of the trade statistics below reveals a compelling trend that challenges this argument and demonstrates that Taiwan receives more than just international advocacy in return.

3.5.2.5.1. Trade Volumes Between Eswatini and Taiwan

Taiwan's main exports to Eswatini consist of rice, printing machinery, filament yarn, dyeing machines, slide fasteners, and garments.⁸ The Bureau of Foreign Trade of Taiwan describes its trade relations with Eswatini in this way:

Our bilateral trade has achieved positive benefits since Eswatini and Taiwan signed the Economic Cooperation Agreement (ECA) in 2018. The ECA also allows us to leverage Eswatini's advantageous geographical location in Africa and preferential terms under FTAs it has signed with other countries. Eswatini is clearly an important African ally and trading partner to Taiwan. _ (Bureau of Foreign Trade of the ROC, 2023)

Below is an up-to-date bar chart graph that shows the annual growth rates of exports from the Republic of China (Taiwan) to the Kingdom of Eswatini from the year 2018 to the first quarter of 2023.

⁷ Information retrieved from the Bureau of Foreign Trade or the Ministry of Economic Affairs of the Republic of China (Taiwan) website https://fta.trade.gov.tw/fta_eswatini.html?1 date retrieved: 28.05.2023

⁸ Information retrieved from the Bureau of Foreign Trade or the Ministry of Economic Affairs of the Republic of China (Taiwan) website https://fta.trade.gov.tw/fta_eswatini.html?1 date retrieved: 28.05.2023

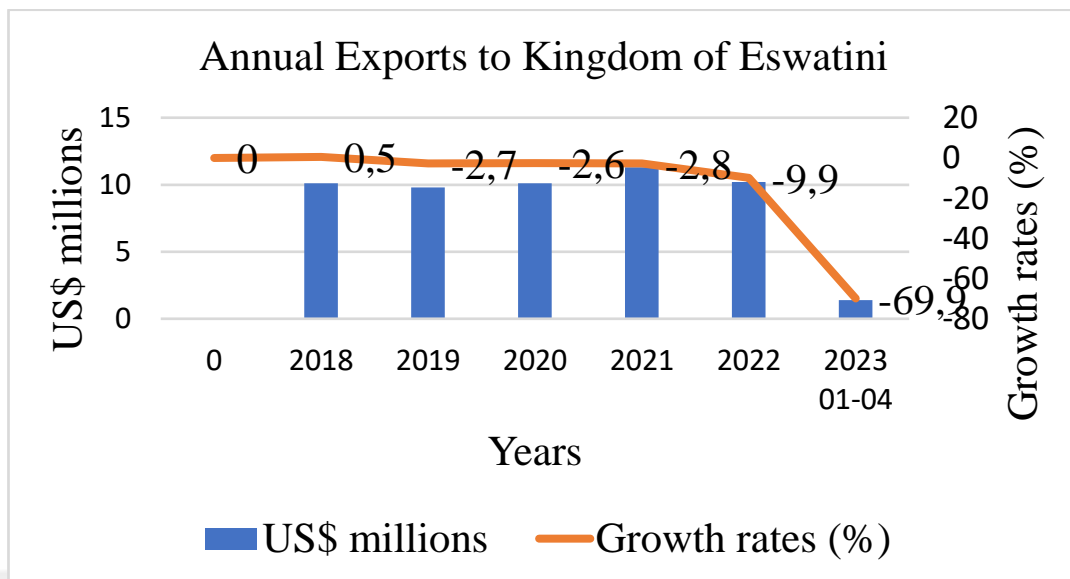


Figure 3. 3. A Chart Graph Showing Statistics of the Annual Exports From Taiwan to Eswatini

Source: Bureau of Foreign Trade of the Republic of China (Taiwan) Statistics
<https://cuswebo.trade.gov.tw/FSCE30F0I/FSCE30F0I?Val=SZ>

The bar chart graph provides valuable insights into the growth rate and total value of annual exports from Taiwan to Eswatini. In 2018, the year of signing the Economic Cooperation Agreement (ECA), the growth rate reached its peak at 36.2%, resulting in a total export value of 10.1 million USD. Although the growth rate declined to -2.8% in 2019 compared to 2018, the total export value remained relatively stable at 9.8 million USD. The subsequent years saw fluctuating growth rates, while in 2021, the growth rate picked up again, reaching 11.9%, accompanied by a total export value of 11.3 million USD. However, in 2022, there was a significant decline in the growth rate, reaching -9.9% compared to the previous years. Despite this decline, the total annual value of exports remained relatively consistent at 10.2 million USD. This observation is important because it demonstrates a steady flow of trade income from Eswatini to Taiwan, which was not significantly affected by external factors such as the global pandemic or the political unrest that unfolded in Eswatini in June 2021. The first quarter of 2023 has shown a decline in growth rate (69.9%) compared to the first quarter of the previous year, forecasting a possible further decline of the overall annual growth rate by the end of the year. Despite what would be considered challenging

circumstances, the trade export volumes between the two nations remained relatively stable, as highlighted by the continuity of the trade income.

It is important to note here that in the ECA of 2018, a list of goods from Taiwan whose custom duties and tariffs were to be removed totaled just over 150 units, while that of Eswatini was 4. This is also illustrated by the following pie charts that show the total value of major imports from Eswatini and major exports to Eswatini in 2022.

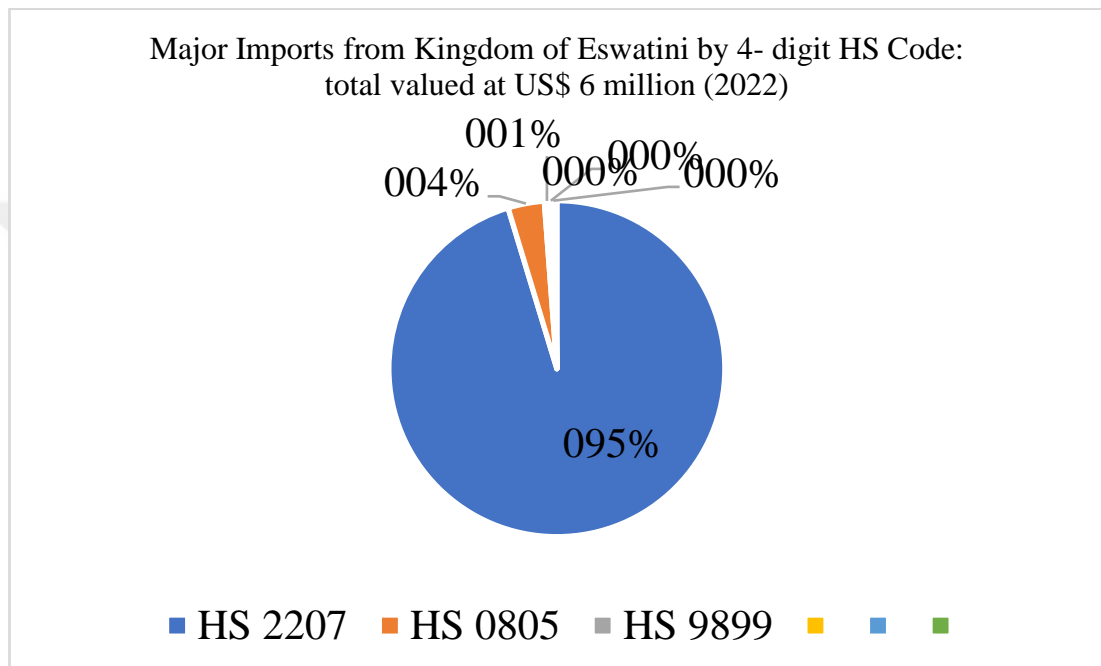


Figure 3.4. A Pie Chart Showing Annual Imports From Eswatini to Taiwan in 2022

Source: Bureau of Foreign Trade of the Republic of China (Taiwan) Statistics
<https://cuswebo.trade.gov.tw/FSCE30F0I/FSCE30F0I?Val=SZ>

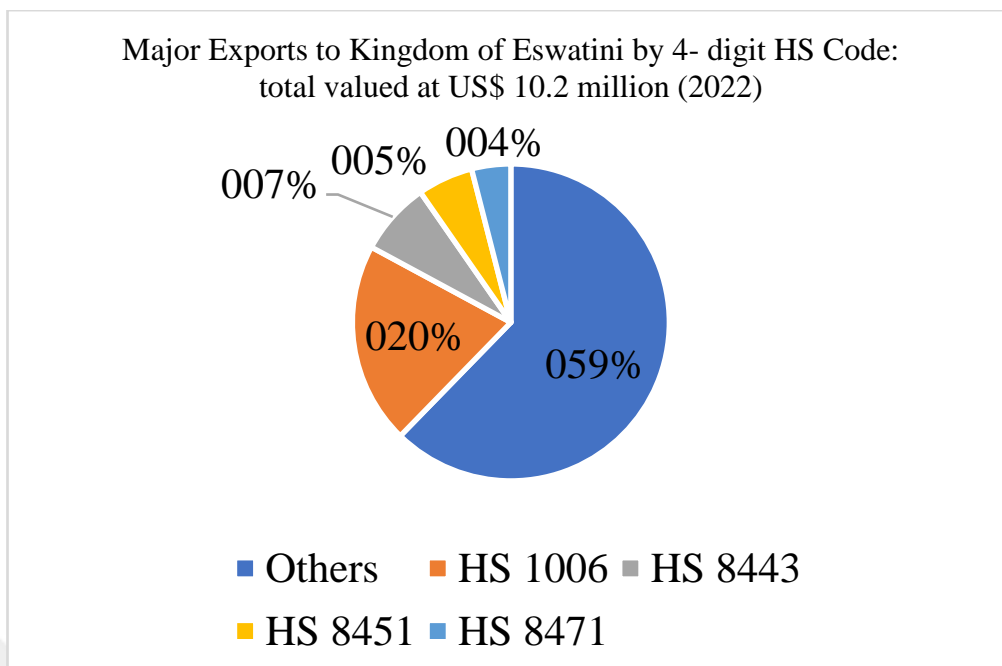


Figure 3.5. A Pie Chart Showing Annual Exports to Eswatini From Taiwan in 2022

Source: Bureau of Foreign Trade of the Republic of China (Taiwan) Statistics
<https://cuswebo.trade.gov.tw/FSCE30F0I/FSCE30F0I?Val=SZ>

As the comparative pie charts illustrate above, there exists a discrepancy in the number of goods between the two countries, which reflects the differing economic structures and capabilities of the two nations. Taiwan, as a highly industrialized and export-oriented economy, has a diverse range of products that it can offer for export. The extensive list of goods from Taiwan in the ECA indicates the country's strength in various industries and its ability to supply a wide array of products to the Eswatini market. On the other hand, Eswatini, as a smaller and less industrialized economy, may have a more limited range of products for export; thus, the smaller number of goods on Eswatini's list in the ECA may suggest a focus on specific areas where the country has a competitive advantage or has more resources to leverage.

Below is an up-to-date bar chart graph that shows the annual growth rates of imports from the Kingdom of Eswatini to the Republic of China (Taiwan) from the year 2018 to the first quarter of 2023, followed by a bar chart graph that shows the trade balance statistics, i.e., the difference in exports and imports between the two countries

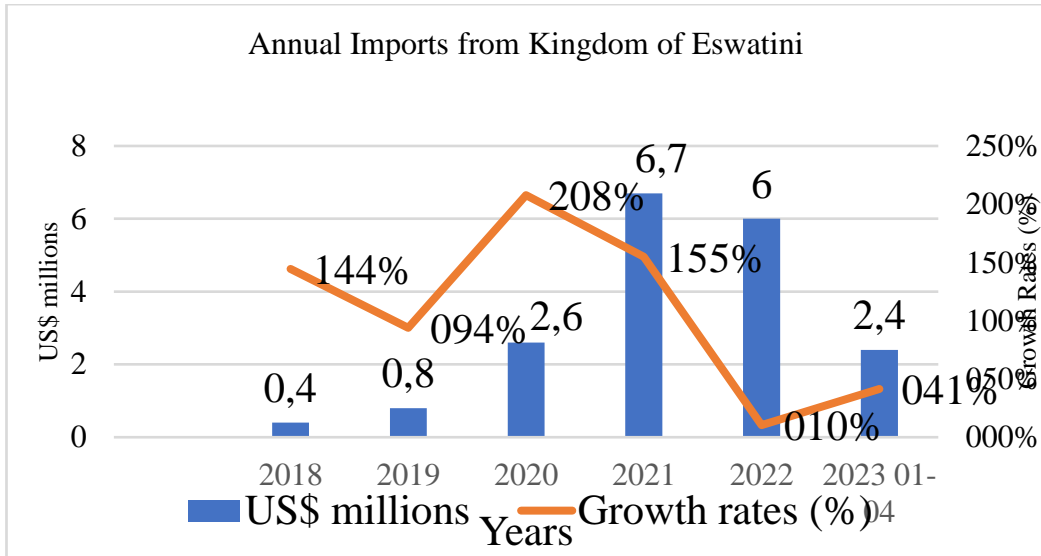


Figure 3.6. A Chart Graph Showing Statistics of the Annual Imports From Eswatini to Taiwan

Source: Bureau of Foreign Trade of the Republic of China (Taiwan) Statistics
<https://cuswebo.trade.gov.tw/FSCE30F0I/FSCE30F0I?Val=SZ>

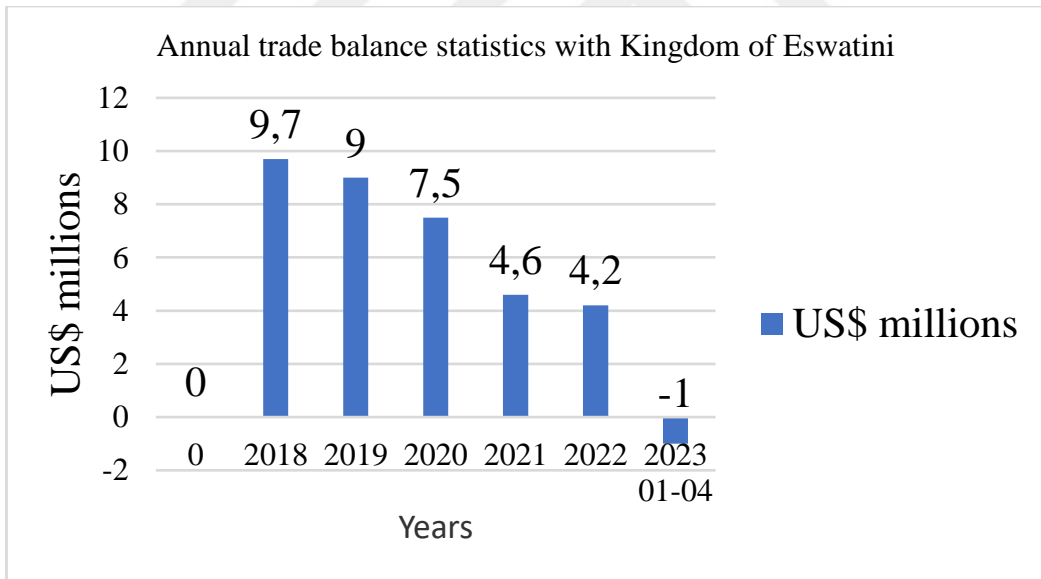


Figure 3.7. A Chart Graph Showing Statistics of the Trade Balance Between Taiwan and Eswatini

Source: Bureau of Foreign Trade of the Republic of China (Taiwan) Statistics
<https://cuswebo.trade.gov.tw/FSCE30F0I/FSCE30F0I?Val=SZ>

Analyzing the annual imports graph provides further insights into the trade relationship between Eswatini and Taiwan. While there may have been fluctuations in the growth rates of annual imports since the signing of the ECA in 2018, a consistent upward trend is observed in the total value of imports. This upward trajectory peaked at 6.7 million USD in 2021, reflecting a positive outcome resulting from the ECA. Although 2022 witnessed a negative growth rate of -10.4% compared to the previous years, the total value of imports did not experience a significant decline from the previous year, thus amounting to 6.0 million USD. This suggests a level of stability and resilience in the import sector, despite the challenges faced during that period. The first quarter of 2023 has already shown a substantial growth rate of 41.4%, with a value of 2.4 million USD, indicating a promising outlook for the annual import value by the end of the year. This forecast suggests the potential for further growth and strengthening of the import sector. The annual trade balance statistics reveal an interesting trend since 2018, indicating a gradual reduction in the trade balance gap between the Kingdom of Eswatini and Taiwan. This narrowing gap suggests a positive development for the Kingdom of Eswatini, as it implies an increased competitive advantage in the trade relationship. The negative value recorded in the first quarter of 2023 (-1.0) forecasts a potential further decrease in the trade balance gap.

Classical trade theories, such as mercantilism, recognized early on that a country's wealth could be enhanced by increasing exports and reducing imports. On the other hand, contemporary theories, most notably neoliberalism, aligned with capitalist principles, argue that promoting economic growth and development is best achieved through trade liberalization policies. Strategic trade policies have become widely adopted by states in the global economy, representing a hybrid approach that combines the protectionist and export-centric policies of mercantilism with the free trade principles of neoliberalism, all aimed at fostering economic growth. The current global economic landscape has countries like the USA and China heavily relying on such strategic trade policies. These nations have developed strong manufacturing sectors, enabling them to export a wide range of goods and services and gain significant comparative advantages. This has resulted in substantial wealth accumulation for these countries, illustrating the effectiveness of exporting more than importing. The diagrams presented above provide an illustration of the comparative advantage that Taiwan enjoys in its trade relations with Eswatini. The establishment of the agreement

on economic cooperation, which included the removal of customs duties and tariffs, has played a crucial role in facilitating this advantage while also gradually strengthening the competitive advantage and export potential of Eswatini. In summation of the analysis of the trade relations between Eswatini and Taiwan, one thing is certain- as it stands, the trade balance strongly favors Taiwan, which indicates Taiwan's comparative advantage in trade with Eswatini and underscores the economic benefits that Taiwan derives from its relationship with Eswatini beyond mere international advocacy.

All the elements of the depth of cooperation in the case of Eswatini and Taiwan show the extent to which their bilateral relations have matured throughout the years. The fact that the level of engagement and collaboration is not limited to the leaders of the two states but extends to government officials and civil servants, ambassadors and diplomats, business owners, students, and even community members is telling of the degree of friendly relations that exist between Eswatini and Taiwan. For the establishment of extensive cooperation to exist, mutual goals and interests, long-term commitments, and observed trust and reliability, all of which are indicative of affinity with one another, must be characteristic of the relations because it is from these extensive cooperative exchanges that loyalty to each other is ultimately reinforced.

3.5.3. Shared Goals and Values

To shed light on the extent of cooperation between Eswatini and Taiwan, the memoranda of understanding serve as a foundation, demonstrating shared goals and values between the two countries. These agreements clearly indicate a mutual commitment to collaborative efforts and partnership, particularly in the sectors of agriculture, education, and health. Despite the contrasting state structures, with Eswatini being a monarchy and Taiwan being a republic, both nations have prioritized developmental cooperation. On his 17th visit to Taiwan in June 2018, His Majesty King Mswati III expressed hope that Eswatini would be able to cooperate with Taiwan in the fields of finance, energy, mining, investment promotion, and aviation (Taiwan Embassy press releases, 2018). There are two noteworthy aspects to consider within this context. Firstly, as a smaller country with a limited economy, Eswatini places significant importance on achieving sustainable development. In line with this, it




highly values the expertise and support provided by Taiwan; thus, collaboration allows Eswatini to benefit from Taiwanese knowledge through skill sharing and through Taiwanese resources, thus enhancing its development efforts. Secondly, Taiwan, being in a unique political situation, seeks international recognition. Eswatini has consistently and unwaveringly provided timely support in this regard. While these goals may initially appear as individual priorities for each state, the crucial point lies in the reciprocal commitment and assurance they have demonstrated toward each other's goals. This underscores the shared values of trust in cooperation, mutual understanding in partnership, and a genuine eagerness to see the goals of the other party succeed.

The previous section has thoroughly accounted for the shared goals and cooperation between Eswatini and Taiwan. In line with this, it is then appropriate to analyze Eswatini's advocacy for Taiwan's recognition within the international community. The code co-occurrence matrix and Sankey diagram derived from the news reports is illustrated below:



Figure 3.8. A Co-occurrence Sankey Diagram Showing the Main Themes That Were Associated With the Mentions of Taiwan’s Recognition From News Reports

Table 3.3. The Code Co-occurrence Matrix Shows the Quotations (""') as Well as the Co-occurrence Themes Associated With Taiwan's Recognition of Numbers

Taiwan advocacy Code co-occurrence Matrix	Taiwan Recognition in international community “9”
 Assurance “23”	7
 Commitment “22”	2
 Promise “15”	5

As shown in the code co-occurrence matrix, the analysis reveals that the issue of Taiwanese recognition was mentioned in a total of 9 quotations within the news reports. Among these quotations, the highest co-occurring code associated with Taiwanese recognition was "assurance," which appeared in 7 instances. Additionally, the codes "promise" (5) and "commitment" (2) were also frequently linked to the topic of Taiwanese recognition. These findings suggest that within the context of discussions surrounding Taiwanese recognition, there is a strong emphasis on assurance. This indicates that Eswatini consistently reassures Taiwan of its support and commitment to advocating for its recognition. The presence of the code "promise" further implies that there is a sense of commitment on the part of Eswatini to actively pursue and uphold the cause of Taiwanese recognition in the international community. In addition to the reassurances, it is worth noting that Eswatini has consistently advocated for the recognition of Taiwan within the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), and with the covid-19 global pandemic and Climate change issues, has advocated for Taiwan to participate in the World Health Organization (WHO) and the UNFCCC. The Kingdom of Eswatini has actively raised the issue of Taiwan's recognition a total of 13 times during the UNGA sessions.⁹ One notable instance occurred during the 77th session of the UNGA on the 21st of September 2022, when His Majesty King Mswati III, in his address, highlighted the importance of recognizing Taiwan:

⁹ This information was taken from the UN Library archives from the UNGA Speeches here [https://digitallibrary.un.org/search?ln=en&cc=Speeches&p=&f=&rm=&sf=&so=d&rg=50&c=Speeches&c=&of=hb&fti=0&fct__2=General%20Assembly&fct__7=Swaziland&fct__8=TAIWAN%20\(CHINA\)&fti=0](https://digitallibrary.un.org/search?ln=en&cc=Speeches&p=&f=&rm=&sf=&so=d&rg=50&c=Speeches&c=&of=hb&fti=0&fct__2=General%20Assembly&fct__7=Swaziland&fct__8=TAIWAN%20(CHINA)&fti=0)

When the world faced the Covid-19 pandemic, it must be noted that no country was spared, which means we all needed to come together to find solutions; unfortunately, Taiwan was unable to access some of the World Health Organization's (WHO) programs and thus implement the remedies that required their approval... we continue to appeal for Taiwan to be considered for full participation in the UN agencies, we are confident that the global village would benefit substantially from Taiwan's meaningful participation in the UN system. The Kingdom of Eswatini calls for the United Nations to make the necessary arrangements for Taiwan to participate significantly in UN-specialized mechanisms and agencies. _ (King Mswati III, heads of state addresses at the 77th session of the UNGA, 2022)¹⁰

It is crucial to also acknowledge that the assurance and commitment displayed in the relationship between Eswatini and Taiwan is not one-sided. In fact, Taiwan has also been reported to demonstrate its own commitment and dedication to upholding its end of the bargain. “Ambassador Tsai promised that Taiwan would continue to support Swaziland in these trying economic times...meanwhile, the King expressed appreciation to Taiwan for its reassurance of supporting Swaziland. “(Kunene, 2011, p.7)

As shown in the previous section of this chapter, the following instances provide evidence of Taiwan's commitment:

- **Implementation of Developmental Projects:** Numerous news reports have highlighted Taiwan's active involvement in implementing developmental projects in Eswatini. These projects signify Taiwan's tangible efforts to contribute to Eswatini's development and showcase its commitment to fostering mutual progress.
- **Scholarships and Youth Ambassadors:** Taiwan's provision of scholarships and sending of youth ambassadors to Eswatini are clear indicators of their commitment to promoting cultural exchange and educational opportunities. These initiatives not only demonstrate Taiwan's investment in Eswatini's youth but also signify their dedication to fostering long-term collaboration and understanding between the two nations.

¹⁰ His Majesty King Mswati III addressed the UNGA during the general debate, where he advocated for Taiwan's recognition for the 13th time <https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1c/k1c3x74djk>.

- **Trade Cooperation:** The signing of the economic cooperation agreement between Eswatini and Taiwan showcases Taiwan's commitment to expanding bilateral trade relations. By establishing the removal of customs duties and tariffs, Taiwan demonstrates its willingness to enhance economic cooperation and mutual benefits.

These examples highlight Taiwan's active participation and commitment in various areas of cooperation, thus reinforcing the notion that the assurance and commitment between Eswatini and Taiwan are mutual and reciprocal. Both countries are invested in the success and growth of their partnership, which further strengthens their bilateral ties and proves the existence of common goals and values in relation to each other.

3.5.4. A History of Positive Relations

As theorists of loyalty in international relations have so eloquently emphasized, the type of interactions among states can either reinforce loyalty or produce enmity (Poulsen 2020: Hirschman 1970). This perspective emphasizes the significance of consistent positive interactions in building trust and fostering loyalty among states. In the case of Eswatini and Taiwan, their enduring relationship exemplifies the notion of reliability through continuous positive engagement with one another. The Kingdom of Eswatini formally recognized Taiwan on the day of its independence, the 6th of September 1968. It is noteworthy that this significant act took place in the same year when the current reigning King of Eswatini was born. This historical alignment symbolizes the depth of commitment and the longstanding nature of their bilateral relations. Further evidence of Eswatini's commitment to Taiwan's recognition can be seen in the words of His Majesty the King. During President Ma Ying-jeou's visit in 2012, at the state banquet held in honor of the President, the King expressed his unwavering support for Taiwan's international recognition. He described the recognition of Taiwan by the international community not merely as participation but as a "reinstatement" of Taiwan's rightful place as a full member of the United Nations (Ngozo, 2018). This statement emphasizes Eswatini's historical perspective, viewing Taiwan as an independent entity separate from the communist People's Republic of China (PRC).

Below is a visual representation in the form of a Sankey diagram, along with a code co-occurrence matrix, which provides insights into the prominent themes closely linked to the longstanding friendship between Eswatini and Taiwan:

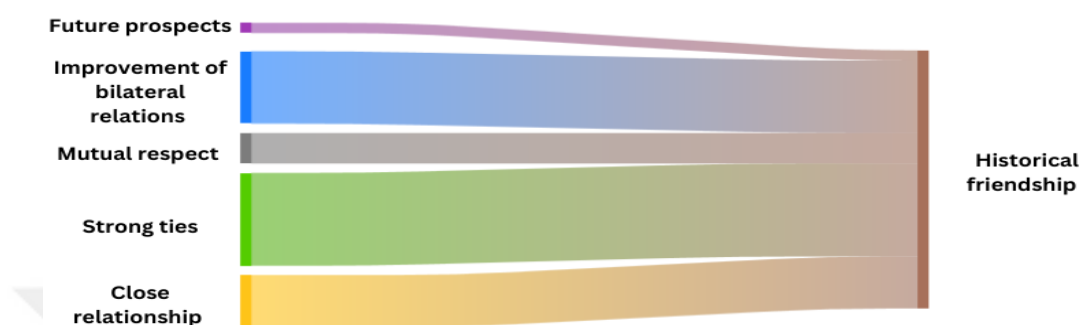


Figure 3.9. A Co-occurrence Sankey Diagram Showing the Main Themes That Were Associated With the Mentions of Historical Friendship From News Reports

Table 3.4. The Code Co-occurrence Matrix Shows the Quotations (") as Well as the Co-occurrence Themes Associated With Historical Friendship in Numbers

Historical friendship Code co- occurrence Matrix	● Historical friendship "47"
● Close relationship "27"	5
● Future prospects "1"	1
● Improvement of bilateral relations "36"	7
● Mutual respect "35"	3
● Strong ties "25"	9

Among the 47 quotations that emphasized the historical friendship between Eswatini and Taiwan, a noteworthy code co-occurrence of 9 for strong ties was observed, highlighting the references to this friendship as a testament to a long-lasting bond. Additionally, the code co-occurrence for the improvement of bilateral relations

amounted to 7, indicating a consistent desire from both sides to keep enhancing their relations. The historical friendship is further characterized by a mutual respect code co-occurrence of 3, showing esteem and high regard for one another. Furthermore, there was a code co-occurrence of 1, suggesting a sense of continuity and future prospects associated with this enduring friendship.

During the 17th state visit of His Majesty King Mswati III to Taiwan in 2018, President Tsai Ing-wen noted that:

This year marks the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Taiwan and Eswatini, the 50th anniversary of Eswatini's Independence, and the 50th birthday of King Mswati III... Through mutual trust and mutual assistance, over the past 50 years, the two countries have developed a long-term cooperative relationship, promoting medical care, agriculture, and education and training programs... when it is time to speak up to support Taiwan's international participation, Eswatini is always by our side... at both the UNGA last September and the World Health Assembly last month, our loyal friends from Eswatini took a stand and spoke up for Taiwan's due rights... (Ing-wen T., official state visit welcome speech, Taiwan Embassy in Eswatini press releases, 2018)

Celebrating a significant milestone of half a century is a testament to the commitment and appreciation that both nations hold for their longstanding friendly relations. This commemoration not only signifies the enduring nature of their bond but also highlights the unwavering dedication of Eswatini to maintaining this diplomatic alliance, despite shifts in international dynamics and changes in presidential administrations in Taiwan. The continuity of this friendship over the years exemplifies Eswatini's steadfastness, consistency, and reliability with regard to Taiwan and reaffirms the nature of the historical ties as being a longstanding bond of positive interactions.

3.5.5. Positive Perceptive Inclinations

The positive perceptive inclinations of states play a crucial role in shaping their interactions and relationships. These inclinations, whether held by states, state actors, or the general public, involve perceiving and viewing each other in a positive light. They hold significant importance for two key reasons. Firstly, positive perceptive inclinations contribute to increased communication and mutual understanding between states. When states perceive each other positively, it creates an environment conducive to open dialogue, cooperation, and the exchange of ideas. This can lead to enhanced collaboration in various aspects such as politics, economics, culture, and security. By

recognizing and appreciating the strengths and contributions of one another, states can find common ground and work towards shared goals. Secondly, positive perceptive inclinations are instrumental in building trust and strengthening affinity among states. Trust is a fundamental element in international relations, as it forms the basis for cooperation, partnerships, and long-term commitments. When states view each other positively, it creates a sense of goodwill, reliability, and even confidence in their interactions. This, in turn, cultivates a foundation of trust and encourages further cooperation and engagement, signaling loyalty to one another. In the case study of Eswatini and Taiwan, the news reports have highlighted the existence of positive affirmations, which serve as indicators of the positive perceptive inclinations between the two countries. Below is a code co-occurrence matrix and Sankey diagram for positive affirmations:

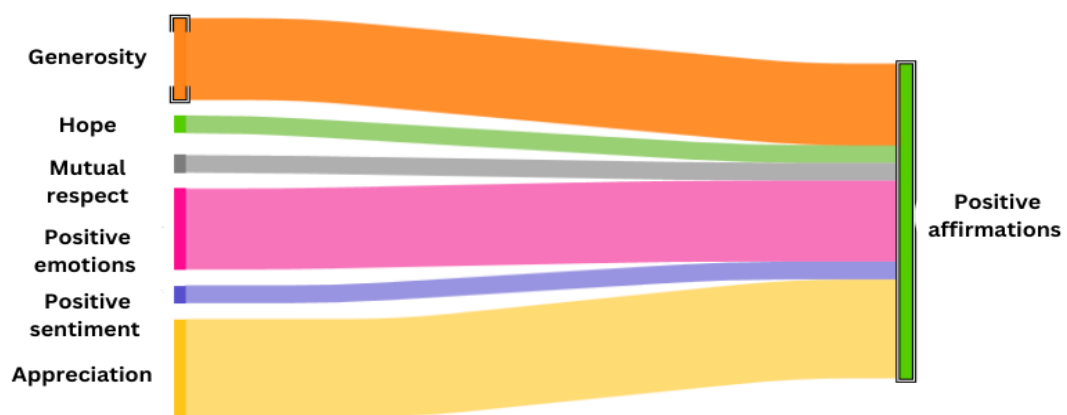


Figure 3.10. A Co-occurrence Sankey Diagram Showing the Main Themes That Were Associated With the Mentions of Positive Affirmations From News Reports

Table 3.5. The Code Co-occurrence Matrix Shows the Quotations (""') as Well as the Co-occurrence Themes Associated With Positive Affirmations in Numbers

Positive affirmations Code co- occurrence Matrix	● Positive affirmations "167"
● Appreciation "79"	11
● Generosity "50"	9
● Hope "20"	2
● Mutual respect "35"	2
● Positive emotions "36"	9
● Positive sentiment "36"	2

The code co-occurrence matrix sheds light on the significant presence of positive affirmations in the news reports concerning interactions between Eswatini and Taiwan. These affirmations, comprising a substantial number of quotations (167), highlight the favorable perceptions and expressions exchanged among a variety of parties involved. Among the positive affirmations, the highest code co-occurrence observed was associated with appreciation (11). This indicates the recognition and gratitude expressed by both sides for the contributions, support, and collaborative efforts extended to one another. Additionally, positive emotions (9) and generosity (9) were prominent themes, reflecting the goodwill and benevolence demonstrated between Eswatini and Taiwan. These sentiments illustrate the empathetic and somewhat compassionate nature of their relations, where acts of kindness and mutual support contribute to fostering a sense of camaraderie and shared values. Furthermore, the co-occurrence of codes such as mutual respect (2), hope (2), and positive sentiment (2) further reinforce the constructive nature of their interactions. These codes signify the regard and esteem shown by both parties towards each other, the optimistic outlook for future collaboration, and the overall positive atmosphere surrounding their engagement. What is significant to note is that these positive affirmations are not limited to official channels or government-level interactions alone but are also evident among community members. This implies that the positive perceptive inclinations extend beyond the realm of state actors and permeate into the wider society, further enhancing the overall bilateral relations between Eswatini and Taiwan. An example of

an exchange between President Ma Ying- jeou and a Swazi textile worker provides insight into the positive sentiments held by the average Swazi person about Taiwan. “Dumsile Dlamini, a textile worker at the Tex Ray textile factory, said shaking the hand of the Taiwanese President was the highlight of her day” (Times of Swaziland,2012, p.9). The abundance of positive affirmations, as revealed by the co-occurrence matrix, means that there exists a favorable perception and a shared commitment to collaboration and mutual benefit. Such positive affirmations contribute to the strengthening of trust, understanding, and affinity between Eswatini and Taiwan, ultimately fostering a solid foundation for sustained cooperation and productive engagement.

3.6. Conclusion

This chapter aimed to present a comprehensive analysis of collected data, including news reports, agreements, memoranda of understanding, trade statistics, and speeches. The objective was to examine various documented interactions between Eswatini and Taiwan and assess their relevance to the five indicators of loyalty identified in this study: frequency of contact, depth of cooperation, shared goals and values, a history of positive relations, and positive affirmations. Through analyzing the co-occurrence of codes and themes, certain insights were able to be generated, which showed the distribution and associations of these interactions. The co-occurrence analyses provided a visual representation of the interconnectedness of different elements within the data. Furthermore, the mere existence of these interactions serves as compelling evidence of loyalty. The frequency of contact between the two nations demonstrates a sustained and consistent engagement, indicating a commitment to maintaining diplomatic relations. The depth of cooperation outlines the main economic activities present within the alliance, which are evident through the various agreements, memoranda of understanding, and trade statistics, and showcase the extensive collaboration between Eswatini and Taiwan in various sectors. The shared goals and values are exemplified by the alignment in areas such as agriculture, education, health, and development, where both countries have demonstrated a mutual commitment to progress, as well as the unwavering support of Eswatini in its advocacy of Taiwan in the international community. The history of positive relations, spanning over half a century, underscores the enduring friendship and loyalty between Eswatini and

Taiwan. Furthermore, positive affirmations from various sources, including government officials, community members, and news reports, reinforce the notion of loyalty. These affirmations reflect a positive perception of the relationship and highlight the trust, mutual understanding, and appreciation that exists between the two nations. Collectively, the analysis of the data provides compelling evidence of loyalty in the Eswatini-Taiwan relationship. The comprehensive examination of interactions and their alignment with the indicators of loyalty reaffirms the hypothesis that loyalty is a key driver of the enduring diplomatic relations between these two nations.



CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

The alliance between the Kingdom of Eswatini and the Republic of China (Taiwan) half a century on served as a reputable foundation to kickstart an academic investigation that fulfilled research aspects that are both systematically inclined and dedicated to a focus on the features of the diplomatic relations that were specific to the case at hand. Ambitious as it may be, the epistemological approach of this dissertation set out to discover the reasons for the two nation's alliance with each other by zooming into their interactions primarily at a unit level of analysis. International Relations as a discipline has displayed a dedicated focus on epistemological approaches that were employed at the systemic- level of analysis, that accounted for all the levels of analysis involved (bracketing) or that sought to develop a metatheoretical approach that bridged both levels of analysis in relation to each other. The starting point of this dissertation, after laying out the most significant theories that have existed in the structure-agent debate in social sciences in general, sought to outline comparatively the most fitting approach to the study as it stands. It follows those contemporary international relations theorists, although only a handful, who have dedicated their time to investigating the recognition of Taiwan in its broader context, have, in their application of the systemic-level analysis or even the bracketing method, identified that states that have recognized Taiwan have more often done so in a trade-off of foreign aid. This explanation has served well in identifying a particular trend in the initial strategic motivations of Taiwan's allies and has held up as we see certain states jumping ship and recognizing the PRC, coinciding with the rise of the PRC as a great power in international relations. The Eswatini- Taiwan diplomatic ties, however, given the shifts in global and even regional trends coupled with the PRC's overtures to Eswatini, and in some cases threats, have withstood the test of time. The historical Analysis of Eswatini's foreign policy gave a window into the initiation of the relations, where the transactional theories applied; the status of the relations, however, in the current global climate, signifies the need for further investigation into the puzzlement of their diplomatic ties.

The unit-level analysis employed as the epistemological approach of this dissertation sought to investigate the intersubjective dimensions that exist within states (usually held by state actors, and in this case, leaders) which inform the decision-making processes in various foreign policy strategies. It supported the assertion made by a few agentic scholars that rationality should not be taken as an innate assumption in foreign policy considerations and that other intersubjective elements of decision-makers, such as beliefs, values, preferences, and perceptions, actually inform the decisions made in foreign policy. Accounting for such elements helps researchers obtain more comprehensive and detailed aspects of especially cases that seem to deviate from the norm.

In line with this approach, this dissertation set out to prove that the endurance of Eswatini- Taiwan relations was attributable to an intersubjective or ideational factor of loyalty between the two nations. To achieve this, the study gathered qualitative data from news reports, official bilateral agreements, speeches, and trade statistics and employed an interpretive approach to extract the indicators of loyalty within the research, as well as an empirical approach that coded the frequencies of the used language and narratives within the collected data. The five indicators which were discovered within the data collected; namely, frequency of contact, depth of cooperation, shared goals and values, a history of positive relations, and positive affirmations, served as the observable variables that displayed loyalty as defined by Lauge Poulsen (2020) and his counterparts. The cooperative activities between the two countries were salient within the data collected to the extent that explicit displays of affective attachments between the state actors of both nations were discovered as well. The analysis of the trading/ economic activities also revealed an aspect of mutual cooperation and mutual benefit, which dispels the aid rhetoric and instead lends to the fact that such economic cooperation has, in fact, strengthened the ties through commitment to uphold each other's interests in the international community, thus reinforcing loyalty. The findings of the research have key implications as far as the alliance of Eswatini and Taiwan is concerned:

- The extensive collaborative activities that exist between Eswatini and Taiwan have not only strengthened the bilateral ties between them but have also

fostered friendly relations that have reinforced the long-term commitments of both sides to each other.

- These collaborative activities suggest that the type of loyalty that exists between these two nations is, in fact, *loyalty as a motive*, as categorized in Poulsen's (2020) theory of loyalty in international relations. Both Eswatini and Taiwan hold a particular collaborative attitude which motivates them to remain loyal to each other.
- These friendly relations seem to be inextricably linked to the endurance or otherwise resilience of the monarchic regime, particularly the Dlamini dynasty within the Kingdom of Eswatini.
- The regional neighbors of Eswatini, especially those in close proximity to her, like South Africa, have not exerted any pressure on the Kingdom of Eswatini to recognize the PRC for the overall good of the region.
- The Kingdom of Eswatini ended any pursuit of strengthening bilateral ties with the great power and friend of Taiwan- the USA, in the 1980s when the Reagan administration rose to power. Since then, no indications or pronouncements of improving relations have existed between Eswatini and the USA.

The above-listed implications have certain conclusions that can be derived about the existing and longstanding ties between Eswatini and Taiwan:

- It is within the interest of the monarch, particularly the Dlamini dynasty, to keep relations between Eswatini and Taiwan unsevered. If the regime is to change in the future, the expectation is that such relations will also disappear, as no dynamics necessary to build loyalty will exist between the new regime and Taiwan.
- Eswatini's pro-Western leaning ended with the disappearance of the threat of the Apartheid government, and now its foreign policy orientations are solely guided by forming pursuing alliances with states that do not criticize the authoritarian, or rather absolutist style of governance that has long phased out of global politics. This dispels any argumentation of Eswatini as seeking to build relations with Western powers such as the USA.

The relevance of this study, quite coincidentally, works hand in hand with its limitations. Conducting research on a small state such as Eswatini has been a tall task given the lack of scholastic works dedicated to especially the political affairs of the Kingdom of Eswatini. Given this sort of limitation, this dissertation's relevance is seen in its attempt to contribute to the limited pool of scholastic research on Swazi foreign policy and political affairs while simultaneously lending a hand to the literature on small-state foreign policy. In addition to this, the emerging global trends such as the potential 'DE- dollarization' of the global market economy on trade brought about by the rise of BRICS, coupled with the high expectations of the outcomes of the PRC's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) which its allies will be privy to, is telling of the context of the Eswatini- Taiwan alliance and draws attention to the fact that this alliance is one to keep track of in this next half of the century.

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