

摘要

在当前大国竞争背景下，认知是推动大国竞争和强化外交政策的重要工具。非洲和中国有着五十多年的长期关系，过去十年间中国深化了与非洲的关系，成为非洲的主要贸易伙伴、双边贷款人和最大的外国投资者。据不完全统计，在近 53 个非洲国家有 1000 多家中国公司，中国对非洲的出口额约为 1130 亿美元，对非洲进口额约 780 亿美元。

除了互利的非中关系之外，对中国在非洲的参与以及中国对非洲大陆的“负面”影响的言论也甚嚣尘上。尽管一些学者认为这些负面观点是在大国竞争的背景下由西方国家刻意创造、渲染出来的。然而，也有一些研究声称中国在非洲的项目多以开发当地自然资源为主，中国运用雄厚的财力发展外交，用债务作为手段与弱国交往，这种言论引发了非洲国家一部分民众的担忧。这些担忧受到西方所炮制的所谓中国的“债务陷阱”论的影响，这种言论认为非洲等弱国无法偿还债务，最终导致“国家的重要资产被没收”，其中涉及到的国家如肯尼亚、赞比亚和乌干达等不同非洲国家。尽管这种说法是空穴来风、子虚乌有，但中国与这些国家的合作协议似乎没有明确规避这一问题，这在一定程度上也加深了非洲民众的焦虑。

尼日利亚与中国在商业、基础设施、经济、贸易和外交等方面的合作已有数十年的历史。由于中国出口额约占双方出口总额的 80%，2021 年尼日利亚的贸易逆差为 11 亿美元，因此尼日利亚民众对于两国贸易不平衡的担忧。据统计，中国向尼日利亚的贷款约 35.9 亿美元，受“债务陷阱论”言论的影响，尼日利亚担心中国可能在尼日利亚违约时接管其国家资产。由于尼日利亚精英阶层实际控制着尼日利亚与中国的关系的发展走向，因此评估尼日利亚精英阶层对此事的看法变得至关重要，需要具体了解他们对华思维和认知。

在全球大国竞争以及中非关系向好发展的大背景下，了解世界对中国的看法至关重要。近年来，由于世界各国对于中国的看法并不一致，中非关系的动态在很大程度上受西方媒体报道的影响，非洲也会转发西方媒体污名化中国的负面报道，这给中非关系的发展造成了严重的负面影响。因此立足于实证的研究来了解非洲民众对中国的看法是至关重要。从研究的路径上来说，这种研究要通过定量

的方式，从个体层面出发收集数据，所针对的对象是能够塑造中非关系的有影响力的个人。

由于尼日利亚在非洲尤其是西非有强大的社会、经济和政治影响力，本文选取了尼日利亚作为案例进行研究。尼日利亚与中国的关系是非洲最大的双边关系之一。此外，本文试图通过尼日利亚的案例为未来非中关系的发展研究提供参考。

本研究回顾了相关文献，梳理总结了中国在非洲实施的项目对中非关系的影响，考察了中非合作的方向，即将建立对外支持作为中非整体合作的一个方面。中非关系是通过谈判与合作建立起来的，过去十年间发展迅速，实现了从消极到积极的转变。但本研究也发现，中非关系的未来充斥着巨大的不确定性。因为中国虽加速在非洲的贸易和投资，却在一定程度上引起了非洲民众的恐慌。非洲的学术界有关“中国试图建立类似西方的新殖民体系”的政治话语已经开始出现。非洲民众也产生了一定程度上的焦虑。可见，学术界或民众会受到西方学者或者西方媒体的影响。

在研究方法上，本文采取了质性研究和量化研究并用的方法，所使用的一手数据是采访尼日利亚精英有关对中国的看法，同时利用二手数据来提供循证研究。该研究能够确定尼日利亚人对中非关系的真实看法，因为受访者被允许从知情的角度表达自己的观点。这些数据清楚地表明了尼日利亚精英在许多领域对中国保持积极看法。

本研究进一步对上述数据进行了描述性分析，并对其进行了解读。研究结果表明，中国在尼日利亚享有高度的积极形象，大多数尼日利亚精英认为，中国对其他国家的内政和治理不感兴趣，中国的崛起被他们视为对中国和非洲的双赢，而西方国家会以自私的议程干涉非洲内政。进一步的调查结果表明，许多尼日利亚精英对中国在非洲的性质和目标表示满意，但同时发现他们对现有双边关系的看法有下降的趋势。第四章还对大多数受访者的恐惧进行了批判性的分析和讨论。

第五章得出了本研究的最终结论，并根据具体情况为学术界和政界提供了建议。整体而言，非洲人对中非关系的看法是积极的。但是，不可否认的是非洲的特定地区的一些精英阶层和普通民众对中非关系的性质和未来发展方向尚存质疑，这些民众受到西方负面舆论的影响，认为现行中非关系中中国与非洲的权力和利

益存在不对称。然而事实表明，非洲经济的腾飞尤其是铁路建设、港口和机场建设、道路建设、教育以及医疗保健服务等领域的发展，均得益于非中关系。中国投入了大量资源帮助非洲进行基础设施建设，同时非洲也为中国提供了石油等原材料，中非之间是互利共赢的关系。

关键词：非洲，非中关系，尼日利亚，精英，认知理论。

Abstract

Aside from the mutually benefitting Africa-China relations, there has been growing suspicion about the engagement of China in Africa and the “negative” impacts on the continent. Although some scholars have argued that this view is propagated by Western propaganda in view of the GPC, some studies suggest that China primarily explores natural resources, applies deep-pocket diplomacy and debt to exploit weaker countries particularly in Africa. These concerns reflect the global perception of the use of ‘debt trap diplomacy’ by China to “confiscate the national vital assets of weaker countries such that there are worries about the possibility of seizures of national assets in different African countries like Kenya, Zambia, and Uganda. Although claim appear fictitious, lack of clarity about China’s agreement with these countries deepens such anxiety.

Nigeria-China relations have spanned for decades in the aspects of business, development cooperation, infrastructure, economic, trade and diplomacy. However, there have been concerns about trade imbalance as China export account is about 80 percent, Nigeria recorded a trade deficit of 1.1 USD billion in 2021. Debt of Nigeria to China is estimated \$3.59 billion; the loan draws great anxiety from Nigerians about China taking over Nigeria’s national assets when Nigeria defaults. It therefore becomes critical for an assessment of the perception of the Nigerians in understanding their views and thinking as it affects this relationship.

In view of the evolving Africa-China relations and the GPC, it is critical to understand China and how it is perceived in Africa beyond the media. Therefore, this study conducted a survey on the perception of Africans on Africa-China relations due to the growing mixed perception about China and the dynamics of its relations with Africa which is largely formed through western media that dominates African media space and creates a negative image of Chinese activities in Africa.

Nigeria was adopted as a case study due to its strong social, economic, and political influence across Africa. Moreover, Nigeria – China relations is one of the largest bilateral relations in Africa thus, the study is significant as it attempts to use the Nigerian case to inform future studies on Africa-China relations.

Study also reviewed relevant literatures to further demonstrate the perception of China relations with Africa the researcher examined direction of Sino- African relations

with negotiable perceptions ranging from negative to positive views on Africa- China relations which has grown exponentially in the past decade but facing great apathy.

The review established that China developed different and to Africa in commercial spheres and accelerate growing of China trade and investment in Africa, have come great anxiety and fear among citizens of Africa, academics and policy makers interest and agenda of China as to neo-colonial system similar to West like to emerged. Study established that a palpable fear is growing in many parts of Africa due to prevailing perception that China is trying to colonized Africa through the back door.

The researcher adopts a mix method in methodology using primary data to answer the question of perception among Nigerians as well as the used of secondary sources of data. The research is able to established the true perception of Nigerians towards China Africa relations as respondent were allowed to freely expressed their views from an informed point.

The analyses of data and the findings of the study shows that China enjoys a positive image among Nigerians as most people viewed China's rising as a win-win game to both Africa and China. One factor that seems to have contributed to this perception of China in among the people is non interest of China in the internal affairs of their allies hence enjoys the positive outcome compared to how many citizens perceived the west as one who is meddlesome in the domestic affairs of Africa with a selfish agenda. The findings further proves that many Nigerians are okay with the nature and goal of China in Africa as their views were to the affirmative of the existing relationship with a negligible percentage descending. However, the fear of the few respondents and the greater majority were critically analyzed and discussed.

Conclusively, chapter five gives a concluding background to the entire study as well as proffer recommendations for both academic and policy makers as the case may be. In summary, the researcher draws a conclusion from the study as relates to perception of Africans on China – Africa relation has been positive and in certain parts of Africa particularly among the elite's class while the common citizens expressed fear and doubt about the nature and goal of China in Africa as many citizens perceiving the relation as a form of colonization by China using different subtle means to capture Africa. Africa economy is great beneficiary to Sino Africa relations as revealed in the study in areas such as railway construction, ports and airport building, road construction, education as well as health care services as China has invested huge resources in

helping build and provide these services to Africa for many years of the existing relationship with Africa providing China with mostly raw materials such as oil among others. Therefore, the Sino-African relations are mutually beneficial.

Key words:

Africa, China-Sino, Nigerian, Relation, perception.

List of Abbreviation

COVID-19 Corona virus

FDI Foreign Direct Investment

FOCAC Forum on China Africa Cooperation

G77 Association of Developing Countries

GDP Gross Domestic Product

GPC Great Power Competition

IMF International Monetary Fund

MOFCOM Ministry of Commerce

NIPC Nigeria Investment Promotion Council

U.S United States

U.N United Nations

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

In transnational relations environment, collective images held by actors affect their collective prospects about the other's gesture and guide the interpretation of the other's conduct. It's argued that the effect of these images is moderated by the degree of sensitivity of the other which is the extent to which it's perceived as an actual entity. Perceptions are told by immediate enterprises and confirmed prospects. Person will perceive stimulus. Scholars argue that perception play critical transnational affair part as it has capacity of change political course and foreign policy (Haksar, 2007).¹ In the surge of great power competition of People Republic of China, United States (US) and Russia, perception remains a tool for promoting GPC for stropping foreign policy.

Africa and China enjoy longstanding relations for over five decades. In the last decade, China has strengthened its relations with Africa and surfaced as Africa's major trading companion, bilateral lender, and one of the largest foreign investors (Reilly, J. 2015). There is an estimate of over 1,000 Chinese companies across nearly 53 African countries, over USD 113 billion worth of Chinese import to Africa and about 78 imports from Africa (French, 2014). In 2006, Nigeria and China worked together on an infrastructure project and concessional oil program in 2011, Nigeria, as China's fourth trading partner in Africa, signed a 2.4-billion-dollar currency exchange agreement in April 2018, valid for three years. In 2019, trade between China and Nigeria reached 19.27 billion dollars (Mumuni, 2017).²

Away from the mutually serving Africa- China relations, there has been growing notion about role of China in Africa has negative impacts to continent. Although some scholars argue that this view is propagated by western propaganda in view of the GPC (Maru, 2019, Pippa & Yu 2019)³. While some studies suggest that China primarily explores natural coffers, applies deep fund tactfulness and debt to exploit weaker

¹ Haksar,2007

² Mumuni,S. M. (2017) China non-intervention policy Africa: principles versus pragmatism.

African journal of political Science and International Relations,11(9),258-273.

³ Maru,2019 pippa & Yu,2019

countries. These enterprises reflect the global perception of the use of debt trap tactfulness by China to expropriate the public vital means of weaker countries (Brautigam & Rithmire, 2021)¹. Also, there are worries about the possibility of seizures of public means in different African countries similar as Kenya, Zambia and Uganda. Although these claims appear fictitious, the lack of clarity about China's agreement with these countries deepens similar fears (Brautigam & Rithmire, 2021, Lumumba-Kasongo, 2011).

Nigeria- China relations have traversed for decades in the aspects of business, development cooperation, structure, economy, trade and diplomacy (Utomi, 2007; Ayoola, 2013)². still, there have been enterprises about trade imbalance as China export account about 80 percent and Nigeria recorded a trade deficiency of 1.1 USD billion in 2021 (Vanguard, 2021)³. Nigeria debt to China estimated \$3.59 billion, the loan draws great anxiety from Nigerians about China taking over Nigeria's public means when Nigeria defaults (Chiejina, 2021)⁴. However, writers questioned purpose of relationship of China and Africa. Alden (2006) said that, Nigeria – China relationship aims to exploit untapped raw materials in Africa, observed in the main event of China prioritizes cooperation and mutual support in energy, new markets, and investment issues. In view of the evolving Africa – China relations and the GPC, it is critical to understand China and its perception in Africa beyond the media. Therefore, it is based on this background that the experimenter sought to conduct a check on the perception of Africans on Africa- China relations using Nigeria elites as a case study.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Mixed perception about China, and the dynamics of its relations with Africa has been largely formed through media reports. Orlander (2016)⁵ and Maru (2019)⁶ argue that Western media dominates Africa and in view of the GPC, it creates a negative image of Chinese activities in Africa. Regardless of this claim, it is important to

¹ Lumumba-Kasongo, Tukumbi. "China-Africa relations: A neo-imperialism or a neo-colonialism? A reflection." *African and Asian studies* 10, no. 2-3 (2011): 234-266.

² Utomi, P. "Nigeria-China in common market." *This Day* (2007).

³ Vanguard, 2021

⁴ Chiejina, 2021

⁵ Orlander 2016

⁶ Maru 2019

construct the perceptions of Africans through evidence-based research. This implies collecting data from influential individuals that shape Africa – China relation understanding state and non – state actors on the subject matter. Investment from China is heavily linked with perceptions on China to Africa countries. Despite the investment of billion dollars in Belt and Road Initiative particularly growing economy, regardless of a major capital investment, construction contract in country, and its weak associated with nation's general opinion of China.

Many Nigerians viewed China rising economy positive for development of Nigeria, while some holds the perception that the buoyant Chinese economy and its presence in Nigeria is not best interest of country. In view of the above problems, study is set to investigate Africans perception on Africa-China relations. Study will adopt Nigeria case study due to its strong social, economic, and political influence across West Africa and Africa. Moreover, Nigeria-China relations is one of the largest bilateral relations in Africa. Thus, the study is significant as it attempts to use the Nigerian case to inform future studies on Africa-China relations.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Study investigates Africans' perceptions of China-Africa relations; the

Nigerian Elites perspective Specifically, study sees on;

1. To identify perceptions of Africans in Africa-China relations;
2. To identify challenges to the Africa-China relations;
3. To proffer solutions to the challenges of Africa-China relations.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Study provides significant information for governments, Nigerian diplomats, stakeholders in business and trade, major Nigerian and Chinese research think tanks, future researchers and the society at large. It is hoped that the findings will help the government to design policies and diplomatic relationship which may enhance the overall wellbeing and mutual economic development of both governments and help policies planners to modify existing agreement where necessary.

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