

An Assessment of Ghana-China Relations (2000-2020): Benefits and Challenges to Ghana.

Abstract

- China's relations with African countries have grown significantly over the last two decades. A large of Chinese nationals have temporarily relocated to various parts of the continent in recent years to engage in trade, mining, and other businesses.
- The limited to no approach on Sino-African relations has created mixed feelings among Africans and especially scholars. A wide range of academic publications on Sino-African relations in recent times have especially focused on the impact of China on African economies.
- The purpose of this study was to examine the challenges and opportunities in Ghana-China relations using realism and liberalism as theoretical frameworks.
- According to the study, local communities and Chinese investors are at odds, while relations between the two governments are improving. However, in accordance with China's realist foreign policy orientation, and despite increasing trade, aid, and investment in Ghana, Beijing has reaped greater benefits.

Findings

- I discussed how Chinese trade imports have resulted in the influx of inferior products, unemployment, and the entrenchment of Ghana's bribe culture.
- Exports are restricted to specific minerals and resources, while imports are unrestricted; automobiles, consumables, fashion, décor, and building materials are among the many products now available in local markets.

- There is a little boost in primary industrial exports in terms of agri-business (farming, fishing). South Africa, Europe and the US remain as Ghana's key trading partners in terms of export destinations, while China remains Accra's strongest import base.

- China's relations with Ghana have resulted in increased bribery and law violations. Engagement is devoid of any ethical compliance. This research looked into how Chinese corporations and individuals defraud Ghanaians through fraudulent activities. Among them are the manufacture of counterfeit textiles, automobiles and machines, hair extensions, footwear, and other consumable products, as well as the deception of the government in illegal mining in Ghana.

- The study suggests that Ghana, like other African nations, is evolving into a Chinese outpost. The disparities in treatment by locals in either setting are explained by a comparison of Ghanaian migrants in China and Chinese migrants in Accra. Accra is overrun with Chinese workers or businesses, whereas many Ghanaian migrants travel to China for educational, vocational, and technical training or business trips. It is well known that China exploits the weak African nations that lack effective local population protection laws.

**Galamsey, a local Ghanaian slang term for illegal small-scale gold mining in Ghana, is derived from the phrase "gather them and sell."

- Chinese investment promotes illegal mining in Ghana. Chinese immigrants frequently come to the Ghana with the intent to mine even though trade accounts for the vast majority of their entry. Even though illegal mining is practiced by citizens of Ghana, illegal mining by Chinese nationals has worsened the situation on "Galamsey" and continues to promote environmental degradation, which is creating havoc and tension in mining communities. There is evidence of crime and robbery in these communities as well.

- Even though Ghana has witnessed many infrastructural developments in industries such as education, entertainment, transport, technology, and health, owing to loans and aid from the Chinese government and corporate businesses, such developments do not transcend to improve livelihoods for the majority of the population. There has been physical development in Ghana, aided by China, but this does not lead to social development in the country.

- China assists Ghana in building its capacity by offering students and state officials in the fields of communication, agriculture, energy, fisheries, and ministry scholarships and other sponsored programs. On the individual and business level, we see improvements in a variety of sectors, which include trading, leisure and entertainment.

- Ghana now has more communication and spends less time traveling thanks to Chinese investment. Two examples from Ghana's Savannah region are the Kojokrom-Eshiem Railway Project and the Fufusu-Swala Road. According to project evaluations, there is a continuous transfer of knowledge and technical skills from China to Ghana during this period of the industrial revolution, as determined by the assessment of knowledge and skills.

Summary

Trade, investment, and aid are at the heart of Ghana's relations with China. China seeks resources, markets, and influence in Ghana. Chinese investment and development assistance is a cover-up for its true intentions to conquer and control. Like the realist, China advocates for its own benefits, and this impact appears to be more negative than positive, just by looking at the social sustainability of Ghana from 2000-2020, not disputing the fact that some opportunities are created for commercial and infrastructural development.

Introduction

- Relations between China and Ghana date back to the mid-twentieth century, when both countries gained independence, Ghana from Britain, and China from Japanese imperialism. The bilateral relationship was initially purely diplomatic, with little commercial activity. Ghana established diplomatic relations with China officially in 1960.
- Ghana and China's modern relationship is based on partnership and mutual assistance with the goal of improving livelihoods. Accra's free market policy and pursuit of technological advancement and innovation are encouraging China's acceptance in mining, land acquisition, market share, and infrastructure development.

- China's share of investment in industries such as retail, commerce, and manufacturing has grown. Despite the excitement surrounding China-Ghana relations, serious concerns have been raised about Beijing's influence and the influx of Chinese citizens in Ghana.
- The primary research goal was to investigate Ghana's goals for orchestrating relations with China, as well as to critically assess the impact of this relationship on Ghana.

Recommendation

Recommendations were made in the areas of research and education, performance, diplomatic advocacy, enactment of policies, behavioral change, and bolstering and empowering both internal and external mechanisms.

- Ghana needs to develop its own economic and environmental development strategy that places a strong emphasis on social sustainability, as opposed to aping western concepts. It is advised that Ghana conduct research and educate the public in order for Ghana to establish a sphere of influence. This will be supported by spending money on statistical data obtained through crowdsourcing in order to use empirical techniques to address problems associated with Chinese development in Ghana.

- Weak management of both domestic and foreign migrants is a result of the limited to nonexistent policy frameworks and laws on migration. The problem itself contains the answer, which is the need for extreme pragmatism in the census and immigration data collection. Ghana must use demographic data to prevent Chinese migrants from overpopulating the nation, just as Nigerians have done.

- The public and corporates should be empowered through resources in audit, control of oversight and policy development. The public must provide such revenue to aid debt financing and adopt a shareholder or sole proprietorship financing of minor infrastructural development.

- In Ghana, a strong sense of patriotism is required. Fighting avarice, bribery, and corruption associated with Chinese businesses require the cooperation of the public and the government.



Methodology

The study adopted a qualitative approach. Data was collected through interviews with purposively selected respondents, along with field observations, archival reviews, and relevant literature. A total of 35 respondents participated in the study. These included academics, market women, members of civil society, and traditional leaders. The aim was to examine how Chinese relations have affected Ghana's development in the areas of governance, trade, aid, and investment.

Bio
Theresa Ayerigah is a Young African Research Fellow from Ghana who works at the Human Sciences Research Council in South Africa's department of Inclusive Economic Development.

She is particularly interested in fashion, diplomacy, and gender. Economic diplomacy, gender justice, regional integration, and peacebuilding are some of her research interests. She is driven to develop a comprehensive continental trade response through effective policy responses and research in both bilateral and multilateral negotiations. Theresa juggles her professional life with her work in fashion and entrepreneurship.

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