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The Impact of China's Expanding Influence on Africa's Regional Politics and Economy: An Appraisal of Nigeria, Mozambique and South-Africa's Experiences

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AZUBUIKE, Callistus Francis
Department of Political Science,
Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka,
Anambra State Nigeria.

EZEAMU, Emmanuel Okwuchukwu
Department of Political Science,
Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka,
Anambra State Nigeria.

CHUKWUMA, Ogonna E
Department of Political Science,
Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka,
Anambra State Nigeria.

Abstract

This research paper interrogated the impact of China's expanding influence on the regional politics and economy of Africa, specifically focusing on Nigeria, Mozambique, and South Africa, through the lens of dependency theory. Using secondary data collection, the paper evaluated the extent to which China's influence on these countries' economies and governance structures has been positive or negative and the implications for their future development trajectories and regional relationships. The findings revealed that Chinese investment has had both positive and negative effects on the selected countries' economies, leading to calls for policies that promote the development of local industries and ensure a more balanced approach to investment. The paper recommends greater transparency and accountability in Chinese investment in Africa, including the establishment of clear standards and guidelines for investment that promote sustainable development, human rights protection, and environmental preservation. The study suggests a framework for monitoring and reporting on the social, economic, and environmental impacts of Chinese investment and engaging in constructive dialogue with Chinese stakeholders to promote responsible investment practices.

Keywords:

Dependency, Super Powers, Beijing Consensus, Economic Development, Regional Politics.

Introduction

China has been rapidly expanding its influence in Africa's regional politics and economy over the past few decades. This has been marked by a significant increase in China's trade, investment, and aid to African countries. China's involvement in Africa has been a subject of much debate, with some arguing that it is beneficial for African development, while others raise concerns about Chinese practices and

Corresponding Author:

Azubuike, Callistus Francis, Department of Political Science, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, Anambra State Nigeria.
Email: cf.azubuike@unizik.edu.ng

their impact on African economies. Nigeria, Mozambique, and South Africa are among the African countries that have experienced China's increasing involvement in their economic and political affairs.

Nigeria is one of Africa's largest economies, and China has been investing heavily in the country's infrastructure development. Chinese investment in Nigeria's transportation sector includes the Abuja-Kaduna railway and Lagos-Ibadan railway. In addition, China has invested in Nigeria's energy sector, with the China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) purchasing a stake in Nigeria's offshore oil fields. However, concerns have been raised about the terms of Chinese loans to Nigeria, with some observers suggesting that the loans could result in a debt trap for Nigeria (BBC, 2018).

Mozambique is another African country that has benefited from Chinese investment. Chinese investment in Mozambique has primarily been in the form of infrastructure development, with China providing funding for the construction of the Maputo-Catembe Bridge, the largest suspension bridge in Africa (Xinhua, 2018). Mozambique has also received Chinese investment in its mining industry, with China's Jinchuan Group purchasing a stake in the Tshikondeni Coal Mine (Mining Technology, 2012). Chinese investment in Mozambique has contributed to the country's economic growth, with Mozambique's exports to China increasing significantly in recent years (Mozambique Embassy in China, 2020).

South Africa is the most industrialized country on the African continent and has strong economic ties with China. China is South Africa's largest trading partner, and the two countries have established several joint economic projects. Chinese investment in South Africa has been primarily in the form of infrastructure development, with China providing funding for the construction of the Medupi Power Plant and upgrading of the Durban Port. China has also invested in South Africa's automotive industry, with Beijing Automotive Industry Holding Co. (BAIC) investing in a new vehicle plant in South Africa (Department of Trade and Industry, 2021). Thus, China's expanding influence in Africa's regional politics and economy has had a significant impact on countries such as Nigeria, Mozambique, and South Africa. While Chinese investment has contributed to these countries' economic growth, concerns have been raised about the terms of Chinese loans and the impact of Chinese investment on local industries. As China continues to expand its presence in Africa, it will be essential to ensure that these investments benefit both China and African countries equally.

Despite these investment efforts, the genuineness and mutual benefit of China's involvement in Africa has been a subject of controversy among scholars. Some believe that this increase in political and economic ties between China and Africa is beneficial to the African continent while others believe that this relationship should be carefully studied and monitored because this could be a Trojan gift, (Brautigam, 2010). One would argue that China's expanding influence in Africa's regional politics and economy has had a significant impact on countries such as Nigeria, Mozambique, and South Africa. While Chinese investment has contributed to these countries' economic growth, concerns have been raised about the terms of Chinese loans and the impact of Chinese investment on local industries. As China continues to expand its presence in Africa, it will be essential to ensure that these investments benefit both China and African countries equally.

To probe this development was what necessitated this study. Therefore, this research aims to analyse the extent to which China's economic and political engagement in Africa has impacted the region's economic growth and political stability, using the experiences of the selected African countries in terms of their engagement with China. Additionally, the study will explore the implications of China's influence on the local industries, governance structures, and foreign policy in the selected countries.

Research Questions

Given the above stated problems, the following questions were put forward for answers;

1. How has China's increasing economic and political influence affected the regional politics and economy of Africa, and what are the specific impacts on Nigeria, Mozambique, and South Africa?

2. What are the factors that determine the nature and extent of China's engagement with Africa, and how have these factors influenced the experiences of the selected countries?
3. To what extent has China's influence on the selected countries' economies and governance structures been positive or negative, and what are the implications for their future development trajectories and regional relationships?

Research Objectives

In order to properly tackle the above questions, we set before us the following objectives;

1. To examine the impact of China's expanding influence on Africa's regional politics and economy, with a specific focus on Nigeria, Mozambique, and South Africa.
2. To identify the factors that determine the nature and extent of China's engagement with Africa and how these factors have influenced the experiences of the selected countries.
3. To critically assess the implications of China's influence on the economies and governance structures of the selected countries, and to provide insights into their future development trajectories and regional relationships.

Literature Review

The rise of China as a global superpower has been an influential force on the world economy and politics. Africa has not been immune to China's increasing economic and political influence. This literature review provides a critical overview of existing literature on the impact of China's expanding influence on Africa's regional politics and economy. The review also identifies the factors that determine the nature and extent of China's engagement with Africa and critically assesses the implications of China's influence on the economies and governance structures of the selected countries.

China's Engagements with Selected African Regional Politics and Economy

China's expanding influence in Africa has been a topic of debate in recent years, with many scholars arguing that China's engagement has had both positive and negative effects on the region's politics and economy. According to Naidu and Singh (2020), China's growing influence in Africa has facilitated the expansion of the African economy, including the creation of job opportunities and infrastructure development. However, there are also concerns about the negative effects of China's engagement, including resource exploitation, corruption, and political instability (Tull, 2017). China's trade with Africa has increased significantly in recent years, making it the continent's largest trading partner. According to the World Bank, China-Africa trade increased from \$10 billion in 2000 to \$190 billion in 2017 (World Bank, 2019). China exports a range of products to Africa, including machinery, electronics, and textiles, while importing natural resources such as oil, copper, and timber.

China's investment in Africa has also been increasing rapidly. According to the China Africa Research Initiative at Johns Hopkins University, China's total investment in Africa reached \$45 billion in 2016, with investments focused on infrastructure, natural resources, and manufacturing (China Africa Research Initiative, 2018). Chinese investments have contributed to the development of infrastructure projects such as roads, railways, and ports in African countries. In addition to trade and investment, China has also been providing aid to African countries. China's aid to Africa is often in the form of concessional loans and grants, which are provided to support development projects in African countries. According to the AidData research lab, China's aid to Africa totalled \$152 billion between 2000 and 2018, making it the largest bilateral donor to the continent (AidData, 2019). China's aid has contributed to the development of infrastructure, health, and education projects in African countries. Nigeria, Mozambique, and South Africa are three countries that have experienced China's growing involvement in their economies and politics. This essay provides an appraisal of these countries' experiences with China's expanding influence, examining China's trade, investment, and aid activities in each country.

In Nigeria, for instance, China's engagement has been characterized by a focus on infrastructure development and energy cooperation (Adesoji, 2019). China has become Nigeria's largest trading partner, with trade between the two countries reaching \$19.27 billion in 2019 (Xinhua, 2020). Nigeria exports oil, gas, and agricultural products to China, while importing machinery, electronics, and other manufactured goods from China. However, Nigeria has been running a trade deficit with China, with the value of its imports from China exceeding its exports to China (NBS, 2021).

China has been investing heavily in Nigeria, particularly in infrastructure projects. Chinese companies have been involved in building roads, railways, and ports in Nigeria. One of the largest Chinese investment projects in Nigeria is the Lagos-Ibadan railway, which was constructed by China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC) (Xinhua, 2020). In addition, Chinese companies have also invested in the Nigerian oil and gas industry, with China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) acquiring a 45% stake in Nigeria's OML 130 offshore oilfields in 2006 (Reuters, 2019).

China has also provided aid to Nigeria, primarily in the form of concessional loans. China has funded several infrastructure projects in Nigeria, including the Abuja-Kaduna railway and the Zungeru hydropower project (Global Times, 2021). However, some analysts have raised concerns about the terms of China's loans, which may impose heavy debt burdens on Nigeria in the long run (BBC, 2018).

On the other hand, Mozambique has benefited from China's engagement through investments in infrastructure and mining (Weng, 2019). China has also become an important trading partner for Mozambique, with trade between the two countries reaching \$1.1 billion in 2019 (Mozambique Embassy in China, 2020). Mozambique exports natural resources such as coal and timber to China, while importing manufactured goods such as machinery and textiles from China. China's investment in Mozambique has primarily focused on the country's natural resources sector. Chinese companies have been involved in mining coal, natural gas, and other minerals in Mozambique. In addition, Chinese companies have also invested in infrastructure projects such as the Maputo-Catembe Bridge, which is the longest suspension bridge in Africa (Xinhua, 2018).

China has also provided aid to Mozambique, primarily in the form of grants and concessional loans. China has funded several infrastructure projects in Mozambique, including the construction of a new airport in the capital city of Maputo (Mozambique Embassy in China, 2020). China has also provided assistance in the areas of agriculture and health.

South Africa has also experienced both positive and negative effects of China's engagement, including the influx of cheap Chinese imports and the acquisition of South African companies by Chinese firms (Taylor, 2018). China is also South Africa's largest trading partner, with trade between the two countries reaching \$42.3 billion in 2020 (Department of Trade and Industry, 2021). South Africa exports minerals such as platinum and iron ore to China, while importing manufactured goods such as machinery, electronics, and textiles from China. China has been investing in various sectors in South Africa, including mining, infrastructure, and manufacturing. Chinese companies have been involved in mining activities in South Africa, with China's Jinchuan Group acquiring a stake in the Tshikondeni coal mine in 2012 (Mining Technology, 2012).

China's expanding influence in Africa's regional politics and economy has also faced criticism. Some argue that China's practices, such as providing loans without proper environmental or social assessments, have contributed to unsustainable development and environmental degradation in African countries. Additionally, Chinese investments have been criticized for their lack of transparency and accountability, as well as for the lack of involvement of local communities in decision-making processes (Brautigam, 2009).

One would say that China's expanding influence in Africa's regional politics and economy has been marked by a significant increase in trade, investment, and aid to African countries. While China's

involvement in Africa has contributed to infrastructure development and economic growth, it has also faced criticism for its practices and impact on African economies. As China continues to deepen its engagement with African countries, it will be important to address these concerns and ensure that its involvement supports sustainable development in the region.

Gap in Literature

Despite the growing body of literature on the impact of China's expanding influence on Africa's regional politics and economy, there are still several gaps in knowledge and areas for future research. One area of such gap is on the impact of China's engagement on the local population, particularly in terms of employment opportunities and the distribution of benefits from Chinese investments. Another area is the impact of China's engagement on local industries and their ability to compete with Chinese companies. To fill these gaps becomes the essence of this work.

Research Methodology

The research design of this study was structured in a case study design, focusing on the impact on the rising global influence of China in the selected African countries of Nigeria, Mozambique and South Africa. The case study approach allowed for an in-depth exploration of the topic, drawing on a range of secondary sources including academic literature, media reports, and government publications.

Theoretical Framework

China's engagement in Africa, particularly in countries like Nigeria, South Africa, and Mozambique, can effectively be understood through the theoretical lens of the Beijing Consensus. This framework represents a departure from the Western-centric Washington Consensus, prioritizing state-led development, social stability, and cooperation over free markets and liberal democracy (Lanteigne, 2018).

State-led development: China's approach to engagement in these African countries often involves direct cooperation with the state, focusing on large-scale infrastructure projects essential for economic development. This aligns with the Beijing Consensus's emphasis on state-led initiatives (Lanteigne, 2018).

Rejection of Western-style conditionality: Unlike traditional Western donors, China typically provides aid and loans without imposing stringent conditions related to governance or human rights. This resonates with African countries, including Nigeria, South Africa, and Mozambique, who can access funding without external criteria (Lanteigne, 2018).

Emphasis on cooperation: The Beijing Consensus prioritizes cooperation over competition. China engages with African countries through partnerships, offering technology transfers and capacity-building initiatives. This cooperative approach fosters long-term relationships in Nigeria, South Africa, and Mozambique (Lanteigne, 2018).

Global strategic objectives: China's involvement in Africa serves its broader strategic objectives, enhancing geopolitical influence and securing access to resources. This aligns with China's goal of becoming a dominant global player (Lanteigne, 2018). There are concerns that Chinese investments may not always align with the development goals of African countries, and that they may lead to a dependency on China. Critics argue that China's engagement in Africa is part of its global strategic objectives and is not necessarily beneficial to African countries. There are also concerns about the impact of Chinese investment on human rights and the environment in Africa (Lanteigne, 2018).

Another theory that can do justice to our research topic is the Dependency theory, propounded by a group of Latin American economists in the 1950s and 1960s, including Raúl Prebisch and Fernando Henrique Cardoso (Amin, 1974). The theory was developed in response to the economic conditions faced by

underdeveloped countries in the post-World War II era, and the failure of traditional development models to address their needs.

In the context of China's expanding influence on Africa's regional politics and economy, dependency theory suggests that African countries are becoming increasingly dependent on China for their economic growth and development. China's investment in Africa's infrastructure, energy, and natural resources has contributed significantly to the economic growth of African countries. However, there are concerns about the dependency of African countries on China and the long-term sustainability of Chinese investment in Africa (Ndulu, 2018). Critiques of dependency theory include the lack of attention to internal factors in underdeveloped countries that may contribute to their underdevelopment. The theory has also been criticized for its emphasis on economic factors at the expense of other factors such as politics and culture. Dependency theory has also been accused of ignoring the agency of underdeveloped countries and portraying them as passive recipients of aid and investment (Amin, 1974).

Impacts of China's Engagements with the Selected African Countries

China's increasing engagements in Africa have also had some positive impacts, including economic growth, infrastructure development, and increased trade. This essay will examine the positive impacts of China's increasing engagements in Africa's regional politics, with a focus on Nigeria, Mozambique, and South Africa.

One of the positive impacts of China's engagements in Africa is the investment in infrastructure development. China has invested heavily in infrastructure development across Africa, including Nigeria, Mozambique, and South Africa. This has resulted in improved transportation systems, such as railways, highways, and ports, which have facilitated trade and economic growth. In Nigeria, China has invested in the construction of rail lines, which will connect major cities and improve transportation (Agbese, 2021). Similarly, in Mozambique, China has invested in the construction of a new port in the city of Nacala, which has increased the country's export capacity (Johannes, 2019).

Another positive impact of China's increasing engagements in Africa is the promotion of economic growth. China has provided loans and investment deals that have led to increased economic growth in many African countries. In Nigeria, for example, China has provided loans to the government that have been used to finance infrastructure development and boost the economy (Oyewole, 2021). This has led to increased job opportunities and improved living standards for many Nigerians. Additionally, China's increasing engagements in Africa have led to increased trade and investment opportunities. China has become a major trading partner for many African countries, including Nigeria, Mozambique, and South Africa. This has led to increased export opportunities and improved access to Chinese markets. In South Africa, for example, China has become the country's largest trading partner, with trade between the two countries increasing by 32% in 2020 (Cronin, 2021). China's increasing engagements in Africa have had some positive impacts on the economic and social development of the region. The investment in infrastructure development, promotion of economic growth, and increased trade and investment opportunities are just some of the examples of the positive impacts of China's increasing engagements in Africa.

On the other hand, China's increasing engagement in Africa has been a topic of debate, with concerns raised about its impact on the political, economic, and social stability of the region. One of the negative impacts of China's engagements in Africa is the potential for debt-trap diplomacy. China has been accused of using loans and investment deals to trap African countries in debt, which then gives China leverage over these countries' foreign policies. This has been observed in Nigeria, where China's loans to the government have increased Nigeria's external debt, which has grown from \$10.3 billion in 2015 to \$27.6 billion in 2020 (Oyewole, 2021). This has led to concerns about Nigeria's ability to pay back these loans, with the potential for China to exert influence over Nigeria's foreign policies.

Another negative impact of China's increasing engagements in Africa is the impact on local industries. China's import of raw materials from Africa, coupled with the export of finished goods, has led to the decline of local industries. This has been observed in Mozambique, where the influx of Chinese goods has led to the decline of local textile industries (Amado, 2020). This has resulted in job losses and reduced economic growth, as the country becomes more dependent on imports.

Also, China's increasing engagements in Africa have led to concerns about human rights violations. China has been criticized for its poor record on human rights, and there are concerns that this could be exported to Africa. This has been observed in South Africa, where there have been concerns about Chinese companies violating labor laws and environmental regulations (Burns & Naidu, 2021). This has resulted in protests and calls for tighter regulation of Chinese investments in the country. In conclusion, China's increasing engagements in Africa have had negative impacts on the political, economic, and social stability of the region. The potential for debt-trap diplomacy, the impact on local industries, and concerns about human rights violations are just some of the examples of the negative impacts of China's increasing engagements in Africa. It is essential that African countries take steps to mitigate these negative impacts and ensure that their relationships with China are mutually beneficial.

Factors that Determine the Nature and Extent of China's Engagement with Africa

One of the primary factors that influence China's engagement with Africa is economic interests. China has a significant demand for natural resources, and Africa has an abundance of these resources, making it an attractive market for Chinese investment. As noted by Akingbade and Zeng (2021), China has invested heavily in Africa's infrastructure, including roads, railways, and ports, to facilitate the transport of resources.

Another factor that determines China's engagement with Africa is its geopolitical interests. China has been seeking to expand its global influence, and Africa provides an opportunity for it to do so. As stated by Shinn and Eisenman (2018), China has been pursuing a "soft power" approach in Africa, including providing aid, investment, and trade agreements, to strengthen its ties with African countries.

Cultural ties also play a role in China's engagement with Africa. China and Africa have a shared history of colonialism and anti-imperialism, which has created a sense of solidarity between the two regions. Additionally, China's focus on mutual respect and non-interference in internal affairs resonates with African countries, which have been subjected to external interference in the past (Akingbade & Zeng, 2021).

Domestic politics also influence China's engagement with Africa. As noted by Taylor (2021), China's leadership seeks to present a positive image of the country to its citizens, and engagement with Africa provides an opportunity to do so. China's involvement in Africa is often portrayed as a way to promote South-South cooperation and as an alternative to Western models of development.

Lastly, China's engagement with Africa is influenced by the individual African countries' policies and preferences. African countries have agency in their relationships with China and can negotiate the terms of engagement. As noted by Manji and O'Coill (2018), African governments have increasingly demanded more significant local content and job creation in Chinese investments. In conclusion, China's engagement with Africa is determined by a complex set of factors, including economic interests, geopolitical considerations, cultural ties, domestic politics, and African agency. It is essential to understand these factors to evaluate the implications of China's engagement with Africa.

The Impact of China's Engagement on the Local Population in the areas of Employment Opportunities and the Distribution of Benefits from Chinese Investments

In this part, we will examine the impact of China's engagement on the local populations in Nigeria, Mozambique, and South Africa. In Nigeria, Chinese investments have played a significant role in the

country's infrastructure development. For example, China has financed and built a number of major infrastructure projects in the country, including the Abuja-Kaduna railway and the expansion of the Lagos-Ibadan expressway (Oyebode, 2019). These projects have created significant employment opportunities for local workers. However, Chinese companies have also faced criticism for bringing in their own workers, limiting opportunities for local employment (Ighobor, 2021). There have also been concerns about the environmental impact of Chinese investments in Nigeria, particularly in the oil and gas sector (Oyebode, 2019).

In Mozambique, Chinese investments have focused on the energy sector, with Chinese companies investing in the construction of a number of major power projects, including the Mphanda Nkuwa dam and the Tete coal-fired power plant (McIntyre, 2018). These projects have created significant employment opportunities for local workers, particularly in the construction and operation of the power plants. However, there have also been concerns about the environmental impact of these projects and their long-term sustainability (McIntyre, 2018).

In South Africa, Chinese investments have focused on a range of sectors, including mining, energy, and infrastructure. Chinese investments in the country's mining sector have led to the creation of employment opportunities for local workers, although concerns have been raised about the exploitation of these workers and the impact on local communities (Chikowore, 2016). Chinese investments in the country's energy sector have also created employment opportunities, with Chinese companies investing in renewable energy projects such as wind and solar power (Lin, 2019). However, there have been concerns about the distribution of benefits from these investments, with some arguing that the benefits have primarily gone to Chinese companies and their shareholders rather than to the local population (Chikowore, 2016).

One would argue that, China's engagement in Nigeria, Mozambique, and South Africa has had a significant impact on employment opportunities and the distribution of benefits. While Chinese investments have created significant employment opportunities in these countries, there are also concerns about the distribution of benefits and the impact on local communities and the environment. It is important for policymakers and stakeholders to work towards a more balanced and equitable approach to investment to ensure that Chinese investments contribute to sustainable economic growth and development in these countries.

The Impact of China's Engagement on Local Industries and their Ability to Compete with Chinese Companies

China's engagement in Africa has also had an impact on local industries in Nigeria, Mozambique, and South Africa. In Nigeria, Chinese companies have invested in a range of sectors, including manufacturing, construction, and telecommunications. Chinese investments in the manufacturing sector have created competition for local industries, particularly in the textile and garment industries (Ogunkoya & Famutimi, 2020). Local manufacturers have struggled to compete with Chinese imports, which are often cheaper and of a higher quality. In the construction sector, Chinese companies have also competed with local firms for contracts, leading to concerns about the impact on the local construction industry (Adegbite, Ayadi, & Adetula, 2020). In the telecommunications sector, Chinese companies such as Huawei have been successful in winning contracts to build and maintain telecommunications infrastructure in the country, further increasing Chinese influence in the sector (Fajana, 2018). In Mozambique, Chinese investments have focused on the mining and energy sectors, with Chinese companies investing heavily in coal and natural gas projects (McIntyre, 2018). This has created competition for local industries, particularly in the manufacturing sector, which has struggled to compete with Chinese imports. In addition, Chinese companies have been accused of taking advantage of weak regulatory systems and engaging in practices such as illegal logging and fishing (Berman, 2019).

In South Africa, Chinese investments have also had an impact on local industries, particularly in the mining and manufacturing sectors. Chinese investments in the country's mining sector have led to concerns about the exploitation of workers and the impact on local communities (Chikowore, 2016). In the manufacturing sector, Chinese imports have created competition for local industries, particularly in the clothing and textiles sector (Tshishonga & Bhorat, 2019). However, there have also been instances of Chinese companies partnering with local industries, such as in the automotive sector, where Chinese companies have invested in joint ventures with local firms (Tshishonga & Bhorat, 2019). In conclusion, China's engagement in Nigeria, Mozambique, and South Africa has had a significant impact on local industries, creating competition for local firms and leading to concerns about the ability of local industries to compete with Chinese companies. While there have been instances of Chinese companies partnering with local industries, there is a need for policies that promote the development of local industries and ensure a more balanced and equitable approach to investment.

Summary of Findings

The impact of China's expanding influence on Africa's regional politics and economy is a complex and multifaceted topic, and our appraisal of Nigeria, Mozambique, and South Africa's experiences reveals some key findings.

1. Firstly, China's engagement with African countries has been driven by its economic interests, particularly its quest for natural resources and new markets. This has led to significant Chinese investment in infrastructure and natural resource sectors, which has created both opportunities and challenges for the local population and industries.
2. Secondly, while Chinese investment has created some employment opportunities, there are concerns about the quality and sustainability of these jobs, as many are low-skilled and low-paying. Additionally, there are concerns about the distribution of benefits from Chinese investments, with some arguing that Chinese companies have focused on extracting resources rather than contributing to local development.
3. Thirdly, Chinese investment has had an impact on local industries, affecting their ability to compete with Chinese companies. This has led to calls for policies that promote the development of local industries and ensure a more balanced approach to investment.

Finally, China's expanding influence on Africa's regional politics and economy has also had implications for regional dynamics and power relations. Some argue that China's growing influence has undermined Western influence in Africa, while others argue that it has led to a more multi-polar and diverse global order. Overall, the impact of China's expanding influence on Africa's regional politics and economy is complex and multifaceted, and our appraisal of Nigeria, Mozambique, and South Africa's experiences underscores the need for a nuanced understanding of these dynamics.

Conclusion

In conclusion, China's expanding influence on Africa's regional politics and economy has significant implications for both China and African countries. China's quest for natural resources and new markets has led to significant Chinese investment in infrastructure and natural resource sectors, creating opportunities and challenges for the local population and industries. The impact of Chinese investment on employment opportunities and the distribution of benefits has been a source of concern, with calls for policies that promote the development of local industries and ensure a more balanced approach to investment. Chinese investment has also affected the ability of local industries to compete with Chinese companies. Additionally, China's growing influence has had implications for regional dynamics and power relations. A nuanced understanding of these dynamics is needed to ensure that Chinese engagement with Africa is mutually beneficial and contributes to sustainable development in the region.

Recommendations

Based on our research, we recommend the following:

1. There is a need for African countries to adopt a more strategic approach to engagement with China, particularly in negotiating investment deals that promote sustainable development and ensure the equitable distribution of benefits. This could involve working collaboratively at the regional level to strengthen bargaining power and leverage, as well as investing in the development of local industries to boost competitiveness and diversify economies.
2. African countries should prioritize the development of their own governance structures and institutions to ensure that Chinese investment aligns with their own development priorities and does not undermine local sovereignty. This could involve investing in capacity building and training for government officials and civil society groups to effectively negotiate and monitor investment deals.
3. There is a need for greater transparency and accountability in Chinese investment in Africa, including the establishment of clear standards and guidelines for investment that promote sustainable development and ensure the protection of human rights and the environment. This could involve establishing a framework for monitoring and reporting on the social, economic, and environmental impacts of Chinese investment, as well as engaging in constructive dialogue with Chinese stakeholders to promote responsible investment practices.

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Authors' Biographies

Azubuiké, Callistus Francis is a Lecturer in the Department of Political science Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka Anambra State Nigeria. He holds M.Sc. in Political Science (International Relations) from Nnamdi Azikiwe University. He is currently concluding his PhD programme in Political Science (International Relations) at Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University (COOU), Igbariam, Anambra State. He has a strong research background in International Political Economy, Global Conflicts, Migration and Refugee related issues and Elections and Corruption on Africa's Political Dynamics. In addition to his research contributions, Azubuiké Callistus Francis is actively engaged in teaching and mentorship roles, educating the next generation of teachers, researchers, political thinkers and scientists.

Ezeamu, Emmanuel Okwuchukwu is a lecturer in the department of political Science Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, Anambra state. He has M.sc in political science (government and politics) at the Nnamdi Azikiwe university Awka, Anambra state. He is currently doing his PhD program in the same Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka with a strong interest in the legislative oversight. Ezeamu Emmanuel Okwuchukwu is actively engaged in mentorship and promotion of good governance in the society.

Chukwuma, Ogonna Ebenezer, is currently a lecturer in the Department of Political Science, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. He holds a Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) and a Master of Science (M.Sc.) Degrees in Political Science with Public Administration as an option which he obtained from Nnamdi Azikiwe University. Presently he is pursuing a Doctorate degree in the same discipline and institution. He equally has a knack for researches on topical issues with public administration background, as well as those on government and politics.