



JÖNKÖPING UNIVERSITY

*School of Education and  
Communication*

# Perceptions of Chinese influence in Sub-Saharan Africa

Case studies of Uganda  
and Tanzania

**COURSE:** *Examensarbete I Globala studier, 15 hp*

**PROGRAMME:** *Internationellt arbete – Globala studier*

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**SEMESTER:** *VT 2018*

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## **Abstract**

With China having established close political and economic ties with Sub-Saharan Africa, the image of China on the African continent has become drastically more important for the success of the Sino-African relationship. The paper seeks to gain an understanding of how Africans perceive China and Chinese influence in Sub-Saharan Africa through a comparative analysis of two case studies, Uganda and Tanzania. The paper focuses on the perceptions and opinions which exist today among the African population, but the historical aspect of the relationships is also discussed in order to gain a more nuanced picture. The results of the paper reveal that the two case studies are very similar to each other, with the largest difference being their history with China, which in the end did not have any greater impact on the results. While China is generally regarded as a good ally who furthers development on the continent, the Chinese in Africa are perceived more negatively.

## **Introduction**

In present-day, China occupies a major role in the development of Sub-Saharan African countries as a result of having established strong ties with the continent both through grants to African governments and through direct foreign investments targeting the continent. At a country level China was in 2015 Africa's largest trading partner, a significant increase from being Africa's eight largest trading partner in 2000. The total value of trade in goods between China and Africa increasing from 7,3 billion USD in 2000 to 135,9 billion USD in 2015. To put it into perspective, India was Africa's second largest trading partner in 2015 with the total value of trade in goods estimated to be 51,1 billion USD (African Development Bank, OECD Development Centre, United Nations Development Program 2017, p. 76). China's major involvement and influence on the continent has led to a number of different perspectives and views on the China-Africa relationship. Critics argue that the relationship is not mutually beneficial and that the Chinese interest in Africa lies in the continents natural resources. China also stands accused of weakening African industries and manufacturers by exporting cheap and low-quality goods to African countries. Critical voices have drawn parallels between the SinoAfrican relationship and imperialism. Others harbor a more positive view on the relationship, arguing that it leads to benefits for both parties and that the relationship brings development to the African continent (Mlambo, Kushamba & Simawu 2016 p. 258). With China occupying such a significant role on the continent, it is therefore relevant to study how Africans perceive China and its involvement in Africa.

## **Research Purpose**

To examine how Chinese influence, investments, and migrants are perceived in Sub-Saharan Africa.

## **Problem Statements**

- What perceptions and opinions exist among the Sub-Saharan African population concerning China and Chinese influence in Sub-Saharan Africa?
- What possible similarities and differences concerning the perception of China and Chinese influence can be found?

## **Method**

The paper will examine the perceptions and opinions on China and Chinese influence in Sub-Saharan Africa that exists among the African population through a comparative analysis of two case studies, with the two countries that have been chosen as case studies being the East African countries of Uganda and Tanzania. The significant amount of Chinese investments and influence in both countries discussed in the “Results” segment of the paper serves as the justification for the choice of cases, as is the broad amount of relevant data and information found concerning the two countries’ relationship with China compared to other East African countries, for example Kenya or Burundi. Furthermore, both countries are classified as “hybrid regimes” with a score of 5 to 6 in The Economist Intelligence Unit’s (EIU) Democracy Index (2017), indicating that both Tanzania and Uganda have a higher level of democracy than some of their neighbours in East Africa, for example, South Sudan or Burundi. It may be difficult to pinpoint and number the exact “amount” of democracy a country possesses, however, the score and label which the two countries chosen as case studies have received from the EIU highlights the similarities between the democratic situations in Tanzania and Uganda.

While the paper will focus on the modern relationship between China and the two case studies, the historical aspect of the relationship will also be discussed in order to provide nuance and a historical background for the subject. The history which the two countries chosen as case studies have had with China is also a factor that greatly distinguishes them from each other, due to this, the paper will also seek to find out how this aspect has influenced the perceptions of China harbored by Ugandans and Tanzanians.

The case studies presented in the article can both be considered as descriptive case studies, where the opinions and perspectives on the Sino-African relationship among the African population are disclosed in the results, bringing an answer to the “what” questions which are stated in the “Problem Statements” segment of the paper (Yin 1984). Furthermore, they can be seen as explanatory case studies, answering the “why” questions presented in the previously mentioned Problem Statements, in the case of this article by examining the underlying reasons behind the perceptions of China and Chinese influence in Sub-Saharan Africa which are held by the Sub-Saharan African populace (Yin 1984). The article is structured as a multiple-case design with two different case studies examined. Herriott & Firestone (referred to in Yin 1984 p. 45) reasons that a multiple-case design is more compelling, resulting in the study being regarded as more robust contrary to utilizing a singular-case design.

The data will be retrieved from previously written scientific literature and publications on the subject matter, previous case studies on the subject, relevant news articles, and existing statistics and surveys related to the specified cases. The scientific literature that will function as basis for data collecting will be derived from peer-reviewed articles retrieved from research databases such as ProQuest Central and SAGE Journals. These articles have been evaluated by individuals which possess the required competence in the relevant field of work, thus granting them the status of “peer-reviewed”, due to this one can be reasonably ensured that said articles can be considered as reliable sources of information. The study will also contain other relevant sources of information, such as well-known books on the subject matter, which are generally held in high regard when it concerns the topics which are discussed in said books, for example, *Case Study Research: Design & Methods* by Yin (1984) or *Comparative Government and Politics* by Hague & Harrod (1982). Furthermore will the study source information from some of the largest news organizations operating in the two countries chosen as case studies, while one can not entirely ensure the reliability of these sources in the same way as one can ensure the reliability of the peer-reviewed articles used for this paper, they will not play a major role in the data gathering but rather be used as a way of giving further background to aspects which are discussed in other sources of information used for this paper.

Due to the broad use of different sources of data for this paper, thus giving a more “complete” view on the subject rather than a select few which in turn might lead to a more one-sided and less elaborate study, one can reasonably ensure that it fulfills the criteria of reliability, future studies on the topic should lead to similar results as long as they are focused on the same period of time as the paper. Furthermore can the results disclosed in the paper be considered as fulfilling the criteria of validity, due to the reliable and relevant sources of data used for the study.

The collected data will be analysed through a comparative study where the two specified case studies are compared and analysed with each other. The purpose of this comparative analysis is to examine possible similarities and differences in the data collected from respective case study. The justification for the choice of utilizing a comparative approach when analyzing the subject is that said approach offers a broader understanding of the chosen subject, furthermore, does it enable the testing of a hypothesis, for example, if one, specified phenomenon always leads to the another specified phenomenon (Hague & Harrod 1982) Lastly, the use of a comparative approach enables us to draw future predictions related to the subject which the comparative study focuses on, for example, if the paper concludes that the two Sub-Saharan African countries chosen as case studies have major similarities with each other when it comes to how it's citizens view China and Chinese influence, one can assume that a third and similar African country should exhibit said similarities too, this will complement future research on the subject since it eases the ability to predict the results of said future study (Hague & Harrod 1982). The *Most Similar Systems Design* (MSSD) approach will be utilized in the comparative analysis, this implies that the two cases that are being compared with each other are as similar as possible in order to keep the extraneous variables as constant as achievable (Anckar 2007) Since the two case studies are extraneously similar to each other, the scientific approach of the paper is more solid than it would have been if the two chosen cases would have showed very few similarities

with one another, for example, if the two countries chosen as case studies would have been Uganda and Canada, which in many ways greatly differ from each other.

## **Previous Research**

Selected previous research and data will act as a basis for the comparative study, this research will be presented in the respective case studies and in the “Results” segments of this paper.

Previous research has been made in the field. Earlier research has covered the China-Africa relationship and the different opinions surrounding it, showing that there exists both negative and positive views on Sino-African relations. Critics argue that the relationship can be considered a form of neo-colonialism or imperialism. That the relationship is purely beneficial for China and that the Chinese interest in Africa is motivated by the continents natural resources is a stance held by critics, while those that are in favor of the China-Africa relationship argue that it is beneficial for both sides and that it is an important factor in furthering the development on the continent (Chen 2016) (Mlambo, Kushamba & Simawu 2016). One study concludes that while the west is more skeptical about the China-Africa relationship, Sub-Saharan African countries generally view the relationship more positively, viewing China as a trade partner (Sigalla 2014). The authors of a study published in 2017 which purpose was to examine the African public’s view of the aid which Africa receives from China by analyzing the results from surveys carried out by Afrobarometer concluded that the view that exists among the African public was generally positive (Donglin & Zhen’er 2017). The study also concludes that the level of democracy in a country has an impact on public perception, with citizens of countries with a higher level of democracy having a more positive view of Chinese aid, furthermore the size of the aid received did not have a significant impact on how it was perceived by the African public (Donglin & Zhen’er 2017).

China recognizes the importance of having a positive image in African countries and not being seen as the sole benefactor of the Sino-African relationship, but that the relationship instead is perceived as beneficial for both parties, furthermore, the Chinese interest in Sub-Saharan Africa is not solely motivated by economic gain but also in gaining Africa’s support for both its domestic and foreign agendas (Zhang, Wasserman & Mano 2016). The President of China Xi Jinping declared on March 30 2013 after finishing a tour to three African countries (South Africa, The Republic of Congo, and Tanzania) that:

China will continue to uphold the principle of peace, development, cooperation, and mutual benefit, and dedicate itself unswervingly to safeguarding world peace and promoting common development [...], no matter how the international situation will change, China is always Africa’s all-weather friend and partner [...], I have a very deep feeling that Africa is a continent full of vitality and hope [...], China-Africa cooperation has great potential and bright prospects. (Xi Jinping 2013)

## ***Chinese media influence in Kenya***

One study published in 2016 examined the perceptions of Chinese influence in the Kenyan mediasphere among the Kenyan populace. Kenya being the only African country which hosts the headquarters of four Chinese media organizations, *China Daily*, CCTV, Xinhua News

Agency, and China Radio International (Mwangi & Zhang 2016 p. 73). A sample size consisting of 201 respondents were asked questions concerning their opinions on the medial influence which China has in Kenya. The authors concludes that the perception among Kenyans is that Chinese media in Kenya offers a positive and constructive narrative on African affairs which differs from the Anglo-American media coverage of the continent, which is often perceived as being overly negative (Mwangi & Zhang 2016 p. 78). However, there exists a belief that Chinese media expansion on the African continent is a way to further China's own goals, 39% of the respondents believed that the media expansion was to promote Chinese business interests, 34% believed that the purpose was to promote friendly relations between China and Africa, and 16% viewed the expansions purpose as being entirely self-promotional, furthermore, 8% of the respondents believed that it aimed to fill a critical gap which the Western media sphere has neglected (Mwangi & Zhang 2016 p. 75).

### ***Perceptions of Chinese immigrants in Southern Africa***

The author of the article *Perceptions of Chinese in Southern Africa: Constructions of the "Other" and the Role of Memory* concludes that Chinese migrants residing in Lesotho are commonly viewed unfavorably by the local population due to the involvement of several factors, Chinese migrants have outcompeted the local small business owners, in some cases through illicit means, a desire from the Lesotho government to retain and attract more Chinese migrants have also resulted in a lack of regulations being enforced on migrants further fueling anti-Chinese sentiments among the local populace (Park 2013). The results of the article reveals that Chinese migrants are perceived more favorably in South Africa contrary to Lesotho, the author argues that this is rooted in the fact that while there is a large number of Chinese migrants in the country, they belong to the smallest minority group in South Africa contrary to Lesotho, where they represent a much larger minority (Park 2013). Additionally, the author argues that the long historical presence of the Chinese in South Africa has had an impact on why they are perceived more favorably by the South African populace as opposed to Lesotho, which has only had a brief history with Chinese migration (Park 2013). Wasserman (2012) concludes in his article *China in South Africa: Media Responses to a Developing Relationship* that the SinoSouth African relationship is portrayed neither as starkly positive or starkly negative in the South African media but that the South African mediasphere instead harbors a more cautiously optimistic and balanced viewpoint on the relationship between China and South Africa. Furthermore does Wasserman (2012) state that the Sino-African relationship is not entirely black-and-white but instead highly complex and that it can not be categorized as either entirely "good or "bad".

### ***Previous research on beneficial Chinese contribution to Uganda and Tanzania***

Other research has focused on China's investments and relationship with the two specified countries chosen as case studies for this paper. One study concludes that while Chinese enterprises contributes to the Ugandan economy the extent of these benefits differ between enterprises operating in different sectors. Chinese enterprises involved in manufacturing and construction, and enterprises involved in gas, oil energy sectors were the most beneficial for the Ugandan economy while Chinese enterprises involved in the wholesale sector contributed the least to the Ugandan economy (Warmerdam & van Dijk 2013a p. 290). The enterprises that had

a higher grade of contribution also employed a larger workforce resulting in a higher grade of employment opportunities for Ugandans (Warmerdam & van Dijk 2013a p .290).

The author of a study published in 2014 came to the conclusion that the relationship between China and Tanzania has had beneficial effects on Tanzanian society. Data disclosed in the study revealed that Chinese investments in Tanzania led to more employment opportunities than investments from other countries, this as a result of Chinese investments being largely focused in the labor-intensive manufacturing sector (Sigalla 2014). Though the author notes that it is important for Tanzania to be pragmatic in pursuing its goals by giving due weight to its own national interests and to critically identify its comparative advantages with China in the pursuit of promoting a competitive advantage amongst Tanzanians (Sigalla 2014). Another study arrived at a conclusion supporting the notion, that Chinese investments generate beneficial effects for the Tanzanian economy. Foreign investments such as Chinese vehicle repair garages generates benefits for the local economy in the form of a transfer of technology and the creation of employment opportunities for Tanzanians (Kinyondo & Chatama 2015).

### ***Theoretical Outsets***

#### ***The historical absence of China in Uganda: How does it affect perceptions?***

One theory that is accounted for in previous research in the field is that Uganda's limited ties with China during the Mao era in the 1970s has impacted the people of Uganda's views, perspectives and knowledge on China and the Sino-African relationship (Shen & Taylor 2012 p. 698). Uganda did not establish as strong ties with China during this period contrary to Uganda's neighbouring countries Tanzania and Sudan. The eight year rule of Idi Amin which ended in 1979 was a major factor in the lack of relations between China and Uganda during this time period. Idi Amin's reign led to a conflict between Uganda and China's strong ally Tanzania, Amins anti-Asian sentiments also resulted in the expulsion of Asian traders from Uganda (Otiso 2006 p. 17). Due to this young Ugandans have a lesser grade of historical experience with China and Chinese people than citizens of other African countries which have had much stronger historical ties with China (Shen & Taylor 2012 p. 698).

#### ***The impact of local cultural values***

In 2016 a study was carried out where 20 Ugandan journalists with Baganda descent participated with the purpose of examining their views on China and Chinese migrants. The authors of the study came to the conclusion that native cultural values greatly impacted how Africans perceive China and Chinese involvement in Africa. The study made several links between the answers from the participants in the study and cultural values held by the Ganda culture which the participants originated from. The reclusive and isolating nature of Chinese migrants in Uganda clashed with the openness and embracement of diversity within the Ganda culture. Another example displayed in the results of the study is that the participants did not see the authoritarian political system of China as something that they considered problematic, the authors of the study connected this to the authoritarian values and respect for clan leaders held by those of Baganda descent (Chang & Ren 2016). The results of the study displays a theory that native cultural values plays a crucial role in how China and the Chinese are perceived in Africa and thus cultural values should be taken into consideration when studying the topic.



### ***Centre-Periphery Model***

This theory takes as its point of departure two of the most glaring facts about the world: the tremendous inequality, within and between nations, in almost all aspects of human living conditions, including the power to decide over those living conditions; and the resistance of this inequality to change. The world consists of Center and Periphery nations; each nation, in turn, has its centers and periphery. (Galtung 1971)

The Centre-Periphery Model is a spatial metaphor which purpose is to explain the relationship between a developed “centre” and less developed “periphery”. This model can be applied to a relationship between two different countries or the relationship between a centre and a periphery within one country. The centre of a Centre nation might establish itself within the centre of a Periphery nation, granting the Centre nation power and influence over the Periphery nation, this resulting in a disharmony of interest between the two nations. This can be referred to as Imperialism (Galtung 1971). The Centre-Periphery Model and the notion of Imperialism will function as a theoretical background in this paper and as a guideline in determining if Africans view the China-Africa relationship as a source of disharmony of interests between the two parties or if the relationship furthers the goal of “escaping” the less developed “periphery”. While it might be difficult to strictly imagine a line which a country has to cross in order to be able to be considered a “centre” society, one can approach this query with the viewpoint that if the individuals in question believe that something brings development and great positive change to a country they would also see it as a way of “escaping the periphery”, in this case it would be if Sub-Saharan Africans believe that the Sino-African relationship brings development and positive change to Africa. Furthermore, if the results of the paper reveal that there is a widespread belief among Africans that the Sino-African relationship is negative for Africa and that it results in the previously mentioned “disharmony of interests” in a significant way, one can reasonably assume that the belief in the two countries chosen as case studies would be that China will not be of any greater assistance when it concerns the idea that Sub-Saharan African countries will one day be considered as “centre” countries. However, it is important to clarify that the usage of this theory will not result in a definitive answer concerning if Sub-Saharan African countries will in the future be classified as “centre” countries due to their relationship with China, instead it aims to examine if that is the general opinion among Africans or not. With the usage of this theory, one can establish a general view on the topic of Sino-African relations and in which direction the relationship brings Sub-Saharan Africa as perceived by Africans, if it will move Sub-Saharan Africa away from the periphery and into the centre or if it will remain in the periphery.

The motivation for the choice of using the Centre-Periphery Model is due to the way it explains a society’s development, from being classified as belonging to the “periphery” to being seen as a centre nation, the power relations between a centre and a periphery society, and the influence which one society can exert on another society, in the case of this study, focus lies on the development and power relations as perceived by Africans. China itself is an example of the ability for one society to “climb the ladder” and move away from the status of being a periphery country and become a centre or semi-periphery one (Grell-Brisk 2017). While some might consider China as a semi-periphery country, in the context of its relationship with Sub-Saharan Africa and if the economic and political influence which China wields is compared with the

influence which are held by said countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, one can classify them as a nation belonging to the “centre” Furthermore, does China’s rise show that the possibility to ascend from the status of periphery society is very real, thus should a similar leap in Sub-Saharan Africa be theoretically possible.

### ***The Historical Context***

The historical aspect of China’s relationship with the two specified case studies will be presented in order to be able to gain an understanding on how the relations between China and the two countries selected as case studies have developed throughout the years. While the Sino-African relationship goes further back than what is presented in this paper, this segment will focus on the last century since that time period has been deemed as relevant for the purpose of this study. It is important to gain a historical context on the Sino-African relationship since several factors throughout the specified time period has made an impact on the state of the relations between China and the two case studies today.

### ***China and Tanzania: Historical Context***

In 1961, Tanganyika, the sovereign state that would eventually become Tanzania became the tenth African country to recognize the People’s Republic of China (Bailey 1975 p. 39). The Zanzibari revolution in 1964 later resulted in an increase in Chinese influence on the island of Zanzibar which would later merge with Tanganyika and form a union. In the mid 1960s, the Tanzanian government opted for a socialist path of development which in turn led to an increase in resentment and hostility between Tanzania and the West. Due to this change in policies, Tanzania began to search for other external sources of assistance and China showed itself as willing to offer aid to the country. In 1964, an agreement was signed which granted Tanzania Chinese aid, and a trade agreement between China and Tanzania was signed in February 1965, furthermore, a Chinese Economic and Commercial Mission was in 1966 opened in Dar es Salaam (Bailey 1975 p. 40). The president of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere said on a state visit to Beijing in 1968 that the purpose of his visit to China was to attain knowledge about “The Chinese model of development”, which he had exhibited great interest in, Chinese influence also resulted in Nyerere opting to lead Tanzania in an increasingly socialistic path of development, which he had previously been suspicious of since he considered socialism as something that was being practiced in non-African countries (Bailey 1975 p. 42).

### ***The TAZARA railway***

Perhaps one of the most well-known cases of Chinese contribution in Tanzania is the TAZARA railway. Built between 1970 and 1975, the 1865-kilometer long railway linked the port of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania with the town of Kapiri Mposhi in Zambia with the purpose of ending landlocked Zambia’s dependence on Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and South Africa by giving the country an alternative option for coastal access (Monson 2013 p. 47). The construction of the TAZARA railway had a total cost of 401 million USD (Kinyondo & Chatama 2015 p. 30). Estimations reveal that approximately thirty to forty thousand Chinese railway laborers and about twice as many African laborers were employed during the construction of the TAZARA railway. During the early stages of the project, the unskilled manual work were for the most part carried out by African laborers while the Chinese laborers focused on the technical aspects

of the project, however, one of the main objectives of the venture was to educate African personnel so they could maintain the railway after its completion (Monson 2013 p. 50). While both Zambian and Tanzanian workers participated in the construction and management of the TAZARA railway, Tanzanian employees were more inclined to stay in employment for a greater period of time than their Zambian counterparts which resulted in them developing closer interpersonal relationships with their Chinese mentors from whom the Tanzanian employees were taught Chinese and other skills (Monson 2013 p. 54). The TAZARA railway is generally regarded as China's first large-scale venture on the African continent, additionally, the construction of the railway served as a blueprint for future large-scale Chinese projects in Africa; state-backed financing structured as long-term loans, a large influx of Chinese migrants functioning as an imported workforce, and the solitary use of Chinese designs and materials for the project (Rohr-Garztecki 2017 p. 129).

### ***Other historical Chinese projects in Tanzania***

China also assisted in financing the construction of the Tanzania National Stadium, construction started in 2004 and the 60,000-seater complex was finished in 2007 with the Tanzanian government financing 53 percent of the total cost of 43,5 million USD while the remaining 43 percent was financed through a soft loan offered by China (Chatama & Kinyondo 2015 p. 30). A more contemporary example of Chinese economic assistance bequeathed to a Tanzanian construction project is the 62 million USD which China pledged to Tanzania in February 2018, the investment would finance the construction of a university catered to the transport sector which is estimated to greatly increase the number of professionals in the Tanzanian aviation industry (The Citizen 2018).

### ***China and Uganda: Historical Context***

While a Sino-Ugandan relationship has existed for over 50 years, Uganda did not establish as strong ties with China during the 1970s segment of the Mao era as Tanzania did during the aforementioned period. While Sino-Tanzanian relations flourished in the 1970s the relationship between China and Uganda came under pressure during the same period due to several factors. The eight year-rule of Idi Amin which commenced with a coup in 1971 had a significant impact on the Sino-Ugandan relationship. Idi Amin expelled Asian traders residing in Uganda in a bid to transfer their economic power to Ugandan citizens, furthermore did Idi Amin's reign result in the ignition of war between Uganda and China's strong ally Tanzania (Otiso 2006 p. 17). These events led to a rift between China and Uganda which stunted the development of the Sino-Ugandan relationship. Sino-Ugandan relations later improved in the 1980s after the downfall of Idi Amin's rule and showed similarities with the Sino-Tanzanian relationship years prior. During a meeting that took place in 1989 between the President of Uganda Yoweri Museveni and the President of China Deng Xiaoping, Museveni praised Deng's reforms of China and the country's economic development (Shen & Taylor 2012 p. 698). The foreign minister of China during the period 1998 to 2003 Tang Jiaxuan writes in his memoir *Heavy Storm & Gentle Breeze: A Memoir of China's Diplomacy* (referred to in Shen & Taylor 2012 p. 698) that Museveni acknowledged that Uganda's own economic reforms were inspired by the China Model.

## ***Results***

The current state of the relationship between China and the two specified case studies will be presented, this includes recent developments in trade, investments, politics, and migration. The purpose of this segment is to display the Sino-African relationship in its current form, contemporary developments related to the subject will function as a factual basis to what is being presented in the next segment.

The perceptions and opinions on China and Chinese influence in Sub-Saharan Africa which are held by Africans will be presented in order to be able to bring answers to the problem statements.

### ***China and Tanzania: Present-day***

Over the past decade Tanzania has established unprecedented levels of trade and investment links with China, the total trade value surged to approximately 2.6 billion USD in 2014. China is additionally the third largest customer of the Tanzanian export industry with roughly 13 percent of Tanzania's total exports absorbed by China, mineral and precious metals being the foremost export commodities (Haile 2017 p. 4). Tanzania's other main exports to China include dried seafood, logs, and raw leather (Chatama & Kinyondo 2015 p. 31). In 2017 the Tanzanian newspaper The Citizen (2017) reported that the total volume of trade between China and Tanzania had reached a value of 4.6 billion USD. As stated by the Chinese Business Chamber in Tanzania in an article published by The Citizen in 2012 (referred to in Sigalla 2014 p. 68), the main focus of the Chinese enterprises operating in the country lies in construction, agriculture, and service sectors, and by the end of 2011 over 400 Chinese enterprises were active in Tanzania with 20,000 Chinese migrants operating in the country.

### ***Chinese entrepreneurship in Tanzania***

Chinese entrepreneurs in Tanzania have ventured into the textile industry as well as established auto-garages, for customization and body-repair of vehicles, Chinese investors also operate in the construction and real-estate sectors (Sigalla 2014 p. 68). Chinese traders import low-cost goods from China and resell them on the Tanzanian market, common goods sold by the Chinese in Tanzania include electronics, clothes, previously used vehicles and bicycles, and construction materials (Sigalla 2014 p. 71). The access to capital from Chinese state-owned banks and the access to low-cost labor and building materials are considered reasons behind the successfulness of the Chinese enterprises operating in Tanzania (Sigalla 2014 p. 69). The cheap but low quality wares sold by Chinese companies in Tanzania are also preferred by the low-income African population due to the low price point, giving those with limited funds the ability to own commodities which they otherwise might not have been able to afford (Sigalla 2014 p. 75). Chatama & Kinyondo (2015) concludes in their paper Impact of China's Cooperation: The Case of Chinese Garages in Tanzania that Chinese ventures in Tanzania creates employment opportunities for Tanzanians and that they often serve as a stepping-stone for locals to start their own businesses with the knowledge and skills which they have gained under the tutoring of Chinese employers.

## China and Uganda: Present-day

Before the Chinese economic reform in 1978, and especially the economic reforms that took place during the 1990s, the Sino-Ugandan relationship predominantly centered around Chinese economic aid projects in Uganda, however, the aforementioned reforms resulted in an increase of commercial activities by Chinese companies in Uganda (Warmerdam & van Dijk 2013b p. 284). As stated in an issue of the Ugandan journal *New Vision* published in March 7, 2012 (referred to in Warmerdam & Van Dijk 2013b p. 283) approximately 265 enterprises with Chinese origin have settled down in Uganda during the 20 years prior to 2012, furthermore the President of Uganda Yoweri Museveni claimed that China emerged as Uganda's largest investor in 2010 (Warmerdam & van Dijk 2013b p. 283).

### ***Chinese entrepreneurship in Uganda***

The results of a survey made in 2012 where interviews with 42 Chinese enterprises operating in Uganda were carried out showed that the companies that participated in the survey were predominantly involved in four sectors: wholesale, construction, import for retail and wholesale, and manufacturing (Warmerdam & van Dijk 2013a p. 273). The results of the previously mentioned survey also revealed that the main motivation for migrating to Uganda given by the interview subjects was the country's market potential while the second most popular answer was the opportunity to be a participant in a Chinese government-funded project (Warmerdam & van Dijk 2013a p. 273).

A significant amount of Chinese expatriates in Uganda are active in the wholesale business, selling cheap but low quality goods to the local populace. The results of a survey commissioned by the Uganda Investment Authority and the Federation of Uganda Employers (referred to in Seruwagi 2012) revealed that out of 150 Chinese enterprises originally licensed as investors, 65 had turned to wholesale and retail sale. Common goods sold by Chinese retailers in Uganda include: electronics, textiles, hardware, spare parts, and ladies accessories (Warmerdam & van Dijk 2016 p. 137).

## Tanzanian opinions on China and the Chinese

### ***The Afrobarometer survey***

In a survey conducted by Afrobarometer (2014) where 2,386 adult Tanzanian respondents were asked questions concerning their opinions on China and the Sino-Tanzanian relationship, 40 percent considered China as the foreign country with the largest influence on Tanzania, followed by the United States at 31 percent. Afrobarometer is an African-led, non partisan survey project which purpose is to measure opinions among African citizens concerning governance and democracy, civil society, economics, and other topics.

When asked about their opinions on China's economic development assistance and if it meets Tanzania's needs, 51 percent answered that it does a "somewhat good job" or a "very good job", 18 percent answered it does a "somewhat bad job" or a "very bad job", and 14 percent perceived it as doing neither a good or bad job. Finally, 15 percent of the respondents chose that they do not know and one percent answered that China does not give development assistance to Tanzania (Afrobarometer 2014).

Furthermore, did 70 percent of the respondents believe that the economic and political influence on Tanzania exerted by China was either “somewhat positive” or “very positive”, followed by “somewhat negative” or “very positive” at nine percent, and “neither positive or negative” at eight percent. Finally, 13 percent answered that they do not know (Afrobarometer 2014). Urban-rural residence had a slight impact on the results with 77 percent of respondents residing in an urban area perceiving the Chinese economical and political influence on Tanzania as “somewhat positive” or “very positive” while 67 percent of the respondents residing in a rural area it as “somewhat positive” or “very positive” (Afrobarometer 2014). As concluded by Afrobarometer (2014), the ratio of those harboring positive perceptions of Chinese influence in Tanzania is somewhat less strong among participants of an age of 65 or older and those less educated, however those possessing positive perceptions still represents the majority of the respondents belonging to the two previously mentioned groups.

When asked about which country the respondents believe should serve as a role model for Tanzanian development a majority at 35 percent answered China, followed by the United States at 30 percent (Afrobarometer 2014).

When asked about which factor the respondents believed primarily provided them with a positive image of China, 31 percent answered “China’s business investments” followed by “The cost of Chinese products” at 22 percent, and at third place came “China’s investment in infrastructure in the country” (Afrobarometer 2014). “An appreciation for Chinese people, culture and language” only received two percent (Afrobarometer 2014). The low percentage of respondents selecting this answer might imply that the Chinese migrants in Tanzania themselves are not necessarily seen as a major positive factor on China’s reputation in the country. Similarly when asked about which factor which contributes the most to a negative image of China in Tanzania three percent answered “The behavior of Chinese citizens in the country” (Afrobarometer 2014). A study by Sigalla (2014) gives weight to the sentiment that the perceived behavior of the Chinese tarnishes China’s image in Tanzania, rude behavior and the usage of abusive language are two phenomena which are commonly associated with Chinese citizens in Tanzania according to the study. However the perceived behavior of the Chinese migrants in Tanzania could be considered insignificant compared to the two major factors contributing to a negative image of China according to the respondents of the survey, “The quality of Chinese products” at 37 percent and “Taking jobs or business from the locals” at 20 percent (Afrobarometer 2014). The study by Sigalla (2014) also confirms that there exists a widespread Chinese stereotype among Tanzanians which associates Chinese migrants in Tanzania with the production and sale of low-quality commodities, the market being flooded with cheap Chinese products together with a high media coverage on China related issues are key factors for why China is highly present in the mind of Tanzanians.

#### ***What do Tanzanians think of their Chinese coworkers?***

The findings of a study by Boness, Mayer & Louw (2017), where Chinese and Tanzanian employees of a private Chinese organization in Tanzania were interviewed in order to explore their opinions on intercultural collaboration revealed that the communication style of the Chinese employees was marred with shouting and abusive behavior. Furthermore, there was a

belief among some of the Tanzanian respondents that the top management of the organization prioritised results over the employees with the support which the organization provides to its staff members being perceived as less than desired (Boness, Mayer & Louw 2017 p. 4-5). The Chinese staff members also put a heavy emphasis on putting work before building interpersonal relationships culminating in a lack of bonding between workers at the organization, several Tanzanian respondents valued interpersonal relationships at the workplace highly, a sentiment which according to them is not shared by their Chinese colleagues (Boness, Mayer & Louw 2017 p. 6).

However the Chinese employees were also seen as hard-working and efficient though occasionally prone to as the respondents articulate it “overworking” (Boness, Mayer & Louw 2017 p. 6). As expressed by one Tanzanian respondent from the Boness, Mayer & Louw (2017 p. 6) study:

When they mean to do something, finish something, they mean it. They work day and night sometimes just to make sure that thing is done. Or if there are other projects we need to win, they work really hard. They make Africa go up in terms of technology issues. We are going high in technology because of them. (CSO department employee 2017)

Chinese migrants are also seen as knowledgeable in their field of work and their greater expertise provides a learning opportunity for the Tanzanians who are employed at the same workplace as them, furthermore, they are seen as very punctual with a clear emphasis on the priority of actually working during the work hours and not using the time for something that is unrelated to the task at hand (Sigalla 2014). Chinese entrepreneurs in Tanzania are additionally perceived as honest and reliable towards their customers and employees, partly due to the notion that salaries from Chinese employers are always sent out on time (Sigalla 2014).

Correspondingly to the results of the Afrobarometer (2014) survey there existed a perception among the Tanzanian respondents that positions that could be filled with local Tanzanians instead were given to Chinese migrants, one interview subject believed that the ratio of Chinese migrants being employed by the organization was unequally high if compared with the ratio of Tanzanian employees (Boness, Mayer & Louw 2017 p. 5) Another Tanzanian respondent felt that positions that were vacant due to Tanzanians leaving the organization was being filled with Chinese “foreigners” instead of locals (Boness, Mayer & Louw (2014).

Tanzanian respondents also expressed a concern regarding a perceived absence of knowledgesharing between them and the Chinese supervisors, this resulting in Tanzanian employees having to acquire knowledge from other external sources (Boness, Mayer & Louw 2017 p. 5). One of the respondents mentions a scenario where he inquires assistance from a Chinese supervisor concerning a certain task which he has no prior experience with, his inquiry results in the supervisor informing him that no one there is able to teach him what he requires and that he instead should be self-taught (Boness, Mayer & Louw 2017 p. 5). Furthermore was there a perceived unwillingness from the Chinese employees to socialize with their Tanzanian workmates, and that they instead choose to segregate themselves which according to the Tanzanian respondents lead to a lack of transparency between them and the Chinese employees at the organization, some Chinese respondents did in turn claim that they discerned a lack of

interest in sharing knowledge from the Tanzanians and that they encouraged information transparency through weekly assemblies (Boness, Mayer & Louw 2017 p. 5, 8). The notion that Chinese migrants segregate themselves and avoids the local population is somewhat contradicted by the previously mentioned study by Sigalla (2014), the study claims that the Chinese residing in Tanzania are generally well-integrated due to learning the language quickly and living in residential areas where the local populace also live, such as Kinondoni and Buguruni, there also exists an interest from the Chinese to cooperate with Tanzanians and venture into joint projects with them. Sigalla (2014) claims that the Chinese expatriates commonly integrate easier than their counterparts from other Asian states and the West.

### ***Perceived corruption in Tanzania related to Chinese projects***

According to a study by Brazys, Elkind & Kelly (2017) there existed a higher grade of perceived corruption related to Chinese projects in Tanzania compared to projects by the World Bank. The perceived level of corruption was higher among Chinese “other official flows” (OOF), projects which are defined as official sector transactions that do not uphold the official development assistance criteria (ODA), this includes grants which are given to developing countries with the purpose of furthering commercial or representational activities (OECD 2018). The authors of the study theorizes that China’s strict non-interference outlook in providing development aid and investments in Africa regardless of the state of human rights or governance in a recipient country contribute to a higher grade of perceived corruption, while China might not directly engage in corrupt practices they might not monitor or interfere when an official connected to one of their projects does due to their policy of non-interference (Brazys, Elkind & Kelly 2017). The non-interference stance might also result in a lack of promotion and enforcement of anti-corruption measures by the Chinese, resulting in a higher grade of perceived corruption due to its implication that the Chinese “do not care” about corrupt practices connected to their projects.

## **Ugandan opinions on China and the Chinese**

### ***Perceptions on Chinese immigrants working in Uganda among working Ugandans***

Similarly to Tanzania, there exists a sentiment in Uganda that Chinese migrants are “stealing” employment opportunities from local Ugandans and that they are directly competing against local businesses. In 2011, a strike was carried out by Ugandan shopkeepers operating in the capital Kampala, the strike was a reaction to an increase in fuel and commodity prices, a foreign exchange rate deemed unstable, but also as a reaction to an increase in competition from Asian traders conducting business in the city (Shen & Taylor 2012 p. 708). As previously mentioned in the survey conducted by the Uganda Investment Authority and the Federation of Uganda Employers (referred to in Seruwagi 2012), many Chinese investors had turned to petty trade and wholesale activity in the country thus violating the restrictions of their Ugandan visa, this caused an uproar from local traders who perceived it as unfair business practices. The flooding of the market with cheap and low-quality goods by the Chinese led to a decrease in business prices among local enterprises, Chinese migrants were also accused of hoarding dollars which they sent back to China causing a negative impact on the exchange rate in Uganda (Warmerdam & van Dijk 2016). Similar demonstrations took place in April 2017, where hundreds of Ugandan shop owners participated in a march in Kampala protesting the influx of Chinese traders in the



city, the protesters claimed that the Chinese retailers and wholesalers engaged in unfair competitive practices due to them being able to offer cheaper goods than their Ugandan counterparts, partly due to tax rebates which they are able to receive from the Chinese government and venturing into petty trade without the proper registration (Athumani 2017).

The notion that the Chinese residing in Uganda face hostility from the local population is something which many Chinese immigrants living in the country are aware of themselves. 42 Chinese companies participated in a survey conducted in 2012 by Warmerdam & van Dijk (2016) with the purpose of examining the companies business practices in Uganda and what kind of hardships they face by operating in the country. When asked about what problems which they have experienced in Uganda, 27 percent responded that they felt an “increasing sense that Chinese are not so welcome”, however the responses with the highest percentage were “getting visas for Chinese workers” at 72 percent and dealing with corrupt officials at 55 percent (Warmerdam & van Dijk 2016 p. 141).

The notion that Chinese immigrants are “stealing” work opportunities from locals was further perpetuated in a study by Shen & Taylor (2012) where 500 urban Ugandans in the ages of 18 to 30 were asked questions regarding their perceptions of the Sino-Ugandan relationship and the Chinese, the study received 462 valid results from the sample with a valid ratio of 92,4 percent. The authors of the study motivates their choice of Kampala as the main area of the investigation due to its economic importance for the country and the high number of Chinese immigrants residing in the city (Shen & Taylor 2012 p. 701). 36,2 of the respondents believed that their own future job prospects were being threatened by the influx of Chinese enterprises and workers in the country, furthermore did 38,6 percent of the respondents state that they felt that “Chinese workers have taken away Ugandans jobs”, there was a correlation between the respondents who expressed negative opinions towards China and those who expressed that their future employment opportunities were under threat by the Chinese (Shen & Taylor 2012 p. 708). 63,5 percent of the participants in the Shen & Taylor (2012 p. 707) study also believed that Chinese enterprises operating in Uganda were more competitive than their local counterparts whereas 20,6 percent considered Ugandan enterprises as more competitive than the Chinese.

Similarly in a study by Nassanga & Makara (2016), where 916 articles published by the Ugandan newspapers *Monitor* and *New Vision* in order to examine perceptions on the Sino-Ugandan relationship and Chinese influence in Uganda revealed that there was a growing concern that a large number of contracts were given to Chinese enterprises instead of locals resulting in a lack of job opportunities for Ugandans.

### ***Does Chinese companies mistreat Ugandan workers?***

Concerns related to the mistreatment of Ugandan workers by their Chinese employers were raised in several articles discussed in the study by Nassanga & Maraka (2016 p. 33). An article by *Monitor* (2014) states that Ugandan staff employed by the Chinese National Offshore Oil Company (CNOOC) have lodged complaints related to the perceived mistreatment and suppression from the company, nepotism, low wages, and being denied leave even though

similar requests were granted for their Chinese colleagues were issues brought up in two separate documents written by Ugandan staff at CNOOC.

In early 2018, Ugandan road laborers working on a road construction project in the region of Karamoja accused their Chinese supervisors of gross mistreatment, according to an article by *Monitor* (2018a), the accused Chinese company which the construction had been contracted out too subjected their employees to beatings and harsh conditions. Complaints had been lodged to local elected leaders, which according to the accusers had turned a blind eye towards the perceived mistreatment, quoting one of the affected workers: “we do not know what our leaders have got from these Chinese because they are not bothered to help even if you go and complain to their offices” (Monitor 2018a). Another complainant claimed that workers who fall sick or suffer injuries are forced to continue their work in order to avoid having their employment terminated (Monitor 2018b).

While one might classify these reports of mistreatment as isolated incidents, it shows that there exists several cases of perceived mistreatment and abusive behavior from Chinese supervisors and coworkers among Ugandans.

### ***General opinions on China and Chinese immigrants in Uganda among Ugandans***

In order to gain further knowledge on how the Chinese are perceived by Ugandans one can once again look at the study by Shen & Taylor (2012 p. 709), the respondents of the study were asked whether they liked Chinese people in general, a majority (42,7 percent) answered that they did whereas 23,1 expressed that they did not. Furthermore, did 42,8 percent respond that they wished to meet a Chinese person whereas the amount of respondents which explicitly stated that they did not wish to meet a Chinese person being 13,3 percent (Shen & Taylor 2012 p. 709). 71 percent of the respondents primarily associated China’s image in Uganda with “economic cooperation” (Shen & Taylor 2012 p. 706).

In the already mentioned study by Chang & Ren (2016) where journalists in Uganda were interviewed in order to provide their opinions on China and the Chinese residing in Uganda the perceived closed-minded and self-isolating nature of the Chinese immigrants in the country were a major negative factor in how the participants viewed the Chinese. The respondents in the Chang & Ren (2016 p. 197) study claims that the Chinese residents in Kampala avoid contact with local Ugandans and that they reside in areas which are for the most part populated with other Chinese immigrants, and that they furthermore show a disinterest in learning the local languages. Quoting one respondent:

It’s said there’re over one million Chinese in Africa today – thousands of them just in Kampala. But I’ve rarely seen them in the malls, in the restaurants or on the streets. They only eat at restaurants run by Chinese. It’s difficult to interview Chinese people because they either reject your requests or are very reluctant to talk in the interview. ... I find it hard to understand why Chinese people don’t want to blend with outsiders. (Chang & Ren 2016 p. 197)

The Nassanga & Makara (2016) study found that in 154 (43 percent) out of 361 articles which reflected the Sino-Ugandan relationship described the relationship as beneficial for Uganda while 103 (28 percent) described it as being solely beneficial for China and 104 (29 percent) implied that it brought benefits to both parties. Out of those who perceived Uganda as the beneficiary, the majority (122, 79 percent) were local journalists, while 54 (52 percent) of those who framed the relationship as being beneficial for China cited foreign sources (Nassanga & Makara 2016 p. 30).

China was portrayed in neutral terms in a majority (407, 45 percent) of the examined articles, followed by 327 (36 percent) which portrayed China positively, and 177 (19 percent) which framed China in a negative way (Nassanga & Maraka 2016 p. 31). A majority (199, 45 percent) of the articles published in the partially government-owned newspaper *New Vision* portrayed China in a positive way contrary to 128 (27 percent) of the articles published in the private-owned newspaper *Monitor* which portrayed China in a similar way (Nassanga & Maraka 2016 p. 32). A majority of the articles which framed the Sino-Ugandan relationship positively were centered around diplomatic relations, other common topics were grants given by China to Uganda, Chinese trade, and Chinese projects, several stories covered China's generosity in giving economic aid to African countries (Nassanga & Maraka 2016 p. 32). Numerous articles framed China as a inspiration concerning successful agricultural development with one article possessing the headline "Ugandans still have a lot to learn from China" (Nassanga & Maraka 2016 p. 32). The notion that Uganda should model themselves after China was further perpetuated in the study by Chang & Ren (2016), where several respondents expressed that they believed that Uganda (and Africa) should aspire to "follow China's path" and emulate it's path of development for in order to achieve faster economic growth.

Shen & Taylor (2012 p. 707) found that a majority (67,9 percent) of the respondents participating in their study either agreed or strongly agreed to the notion that a "good economic relationship existed between China and Uganda", furthermore were approximately half of the respondents (51,4 percent) in agreement to further open up the Ugandan market to Chinese products.

***The motives behind Chinese support and investments, as perceived by Ugandans: Does China support dictatorships?***

However, when the respondents participating in the Shen & Taylor (2012 p. 707) study were asked if they believed that "extracting our natural resources is the main motive of Chinese engagement in Uganda", 26,8 percent agreed whereas 17,9 percent of the participants firmly disagreed. Comparingly, the viewpoint that China is a predator or neo-colonialist did resonate well with a large majority of the participants in the Chang & Ren (2016) study, where many saw it as a notion invented by the media in the West and forced onto Africans. There existed some conflicting views between the respondents partaking the the study by Chang & Ren (2016), while the older respondents generally did not resent the Chinese authoritarian political system, some of the younger participants (all below the age of 30) raised critical voices concerning the support which China gives to non-democratic African regimes and leaders, which in turn worsens the already inadequate democratic situation in certain countries. One

respondent brought up criticism related to a perceived export of media censorship from China to African countries:

CCTV does a better job covering African issues in a fair and balanced way than BBC and CNN. Yet there's a fundamental flaw: it is completely silent on China's domestic political issues many Africans are very interested in. I think that's really stupid. ... Regrettably, some African governments are modeling their media censorship on China's example. (Chang & Ren 2016 p. 196)

China's non-interference policy, which is brought up in the Brazys, Elking & Kelly (2016) study can be seen as an explanation to why the Chinese government grants support to nondemocratic governments, the non-interference outlook, which the policy implies provides aid and investments without a regard for the state of human rights or democracy in a country.

## ***Discussion***

### ***The historical context: Differences between Tanzania and Uganda***

There are several differences between the two case studies concerning how their relationship with China has developed throughout history, on one hand, there is the Sino-Tanzanian relationship which saw heavy diplomatic growth during the 1960s and 1970s, during this period, relations between what would later become Tanzania, and China flourished due to an increasing resentment of the west from the Tanzanian side. Furthermore, were Tanzanian policies during this period heavily influenced by their ally China's own policies, as stated by the former President of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere. Nyerere's admiration of China's domestic policies and development strategies would be echoed much later by the current President of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni. The construction of the TAZARA railway also ensued during this period of time, a project which nowadays is regarded as China's first significant large-scale venture on the African continent and is seen as a blueprint for future Chinese projects on a similarly massive-scale in Africa. On the other hand, there is Uganda, which did not develop as close relations with China as Tanzania during the same time period. The Sino-Ugandan relations being marred by several factors, such as the expelling of Chinese merchants residing in Uganda by Idi Amin, and the country going to war with Tanzania, which as previously stated, was a strong ally to China. Sino-Ugandan relations later recovered and took a shape similar to the Sino-Tanzanian relationship years before, with Museveni modeling several reforms on the China Model, similarly to what Nyerere did decades prior.

### ***The historical context: What has been its impact?***

While the results of the paper show that there is a significant difference between the two case studies concerning how their relationship with China has developed during the last decade, the impact which said historical difference has had on the topics which this paper has focused on can be considered negligible. Due to the similarity between the two case studies concerning the issues and points of interest which are discussed in this article, one can assume that the historical aspect has not had a major influence on how citizens of both case studies perceive China and Chinese influence, no obvious connection linking the historical aspect of the two case studies relationship with China with the African perceptions discussed in this paper has

been found in the material which have been analysed for this study. With this in mind, one can arrive at the conclusion that the more prosperous relationship which Tanzania had with China during the 1960s and 1970s did not have any greater impact on how said relationship is perceived today by Tanzanians if compared to the perceptions harbored on the Sino-Ugandan relationship by Ugandans. However, one can assume that a major reason for the negligent impact which the historical aspect discussed above has had on African perceptions on China is due to the relatively young African population lacking memories from the 1960s and 1970s, either because of them being too young, them not being born yet, or due to not feeling any connection with events which took place a long time ago.

### ***Similarities in how China and the Chinese operate in Tanzania and Uganda***

Several similarities between how Chinese enterprises operate in Uganda and how Chinese enterprises operate in Tanzania can be found, in both countries Chinese trade activity and investments have surged within the last 20 years. Chinese companies in Uganda are also active in similar sectors as Chinese companies in Tanzania, these sectors include the previously mentioned wholesale activity, trading, and construction projects. Furthermore, there is a large amount of Chinese traders conducting business in both countries, selling cheap commodities to the local population.

### ***Chinese immigrants: A threat to the African workforce?***

Both case studies acknowledges a perceived threat which the influx of Chinese migrants on the continent pose towards African businesses and laborers. Several of the studies, surveys, and other publications disclosed in this paper show a negative attitude towards Chinese traders, which according to several sources are illegally and unfairly operating in Sub-Saharan Africa, many conducting wholesale and retail without being granted the required licenses, and that the prevalence of cheap Chinese goods in African markets force out local enterprises due to them not being able to compete with the low prices which are offered by Chinese traders.

Previous demonstrations, news articles, and surveys show that there is clearly a demand amongst the African population for stricter regulations and actually ensuring the enforcement of said regulations when it concerns Chinese immigrants venturing into the retail sector in Sub-Saharan Africa, the worrying trend that local entrepreneurs feel that they are forced out of business due to unfair work practices from the Chinese is something that needs to be addressed by African governments in order to further harmonize the relations between Africans and the Chinese.

Furthermore does the results of the paper show that there exists a fear amongst the citizens of both countries chosen as case studies that their future job prospects are being threatened by the perceived high prevalence of Chinese laborers and businesses being awarded lucrative contracts and employment opportunities over locals, although studies show that Chinese investments in Sub-Saharan Africa provide job opportunities for locals, many feel that said opportunities instead are being given to Chinese immigrants thus negating the perceived benefits which Chinese-led projects in Sub-Saharan Africa are supposed to have for locals seeking employment.

### ***The image of the Chinese in Sub-Saharan Africa***

The results of the paper reveals conflicting opinions and statements on how the Chinese residing in Sub-Saharan Africa are perceived by the local population. On one hand there is the view related to Tanzania that is expressed in the study by Sigalla (2014), that Chinese immigrants integrate far better than their Western counterparts, that they exhibit a will to meet the local population, to learn the local languages, and to live in the same areas as the locals live in.

On the other hand there is the notion that the Chinese are reclusive, avoiding contact with locals and creating Chinese enclaves where they solely associate themselves with their fellow countrymen. That Chinese immigrants rarely take the time to learn the local languages or become friends with the locals of the country which they reside in. This view is exhibited in both case studies, there is, for example, the study by Boness, Mayer & Louw (2017), which results reveal a perceived disinterest among Chinese employees at an organization when it comes to socializing with their Tanzanian co-workers. There is also the perceived rudeness from the Chinese, and accusations of mistreatment and abusive behavior which further tarnishes the image of Chinese immigrants in Sub-Saharan Africa.

However, the results do show that Chinese immigrants are seen as very knowledgeable and skilled in their field of work, “they work day and night sometimes just to make sure that thing is done” as said by one of the respondents participating in the study by Boness, Mayer & Louw (2017). They are also perceived as honest, punctual, and reliable towards their customers and employees. This might imply a cultural difference in how work is perceived between the Chinese immigrants and their African coworkers, with Chinese workers heavily prioritizing results and putting work first and foremost, while Africans put a higher value in nurturing interpersonal relationships between them and their fellow coworkers, this resulting in a cultural clash between these two different outlooks on the subject of “work”. Furthermore, the results of both case studies exhibit an eagerness from Africans to meet and create interpersonal relationships with the Chinese, and that the perceived way which Chinese immigrants in Sub-Saharan Africa isolate themselves from the local population is seen as disappointing by Africans.

### ***The validity of using a state-owned newspaper as a source of information: Does the New Vision represent the people of Uganda’s view?***

The results reveal that the Ugandan media is generally positive towards China and the SinoAfrican relationship. However, it is clear that the Ugandan government values its relationship with China, this might manifest itself in the articles published by Ugandan media which frames the Sino-African relations in a positive way, because of this, one must ask the question if this framing only represents the state’s view of the relationship and not the people’s view. Media can act as an extension of the state, and as an important tool to spread propaganda, especially in a country lacking press freedom. The results of the study by Nassanga & Makara (2016) gives weight to this theory, according to the study, the Ugandan state-owned media was generally more positive towards China and the Sino-African relationship, compared to privately-owned media.

### ***Centre-Periphery Model: Disharmony of Interests?***

One question raised in “Theoretical Outsets” section of the paper is if the Sino-African relationship leads to a disharmony of interests between the two involved parties. If China’s goals with the relationship are perceived as compatible with Africa’s goals, or if the relationship is perceived as beneficial for China and less so for Africa. The results show that there exists a belief among Africans that portrays China as an exploiter and a imperialist, that China’s ulterior motive behind the Sino-African relationship is to extract the continents resources and not to help the development of the African continent. This was for example seen in the results of the study by Shen & Taylor (2012), with 28,6 percent of the respondents fully agreeing to the notion that China’s reason behind their involvement in Uganda was to extract the countries resources, while this might not be seen as high number one must consider that only 17,9 percent of the respondents firmly disagreed with the statement.

Another example that is brought up in the results of this paper is the high grade of perceived corruption related to Chinese projects in Tanzania compared to projects by the World Bank, with the strict non-interference policy which China employs being singled out as one of the main reasons. The support which China’s gives to certain African countries which are severely lacking in democratic processes and freedom of speech are also issues which are disclosed in the results, which likewise can be connected to the policy of non-interference. By supporting undemocratic regimes, China can further worsen the democratic situation in many Sub-Saharan African countries, which in turn can hamper development in said countries. The already mentioned perceived threat which Chinese immigrants pose to African enterprises and the African workforce should also be considered a concern which is connected to China’s presence on the continent.

However, criticism has been directed towards the idea of framing China as an exploiter and colonialism on the African continent, with many accusing the West of inventing the notion and peddling it to Africans. This is shown in several studies accounted for in this paper, studies which furthermore are related to both case studies, for example, the study by Chang & Ren (2016) and the study by Sigalla (2014), which both concludes that Africans are generally more positive towards China compared to Westerns sources. Furthermore does the results of the study by Nassanga & Maraka (2016) show that articles framing the Sino-Ugandan as solely beneficial for China generally cited foreign sources, while the articles that framed the relationship as being more beneficial for Uganda generally cited local sources. Due to this one must consider the importance of not relying single-handedly on non-African sources when examining the SinoAfrican relationship, but to instead understand the importance of sourcing information from non-Western media and sources in order to gain a balanced view on the relationship.

### ***Centre-Periphery Model: Escaping the Periphery***

The results of the paper reveal that there exists a widespread belief amongst Africans that the Sino-African relationship is beneficial for Africa and that it furthers development on the continent, this belief is expressed in the results related to both case studies, showing that similar thoughts are harbored by citizens of both Uganda and Tanzania. The survey conducted by Afrobarometer (2014) shows that a majority of the respondents harbor the opinion that the political and economical influence which China wields in Tanzania is positive for the country.

The results of other studies related to Uganda which are disclosed in the paper further solidifies the notion that Africans have a positive outlook on the Sino-African relationship, for example, the study by Nssanga & Maraka (2016) or the study by Shen & Taylor (2012). The thought of China as a role model for Africa is also reflected in the results of the paper, with African leaders, for example, Tanzania's former President Julius Nyerere and the current President of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni, but also African citizens supporting the notion that China should serve as an inspiration when it concerns agricultural and economic development, and that Africans can gain a substantial amount of knowledge from skilled Chinese immigrants residing on the continent. Furthermore, does the sale of cheap goods which the Chinese commonly are associated with in Sub-Saharan Africa provide low-income households with the opportunity to acquire commodities which they otherwise would not have been able to afford.

While it might be difficult to answer the question whether China will be the one to help Sub-Saharan African societies to "escape the periphery", one can still conclude that there exists a positive outlook on the Sino-African relationship among Africans, and while the road ahead might be long, time will be able to tell if the confident attitude which many Africans have pertaining to China is justified.

#### ***Possible areas for future research on the subject***

While the cultural dimension of the Sino-African relationship has been touched upon in the paper, further research could focus on the impact which cultural differences possess when it concerns the Sino-African relationship and how the Chinese are perceived in Sub-Saharan Africa. Future research could more extensively highlight the differences in the culture of the two case studies and the Chinese culture in order to gain a more nuanced view on how it has shaped and still shapes the relationship between Sub-Saharan Africa and China.

The comparative approach of the paper opens up possibilities for future comparative studies between cases which are extraneously similar to the two cases which are discussed in this article, due to the parallels drawn between the two case studies, one can use the results of this paper to predict how citizens of a comparable country would perceive China and Chinese influence in said country, easing the process of researching a similar topic.

#### **Concluding Remarks**

The finding of the paper reveal that the most notable difference between the two cases being the historical aspect of their relationships with China, however, the impact which this difference has had on Tanzanian and Ugandan perceptions on China could not be identified in the paper, due to this one should consider the idea that this aspect has not had any greater influence on their perceptions and views of China, at least not in a noteworthy way.

Concerning the two research questions posed in the beginning of the paper, one can find numerous notable similarities between the two cases documented in the paper, the results of the paper reveal that the attitudes towards China and Chinese influence in the countries chosen for the study imply that the citizens of both Tanzania and Uganda generally have a positive viewpoint on their respective country's relationship with China. The influence which China



exerts on the two case studies is broadly viewed as a pathway to further development and prosperity, not as way of exploiting their country's resources and natural riches. However, while the Sino-African relationship generally is viewed positively by the citizens of the two case studies, the Chinese residing in Sub-Saharan Africa are perceived in a less positive way, the results reveal a certain perceived hostility and rudeness from the Chinese migrants which have taken up residence in the countries discussed in the paper. Furthermore, do they according to the results, exhibit a perceived unwillingness to blend in and integrate in the African societies which they have immigrated to. The influx of Chinese-owned enterprises and workers on the continent is also seen as a threat towards the African workforce, additionally, the accusations of abusive behavior in workplaces and unfair businesses practices further fuels the negative image which China's citizens possess in Sub-Saharan Africa. However, the paper's focus lies on how China and the Chinese are perceived in Sub-Saharan Africa and not how they actually are, due to this, one should not take the results presented in this article as solid facts concerning the behavior of Chinese immigrants in Sub-Saharan Africa, one should instead view it as merely opinions and views which are held by Africans. Still, the results show that there are several distinguished issues related to the image of the Chinese in Sub-Saharan Africa, which in turn can deteriorate Sino-African relations. By identifying the issues concerning the image which China and its citizens have in Sub-Saharan Africa, one can argue that China's next step would be to remedy these concerns in order to further boost its popularity in Sub-Saharan Africa.

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