

# **NIGERIA-CHINA RELATIONS, 1999-2019**

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# RESEARCH PROPOSAL

## Chapter One: Introduction

This study analyses the patterns of political and socio-economic relationship between Nigeria and China from 1999 to 2019. Three main phases stand out in the case of Sino-Nigerian relations: the Bandung period, Post-Bandung period and the Age of Business. The third phase – Age of Business (1999-2019) – is the major period of focus for this thesis with emphasis on key areas in Sino-Nigeria relations which include the economy, political, military and cultural sectors.

This period represents the contemporary phase of China-Africa relations, and the form main focus of this study. The main rationale behind this phase is twofold. First, this period fits into the broader discourse of Sino-Africa relations which has gained tremendous importance in African studies and generally the study of international political economy. Studies and scholarly discussions on the ‘new’ and monumental phase of China’s engagement in Africa have gained relevance due to the current increase in trade, investment, and aid figures, and with this increase, attention has been drawn to the meteoric rise of China. In these pertinent discussions, country cases like that of Sino-Nigeria relations are very crucial as they provide the much needed nuance to an emerging discourse.

The second reason for the choice of this phase is mainly conceptual. The Age of Business represents Nigeria’s attempt to intensify the neoliberal efforts to liberalize its economy to gain global recognition and attract foreign investors. This therefore serves as a useful case that fits the analytical framework of liberalization in a global era. Nigeria’s post-independence economic experience is largely made up of economic reform linked to Western and global institutions such as the World Bank, and IMF. This first sets the background for a look at the evolution of economic relationships via liberalization, as the country’s attempt to open up its economy to attract international investments and to globalize its economic operations gains momentum with Chinese economic engagement. Also, this sets the foundation for looking at Beijing’s economic agenda for sub-Saharan Africa (in this case Nigeria) vis-à-vis the Western approach through a set of ideas like what the Washington Consensus offered.

The depth of the study calls for a macro analysis which can illustrate macro trends, motivations and strategies of Chinese engagement with Nigeria. While the majority of texts on emerging economies in Africa tend to be biased, focusing primarily on China, this study is to narrow the scope of inquiry on the growing relationship between the two countries, taking into consideration the roles played by the Nigerian government in promoting bilateral relations with China. The specific objectives therefore are to:

- Provide an analysis of Nigeria's relationship with China in key areas such as bilateral trade, oil and gas, power generation, rail transport system, road construction, communication, manufacturing and retail loan finance and general free trade zone.
- Examine the political, military and cultural bilateral relations between the two countries from 1999 to 2019.

In this study, emphasis is on Nigeria's relationship with China which exhibits a change in the nature of the engagement, mainly from a more ideological and political position to a more economic one. As observed in other countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Nigeria relationship with China takes a common path from relative diplomatic to active economic engagement. In recent times, this path is mainly dominated by the economic activities between Nigeria and China.

### **Chapter Two: Foundations of Sino-Nigeria Relations**

Chapter two focuses on the foundation of Sino-Nigeria relations; and contextualizes China and Nigeria in the study and discusses the nexus in Nigeria-China relations.

### **Chapter Three: Trajectory of Sino-Nigeria Relations**

Chapter three looks at the trajectory of Sino-Nigeria relations with emphasis on commerce and industry in Sino-Nigeria relations; information and communication technology in Sino-Nigeria relations; oil and gas sector in Sino-Nigeria relations; and the power sector in Sino-Nigeria relations.

### **Chapter Four: Nature and Dynamics of Nigeria-South Africa relations**

Chapter four examines the nature and dynamics of Sino-Nigeria relations 1999-2019. It also looks at the irritants in Sino-Nigeria relations as well as the prospects in Sino-Nigeria relations.

## **Chapter Five: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations**

Summary and conclusions are to be drawn from the research literature, research findings and content analysis.

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