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Chinese Engagement in Sub Saharan African Economies: A Case of Tanzanian Economy

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Abstract

This article investigates the impact of Chinese activities in sub-Saharan African countries with respect to the growth performance of economies in that region using Tanzania as a case study. To build their economies, these countries have turned to China for support over the past few decades as the conditions attached to accessing loans from the West have become increasingly unattractive. These inflows of FDIs from China, along with aid, grants, and trade agreements, have helped to open many African countries' economies and propel infrastructure development, social impact programs, and a reduction in poverty. Yet, critics question China's motives and point to the burden facing African countries that may struggle to repay the loans. Using a case study of Tanzania, this article finds that China's FDI has generally contributed to improved living conditions of the people, but this progress is tempered by trade imbalances, mounting debt, and failure to produce projected job opportunities. For their part, the Chinese have benefited from access to the continent's resources and new markets for their merchandise. The findings also suggest African countries continue their robust economic ties with China but reduce their dependence on China by exploring other partners and new ways to leverage Africa's own resources to fund growth and development on the continent.

Subject Areas

Development Economics, General Business Research

Keywords

China, Sub-Saharan Africa, Trade, FDI, Economic Growth, Tanzania

1. Introduction

Over the last 15 years, China has become a major economic partner of sub-Saharan

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African countries. Total merchandise trade between China and Africa increased from $9 billion in 2020 to $166 billion in 2022, making China Africa's largest trade partner (UN Comtrade, 2023) [1]. In terms of foreign direct investment (FDI), Chinese FDI flows to Africa increased from just $200 million in 2020 to $2.9 billion in 2021, turning China into the largest developing country investor in Africa (UNCTAD, 2023) [2].

Additionally, Chinese aid initiatives in Africa in the form of economic or technical cooperation have also increased remarkably in the last decade. According to China's National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), the turnover on economic cooperation projects 2 in Africa reached $29 billion in 2021 compared to $1.2 billion in 2020.

At the same time, Africa's growth performance has improved significantly. Following two decades of negative growth rates in the 1980s and 1990s, Africa's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita grew by an annual average of 2.4 percent in 2000-2009, while the growth rate in 2010-2012 amounted to 1.8 percent (Busse *et al.*, 2014) [3]. In view of this development, the question arises as to whether China's engagement has contributed to economic growth in Africa. This is the main focus of this paper. Obviously, various factors have contributed to Africa's better growth performance, including a marked improvement in institutions and infrastructure and a decrease in conflicts and macroeconomic distortions (OECD *et al.*, 2023; UNECA, 2023) [4] [5], all of which have to be controlled for in an empirical investigation. Due to the intensity of Sino-African economic linkages an empirical assessment of the impact of one country (China) on African growth seems appropriate.

When assessing the economic impact on Africa, it is important to note that China's economic activities have resulted in an overall increase of trade, FDI, and aid in Africa rather than a diversion of existing flows from third countries. In principle, this should have positive effects. An expansion of international trade with a new partner like China could boost growth rates by increasing demand for African products (mainly raw materials). Also, the diversification of Africa's traditional trading partners could reduce export volatility, thereby decreasing output volatility and thus boosting long-run growth rates (Hnatkovska & Loayza, 2021) [6]. Furthermore, China's enormous demand for raw materials has led to higher world market prices for raw materials, improving the terms-of trade of African exporters of natural resources (Zafar, 2022) [7]. Consumers in Africa could benefit from (additional) imports of manufactured goods from China, allowing them to cut their expenses by consuming low-cost Chinese products or increasing the variety of consumer goods available to them. Likewise, African producers could take advantage of low-cost Chinese inputs in their production process.

Similar to trade, foreign investment from China could also have positive growth effects. It is expected to enlarge the capital stock in African countries, to increase productivity levels through higher competition intensities, and it is associated with higher tax revenues (UNCTAD, 2022) [8]. Also, foreign investment could foster productivity spillovers to African firms. In contrast to North-South FDI, spillovers from South-South FDI could be even larger, as Chinese firms use technologies that may be more appropriate for African firms. Finally, Chinese economic cooperation projects establish and improve much needed infrastructure in Africa, which lowers transaction costs and thus enhances (internal and external) trade and growth rates.

Generally, this article seeks to explore Chinese going out strategy and its impact on African economies. The case of Tanzanian Gross Domestic Product and Economic Growth. The article will critically analyse Sino-African Relations, Sino-Tanzania Trade and Economic Relations, Impact Assessment of Sino-Tanzania Economic and Trade Relations and conclude it.

2. Overview of Sino-African Economic Relations

Sino-African economic relations have only surged since 2000 but the political relationship between China and Africa dates back many decades. In fact, China regaining its seat in the United Nations in 1971 is largely attributed to the strong vote of African countries that ended their diplomatic ties with Taiwan for the sake of China. During the 1980s and 1990s Sino-African relations were still mainly political, as China itself was undergoing extensive economic reform and opening up its economy to the rest of world. In the late 1990s China's remarkable growth performance made policy makers realize that in order to sustain high-level growth it needed to ensure its future supply of natural resources. In this regard, Africa became a particularly important region for China.

The importance of Africa in China's foreign policy culminated in the establishment of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in 2000. The forum holds ministerial conferences every three years and is an important platform to implement specific economic policy programs with Africa. Moreover, China's "Going-Global" policy, announced in 2001, also contributed to the rise in Sino-African economic relations. In order to encourage foreign trade and outward FDI, the policy provides Chinese firms with easy access to loans, foreign exchange and preferential policies for taxation, imports and exports (UNCTAD, 2022) [8]. Although the policy is not primarily targeted at Africa, it identifies key areas in which to encourage FDI, including resource exploration projects which are a particularly important Chinese activity in Africa. When analysing Sino-African economic relations, three channels of economic interaction are dominant, namely trade, FDI, and aid (economic cooperation).

2.1. Trade as a Key Channel of China-Africa Relation

Trade between China and Africa is found to be a key channel of economic relationship whereby there is both export and import of goods and services from both sides (Moshi, 2017) [9]. This channel shows a growing trend of its volume and values over a time such that some data disclose that; it grows at 20 percent in each year since 2000. In 1999, the value of Trade between China and Africa was about 6.5 billion USD while in 2008 found to be 106 billion USD. However in the year 2015, trade value between China and Africa found to be 188 billion USD (Moshi, 2017) [9]. Therefore, this gives a picture of how Chinese investment in Africa is and how the relationship between these two sides appears to be over time.

2.2. Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) as Another Channel of China-Africa Relation

Chinese Government used a so called Going Out Strategy to undertake investments in the overseas. It was implemented to rescue markets and other economic resources in the foreign countries mainly from 2000's years (Lombardi & Wang, 2016) [10]. It was also designed to address the challenge of overcapacity in production within China and to strengthen process of industrial structure adjustment as well as to encourage and support firms with comparative advantage to invest in the overseas (Lombardi & Wang, 2016) [10]. Implementation of this strategy led to a growing trend and increasing flow of the Chinese Foreign Direct Investments (FDI's) from China to Africa whereby Chinese enterprises and companies from both state owned and private owned invests in the overseas especially in African Countries. Under this strategy, China adopted various mechanisms including construction of infrastructural facilities through One Belt One Road Initiatives (OBOR) or Built and Road Initiative (Lombardi & Wang, 2016) [10]. **Figure 1** is an example of one project undertaken by the China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC) and China Railways 15th Bureau Group in Tanzania. However, also there are some small investors who undertake small business like restaurants. Therefore, these few grounds reveal the facts that in the past several years, China was the single largest bilateral source of annual foreign direct investment (FDI) in Africa's 54 countries (Moshi, 2017) [9].

Figure 1. Construction of John Pombe Magufuli Bridge over Lake Victoria in Mwanza region undertaken by China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC) and China Railways 15th Bureau Group which is also under Built and Road Initiative (Photo by Herman Emmanuel/Xinhua Sep 9, 2023).

3. Sino-Tanzania Economic and Trade Relations

The agreements signed under the umbrella of economic, trade, aid and technical cooperation between China and Tanzania include: The Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation between the PRC and the URT (June 1964); The Trade Agreement between the PRC and the URT (February 1965); The Agreement between the Government of the PRC, the Government of the URT and the Government of Republic of Zambia on the Construction of the Tanzania-Zambia Railway (September 1967); The Barter Trade Protocol between the People's Republic of China and the United Republic of Tanzania (March 1984); The Agreement between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania on the Establishment of a Joint Economic and Trade Commission (August 1985); The Framework Agreement between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania for the Provision of an Interest Subsidized Preferential Credit by China to Tanzania was signed in 1996 and 1997.

During the last 26 years the exports of China to Tanzania have increased at an annualized rate of 16.7%, from $93.2M in 1995 to $5.14B in 2021. In 2021, China did not export any services to Tanzania. Tanzania-China in 2021, Tanzania exported $420M to China (Benabdallah, 2021) [11].

In September 2023, China exported $768M and imported $161M from Tanzania, resulting in a positive trade balance of $607M. Between September 2022 and September 2023 the exports of China have increased by $40.9M (5.62%) from $727M to $768M, while imports increased by $53.1M (49.4%) from $107M to $161M (Bloomberg, 2021) [12].

In September 2023, the top exports of China to Tanzania were Synthetic Filament Yarn Woven Fabric ($31.5M), Rubber Footwear ($24.5M), Coated Flat-Rolled Iron ($23.2M), Rubber Tires ($18.1M), and Hot-Rolled Iron ($15.1M). In September 2023 the top imports of China from Tanzania were Raw Copper ($7.49M), Refined Copper ($5.48M), Coconut and Other Vegetable Fibers ($5.06M), Other Oily Seeds ($1.63M), and Nickel Ore ($1.28M) (Bloomberg, 2021) [12].

In September 2023 the exports of China were mainly from Zhejiang Province ($217M), Guangdong Province ($150M), Shandong Province ($109M), Jiangsu Province ($67M), and Fujian Province ($30.1M), while imports destinations were mainly Shandong Province ($46.4M), Anhui Province ($28M), Tianjin ($22M), Beijing ($12.8M), and Guangdong Province ($10.2M) (China Daily, 2023) [13].

In September 2023, the increase in China's year-by-year exports to Tanzania was explained primarily by an increase in product exports in Synthetic Filament Yarn Woven Fabric ($17.9M or 132%), Hot-Rolled Iron ($14.6M or 2.82k%), and Coated Flat-Rolled Iron ($14.2M or 158%). In September 2023, the increase in China's year-by-year imports from Tanzania was explained primarily by an increase in product imports in Refined Copper ($2.07M or 60.7%), Other Oily Seeds ($919k or 130%), and Sawn Wood ($429k or 72.5%) (Bloomberg, 2021) [12].

3.1. Export and Import Trade between Tanzania and China

Generally, traditional export in Tanzania dominated the total exports until 1999 when the trend reversed in favor of non-traditional exports. Tanzania's main exports to China include dry seafood, raw leather, log, coarse copper and wooden handcrafts, while Tanzania's imports from China are mainly foodstuffs, vehicles, textiles, light industrial products, chemical products, mechanical equipment, electric appliances and steel (Benabdellah, 2021) [11].

The total trade value between China and Tanzania has been growing over time. China's total trade with Tanzania averaged US$ 70 million during the period 1996-2002, mainly dominated by imports. However, since 2003 the trade between China and Tanzania improved tremendously; it grew at annual average rate of 59 percent from 2003 to 2006 making China one of Tanzania's major trading partners, others include United Kingdom, South Africa, India, Japan, Kenya and United Arabs Emirates. However, the trade balances have been worsening (Tanzania is the net importer) as the trade volume between the two countries increased (CAP, 2020) [14].

Total exports to China averaged only US$ 5.8 million during 2016-2022, but increased significantly to annual average of US$ 64.3 million in 2013-2016. In year 2016 the exports to China was US$ 150.34 million, which is about 9 percent of the total exports of US$ 1720.43 million. Sector wise, crude materials except food/fuel dominated the exports to China (48.4%) followed by Food and live animals (about 2%) (BBC, 2021) [15].

Tanzania's imports from China include: foodstuff, vehicles, textiles, light industrial products, chemical products, mechanical equipment, electric appliances and steel. Imports also portrayed an upward trend, averaged US$ 80.8 million during 2016-2022 and increased to US$ 205.2 million in 2013-2016. Total imports from China were US$ 4545.49 million during 2016, which is about 7 percent of Tanzania's total imports for that year. We can obviously claim from the two figures on exports and imports that the surge in Chinese trade started since 2013. In fact, China is now Africa's third largest commercial partner after the United States and France and the second largest exporter to Africa after France (Looy, 2021) [16].

In September 2023, China exported $768M and imported $161M from Tanzania, resulting in a positive trade balance of $607M. Between September 2022 and September 2023 the exports of China have increased by $40.9M (5.62%) from $727M to $768M, while imports increased by $53.1M (49.4%) from $107M to $161M (Bloomberg, 2021) [12].

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3.2. Investment

Since the late 1970s, China has made major progress in economic reform and opening up. This in turn, offers new opportunities for the farther expansion and consolidation of the existing bilateral cooperation. Indeed, it needs to be recalled that, China-Tanzania bilateral relations started in the 1960s and has been developing rapidly in recent years. The recent Sino-Tanzanian joint ventures established in Tanzania include the transformed Friendship Textile Co. (URAFIKI), in 2016 into Tanzania-China Friendship Textile Corporate Ltd, where the Chinese government invested US$ 5.5 million (51%) with enhanced profits and job creation. Chinese-Tanzania Joint Shipping Company is another joint venture (50% each) with capital of TZS 17.2 billion (US$ 15.5 million). These serve as successful examples for mutually beneficial cooperation between the two countries (CAP, 2020) [14].

By end 2016 there are more than 140 Chinese-companies registered with the TIC and BRELA, carrying out the business of labor contracts and services in Tanzania. Among them, 3 are in agriculture—with investment of US$ 49.33 million; 11 in manufacturing—investment of US$ 54.12 million; 2 in solid mineral with US$ 11 million; 1 in shipping with US$ 5 million; 13 in construction—with investment of US$ 12.4 million and 2 in telecommunications.

The official figures released by TIC2 indicate that on aggregate the Chinese share of FDI to Tanzania stood at 2.4% of total FDI flow to Tanzania between 2010-2016. The manufacturing sector received the lion's share of the total Chinese FDI, during the period, followed by agriculture and natural resources (looy, 2021) [16].

Accordingly, China's share of FDI remains low compared to traditional sources of FDI. The dominance of Chinese FDI in manufacturing, which is basically agro-based and in agriculture sector is in line with Chinese policies towards African Agriculture (2016) which intend to promote agricultural cooperation and exchanges with African nations at various levels, through multiple channels and in various forms. These channels and forms include land development, agricultural plantation, breeding technologies, food security, agricultural machinery and processing of agricultural and side-line products. Indeed, Chinese investments in these sectors in Tanzania seem to be well informed by this policy package (China Daily, 2023) [13].

Today China is the biggest investor in Tanzania, as well as the largest exporter of goods to Tanzania. The investment volume reached 7 billion USD in 2019, trade volume between China and Tanzania reached 3.9 billion USD. China ranks as Tanzania's fifth-largest export destination (CAP, 2020) [16].

4. Impact Assessment of Sino-Tanzania Economic and Trade Relations

There are several channels through which Chinese activities will affect the development process in Africa and Tanzania in particular. In the last Forum (2016) two documents were adopted by the participants: The Beijing Declaration as well as The Action plan 2017-2018. Both documents were unanimously hailed by the parties, 50 years after the commencement of diplomatic relations between China and Africa, as "historical milestones" and as a manifesto for "new kind of strategic partnership". The agreements embodied in the documents include a comprehensive package of concrete investment and development and commitments on the part of the Chinese for the next three years, including favorable credits in the amount of three billion us dollars, preferential credit for the purchase of Chinese goods to the value of two billion us dollars, as well as the doubling of Chinese development aid by 2019. Further, within the framework of the second Chinese-African Entrepreneurs Conference, on the side line of the summit, a Chinese-African Chamber of Trade was set up and investment agreements with eleven African States, in the amount of 1.9 billion us dollars, were concluded (Hofman *et al.*, 2021) [17].

In the context of the foregoing, it is clear that the main channels of impact are basically three: Trade, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and Aid. We are aware of other channels like: migration; governance and environment, however, for now we will focus the attention on the former category of impact assessment (BBC, 2021) [15].

The trade, FDI and AID relationship between the two countries is based on a number of mutually beneficial factors. On the Tanzanian side, China is more acceptable because of its policy of non-interference in other states internal affairs. Therefore, loans or aid are not subjected to political conditions, as is often the case with the Western countries (China Daily, 2023) [13].

4.1. Export and Import Trade

Chinese-Tanzania trade relations have seen a change in the trade composition between the two countries during 2006-2016. This change has also led to a realignment of trade relations with Tanzania's traditional trade partners. Between 2016-2022 Tanzania exports to China were insignificant; they averaged 2% of the total exports during the period, when compared to her main trading partners namely, United Kingdom (39%), India (35%), Germany (20%) and South Africa (4%). Exports share to China during 2003-2006 picked up to an average 11%, while those of India and German dropped to 11% and 8% respectively, with UK (50%) and South Africa (20%) recording an improvement (Hoffman *et al.*, 2021) [17].

China did command over an average of 18% of the total imports during 2013-2016, which is an improvement from 13% during 2016-2022. The shares of other trading partners such as India and UK dropped to 16% and 11% from 19% and 23% respectively. Thus, from 2003 the Sino-Tanzania trade relation has grown quite strongly (CAP, 2020) [14].

The trade relations between China and Tanzania have both direct and indirect impact on the economy of the latter. The direct impacts range from increased export volumes and prices of certain raw materials, to availability of Chinese products which are accessible to a broad spectrum of consumers and thus improve their welfare. However, how such a phenomenon will impact on poverty remains controversial. Nonetheless, the growth of exports can impact positively in reducing poverty, if it translates into higher investment, higher capacity utilization, higher employment and expanded output. This will in turn result into an increase in per capita income (Lunogelo & Baregu, 2023) [18].

Apart from what appears to be possible positive impacts, one should not lose sight of the fact that most of the imports from Tanzania to China are primary commodities, while exports from China are manufactured goods. This content and pattern of trade may have the possibility of locking in Tanzania specializing on primary commodities with its short term benefits and long-term problem. Further, the pressure on domestic manufactured goods through competition and the positive effect through supply of cheap producer goods may stifle or promote industrialization in the country. Furthermore, one of the effects of Chinese trade relations is the competitive effect which is a significant threat to Tanzanian producers and exporters, both in domestic market and third country market (Zafar, 2022) [7].

In a recent study (Mashindano, *et al.* 2021) [19] China tops the list of countries which exports counterfeit products to Tanzania. It is followed by India, U.A.E (Dubai) and Kenya. Counterfeit goods affect the economy in different ways. These include: loss of government revenue, loss of employment opportunities, health hazard (diseases and deaths), deepening of poverty, and unfair competition which tends to harm domestic manufacturing industry.

The government and various stakeholders have taken a number of measures to address the problem. The regulatory authorities, like the Tanzania Foods and Drugs Authority (TFDA), Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) and the Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS), and the manufacturers' association (CTI) have intensified advocacy efforts and scale-up campaigns against entry of sub-standard products in the local market. These efforts are being complimented by the initiatives to review laws and regulations which will empower the regulatory organs to more effectively curb the problem than the case is at present (Zafar, 2022) [7].

We sum up the trade section by putting emphasis on three dimensions of the impact (Qureshi & Wan 2021) [20]. First, the complementarity effects which is the growth of exports to China due to an increase in demand. Second, the international competitive effect, this refers to increased competition from China from exports in third markets. Third, the domestic competitive effect due to increase in competition from China in domestic markets. However, the threats include de-industrialization and counterfeit problems (Mashindano, *et al.* 2021) [19].

4.2. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

In analyzing the issue of FDI, especially in the African context it is important to focus on the motivation for the flows. This in turn informs the kind of the likely impact. According to Aiden and Yixiao (2022) [21] the likely impacts are through four channels: 1) direct competition for FDI (or what is commonly known as FDI crowding out by China); 2) indirect consequence of the rise in the price of commodities on FDI flows; 3) interest of Chinese multinationals to invest in Africa; and 4) opportunity for African FDI in China and India.

In discussing the crowding out effect, it is stressed that as much as FDI flow is geared toward resource extraction (resource seeking) and domestic market (market seeking); China does not pose a direct (and significant) threat to Africa. In relation to the more indirect channel, Goldstein (op.cit) argues that the commodity booms are at least partly fueled by Chinese and Indian demand, and are making Africa more attractive to "resource and raw-material-seeking" FDI.

Nevertheless, the long-term might hold a very different picture. The pace which China is changing the technological structure of its production and exports, rising costs of locating export oriented production, the recipient country's proximity to European and Middle Eastern consumer markets and a host of other factors might help the recipients and thus Africa to become the next "goose" in the long run. Indeed, Asian countries are increasingly providing essential inputs (and components) to Africa's growing manufacturing sector most probably, its textile and apparel sectors and in some cases, its automobile sector (Busse et al., 2014) [3].

Busse et al. (2014) [3] observes three possible forms of Asian investment in Africa: 1) investments aimed at supplying Asia with natural resources and processed raw materials; 2) investments that target African domestic market which could get a boost via effective regional integration; and 3) investments aimed at supplying the international markets such as EU and the US motivated mostly by low-labor costs plus favorable trade access given to African countries in those markets.

It should also be borne in mind that: First, it is highly unlikely that China diverts FDI that would have been coming to Africa. Second, the level of FDI from China is not only very small but also located in a few countries. Third, these flows from China are largely motivated by the desire to secure sources of energy and raw materials as well as the desire to exploit preferential markets which are accessible to African countries. In order to have deeper insights into to the impact of FDI on the receiving countries, future studies need to focus on impact indicators like technology transfer, employment creation, and competitive-threat to local producers, as well as on locking African countries in primary commodity production and exporting sectors.

Some positive impacts of Chinese FDI to Tanzania include: 1) capital formation through availability of investible financial resources; 2) technology transfer, in the form of technology-embodying products such as machinery, equipment and tools, and technical skills such as management and organizational expertise, marketing etc.; 3) access to export markets e.g. Tanzania Friendship Textile Mills (URAFIKI) which is jointly owned by China and Tanzania, does export a significant proportion of its products; Enhanced local competition which increases the welfare of the people through product availability, quality improvement, and reduced prices; 4) employment and revenue generation, thus contributing to reduction of income poverty and boosting government budget. However, it is argued that exemption given to investors in form of tax holidays often lead to loss of fiscal revenue. The fact that a number of Chinese projects are managed and operated by Chinese workers raises concerns on the impact of such investments on unemployment reduction. All these issues demand further research before concrete conclusions can be drawn.

The likely negative implication of the above to Tanzania is that industrialization aspirations may not be realized or may have to be postponed and efficiency and market seeking FDI will continue to shun places in the short and medium-terms. This will be the case as long as China can keep its competitive edge in low technology industries, unless the preferential market access granted by developed countries (such as Every Thing But Arms and AGOA), and tariff jumping FDI and proximity to rich economies could overturn the cost disadvantages of countries in Africa.

5. Conclusions

The "Chinese Model" has a number of lessons which can be adapted to the Tanzanian environment. The idea here is not to replicate the model. Rather, the idea is to extract specific lessons from the Chinese experience that may be relevant to the common and at the same time diverse circumstances of many African countries. These lessons can range from institutional changes, to specific industrial and trade policy measures, to mechanisms of attracting and disciplining FDI with greater development potential, to devising more effective "reciprocal control mechanisms" between states and business, to enhancing bargaining power vis-à-vis other major donors (Oya, 2021) [22].

One, China has displayed high and sustained high economic growth rate for over two decades. The economic growth has been driven by high investment growth, reaching more than 40 per cent of GDP. However, this impressive performance has been attained without adherence to the "Washington Consensus" doctrine. Indeed, policies in China differ fundamentally from those of the World Bank and IMF, and in spite of this, China has performed tremendously well. The main lesson to be learned here is that African states have to appreciate the fact that there is an alternative path to socio-economic development, contrary to the usual neo-liberal doctrine. Therefore, there is a need for African countries to learn more about the experiences of the Asian drivers and adapt some of the lessons to their own conditions.

6. Recommendations

Indeed, the cooperation between the two countries has both challenges and opportunities. Whereas the former range from trade imbalances, delayed structural change, to skewed playing field, the latter are those embedded in China-Africa platforms which are yet to be grasped effectively by Tanzania, although they are critical in addressing the country's socioeconomic development agenda. Consequently, in order for Tanzania to adequately tap the existing and unfolding opportunities, it needs to craft a clear strategy for engagement with China as a way hastening implementation of signed agreements, while aligning the national development strategies with the requisite Chinese initiatives. Surely, it is only through such a proactive stance that a win-win partnership between the two countries can be nurtured, consolidated and sustained.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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