CHINESE 'DOLLAR' INFLUENCEIN AFRICA, IMPLICATION FOR TAIWAN-NIGERIA TIES

Ghazali Bello Abubakar

Ghazali Bello Abubakar, ***Ph.D.***
Department of Political Science,
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences,
Sokoto State University
[1]alghazel@gmail.com
[2]*ghazali.abubakar@ssu.edu.ng*

ABSTRACT—The dawn of the twenty-first century begun at a time when the global population rises to over 7.2 billion people out of which Asia and Africa account for more than 60 percent of the entire figure. The China's rapidly growing economy since 1970s, and the nature of exporting its end-goods to the global markets including in Africa coupled with the large investments in multiple sectors throughout the region confirm Sino-Africa mutual closeness in terms of trade pattern. This study aims at exploring how hardest the severance from Nigeria could generally affect Taiwan-Africa relations at a larger scale. It nevertheless, proposes to examine how much authentic the afterthought that democracies don't go to war,is, and whether if they go to diplomatic bust-up for economic reasons. This study concludes that the leading forces behind the Nigeria's abrupt changing attitude towards Taiwan is China's dollar influence. It also finalizes that the Afro-Taiwan political and diplomatic dancingmay have so much impacts on Taiwan sovereignty at the international level.

KEYWORD—Taiwan-Nigeria, Africa, Diplomatic isolation, Sino-Africa, Financial Packages .

BACKGROUND

This Over the course of national interest, state of dilemma between Beijing's dollar in one hand and Taipei's soft landing over the cost of historical diplomacy ties, make African nations including Nigeria measure and think rationally. The traditional theory of realism assumes that power always determines the inter-nations connections in modern day global politics. Perhaps, this might be the typical scenario in Taiwan-China-Nigeria pyramid relations. Nigeria, the most populous Black Country in the world, has since declared her paramount desire and candidacy for the permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) where the People Republic of China (PRC) already is a member with a veto power. Secondly, in 2016 the Nigeria's president, Muhammadu Buhari paid a state visit to Beijing and in turn, Chinese minister of external affairs, Wang Yi, visited Nigeria in early days of 2017. During that visit, Mr. Yi and Geoffrey Onyeama, his Nigerian counterpart, signed communiqué that re-echoed Nigeria's backing One-China Policy. Mr. Yi asserted that his government is ready to invest some US$ 40 billion in Nigeria.
Besides, in some few decades ago, China has actively participated in the process of promoting peaceful Africa. It deployed her troops in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Congo, and elsewhere in Sub-Saharan Africa to maintain law and order, and to restore mutual coexisting through reciprocity and good governance. Nevertheless, in many post-conflict African nations, China has categorically showed her clear position in terms of boosting economy, rehabilitation, and other socially humanitarian concerns to the affected areas. Moreover, Beijing tries to maintain her position to grant aids to African nations. It now supports Africa to secure a permanent seat in the UN Security Council. In the last two decades or so, there were very few historical events that showed Taiwan's involvement in the region as point out by Rich and Banerjee (2015).
Simultaneously, Republic of China (ROC) and Nigeriaare new emerging democracies.Despite the number of challenges, some important steps are being taken (particularly in Taiwan) to build up sustainable democratic governance and strong political institutions; Taipeisuffers from diplomatic segregationyet, especiallyby individual African countries. Many of them closed their representative offices and in turn, demanded Taiwan to do the same. This reaffirms Abuja's stance on the prime objective of the communist China that is One-China Policy. Additionally, the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) ratified between Nigeria and Taiwan somewhere in 1990s, which also brings trade missions of the countries into force, was reviewed in 2017 (Oshodi, 2018).
Similarly,Western countries that happened to be in a soft touch with ROC have already moved toward China. Since that time, Taiwan has embarkedupon a transformation and democratic transition gradually until 1996 when it has gone, for the first time, into a historic home-grown democracy through a competitive presidential poll that has taken roots ever in the history of Taiwan (Bellows, 1996).
Taiwan-Nigeriarelations of almost three decadesare seen under probability after Nigerian authorities demanded Taiwan to relocate back to Lagos somewhere in 2017. Many experts believe that 'economic consideration' is one of the main reasons behind this straightforward action taken by the Nigerian government.
Taiwan-Nigeria diplomatic connectivity has officially started in 1991, whenTaiwan established its trade office in Lagos, the then Nigeria's Capital of Administration during a military junta of Gen. Ibrahim Babangida (rtd.). Coincidently, Nigeria's capital was moved to Abuja at the same year, by the same regime of Babangida. The Trade Office was therein relocated to Abuja in 2001 after consecutive ten (10) years of its establishment. In January, 2017 the Taiwan-Nigeria relations seems underneath the

standard level due to what is believed as under the sway of heavyweight 'Chinese Dollar'. The PRC's great campaign of 'One-China Policy' strives by all the means to overtake the twenty seven (27) year-old Taiwan-Nigeria ties through juicy businesses, bilateral agreements, financial aids, projects and cultural exchange programs offered to Nigerian students, academic staff and government officialswith direct impact.

METHODOLOGY

This study relied on analytical and descriptive approaches. Various books, journals and research reports were consulted as sources of information. Current Nigeria's relations with both ROC and PRC in diplomacy, trade and investments were used. Political events including Nigeria's economic condition, combating acts of terrorism, insurgency and banditry, fighting against corruption, looting and mismanaging public resources in the country were also being followed in various websites, and the data collected has been examined, clarified and analyzed theme by theme. Qualitative data analysis that has been taken in form of words, narration or even description was intelligently being analyzed and interpreted. The relevant themes were identifiedon an understandable and credible way for reader.

As the study involves inter-nations connections in diplomacy, economy, trade and investments, culture and education; communiqué, documents, reports, records and other related information from the concerning ministries such as Ministry of Foreign Affairs of both Nigeria and Taiwan are collected, studied and analyzed.

English is the official language in Nigeria, and widely spoken in Taiwanese educational institutions, agencies and NGOs. This strengthened me followed up past and current events in Nigeria and collected data from various sources like books, journals and websites. However, I used English as medium to discover much on Taiwan international relations. Mostly, this project depended on the existing primary sources and much clarification of up to date publications that gauged, which theories carry more weight and support my hypotheses and or reject them.

THEORITICAL FRAME

The rational actor model of realism theory of international relations will be the frame of analysis in this study. Justifiably, this theory is selected to guide this research because it provides thatat international level of analysis, states' leaders formalize their national objectives on priority basis. Therefore, states deal with one another; putting forward their national interests. On this ground, all of Taiwan, Nigeria and China apply and follow the same criteria. Thus, it is aptly rational for China to ask Nigeria change Taiwan office from Abuja to Lagos. Nigeria had rationally requested Taiwan to redeploy its representative office to Lagos, which has rationally been done by the Taiwan.

This type of rationality canvasses that nations ideally, calculate the possible costs and benefits that could be brought about by a particular action or behavior. In fact, this is one of the most difficult tasks in formulating foreign policy because both of the costs and benefits can be miscalculating due to the incorrectly information used.

For instance, Nigerian authorities might have calculated how much bulky benefits would be gained in siding with Chinese interests, which can also attract huge financial package, projects, and helping Nigeria in standardizing infrastructures talk-less of trade and investments in hydro-carbon, electronic equipment and other automobiles. China's domestic policy prioritizes 'One-China Policy', the policy, which gets resistance fromTaiwan for tens of yearsand thus galvanizes anxiety from mainland China. Beijing taking step forward to freeze Taipei's capability and accelerating efforts to ensure diplomatic segregation against the island(Yu, 1999). Meanwhile, China is steadily paralyzing Taiwan throughher industrial and monetary power to persuade third world African nations to consider diplomatic embargo against Taiwan.

SINO-NIGERIA RELATIONS: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Five decades since when diplomatic connection was ratified for the first time between Nigeria and China, which was in 1971 accordingly. As usual, domestic demands and, perhaps pressures drive foreign policy of any sovereign nation; Nigeria and China were never exceptional. Although diplomatic ties are always meant for mutual benefits and soft landing over inevitably some cardinal issues, which often enforce themselves as lives go. But consequences arealso presence almost all the time. Simply because eventually, circumstantial situations do occur in an evolutional nature. Hence, these evolutions bring about ups and downs in diplomatic relations between among different individual countries only to reflect on the way world looks like.

Historical record shows that, as in the words of Asogwa (2012) China showed interest in Nigeria years before the Nigeria's independence. This interest, which many experts believe to be a concrete reason behind the subsequent diplomatic connection, was informal. As Nigeria was under British colonialism, it was prohibited to extend any official closeness to Communist country such as China, therein. The first Sino-Nigeria formal contact come to being in 1960 when China participated in congratulatory celebration to Nigeria upon attaining independence. Nigeria and China agreed on certain principles that symbolize mutual togetherness. These principles include peaceful mutual co-existence,non-aggression commitment, and non-interference in one another's internal affairs.

NIGERIA AND TAIWAN: FROM SUN YUN-SUAN TO TRADE MISSIONS

Nigeria and Taiwan connection started as early as 1960s when the World Bank endorsed a Taiwanese scientist, Sun Yun-Suan, the then leading personality in the Taiwan Power industry, to work as CEO and General Manager of the Nigeria's Electricity Corporation between 1964 and 1967. The absolute aim was to revive the power sector in Nigeria. This attempt had later on, established trade and economic relations between Nigeria and Republic of China (ROC). The Sun's engagement ensured additional amount of the electricity supply by around 87 percent, therein (Yueh, 2009).

However, in 1990, both Nigeria and Taiwan ratified on a Memorandum of Understanding on certain issues including trade and investments that led to the establishment of trade missions in Taipei and Lagos in April 1991 and November, 1992 respectively. Additionally, the Taiwan Consulate General was opened on August, 1993 in Calabar city of Nigeria as an attempt to help in processing Nigeria's exports. As this effort have not

attracted Taiwanese investors, Taiwan terminated the agreement and closed down its office in Calabar after nearly four years (Tseng, 2008).

SINO-AFRICA AND THE QUEST FOR GOLDEN CHANCE: THE NIGERIAN PERSPECTIVE

Africa and China represent an ancient civilizations and predated historical backgrounds. The ancient Egyptian civilization, Mali, Senegal, Ghana and KanemBornu empires amongthe oldest and world largest human civilizations recorded by history. Economically and politically, China emerges to safeguard her national objectives through her connection with Africa. To satisfy these objectives, population remains one of the determinant factors targeted by the communist China. Nigeria, the populously advantageous nation with the largest black citizens in the world, seems to agree on what was seen as passive trade-by-barter with Chinese regional interest through which it simultaneously wanted to realize many decades ago, the'One China Policy', and in reverse, Nigeria sees it a chance to seize other financial, trade and investment chances from the opportune doors opens by the wealthy Communist regime of China.

Beyond doubt, this is golden chance for both Nigeria and China, as it would lead to ensuring the China's policy get endorsed in Africa by wiping Taiwan and denouncing her diplomatic legality asin the international community. Yun Sun (2014), puts it that Africa is seen as a continent with many opportunities that compose both large population which means rising of the demands due to the lack of basic necessities, infrastructures, industries, quality education, skilled labors, and health care in one hand, and in the other, the big market that eases immediate consumption ofend-goodsproducts. In other words, China needs Nigeria'simmaturity in terms of industrialization, and of course its big populationfor consumption and investments which are very much important for domestic economic growth. Likewise, Nigeriadesires China's products that somehow become inevitable for her to satisfy domestic needs.

Adewuyi,O and Oyejide,Ademola(2013), maintain that for the last four decades or so, Sino-Nigeria trade and investment were seen and believed by many experts to be a point of reference simply because,apart from mutual benefits and costs, theyalso bring about different trendsregarding security and governance challenges.

Nigeria placesher priority on One-China Policy.The Nigeria's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Geoffrey Onyeama was quoted as saying:

> "Taiwan will stop enjoying any privileges because it is not a country that is recognized under the international law; and under the position we have taken internationally, we recognize the people China…Taiwan will not have any diplomatic representation in Nigeria and also, they will be moving to Lagos to the extent that they function as a trade mission with skeletal staff…Chinese government does not oppose trading with Taiwan as long as there is no formal contact with the government that will suggest recognition of Taiwan as sovereign country"(Onyeama, January, 2017)

Apart from a remarkably economic gaining between the two countries,China is however, expected to support Nigeria's vision of becoming a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council in a bid to maximize the number of permanent members of the council. This agenda coupled with the economic reasons as well as financial packages and projects that are committed to be executed by China, the Africa's emerging powermay possibly turn as the biggest gainer of Sino-Africa connection.

Veto power alone (enjoying by the currently five permanent member-countries of the Council) will ensurethat Nigeria take part in different important deliberations of Intergovernmental bodies such as the United Nations, International Monetary Fund, and even International Atomic Energy Agency, which will at the same time, mean high caliber for Nigeria's regional and international politics as well.According to Yongjian (2005), PRC would always remain happy with Nigeria's prompt response in recognizing the mainland a legitimate nation to be included in the United Nations and not Taiwan during the 26th session of the United Nations General Assembly in 1971.

Furthermore, formal and informal supports could be drawn altogether from the common similarities that may passively connect the two sovereign nations; from ethnic complexity to richness in both human and natural resources. The most important of it is the largest population each of them has. Chinese population, which is 1.4 billion determinates consumption and production as well. However, Nigeria, with 204 million, emerges the populous country in Africa. Oche et al (2001) argue that one-third of every three persons in Asia is Chinese, as one-fourth of every four persons in Africa is Nigerian. Hence, Nigeriastands in need with exporting countries such as China in order to meet her population's demands as she also needs to export for financial needs in turn. Chinese products have large market in Nigeria and Nigerian resources i.e. oil attract Chinese consumption widely.

CONCLUSION

As in other regions, China – through her multiple measures: veto power at the UNSC, rapidly rising economy, trade and investments – becomes a real threat to the Republic of China's (Taiwan) claimed sovereignty in Africa.It's palpably clear that in order to underpin her policy of unification (with Taiwan), China utilizesthe Africa's notoriouspoorness and rampant poverty to execute this prime objective. However, financial ability of the Communist regime punishes Taiwan not onlyby raping small economies of Africa and Asia, but also tempts Europe and Americas as well. As far as 'One China Policy' is concerned, notwithstanding the People Republic of China is a Communist regime, the capitalism serves as 'grist to the mills' for her as it more or less, makes it easy to attract recognition from these countries simply because the economic benefit and financial gaining are high.Relatively, it would be irrationally a great danger for an African country to oppose China for a mere sake of Taiwan diplomacy or economic reason. In contemporary world affairs, 'might' matters much a lot than 'right' does. It could be condemnable attempt to dump a party that falls in need with your support to the one that might stand with or without you, especially when the later (i.e. China) appears aggressor against the former(i.e. Taiwan), but this canno longer determine the global affairs, but is in one way round,the rule of the game, alternatively.Nigeria is not exceptional nation in Africa. As mentioned above; apart from China's financial packages and

projects, Nigeria is bidding for a permanent seat at the UNSC where China would have a lot to offer when the issue of maximization arises. Hence, Nigeriastill needs to strengthen her already cordial relations with China far deeper than never before.

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