



## Strategic philosophical framework for nigeria-china relations: a misleading philosophy of capital accumulation

### KEYWORDS

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**ABSTRACT** *The present research highlights the point that all is not well with Nigeria-China Relations. The problem necessitating the research is the observation that Nigeria-China Relations is fast turning Nigeria into an African dump site for China's market globalization for non-mutual benefits in favour of China. The aim of the paper was to propose through Kwame Nkrumah's argument for self-development (as captured in his book: "Neocolonialism"), a new philosophy and policy framework for mutual benefit, otherwise Nigeria may become China's new colony in Africa. The methods adopted for this purpose were those of observation, analysis and inference. In the end, the study concludes that if Nigeria must develop, then Nigeria's foreign policy department must re-evaluate the country's foreign relations, not only with China but in its entirety. The discovery which the paper made was a shocking one, namely, that most Nigerians tend to believe that all is well with Nigeria-China relations, while this is not the case. The research is significant as a work which raises something new from Nkrumah's thoughts, namely, his concept of political self-development as a valid philosophical framework for the "de-Chinazation" of Nigeria from China's external policy, especially that of its market globalization.*

### Introduction

Any foreign relations policy (it does not matter which brand or shade it belongs), is a way of regulating the conduct of behavior among the different nations involved. Although the foreign relation of any one nation is defined by the country's foreign policy, foreign relations represent a philosophy and a policy which one country adopts towards another. In the Humanities, it is defined in terms of philosophy and in the Social Sciences as foreign policy relations. One thing that is so central is that there is hardly a country that does not bear certain relationship with either or both with friendly nations with commonwealth countries such as Britain and America by virtue of our colonial history, the country's relations with the Asian Tigers seem the strongest. Yet, new turn of events seem to indicate that all is not well with Nigeria-China relations. According to Online Dictionary of English Words (Internet, Online), any foreign policy is a government's philosophy of dealing with the Nation in question. There is, however, no universally acceptable definition of 'foreign relations', hence, the study adopts one foreign policy here given as a working definition for purposes of the current research.

The Wikipedia article, "Nigeria-China Relations" canvasses the position adopted in the study, namely, that although it seems at first sight that China is a God-sent Messiah to rescue Nigeria from underdevelopment, the actual truth to consider is that all is not well (Internet, Online). The current philosophy guiding the relations between the two countries is one which is definable in terms of three elements with unreciprocated adverse effects on the part of Nigeria. The foregoing article in the Wikipedia has indicated that these three elements, which power Nigeria-China relations revolve around poverty, interest of Nigerians oligarchy and the strategic philosophy of market globalization since Nigeria has very little to market to China. With Nigeria fast becoming a protégée of Chinese' social and economic imperialism, it has become expedient to search the libraries for a new strategic framework for Kwame Nkrumah's philosophy of self-development as captured in his book: "Neocolonialism". Since first things must be tackled first, it is pertinent to make a general highlight of this phi-

losophy of self-development as a new and strategic policy framework for repositioning Nigeria-China's contemporary relations.

Nkrumah's Philosophy of Self-Development as a Policy Framework for Nigeria-China Relations

Nkrumah did in 1965 contend that neocolonialism is the last stage of imperialism. Yet, it is for situations such as the country's foreign relations with China that he wrote. Nkrumah in the first chapter of his book: "Neocolonialism" (1965:4) opines that this last stage of neocolonialism is among other things not just the last, but the most dangerous stage of social and political or economic imperialism by the so-called developed countries of the world. Nkrumah makes it clear that it is so-called 'neo' because it is the same old colonialism of the underdeveloped Nations by the advance Nations, relying on indirect means, which may be political, economic, military or strategic in nature. Although the Nigerian state speaks of poverty, Nkrumah is apt to the forms of neocolonialism to self-development by blaming the over dependence of African Nations on the developed West (Ibid). According to the online article, "Neo-colonialism" the last stage of imperialism by Kwame (1965) as retrieved from [www.marxist.org/.../intg](http://www.marxist.org/.../intg).

*Old fashioned colonialism is by no means entirely abolished. It shall constitute an African problem, but it is everywhere on the retreat. Once a territory has become nominally independent, it is no longer possible.*

Over-dependency on China is clearly as dangerous as depending totally on any other nation, especially, at a time like this when the cheap nature of Chinese technology, Chinese construction companies and Chinese foreign labour has both stopped Nigeria from developing her own and further limited the Nigerian vision to the vision of China Relations as the best for the country. This explains why the following recent analysis by BBC World News indicates in the Nigerian attitude a total digression from Nkrumah's advice for self-development. According to this excerpt s handed down in the Wikipedia article: Nigeria-

China" Relations", en.wikipedia.org/wiki/China%25E2%25.

China is one of Nigeria's most important trading and export partners. According to BBC World Service Poll, 85% of Nigerians view China's influence as positive with only 11% expressing a negative view, making Nigeria the most pro-China (in its foreign policies).

With this at hand, Nkrumah's whole point in his "Neocolonialism", which constitutes our rallying point in the current research, namely, the point that the problem with all third world countries under one form of neocolonialism or the other, is a problem of attitude or more directly the attitudes of over-depending on partner nations (1965:6). Hence, the position of Adele, J., L., *In The New Scrambles* (2010:22/23), is that unless self-development is vigorously pursued in line with the recommendations in Nkrumah's *Neocolonialism*, Africa would continue to remain a scramble site for the rich nations of the world.

## Overall content if Nigeria-China Relations

### 1. Strategic or Military Relations

Like its United Nations wider canopy, Nigeria and China relate and cooperate in one sense in relation to strategic or military assistance. When Britain and United Nations withdrew their support for Nigeria in favour of "Biafra", strategic cooperation shifted to Russia from her commonwealth counterparts. Consequently, the Gowon administration was able to sustain the war from Russian supplied arms. Today, the collapse of Soviet Union in 1991 has opened up new doors for similar services for China. Apart from some Western Nations like US and Britain, much of the arms that sustained the war against Niger-Delta militancy came as exchange of oil for arms with China (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/China%25E2%25.).

### 2. Commerce or Economic Relations

When Chinese President Hu Jintan visited Nigeria in 2006, China was in that visit able to perfect its Economic relations with Nigeria by obtaining three oil drilling licenses and promising to recycle same by investing at least 4 billion from her annual proceedings into what they foregoing Wikipedia article calls, development projects in Nigeria (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/China%25E2%25). But what exactly would constitute these development projects were not specified. Since the 2006 date of the supposing sealing of oil ties with China, Nigerians are yet to see a housing project built by a Nigerian government for any rural Nigerian community. One is yet to hear of an announcement of any scholarship scheme for Nigerian students. The conclusions from the foregoing are that Nigerians are certainly the losing partners as the country's oligarchy is already enjoying free trips to China. Alternatively, the compensa-

tion for the average citizen has been that of a proliferation of cheap but substandard Chinese constructions and technologies that cannot be allowed even in neighbouring countries.

## DEVELOPMENT OF BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH CHINA

Unlike Britain, US and other commonwealth nations which owe their bilateral relations with Nigeria to the country's pre-independent days, the Wikipedia article: "Nigeria-China Relations" put the official kick-off date for Nigeria-China Relations at February 10<sup>th</sup>, 1971. Although, informal activities were already taking place before then, this date makes a new era in which Nigeria-China Relations grew closer. The foregoing sources largely represent the official view to the extent that between the 1970s to 1989, Nigeria has become a chief import service of Chinese oil in exchange for Chinese booming economy, social relations ad strategic support. The question which should bother Nigeria's intelligence is that of the decision to export crude to China and purchase Chinese refined oil, when five refineries in the could still do the job. This lack of confidence in its own system is the sole advantage which China has taken of her Nigerian counterpart for the prosperity of China.

From the foregoing, it is self evident that Nigeria is the losing partner in the Nigeria-China Relations. This makes it imperative for her to change the mode of operations in favour of Nkrumah's philosophy of self-development as a way of putting Nigeria at par with not only her Chinese counterparts but other nations of the world. It is one thing to say that bilateral agreements with China and other developed nations of the world have been based on 'reached negotiations', but it is quite another thing to state that China is able to 'negotiate better'. That is why Nigeria finds herself on the depending bench with China. For the most part, the Chinese state is careful about anything and everything that enters China. At it is, one may even suggest that is the Chinese government requests that Nigeria should shutdown all public schools as a condition for investing in Nigeria's oil, Nigeria's foreign policy would agree and this is wrong. Just like the Nigerian government does not have to release all the Boko Haram General as a condition for securing the release of the *Chibok Girls*, the challenge is thrown in the foregoing article on the Nigerian foreign policy planners as well as all stakeholders in the research and academic world to re-evaluate what now passes on as Nigeria-China Relations.

## REFERENCE

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