THE NATURE OF CHINA'S RELATIONS WITH AFRICA: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF SINO-BOTSWANA AND SINO-NAMIBIA RELATIONS

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ABSTRACT

This study systematically analyses the nature of China's relations with Africa from a comparative perspective. It uses Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibia relations as specific case studies. The necessity of the comparative approach is to draw out similarities and differences of factors that influence the nature of Sino- African relations, with a specific focus on these two southern African states. The systematic study is grounded in the constructivist theoretical paradigm. Constructivism claims that core issues of international relations, national interests, security, identity, norms, and ideas are socially constructed. The foregrounding of the study in constructivism necessitated the adoption of the qualitative research methodology which allowed for a comprehensive data collection, thus advancing the reliability and trustworthiness of data and findings. Botswana and Namibia were found to share several commonalities in terms of foreign policies and relations with China. The two southern African states have established strong and effective foreign policy principles which guide their engagement with other states in general, and with China in particular. Empirical evidence emerging from this study suggests that both Botswana and Namibia are driven by specific foreign policy principles. Despite these commonalities, the dissimilarity of factors influences positive economic and political outcomes for Botswana and Namibia in their ties with China.

Firstly, history plays a vital role in the relations between China and Namibia but plays less role in the Sino- Botswana relations. The nature of the Sino-Namibian ties has been constant since the 1950s and is driven by historical linkage, specifically China's role in Namibia's liberation struggle. China was not largely involved in Botswana's struggle for independence. Therefore, Botswana's relations with China are not largely politically motivated but are economically determined. Secondly, results indicate that a change in political leadership and governance architecture has not entirely influenced the overall nature of relations China has with Namibia and Botswana. The principles of the relationships remain unchanged, however, approaches to the relations differ practically from one leader to another and these diverse foreign policy postures essentially influence the nature of Chinese presence in Botswana and Namibia in general and more so for Botswana. Also, stable and sustainable political leadership is essential in the bilateral relations China shares with Botswana and Namibia.

Thirdly, Developmental State behaviour is noted. It has been established that while Botswana and Namibia are democratic developmental states, China is largely regarded as an authoritarian developmental state. However, the extent to which the Botswana and Namibian governments exert power and influence to achieve economic development goals in their relations with China vary. Motivated by economic determinism, Botswana exercises significant control and ownership of its natural resources and the mining industry. Motivated by political considerations, Namibia's natural resources and the mining industry are largely owned by foreign entities, with China particularly in full control of the uranium mines in the Namibian state.

Evidence which emerged from this comparative study suggests that patterns of the Sino- African relations duplicate those of neo-colonialism or rather demonstrate a "partially neo-colonising power". The Asian state tends to take advantage of weaknesses inherent in the political economic system of different African states, as exemplified by Botswana and Namibia case studies. As a result of the historical past, the form of international neo-patrimonialism comes into play, particularly in the case of Namibia. The structure of the Forum of China -Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), in which African states are meant to sign documents containing what China has already decided to offer in terms of development to Africa, is brought forward. This happens without due consultation with African states and the priorities of such offerings in terms of Africa's development agenda. This is indicative of a tendency of neo-colonialism. The study suggests that for Namibia to benefit greatly from the relations with China in terms of economic development, there is a need for a clear distinction between political ties and economic ties, and a break from historic bondage.

Keywords: Foreign Relations, Foreign Policy, Political Leadership, Governance, Constructivism, Developmental State, Neo-Colonialism

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACP	African Caribbean Pacific Countries
AGOA	African Growth and Opportunity Act
AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
ANC	African National Congress
AU	African Union
BDP	Botswana Democratic Party
BIUST	Botswana International University of Science and Technology
BPC	Botswana Power Corporation's
BRCS	Botswana Red Cross Society
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CDB	China Development Bank
CGSP	Chinese Government Scholarship Program
CIUB	Confucius Institute at the University of Botswana
CNEEC	China National Electric Equipment Corporation
CPC	Communist Party of China
CPIFA	Chinese People's Institute of Foreign Affairs
CSCEC	China State Construction and Engineering Corporation
CSCP	Comprehensive Strategic Cooperative Partnership
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EPAs	Economic Partnership Agreements
EU	European Union
FOCAC	Forum of China- Africa Cooperation
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FIA	Foreign Investment Act of 1990
FLS	Frontline States
FNLA	National Front for the Liberation of Angola
FRELIMO	Liberation Front of Mozambique

GDI	Global Development Initiative
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GFC	Global Financial Crisis
GWM	Great Wall Motors
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPPR	Institute for Public Policy Research
IR	International Relations
JPCC	Joint Permanent Commission of Cooperation
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MIAC	Ministry of International Affairs and Cooperation of Botswana
MIT	Ministry of Industrialisation and Trade Namibia
MIRCO	Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation
MINUSMA	Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
MPLA	Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NDP	National Development Plans
NPC	National Planning Commission
NPC	National People's Congress
NIPA	Namibia Investment Promotion Act
NIPDB	Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board
NSA	Namibia Statistics Agency
OBOR	One Belt One Road Initiative
ODC	Okavango Diamond Company
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OPEC	Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
OFDI	Outward Foreign Direct Investment
PLAN	People's Liberation Army Navy

PRC	People’s Republic of China
QCA	Qualitative Content Analysis
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SGs	Secretary Generals
SSKI	Sir Seretse Khama International
SOEs	State-Owned Enterprises
SRF	Silk Road Fund
SWAPO	South West Africa People’s Organisations
SWANU	South West Africa National Union
UNITA	National Union for the Total Independence of Angola
UB	University of Botswana
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UN PKOs	United Nation's Peacekeeping Operations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USA	United States of America
WHO	World Health Organisation
WB	World bank
WTO	World Trade Organisation
ZANU -PF	Zimbabwe African National Union–Patriotic Front
ZANU	Zimbabwean African National Union

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Foreign Relations: Foreign relations are described as effective ways in which states engage and manage relations with other states. States intend to create strong bonds that are made up of economic, political, and social interactions. Grieco, Ikenberry and Mastanduno (2019) define foreign/International relations as the political, economic, social and cultural ties between two states or among numerous states. From an international political perspective, this study draws attention to how states conduct relations while focusing on foreign policymaking and implementation, trade and diplomacy in the Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibia relations.

Foreign Policy: Foreign policy is a set of policies that states apply in its interactions with other states. They are a mechanism that a national government employs as guiding tools in their diplomatic interactions with other governments. Foreign policy of a state is formulated to protect and promote its national interests in the conduct of relations with other states, both in bilateral and multilateral relations (Ahmed, 2020). In the context of this study, the states under study have a set of policies and standards which guide their relations with China. These policies aim to achieve political and economic goals and values while at the same time safeguarding the national interests of these states. This may include national and international security, maintaining sovereignty and economic prosperity.

Developmental State: Andrew and Nwapi (2018) stated that the developmental state concept suggests state-led development or state intervention in economic policy. In this context, a developmental state is defined as full intervention and control by the government in the economic activities of a state. The government invests in key sectors of the economy to stimulate the growth of new industries in the private sector

and provide direct support for state-owned enterprises in strategic sectors of the economy. To this study, the researcher applies developmental state discourse by exploring the extent to which Botswana and Namibian democratic governments are involved in the economic affairs of the states.

Political Leadership

Murray Edelman cited in Liebenberg (2012) contests that often political leaders are simply the layer drifting to the top from an otherwise healthy society, or 'that self-inflated personality types through choice or short-mindedness, or as puppets of conglomerate interests or mindless ideologies, end up on top by conniving, corruption and back-stabbing'.

Political leadership in the context of this study refers to the governance of states and institutions by individuals (presidents) for economic emancipation and advancement of states through operational and political elements. Political leadership is viewed as one of the factors whereby change in political leadership and governance and the influence it may have on foreign relations is highlighted. The personality of the political leader in office plays a pivotal role in relations states' understudy share. Also, the institution which includes a strong political structure and political support remains relevant and remains the key driver for governance in the Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibia relations.

Neo-colonialism: Neo-colonialism is defined as a policy whereby a major power uses economic and political means to preserve or extend its influence over underdeveloped nations (Udegbunam, 2020). It is a concept where there is an application of pressure on various areas such as politics and economies by one state to influence and regulate another state, more often smaller and weaker states. To this study, neo-colonialism

amalgamates China’s renowned presence in Africa which has received mixed views and opinions from researchers, particularly from the western scholars and think tanks.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my family and to my late Co-Supervisor, Prof. Ian Liebenberg. May his soul rest in eternal peace.

DECLARATION

I, Roseta Mersia Nawases, hereby declare that this study is my own work and is a true reflection of my research, and that this work, or any part thereof, has not been submitted for a degree at any other institution.

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Name of Student **Signature** **Date**

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction: Orientation and background of the study

The rise of the People's Republic of China (PRC) as a new global leader since the late 1970s has transformed the world order, as the state has claimed its position in international politics and become quite influential on the African continent. The year 1978 marked a period of reform and the opening of China's planned economy, giving top priority to economic development. Launching a second revolution in that year, Deng Xiaoping's administration formulated and implemented an open-door policy, restructuring the Chinese economic system to open to the rest of the world (Long, 2005). During the 1980s, China then introduced the four modernisations with the aims of strengthening the modernisation of agriculture, industry, national defence, and science and technology (Liebenberg & Van der Merwe, 2020; Gros & Fung, 2019 as cited in Iroanya & Nawases, 2022). Former Premier Enlai mentioned that the objective of the four modernisations is to transform socialist China and encourage flourishment and supremacy with aims to accomplish the fundamental goal of the 100-Year Marathon (Clark, 2020). This was done through the integration and coordination of its internal and external policies and has resulted in China evolving to become a global economic power.

The evolution of modern China-Africa relations dates to the 1950s, with Egypt being the first to establish diplomatic relations in 1956 (Naidu, 2007; Iroanya & Nawases, 2022; Yu, 1988). This era marks a time when most African states went through decolonisation. Despite its gnarly economic position during that period, China provided large economic and military aid to support African states' national liberation movements (Sun, 2019). Liebenberg and Van der Merwe (2020) shared similar

sentiments by adding that China's external involvement was augmented through its use of soft power and because it supported liberation movements in Africa. China's fast ageing population as well as its high-level and high rate of savings forces the country's policymakers to be in continuous search of outbound investment opportunities (Johnston, 2016). This clearly shows how states change interest over time and readjust to modern international affairs, while at the same time safeguarding their identity. The geographical focus of this study is Botswana, Namibia, and China. Botswana and Namibia are neighbouring states with diverse natural resources and similar population sizes. Namibia (previously under South African rule) is on the south-western coast of Africa, distinguished by the Namib desert on the coast, the Atlantic Ocean (to the west), and occupied partly by the Kalahari Desert in the eastern part, bordered by Botswana (Green, 2023). Botswana, conversely, is a landlocked state in the centre of the southern part of Africa and is mostly covered by the Kalahari Desert. It is bordered by Namibia (at the Caprivi strip) to the west and northern parts, Zambia and Zimbabwe to the north-eastern part, and South Africa to the southeast and south (Parson, 2023). China, the second largest economy globally, is in the East Asian part of the world. Known for its large population, in fact the largest in the world, China has over the years grown to be a dominant and influential global powerhouse.

Scholars like Sekakela (2016) highlighted that China's rapid economic advancement generated enormous improvement in the economic performance of many African states. The relations are further observed as either a positive sum game or a rather zero-sum for Botswana and Namibia. Novel information from previous studies, deeply discussed in the literature review, emphasized how Botswana's economic relations with China have more gains for Botswana, in comparison to the gains Namibia attains from its relations with China. This is despite the fact Namibia has enormous natural

resources as it is a maritime country, while Botswana is a land -linked state. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita in Botswana was last recorded at 6887.75 US dollars in 2021 while Namibia's GDP per capita was at 4098.66 US dollars in 2021 (Trading Economics, n.d.). Existing literature cautions that as much as close ties are common in world politics, there has been limited scrutiny presented in international relations, either with a broader empirical pattern or as an "overall analytical category" (Haugnik, 2018).

Guided by the tenets of the Theory of Constructivism and by adopting the qualitative research method approach, this study constitutes a relatively specific and new areas of focus on the nature of China's presence in Africa, particularly in southern Africa, concerning Namibia and Botswana. This study deems it relevant to apply key tenets of the constructivist theory to analyse the features that influence the nature of China's relations with Botswana and Namibia. For instance, the concept of a Developmental State (DS) and change in political leadership and governance architecture could be viewed as features that shape and best describe the nature of relationships China has with Botswana and Namibia. The argument is not that there are no other factors that shape the relations among states under study. This study, however, focuses on unique factors such as the said drawing focus from these various approaches amongst others that have been influential in shaping these relationships. There are other key dimensions and features that this study draws attention to, such as resource allocation for economic advancement, political ties and the perception of neo-colonialism in Botswana and Namibia. The study intends to highlight what is already known, as it is imperative to examine and analyse the range of approaches adopted by scholars, advancing theoretical insights, and filling the identified policy gaps of the subject matter. This is done by magnifying the features and the pivotal role they play in

foreign policy implementation which result in dissimilar economic benefits for the two African states understudy in their relations with China. By highlighting problematic areas based on the nature of the reality, lessons, and experiences from Namibia's and Botswana's economic and political relations with China, this study is set apart as it provides qualified views with a wider exposure to the subject matter by addressing the identified intellectual deficit in analysis of these relations. The study further problematises the practical similarities and dissimilarities between Botswana and Namibia regarding their foreign policies, foreign postures, and overall identified components that may influence the nature of the ties the two southern African states have with China. Political leadership in this context refers to the governance of states and institutions by individuals (president) for the economic and political emancipation and advancement of states through operational and political elements.

1.2. Chinese Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)

China holds global connectivity in high regard; hence the country readjusted its approach to the world. National interests, as one of the core tenets of the constructivist theory, are encapsulated in China's ever-evolving search for greater economic advancement and growing global awareness as it strives to develop initiatives aligned to meet the needs of its local people, while at the same time safeguarding its identity and influence in international politics.

Following the actions of the 'Go Global Strategy' and to further assess China's economic integration strategies, it is of great importance to highlight China's biggest foreign policy initiative, the 2013 BRI and the role it plays in the economic growth of developing states as well as the role of these states African the initiative. The need to cater to its growing population and the effects of the strict family planning policies, called for a shift in China's economic models. Additionally, the 2008 Global Financial

Crisis (GFC) which led to a slow pace of growth of China's GDP and a drop-in demand for Chinese commodities, further forced the country's policymakers to search for development finance opportunities away from the low value-added labour-intensive, manufacturing export-led model (Johnston, 2016). To further redefine its role in international politics and to respond to global needs, provision for investment, strategic trade partnership, and aid to developing states form part of the Chinese foreign policy.

Feldshuh (2018) supported the above view by adding that the BRI proposed to upgrade infrastructure, improve China's bilateral ties, and international institutions, and essentially motivate global development. Like the Go Global Strategy, the BRI forms part of China's active role in investing in foreign states. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (n.d.) highlights BRI's major priorities: policy coordination, infrastructure connectivity, unimpeded trade, financial integration, and connecting people. Since its inception, Chinese investments have been on a rapid rise in more than 60 BRI states. During the first BRI forum for international cooperation held in May 2017, Beijing gathered over 65 states, covering two-thirds of the global population, with the aim of expanding its investments and ties (Ang, 2019). In March 2020, the number of nations that had joined the BRI by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with China had increased to 138 (European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, n.d.). SAFE (2018), cited in Zhou, Gilbert, Wang, Cabré, & Gallagher (2018) stated that in 2017, the Chinese government pledged US$113 billion in special funds for investments in BRI, about eight times the Chinese financial sector's OFDI flow in the same year. Most of the funds that were pledged for various projects and investment opportunities were sourced from the Chinese Export-Import Bank (Eximbank) and the China Development Bank (CDB). The two banks are set to be the key players in financing Chinese activities in Africa (Brautigam & Tang,

2014 cited in Noesselt, 2019). Hayes (2017 as cited in Liebenberg and Van der Merwe, 2020) stated that Chinese contractors would be granted with credit to carry out the work of BRI in these states.

1.2.1 Chinese BRI and Sino-Africa relations

Apart from the above-mentioned financial institutions, pledged funding was dedicated to the Silk Road Fund (SRF) and Chinese commercial financial institutions have been encouraged to conduct BRI investments in Chinese Yuan (Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), 2017 cited in Zhou et.al, 2018). The initiative also included Chinese companies outsourcing parts of production chains to Africa as part of advancing socio-ecological production standards and sustainable development (Noesselt, 2019). These companies are also presented with opportunities to invest in developing industrial, manufacturing, and special economic zones and parks (Liebenberg & Van der Merwe, 2020). These positive moves would strengthen the internationalization of the Chinese currency. Noesselt (2019) wrote that "Chinese banks reinvest their currency reserves to further strengthen the internationalization of the Chinese currency by offering loans and credit lines the renminbi".

China has now moved from a more state-centric approach to an all-inclusive approach that involves non-state actors. In demystifying the BRI and Sino-Africa relations, China has engaged numerous African economies that are participating in the BRI. Calabrese (2019) wrote that 40 of the 55 African states had signed some sort of MoU or other agreement on the BRI as of September 2019. These economies amongst others include Djibouti, Zambia, Tanzania, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Angola (Breuer, 2017; ZiroMwatela & Changfeng, 2016). An interesting fact is that in 2014, as part of the BRI, China built a military/naval base in Djibouti, the country's first permanent naval/military establishment beyond its borders (Chaziza, 2018). Noesselt (2019) as

well as Hartmann & Noesselt (2019) argue that China is not only concerned with the stabilization of resource-rich African nations, but also on trans-border activities of non-state actors. She added that BRI allows for China to secure contracts for Chinese State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) within the infrastructure building sector by concluding bilateral investment deals with African states (Noesselt, 2019 as cited in Hartmann & Noesselt, 2019). Sun (2019) alluded that the BRI has been encouraging Chinese investors to build industrial parks and opening labour-intensive manufacturing factories in Africa.

During the 2018 FOCAC meeting, China announced that it has made a provision of $60 billion in financial support to Africa, with initial focus of the BRI being in East Africa (Overseas Development Institute (ODI), 2019). The BRI opportunities are however not entirely explored within the southern African region, particularly in Namibia and Botswana. If the opportunity is grasped, aggressively introduced and explored, the two nations could contribute to strengthening the Sino-Africa development relations as access to the region for trade would be easy through the Namibian harbour, to the rest of the neighbouring economies. For sustainable development, African states could exploit these opportunities and interests presented by Chinese investors through this initiative which would assist in filling the infrastructure gap which hinders trade in Sino- Africa relations. Also, China has continuously demonstrated its commitment to providing infrastructure development to African states.

As mentioned, China has been experiencing a rapid population growth and needs to relook at its domestic policies that would aid in output per capita as the workforce share is also dropping (Johnston, 2016). For this to be realized, China shifted domestic

low-cost labour-intensive production to other states, to now developing higher value-added industries and services (Johnston, 2016). Africa's cheap labour costs remains attractive to many as an influx of Chinese nationals in the continent has been on a continuous rise. Africa has been the answer to this objective because of its attractive minimum wages. Johnston (2016) also highlights that outsourcing will aid China to generate concurrent demand for some of its excess industrial capacity.

Despite all these positives, speculations and suspicions around BRI and China's overall intentions continue to bloom abroad. Critics believe that the initiative is triggering "debt traps" and practising "debt trap diplomacy" (Ang, 2019; Dollar, 2019; Risberg, 2019). Numerous Western analysts have uttered their concerns about the unfair terms of investment and weak governance model that BRI projects set for developing states as well as claims that the total dollar values shown in informal pledges overshadow the actual investment in projects (Marston, 2018). Similarly echoed by Ang (2019) is that some analysts have criticized China for practising "predatory lending" as termed by Us diplomats, using BRI as a cover to extend loans that will leave BRI partners indebted to Chinese interests This also giving China leverage over these nations.

Feldshuh (2018) also submitted that the West describes the BRI with suspicion and mistrust, adding accusations of "debt diplomacy", neo-colonialist drive, or that China is undertaking a "new Marshall Plan." Regarding the debt trap, Marston (2018) and Dollar (2019) provided an example of Sri Lanka as proof that BRI is unsustainable following the small country's inability to pay off massive loans for the construction of a $1.5 billion port at Hambantota. As a result, the government of Colombo worked out an uncomfortable debt-for-equity swap whereby China secured a 99-year lease over the port (Marston, 2018; Risberg, 2019).

The delay, or rather, the fact that the pledges seemingly do not always equal projects as numerous projects do not become visible has caused concern in the Western world. For instance, the Chinese-backed railway projects (e.g. the Bandung-to-Jakarta railway line, worth $5.5 billion deal signed by Indonesia with China in 2015), in other Asian states such as Malaysia (one of the largest beneficiaries of BRI investment) and Thailand are examples. These governments have complained about corruption, excessive costs, and "a new version of colonialism" as stated by the Malaysian Prime Minister, Mahathir bin Mohamad (Ang, 2019). Dollar (2019) added that the program is seen to be lacking transparency, and as such, difficult to find details on the amounts China is lending for the different projects, terms of the loans, selection of contractors, and lastly, the environmental and social risks that are involved.

1.2.2 BRI and its challenges

The BRI along with other economic integration policies introduced by the Chinese government for developing states pose as a threat to US hegemony as the US has been quite reluctant and missed the chance to support underdeveloped and developing African nations. Also, US military involvement for instance in Sudan, Somalia and Libya (2011) has not endeared the USA to many African States. China has also been accused of using the BRI as an instrument to promote its dictatorship-like economic model to other nations. Dollar (2019) wrote that the BRI received criticism, as numerous big loan recipients like Venezuela, Cambodia, Laos, Sudan, and Zimbabwe have poor records of democracy and civil liberties.

In the African front, Calabrese (2019) highlighted challenges faced regarding infrastructure development, which is one of the main objectives of the BRI. She stated that several projects, even before the BRI have turned into 'white elephants'. These projects are either too large, too expensive, not viable, or simply not well planned and

out of proportion with their value or worth (Calabrese, 2019; Dollar, 2019). Another issue has to do with the nature of negotiations on regional integration and the role of BRI. Studies have shown that BRI negotiations are mainly on bilateral terms, even when it has to do with the development of infrastructure (such as corridors) for neighbouring states to connect. For instance, Tanzania signed a US$7.6 billion loan agreement with the China EXIM Bank in July 2016, aimed at constructing a standard gauge rail corridor that will link Tanzania with regional neighbours Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, and Congo (Johnston, 2016). If this was a joint negotiation between the involved African states and China, it would turn out more advantageous to the African nations as the repayments for instance would be shared and the negotiation process would be faster, thus resulting in rapid development and regional trade.

Another example is the case of Kenya and Uganda, where the Chinese government holds separate talks with the two African governments regarding the construction of the Standard Gauge Railway, aiming to link the port of Mombasa through Nairobi, and then on to Uganda and beyond (Calabrese, 2019; Wissenbach, & Wang, 2017). Lastly, what is worrisome is the absence of the definition of the concept of the BRI. The Chinese government has been quite vague about the BRI brand and what it is about. For instance, Ang (2019) wrote that BRI nations lack information on "whether the initiative is primarily about building infrastructure, promoting trade, extending Chinese loans, establishing new standards, or broadcasting Chinese soft power. As a result of this, states would find it cumbersome to enforce accountability as it is difficult to evaluate BRI projects according to their purported aims" (Ang, 2019). This vagueness could be one of the reasons for the seemingly wide mistrust the BRI is experiencing (Feldshu, 2018).

Cognizant of the continuous geopolitical race, China should pay mind to financial hazards that may come with initiatives such as the BRI. Various scholars have raised concerns over the high risks China might experience when operating in diverse regions, each with its own geopolitical and financial hazards. They have suggested that China work closely with BRI partnership economies to develop various coordinating mechanisms, particularly in finance and industrial capacity (Feldshuh, 2018).

Claims and accusations against the BRI and the rise of China as a hegemonic power are usually dismissed and disputed by Chinese authorities. The Chinese government in its defence claims that those accusations and suspicions are a simple manipulation aimed to raise suspicion of China's intentions overseas (Feldshuh, 2018). Some analysts think that the BRI is not a threat to US hegemony. Marston (2018) for example, points out that although the world has experienced a rise in Chinese presence in developing states, the FDI from US private companies still outweighs that of Chinese investors, particularly in the Southeast Asian region. Marston (2018) also added that despite a significant rise in Chinese FDI, and infrastructure development, Japan remains the dominant player within the region.

In conclusion, Calabrese (2019) suggests three ways in which Africa could avoid making strategic mistakes and capitalize on the BRI. The first is to plan infrastructure strategically, ensure good quality and fitting infrastructure, second, to think about the regional dimension of infrastructure projects, and lastly, to learn from other states, especially China's neighbouring nations as they have experience in dealing with Chinese-supported infrastructure projects (Calabrese, 2019).

1.3 Africa's security dilemma and China's economic development

The development, growth, stability, and the security nexus are important on the continent (Khadiagala and Delegise, 2020; Gumede, 2020). Gumede (2020), following Samir Amin, suggested that new engagements and re-engagements on the globe, and perhaps disengagements from strong Western forces, should be reflected upon. Here, states such as India and China play an imperative role, and in the case of this study, China. Global Security Initiatives which form part of President Xi Jinping's thoughts on diplomacy encompass a united response to the rising challenges faced by the global community (Kasonta, 2022 as cited by Cao, 2022). Kasonta (2022) adds that Xi's thoughts invite all states to address global security issues through joint consultation, based on justice instead of the exceptionalism of a particular state.

The world witnesses the Sino-Africa partnership evolve and gradually shift gears from investments and aid in areas such as infrastructure development to focus on issues of security and stability. Security has always been a major concern for African states. China, as a large trading partner, seeks to create an environment which is stable and secure for its investments by claiming an active position in Africa's peace and security dilemma, as part of its new strategy. Noesselt (2019) stated that China's Policy Paper on Africa, which was released by President Xi in 2015, highlights the relevance of peace and security in Africa. The significance of China's 'five-no' approach and its increased participation in Africa's peace and security issues is worthy of note.

1.3.1 Chinese military aid to African states

Despite China's approach to relations with Africa, it has increased its presence in Africa by providing combat troops through the United Nation's Peacekeeping Operations (UN PKOs) (Cabestan, 2018). Cabestan (2018) and Hartmann and Noesselt (2019) add that China People's Liberation Army's participation in the

Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) since 2013 with aim to stabilise internal conflict. Before this, during the liberation movement era in Africa, China provided limited military support to rebel movements such as Angola's Front for the National Liberation of Angola (FNLA) from 1974 to1975 to fighting Portuguese colonialism as well as the Zimbabwean African National Union (ZANU) during the liberation struggle against the minority regime of Ian Smith in then Rhodesia (Liebenberg & van der Merwe, 2020). Liebenberg and van der Merwe (2020) added that the short-lived military assistance was however abruptly withdrawn when China discovered that the American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and apartheid South Africa also supported the FNLA (see also Liebenberg, Risquet & Shubin, 2019).

After this era, China's first intervention recorded was in South Sudan in 2012, a diplomatic intervention that has highlighted what it means for China's foreign and security bearing wholesomely (Hartmann & Noesselt, 2019). In 2018, China and Africa hosted a forum on defence and security with aim of assessing the current security constellations in Africa (Noesselt, 2019). In the same year during a FOCAC summit, the importance of strengthening peace and security in Africa was brought forward, thereby tightening regional organisations and initiatives (Xinhua, 2018). However, Chaziza (2018) submitted that after years of practising the non-intervention policy, particularly in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, Chinese presence is now faced with concerns of creating further instability in the region. This is because of the Chinese military base in Djibouti, operated by the Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) (Chaziza, 2018). Dahir (2017, as cited by Risberg, 2019) added that this military expansion concerns U.S. national security, as the base has become the embodied symbol of China's aggression along the BRI.

Despite the above mentioned, the move by the Chinese government highlights measures to better safeguard its global influence and geo-economic interest as well as to better protect its overseas nationals. Events and actions of such nature stipulate China's intentions in safeguarding and ensuring a secure and stable environment for its investment projects in Africa.

With economic strategies such as its BRI, Beijing saw the importance of addressing issues of security and stability in Africa (Noesselt, 2019) to avoid spill over effects and events it may have on their economic integration initiatives as well as to protect their own interest. Also, with its deepening involvement in economic and now security issues in Africa which forms part of its diplomatic process, China strives to demonstrate its responsibility as a great power by complying with international norms. Apart from military efforts, from 2014 to 2016 respectively, the Chinese government provided a significant amount of aid during the fight against the Ebola epidemic in West Africa (Sun, 2019). Despite all that, the issue of China's growing weapon industry and arms sales to various African states, however, remains a growing concern as it escalates the already fatal security dilemma the continent is experiencing.

1.4 Problem Statement

The study analyses China's overall presence in Botswana and Namibia by applying the constructivists' assumptions with focus on political and economic policy implications. Notwithstanding the similarity in natural resource possessions, existing literature as discussed in Chapter 2, suggests that Botswana benefits economically more from its ties with China compared to Namibia with slightly more resources with fish and fish products and others. To highlight and discuss the ontology of the relations, contributions made by this study intend to aid in understanding the pattern of relations

between China and Namibia on the one hand, and China and Botswana on the other hand.

Another unique gap that has been identified is the impact of change in political leadership and governance architecture on foreign policy implementation and interaction in China's relations with Botswana and Namibia. Political leadership ought to be institutionalised and understood as such, where macroeconomic policies are formulated and guided by political ideologies. It should be viewed as an institution where objectives of state policies are pursued regardless of different leadership styles. Also, the ideologies, personality and/or preferences of an individual as the head of a state present critical questions as it may influence the foreign policy/relations of that country. Inherited norms and values from previous political leaders tend to be influential, and thus inform policy decisions taken by these states under study. While numerous studies have been conducted, scholarly studies on the specific focus of political leadership change within this context is relatively rare (Liebenberg 2012; 2022).

By applying the constructivist theory, the study seeks to examine whether change in political leadership (presidents) is indeed a contributing factor in influencing and shaping relations states have with one another, particularly relations that China has with Namibia and Botswana. The study further explores Sino-Namibia and Botswana relations from the context of a developmental state discourse. An ontological behaviour analysis of various developmental states with one another is conducted to explore their interconnectedness and to what extent this plays a role in shaping the relations China has with these two African nations. China is an authoritarian developmental state and Namibia is a democratic developmental state. The study also seeks to establish whether Botswana is also a democratic or soft-dictatorship

developmental state. Significantly, no comparative study that analyses Sino-Africa relations with focus on developmental state (Botswana?) and free market state (Namibia) has been done, and as such, this current study fills the identified scholarly gap. This could jointly contribute towards building more developmental states in Africa and the Global South.

Lastly, China's new role in Africa has elicited accusations that its presence and activities represent neo-colonialism comparable to that practised by Western states, only on a different dimension. Several Western researchers mentioned later in the text argue that the US has ceded its position in Africa to the Chinese. According to Wallerstein (1979) "core states exploit peripheral ones through unequal terms of trade, which are sometimes mediated by semi-peripheral states". This may be the reason why some analysts talk about selective disengagement (Gumede, 2020). These allegations, which China refutes, contrast with the theoretical underpinnings of this study regarding the genesis of Sino-Africa ties and the aims China have for African policy. The study thus analyses perceptions by scholars on Chinese neo-colonialism and the overall motive of China's presence in Botswana and Namibia. It intends to proof speculations by conducting a qualitative method analysis of the case units with specific focus on the economic and political relations and how they influence interests and identities of these states and their actors. Although various studies have been conducted on the Sino-Africa relations (Albert, 2017; Dent, 2011; Taylor, 2008 and Tembe & Xu, 2013), not many studies of this nature were done on China-Africa relations from a constructivist perspective.

1.5 Research Objectives

1.5.1 Main Research Objective

The main research objective addressed by the study is:

1. To compare and contrast various economic and political components of Sino-Namibia and Sino-Botswana relations in the context of a developmental state discourse from a constructivist theoretical perspective.

1.5.2 Specific Research Objectives

Specific research objectives addressed by the study are:

2. To appraise whether change in political leadership and governance architecture in Namibia and Botswana has an impact on the nature of their foreign relations with China.

3. To interpret the neo-colonial perception of China's presence in Botswana and Namibia.

4. To recommend economic development policy and strategy transformation for Namibia from lessons and experiences drawn from Botswana's economic relations with China and vice-versa.

1.6 Significance of the study

The study provides empirically based recommendations for policymakers and researchers for both Botswana and Namibian governments on measures that could be taken to enrich these relations. It further provides a normative contribution by stretching the theory to better explain the nature of China's relations with the Southern African states under study. Literature presented in this study draw together writings on the two selected southern African states and their ties with China by bringing focus to the development models that are adopted, as well as political governance techniques amongst others. A broader scale of knowledge is provided for policymakers for the

two governments to develop foreign policies for national interests and security. Comparative case studies of this nature are imperative when engaging with emerging superpowers such as China in that it assists developing nations to identify and develop or shape trade agreements that would attain positive outcomes for them as resource rich nations. There is limited literature about the perceptions on China neo-colonizing the African continent. This study thus intends to create a foundation for further areas of research and for developing a framework for these case studies. Also, there is space for more studies which focus on the state in specific comparative studies in southern Africa.

1.7 Limitations

Challenges were experienced by the researcher in getting some population size figures of the selected institutions as numerous emails went unanswered. In addressing the limitation, secondary data such as reports were used. Another concern was access of vital information and data which some respondents deemed confidential and they were quite apprehensive about involving themselves in the study or sharing such information with the researcher. Obtaining a permit to conduct research in Botswana as a requirement before entering the country for research purposes was a huge challenge as the emails to the relevant government institutions went unanswered. To address this, the researcher interviewed field experts based in Namibia, South Africa, and relevant reports. A lack of prior research conducted on Sino-Africa relations with specific focus on individual states within the southern African region is also highlighted as a limitation. Lastly, aftereffects of Covid-19 caused a hindrance during the process of data collection and ample time is required for this study as restrictions due to Covid-19 caused delays.

1.8 Delimitations

This study limited itself by focusing only on diversification of economic and political approaches to the specific foreign relations as referred to in the topic of the research undertaking. The focus is mainly on the nature China's relationship with Botswana and Namibia in the southern African region. The study does not cover other states within the region that equally have relations with the Asian giant.

1.9 Dissertation outline

Chapter One: Introduction

This chapter provides the orientation and background of the study. It briefly discusses the economic and security aspects of China and its presence in African states in general and Botswana and Namibia in particular. The chapter further includes the problem statement, clearly stating what the problems are that the study intends to address, why they are regarded as problems and what the effects are. It further outlines the research objectives of the study followed by the significance, limitations as well as delimitations of the study.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Chapter two presents the literature review and theoretical framework. The core tenets of the theory of constructivism and its application to the ties China has with Botswana and Namibia are given. Also discussed in this chapter is the developmental state behaviour in Southern Africa and its relevance to this study, change in political leadership, and governance, as well as neo-colonialism and the Sino-Africa relations. An in-depth analysis is conducted on how the tenet of the theory best describes the nature of the relations, debates, limitations and key assumptions and contributions from this study.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

Chapter Three is the research methodology and research design. An overview of the research methods and designs applied in this study, including data collection methods and data analysis methods were expanded upon.

Chapter Four: Sino-Botswana Relations – Diverse Components

Chapter Four gives data presentation of the various components of Sino-Botswana relations. The chapter provides comprehensive feedback and data collected from the research participants to address the research objectives of this study, particularly for the China- Botswana relations.

Chapter Five: Sino-Namibia Relations – Diverse Components

The Various components of Sino-Namibia Relations are given in Chapter five. Similarly, to chapter four, this chapter presents the empirical findings gathered from the research participants with the aim of addressing the research objectives of the study.

Chapter Six: Data Comparison and Analysis: Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibia Relations

Chapter six gives a comparison and analysis of data: Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibia Relations. Secondary data related to the nature of Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibia relations is also incorporated in the comparison and analysis of the study.

Chapter Seven: Evaluation, Recommendations and Conclusion

The final Chapter seven provides the conclusion of the study, including the summary of the chapters, evaluation of the research objectives, contribution to the body of knowledge, practical and policy recommendations, and areas for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: THEORY OF CONSTRUCTIVISM

2.1 Introduction

This chapter sustains the effort to build a strong academic case for this study by further reviewing existing literature about Sino-African relations generally, particularly the Sino-Namibian and Sino-Botswana relations. Consequently, scholarly publications dealing with critical issues about Sino-Namibian and Sino-Botswana relations within the broader context of Sino-African relations are examined with the specific aim of providing in-depth knowledge of what has been found in different studies. Thus, areas of agreement among leading scholars as well as areas of disagreement among them regarding the two state case studies are highlighted and discussed.

Several leading scholars such as Melber (2018), Abegunrin and Manyeruke (2020) have approached Sino-African discourse from a historical perspective. Such studies focus on historical circumstances that gave rise to the nature of relations between China and Namibia on one hand and China and Botswana on the other hand. Other works are heavily influenced by theoretical paradigms. While some works are based on structuralist theories such as realism, liberal institutionalism or dependency theories, others have used non-structuralist theories such as constructivism in an attempt to explain Sino-African relations in general. While these theoretical approaches differ radically, there are certain recurrent issues in scholarly publications about Sino-Namibian and Sino-Botswana relations. Literature reviews provide important building blocks that demonstrate familiarity with the topic, explore previous research in the field (the historical element), to summarise, integrate, and thematise known and evolving knowledge (including the theoretical review). Elements touching

on context, theory and methodology (methodological review with integrative elements) also contribute to a solid literature review (Neuman, 2007, pp. 446-447). The present study adopts the non-structuralist theory of constructivism. In this regard, review of extant literature is organised according to broad headings which reflect the ideas of constructivism and at the same time closely align with the research objectives.

2.2 Sino-Africa Relations

Of utmost relevance is the 1955 Bandung conference (Indonesia) which hosted both African and Asian high-level politicians, an era which marked the height of serious attempts to end colonialism and imperialism in the two continents (Breuer, 2017). This historic event which, unfortunately was the first and last Afro-Asian conference, intended to lay out the concept of regionalism to Asia and Africa (Liebenberg, Kruijt & Paranjpe, 2020). The conference successfully pinned a development approach for the developing nations as guiding principles to their relations. The guiding principles include mutual respect for the sovereignty, equality, mutual benefit, and non-interference into internal affairs of other states (Breuer, 2017). However, from the Bandung conference forth, the world saw a slow shift towards the advancement of a neutralist policy that conveyed the global concerns of the Cold War, and the foundational tenets of peace and independence were to become the fundamentals of the new non-alignment policy (Paranjpe, 2020 cited in Liebenberg, Kruijt & Paranjpe, 2020).

During the period of decolonization (1950 -1980), China became a prominent political force and one of the leading states within the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) (Liebenberg & Van der Merwe, 2020). Between December 1963 and February1964, a time when most African nations gained independence from their colonisers, the then

Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai undertook his first state visits known as ‘Zhou’s Safari’ to various African states (Fonda, 2017).

Figure 1: Zhou Enlai on a visit to Africa, 1963. Image Ownership: Public Domain. Source: (Blackpast organisation, Fonda, 2017)

Highlights of this tour were placed on China’s aid to Africa, with great emphasis on the guiding principles of the neutralist and new non-alignment policies which would lay a solid policy footing for the bilateral relations China had established with various African nations (Sun, 2019). In one of his speeches, Zhou pledged that “China would support ‘revolutionary struggles’ throughout the continent and oppose both foreign intervention and native ‘reactionaries” (Fond, 2017). In turn, over time, Africa’s support for China was showcased in the 1970s when China regained its legitimate seat in the United Nations (UN).

Prior to the commencement of its economic reform processes, China entered the African scene by financing the construction of the railway line connecting Tanzania

and Zambia in 1976 (Liebenberg & Van der Merwe, 2020). This was seen as a monument of the relations China was having with the continent. Tembe and Xu (2013) wrote that the railway line connecting Tanzania and Zambia enabled copper exports from Zambia's mines without having to pass through South Africa in the years of Apartheid. It allowed Zambia as a frontline state to be less dependent on Pretoria, which was a much-needed alternative. Meanwhile, a militarizing South Africa was destabilizing southern Africa to enhance its Pax Pretoriana built on the ideology of Total Onslaught (Grundy, 1988).

2.3 Constructivist Theoretical Paradigm

The theory of constructivism is one of the approaches that have taken centre stage in reviving the study of the past in the field of International Relations (IR). This is after the study and historical inquiry in IR in the late 1980s was neglected as rationalism claimed dominance (Reus-Smit, 2008). At the end of the Cold War, the relevance of constructivism grew as a theory that could explain peaceful outcomes, comprehend what national interest is, and how it relates to national identity (Baylis, Smith & Owens, 2017). The theory confirms and illustrates historical insights and emphasises historical changes over the years which allow states to understand their place in contemporary world politics. Nicholas Onuf introduced constructivism to IR in 1989, Alexander Wendt popularised constructivism in 1992 and 1999, and Friedrich Kratochwil who is one of the founding fathers of constructivism and the conceptualization of language as action are some of the contemporary scholars who have influenced the theoretical development of the constructivist perspective (Blanton & Kegley, 2020).

Waltz (1998) highlighted how constructivism looks at ways in which ideas, norms, identities, and interests are created. The theory rejects rationalism and its narrow focus

on a state's continuous pursuit of power by emphasising that social structures existing between ideas, beliefs, and values shape political behaviour and an actor's identity and interests (Blanton & Kegley, 2020; Reus-Smit, 2008; Fierke, 2007 as cited in Storer, 2007). These social structures are however produced and replicated by the knowledgeable practices of social and political agents (Reus-Smit, 2008). For constructivists, history, political culture, domestic debates, and type of government shape the foreign policy of a state.

Constructivism asserts that knowledge is built when you interact with other people. Communication plays a pivotal role in shaping and altering identities as interactions among individuals and states create and reinforce ideas and beliefs (Grieco, Ikenberry & Mastanduno, 2015). State interaction could result in multiple identities based on an actor's (state) own view of who they are, which essentially highlights various state interests. These interactions, shared ideas, and interests shape bilateral relations, define the international structure, and contribute to the practice of IR. Special relationships are best comprehended as relational identity constructions, unceasingly renewed through an active interplay between prevailing representations at domestic level and recurring interaction patterns at the international level (Haugevik, 2018). Wendt (1992, p. 406) wrote "It is through reciprocal interaction, in other words, that we create and instantiate the relatively enduring social structures in terms of which we define our identities and our interests". For instance, and particularly referring to the case of Sino-Africa relations, Africa is a continent seen by many including China's President Xi Jinping as "a continent of hope and promise" (Hartmann and Noesselt, 2019, p.32).

Gros & Fung (2019) argued that the Liberal, Marxist and Realist discourses only provide a partial explanation of the Sino-Africa relations, and that most studies view the relations from a neoliberal lens. They, in lieu, highlight constructivism as a theory

to better explain Sino-Africa ties. The current study supports the works of scholars such as Gros and Fung and affirms that constructivism indeed better explains the nature of the Sino-Africa special relationship. Constructivism does indeed better explain Sino-African relations in general, and for this study, the Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibia relations, as it applies human consciousness amongst other beliefs such as ideas and interests. The theory does not overlook actors other than the state that play a major role in exercising African agency in international relations (Gros & Fung, 2019). African agency in the Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibian is highlighted in this study by providing a comprehensive evaluation of constructivism as a theoretical approach that elaborates how economic and political policies are implicated by the nature of relations China has developed with Botswana and Namibia in the context of DS discourse over the years.

To showcase the pattern of how things are in reality (ontology) and how things came to be (epistemology) in practice, this study demonstrates exploratory and explanatory values of the Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibian relations. Constructivism illustrates views of shared ideas as well as human association which are the focal points of foreign relations China has with Africa in general, and with Botswana and Namibia in particular. A better understanding of self-identities, interests, and images of the world can modify the world when constructions of international realties change (Finnemore, 2015; Barnett, 2005 as cited in Blanton & Kegley, 2020). The identities of China, Botswana, and Namibia vary with diverse interests as China's interest, for instance, is global economic and political dominance, affording them global influence. To mark its position in the international system and regain its rightful place, China had to construct a linkage with the developing world (Taylor, 2006). Noesselt (2019) opined that African states aim to boost their economies by integrating their markets and

forming trading blocs. The two African states' interests would be economic advancement and survival. In justifying the application of the constructivist theory to this study, it should be noted that this theory does not reject the fact that states seek self-interest in formulating foreign policies (Matambo, 2014). It tends to magnify the interests of states, norms, and identity for absolute gain amongst states (Matambo, 2014). Gros & Fung (2019) proposed that constructivism affords a more complete understanding of Sino-Africa relations while at the same time not rejecting other theories *per se.* This warrants greater scrutiny of the key components of the constructivist theory and to substantiate the reality of the nature of China's relations with Botswana and Namibia.

2.4 Constructivism Theory: debates, limitations, contributions

In contemporary world politics, there is a need to explain the nature of relations between states by applying more than one theoretical approach. This provides a sufficient explanation and understanding in defining relations between states. Therefore, it is of utmost significance to provide various arguments and criticisms showcased by scholars for these theories. Reus-Smit (2008) noted that the realists honour externally constituted states, material political structures, as well as interests which they define as power. Marxism envisages 'a world comprising conflict and hierarchy generating economic structures, agents constituted by their class interests and politics as an epiphenomenon of economics' while liberals view the social universe as made up of externally constituted egoistic individuals and political institutions (Reus-Smit, 2008).

The constructivist ontological argument remains relevant in the practice of IR. (Neo) realists and (neo) liberals adopt an ontology that rationalist human nature causes rational human and state behaviour, of which the constructivists criticised this

materialist ontology and labelled it as reductionist (Wendt, 1999 and Finnemore,1996 as cited in Weins, 2015). Realists, however, criticise constructivism for its emphasis on norms and values. Norms, according to realists are merely manifestations of state or individual interests and thus can be quickly adopted for strategic reasons (Blanton & Kegley, 2020). Liberals on the other hand are of the view that constructivism is agnostic and fails to offer core notions about what is deemed to be right or ethical in international affairs (Blanton & Kegley, 2020). The theory is further criticised for blurred about factors that cause ideas to become more dominant than others (Blanton & Kegley, 2020). Even though constructivism has often been described as the opposite of realism, Solomon (2012) and Nexon (2011) mentioned that realism and constructivism are not hardheartedly opposed as constructivists claim a merger of constructivism with the great power rivalries (Blanton & Kegley, 2020). Chernoff (2008 cited in Behravesh, 2011, p.2) further argued that constructivism provided limited substantive knowledge or hypotheses regarding the behaviour of states or state systems.

Moreover, social constructivism has been criticised as overemphasising the role of social structures at the expense of the purposeful agents for instance a state's or organisation's political leaders, whose practices aid in creating and altering these structures (Blanton and Kegley, 2020). Although constructivism has brought about fresh perspectives in the study of IR, some scholars are of the view that constructivism is not a theory as such, but somewhat a general social scientific framework or "meta-approach" (Blanton & Kegley, 2020).

Constructivism is the view that both neo-realism and neoliberal institutionalism are 'under -socialised' as they give inadequate attention to how the actors in world politics are socially constructed (Wendt, 1999, p. 4). Onuf (1989) submitted that mainstream

theories could not predict how future international systems would look like after the end of the Cold War and that power of distribution would not be enough to predict whether the US would have global hegemony, or whether it would prefer multilateralism and cooperation with other states. Despite the criticisms and limitations, social constructivists point the development of identities to recurrent social practices and view most identities as shared or collectively understood (Blanton & Kegley, 2020).

For scholars to explain state behaviour, they need to comprehend a complex blend of history, ideas, norms, and beliefs. Constructivism has thus been chosen for this study as it creates alternatives and provides more detailed theoretical and conceptual explanations about major developments in mainstream IR, such as great powers and their behaviour in multilateral spheres or the ever-changing world order. The theory is of the view that the interests of actors are established by their social identities and believes that understanding how actors attain their interests is part of understanding why they behave the way they do (Reus-Smit, 2008). Since constructivism believes that social ideas and interests are constructed, identities and interests are as a result, transformable (Wendt, 1992; Auth, 2015 as cited in Weins, 2015). Essentially, both neo-realism and neoliberalism are of the view that ideas and norms construct how states define their interests as they see the world as a tactical place rather than as a society. These two theories do not accept that states change identity and interest because of benefits gained through interaction and cooperation. Constructivists on the other hand believe that interests and identities of states change over time and these changes remain relevant for the theory. It highlights the importance of its tenets and intersubjective meanings that offer value to analysing the Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibia ties.

2.5 Historical Constructivism: Sino-Namibia and Sino-Botswana relations

Constructivism rose in importance as a theory of IR after the Cold War (the 1990s). It is an approach that highlights the importance of rediscovery and consistency in the study of history and provides an improved clarification of changes in identities, interests, and ideas (interactions) of states in the affairs of international relations. Reus-Smit (2008) submitted that constructivist scholars were energised by the sense that changes needed comprehension, and this translated into a concern with history. Through the process of interaction, states transmit signals that are then interpreted by other states (Harnisch, 2011). The theory of constructivism further emphasises human consciousness and its role in international life as it focuses on the significance of ideas and norms in international politics and that states are not unitary actors (Ruggie, 1998). It believes that ideas define the international structure that constructs the identities, interests, and foreign policy practices of states. Ontologically, constructivism looks at how ideational or normative structures establish agents and their interests while within the epistemological context attempts to match rationalism with sociological perspectives (Soltani, Jawan & Ahmad, 2014).

Plainly put by DeBardeleben (2012) and Rathbun (2012 cited in Blanton and Kegley, 2020), constructivism suggests that relations among and between states are better comprehended through the spectrum of intersubjective human action and the socially constructed nature of the political world. To provide a broader scope that allows better understanding, constructivism brought back the long neglected social dimension of the international system into IR (Buzan, 2004), where the world looks at an actor's norms of behaviour, their interests, their identity, and social interactions. The way actors (state and non-state) understand each other's behaviour varies. Constructivists argue that their inclusion was mainly for understanding the behaviours of actors as well as

to realise reasons "why they saw the world and themselves as they did" and that identities are social and are seen to shape the interests of a state (Baylis, Smith & Owens, 2017).

Blanton and Kegley (2020) provided an example where states with a history of conflict can change the essential nature of the relations if they result in creating patterns of peaceful interactions and cooperation over time. For instance, European Union member states who fought against each other in both world wars have been striving to develop a common identity over time (Blanton & Kegley, 2020). This is however debatable as ethnic identities such as Germans are still Germans, the English are still English and the French are still French. Like realists, constructivists are of the same view that the structure of the international system is anarchic, as summed up by Alexander Wendt in "Anarchy is what states make of it" (Wendt, 1992, p. 424). As a result of an anarchic structure, states respond differently to situations and events in the international society as anarchy is seen as something states (humans) have made.

Constructivism thus leaves it to the actors to make what they will of the structure (Gros & Fung, 2017). It showcases the practicalities of how things are and how they ought to be when states interact with one another. The theory believes that humans have choices regardless of structural constraints, and therefore consider several options in response to anarchic conditions, such as selfish behaviour by states but also a more cooperative conduct (Gros and Fung, 2017). Constructivism views the structure of the international system as a distribution of shared ideas. Domestic and international identities of actors are shaped by respective dialogue at home as well as within the international community (Blanton & Kegley, 2020).

Therefore, realising that as events of reality, interactions, and ideas of states always change, constructivist views are relevant in describing the nature of Sino- Botswana and Sino-Namibia relations, their historical background (1975 political and economic ties and 1960's liberation struggle), shared knowledge amongst the three states, the anarchic international system, and socially constructed concepts which are not otherwise debatable. Subsequently, because of shared history and norms amongst other dynamics, China could defend developing states in Africa, Latin America, and Asia from international interventions (Storer, 2007). This can be the form of aids. China provided the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) with aid during the liberation struggle. After Namibia gained independence, China continued to pursue linkages with the SWAPO government, as part of its policy of reinforcing itself globally through the utilisation of Third World support (Taylor, 1997). In the case of Sino-Botswana, since 1975, the relations were merely based on mutually beneficial economic interchange.

The theory emphasises these historical changes and the birth of its ties over the years by illustrating the insights comprehensively. Constructivists use history to counter ahistorical mainstream ideas; historical facts are used to prove deficiencies in mainstream narratives; history is used for its relevance and to answer open-ended questions. Constructivism further defines and clarifies shared perceptions and meaning of China's relations with Botswana and Namibia as they share somewhat similar national interests and because of their shared historical contexts and developing affairs.

2.6 Sino- Africa relations: Norms, interests, ideas and national identities

Blanton and Kegley (2020) highlight norms as "generalized standards of behaviour that once accepted, shape collective expectations about appropriate conduct". The theory of constructivism looks at how norms shape the behaviour of international

actors. Theys (2018) added that states adapt to a certain identity and are expected to adhere to the norms that are associated with that identity. An analysis of various approaches and changes to norms and identities in the Sino-Africa relations are highlighted as the behaviour of states with an identity is aligned to norms and these norms determine how and why states interact in certain patterns. Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) listed various types of norms that create a better understanding of the significance of norms. Firstly, Regulative norms are seen to order and pressure behaviour (appropriate standards of behaviour) for an actor with a given identity, for example, capitalist states; secondly, constitutive norms produce new actors, interests, or categories of action, for example., sovereignty; and lastly, prescriptive norms which propose certain norms. Wendt (1992) added on the three stages of change. Firstly, new desired norm is set, then it is internalized, and lastly, socialisation and learning effects take place that make the norm universal (Wendt, 1992).

As highlighted earlier, Baylis, Smith and Owens (2017) submitted that the popularity of the theory of constructivism came to the fore when debates around the commitment to materialism and individualism of states became more relevant. In this context, individualism is explained by Baylis, Smith and Owens (2017) as "actors that fixed interests and that the structure constrains their behaviour". Constructivism argued that as a result of the commitment to individualism and materialism, mainstream theories failed to see revolutionary ideas to transform organizations of world politics and state identities. During this time, changes in norms came about and new norms about sovereignty came to rise (Blanton & Kegley, 2020). Constructivists highlight the idea of sovereignty as an institution with norms and practices wherein identities of modern states are established (Reus-Smit, 2008). Due to interaction (bilaterally or through institutions), Copeland (2000) and Wendt (1992as cited in Weins, 2015) submitted that

states continually change their identities and interests, which results in a transformation of systems.

Interesting so far is that constructivism embraces the effects of ideas and beliefs on international politics (Theys, 2018). Powerful States such as the USA, the United Kingdom (UK), and China form part of some international institutions/organisations to change smaller states' norms. These powerful states aid smaller states with economic and political issues through these institutions, and eventually, the diverse interests of all states could be met. States tend to internalise norms in addressing issues that affect them and their interests. They come together through multilateral engagements such as the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) bloc with aim of drawing up policies on issues that affect them and their interests and the world. Even so through bilateral means, stronger states tend to aid smaller/weaker states in various ways.

Mkandawire (2001) asserted how African and Asian states and societies share certain characteristics and attributes (for example. clientelism or neopatrimonialism and close ties between business and the state). African states have been used as evidence of a 'captured' state and Asian states as fixed state autonomy. Behaviour of such nature showcase how states adopt and internalise social norms and interests. Also, one of China's five no-approach namely the 'non-interference in domestic affairs of other states' unlike what the western nations are known for forms part of China's norms (Weins, 2015). Africa may permit China to recycle its massive foreign exchange reserves into profitable investments overseas (Tembe & Xu, 2013). As a result of these intensive engagements for individual material interests, this study has identified a critical question of whether China would intentionally or otherwise alter the norms of African states towards their preference and as part of its foreign policy.

2.6.1 China's national identity and influence on Africa

Moreover, the identity of a state varies from one interaction to another, and economic and political identities are significant determinants of economic action. Theys (2018) highlighted that identities are a depiction of an actor's understanding of who they are, which in turn directs their interests. The identity of "the self" in social constructivism depends on the identity of "the other", plainly put by Wendt (1999) as "role-taking" and "alter casting" (Wendt, 1999; Copeland, 2000 as cited in Weins, 2015). Thus, interactions with one another have become a rooted part of each state's identity and interest (Storer, 2007). For instance, the identity of a small state suggests a set of interests that are different from those suggested by the identity of a large state.

As already mentioned, Theys (2018) noted that the small state is possibly more focused on its survival, whereas the large state is focused on dominating global political, economic, and military affairs. Therefore, national identity is the source of a state's foreign policy, and powerful and influential states like China could be projecting their national identity to weaker developing states. Risse-Kappen (1996, p.367as cited in Blanton and Kegley, 2020) added that internal identities are vital for states' perceptions of one another in the global arena. State identity affects the way states interact with each other. States such as China have different identities depending on who or what they are dealing with at a particular point in time. China's international identity has been experiencing changes since 1949. In analysing China's behaviour in international politics, some (neorealist and neoliberal) scholars label China as an emerging power, a threat to world order, and key competitor in the economic space, while others such as constructivists have taken a more non-rational path (Ebehard, 2011; Weins, 2015).

China is viewed or impugned with an identity of a permissible prominent power in the international system, advancing and growing its economy through increased interactions with small states such as Botswana and Namibia mainly for the mineral resources they have at their disposal. Although China's national identity has been changing because of the evolving global world, its national framework still relies on the founding doctrines of the CPC (Shambaugh, 2013). However, because of its ever-changing identity and roles in international affairs, David Shambaugh submitted that the Asian giant is "experiencing something of an international identity crisis" (Weins, 2015).

During the 1960s when China's role in Africa became more significant, three primary factors highlighted China's initial interest. Yu (1988) wrote that the first factor offered to China was a ground by the Third World states to achieve political and ideological objectives. The second was the need for support to secure international recognition and support as the only legitimate government by undermining Taiwan's global recognition and a seat in the United Nations and the last interest was motivated by the Sino-Soviet conflict.

While some African states, particularly the left wings like Algeria and Mali welcomed and received Premier Zhou Enlai's tour in Africa in 1963, anti-communist states like Ethiopia and Tunisia were somewhat hostile towards the Premier and his 50+ delegation (Fond, 2017). However, during that tour, Zhou ensured that he sowed the seed of friendly relations between China and states with different political systems and wanted to present itself as the only truly anti-imperialist Marxist nation and not the Soviet Union. Fond (2017) added that in 1965, Zhou returned to Africa in effort to lobby for support for his vision from African leaders at the second Asia-Africa conference that was to be held in Algeria the same year. The conference was however

cancelled due to the overthrow of Algerian President Ahmed Ben Bella (Fond, 2017). Under Deng Xiaoping's leadership, China reconsidered its tactics and began to place importance on its economic development and sovereignty, and opposition to hegemony for a new international economic order (Tounkara, 2010).

As ideas define identities which as a result inform meaning to material capabilities and behaviour (Blanton & Kegley, 2020), Noesselt (2019) mentioned that African economies open strategic windows to states such as China to advance its win-win solutions in areas such as infrastructure investment. In his speech at the UN Office in Geneva on January 18, 2017, Chinese President Xi Jinping highlighted equality, justice, sovereignty, openness, and the rule of law as some of the essential elements of a new international order (Jinping, 2017).

During the FOCAC summit held in 2006 in China, former President Hu Jintao outlined the Chinese foreign policy towards Africa to the 46 heads of state, including SADC members who were present at the summit (Dent, 2011). The principles of sincerity, friendship and equality, mutual benefit, reciprocity, and common prosperity have shaped the identity of these relations. By applying constructivist views, China's promotion of development cooperation with Africa in its various forms, to the mutual benefit of both parties, mutual support and close co-ordination, its commitment to strengthening cooperation with Africa at multilateral levels, draws upon the international community to play a more active part in Africa's peace and development (Dent, 2011). According to Tembe and Xu (2013), China has become Africa's biggest partner by making provision of large investments whereby both parties benefit in one way or the other and more for one than the other. As alluded to by Johnston (2016), in efforts to gain and maintain its presence in Africa, China has been providing extensive amounts of aid, investments, trade and financial support for selective special economic

zones. Africa, home to vast resources and with the potential to be one of the world's largest consumer markets, is faced with challenges such as the lack of basic infrastructure, skilled labourers, and investment (Sun, 2019).

In efforts to aid African states with economic advancement (interests), China has been intensely investing in these economies and has been playing a constructive role (Mlambo et al., 2016). Kelly, Dobbins, Shlapak, Gompert, Heginbotham, Chalk and Thrall (2014) noted that as an emerging great power, the Asian state is swiftly maximizing its economic, military, and political influence over the world, indeed a great challenge for the US global hegemony, particularly in the Asia Pacific region. Sun (2019) added that as part of its economic structure, China has seen this as an opportunity to aid African nations in sustainably developing sectors by transferring some of its quality industrial capacity to Africa to help build its industrial system. This has resulted in positive outcomes for both parties. Jeffenis (2012, as cited in Mlambo et al., 2016) further described Chinese presence in Africa as having economic benefits as it brings development for both China and Africa.

China engages in bilateral agreements which aim to build and or finance large- scale infrastructure projects in Africa (Noesselt, 2019). Also, its great dependence on imported raw materials and energy resources from African nations expands China’s economy. China-Africa trade reached US$204 billion in 2018 and almost half of the infrastructure projects on the continent are undertaken by Chinese contractors, with more than 3,000 Chinese enterprises operating in Africa (Sun. 2019). Additionally, China has now also advanced into investing in green technologies as well as transforming into a centre of global technological innovation (Noesselt, 2019). Various Chinese programmes such as the BRI have created jobs for many African

youth, greater than the number of jobs Americans have created (e.g., Mombasa-Nairobi Standard Gauge Railway, 30,000 jobs for local people) (Sun, 2019).

The question of whether China has been succeeding in projecting its national identity to African states remains relevant. States do not have identities or national interests before interactions with others. Constructivism submits that material interests, which are central to liberal, realist, and Marxist views are not sufficient to explain patterns of economic interactions or policies.

Ontologically, China's 'five-no' approach to describing its relations with Africa informs its set of interests, which are essentially adjustable, and their meanings could change on various interactions. China's rush to promote diplomatic ties with newly independent African states in the 1960s had prearranged immediate political interests and future economic interests (Iroanya & Nawases, 2022). These interests are shaped by the identity China has formed in its engagement with African states, influenced by the ideas and norms that are exchanged and shared. Weins (2015) alluded that state interests and identity are regarded as the dependent variable, as they act as agents according to an object's significance that is shared collectively and structurally.

2.6.2 Sino- Botswana and Sino-Namibia political and economic ties: Interests, ideas and norms

Both ever-changing domestic and international policy settings are equally imperative as they are drivers of state foreign policy in this world of interdependency. Jian (1996, p.10) stated that "no sources of foreign policy remain static; foreign policy determinants change over time, resulting in foreign policy adjustments." He added "as changes take place in IR, in the nation's domestic political, or even in its political leadership, every nation, from time to time, has to adjust its foreign policy accordingly" (Jian, 1996 p.23 as cited in Dintsi, 2019). Essentially, domestic politics,

mainly domestic cost and impact, play an imperative role in foreign policy (Shambaugh, 2013 p. 15 as cited in Weins, 2015).

Visible respect for core interests between Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibia remain undisputed. Principal factors which govern the state of the Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibia relations are economic, political, cultural, and aid. The Republic of Namibia (previously known as South West Africa) and the Republic of Botswana (previously known as Bechuanaland) established official relations with China in March 1990 and January 1975, respectively (El Obeid & Mendelsohn, 2021; Embassy of China in Botswana, 2005). From being isolated from the world for decades to becoming one of the world's most powerful states, China has demonstrated dominance and influence in the international sphere in general and in third - world states in particular. Some already highlighted earlier in the text, China's foreign policy is guided by Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. Namely:

a) Mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity

b) Mutual non-aggression

c)Non-interference in each other's internal affairs

d) Equality and mutual benefit

e) Peaceful coexistence (United Nations, 2014, p.70).

China's Foreign policy known as "independent Foreign Policy of peace", adopted in 1982, aims to "help China create a stable international environment favourable to China's economic modernisation drive" (Jian, 1996). Weissmann (2015, p. 152) reported that 1949 marked China's core objective of its foreign policy, which was to

reclaim the respect and dignity of being a great nation that it had lost after what they perceive as a "century of humiliation," as outside powers dominated the region.

McCourt (2014, as cited in Haugevik, 2018) echoed that relationships described as "special" can be generative of states foreign policy. Expanding evidence from the available extensive literature emphasises the ever-growing special bond and commonalities between China and various African states, highlighting strategic advances of the relations. China's major engagements in Africa were with the anti-colonial movements and now aim to expand its economic cooperation trajectory amongst others. Having said that, Botswana and Namibia have always been one of China's main focuses in terms of cooperation and development.

2.6.2.1 Sino-Botswana relations: Botswana's Foreign Policy

In 1971, Botswana voted in favour of China taking a seat in the UN, and thereafter in 1975, ended its diplomatic ties with Taiwan, ultimately creating one with China (Parsons, Tlou, Henderson, 1995; Bolaane, 2007, p.146). Like they did with many African nations during the period of liberation struggles, China supported Botswana with light weapons as well as some technical assistance in areas such as railway rehabilitation and the health sector (Youngman, 2017). Although the economic cooperation between the two states started at a snail pace, Botswana's speedily growing economy attracted trade and investment from China, and since 2000, the multi-dimensional relations has grown. Bolaane (2007) noted bilateral agreements on investment and preferential loans were signed in 2000 and agricultural and cultural cooperation were implemented. Sino-Botswana relations cover "political/diplomatic relations, economic relations (trade and investment, public works contracting,

technical assistance in fields such as agriculture, education and health) and community relations" (Youngman, 2013). Taylor (1998, p. 82) stated that:

"China thus was a useful ally by which Botswana could strive for an assertion of its own international identity and conversely, Botswana was a state at the centre of the southern African maelstrom through which Beijing could protect its policies and agenda vis-à-vis southern Africa and superpower expansionism".

After independence, Botswana adopted an independent foreign policy. This foreign policy was hinged on eight principles as suggested by its founding father, Sir Seretse Khama (Motsamai, 2015 p. 3):

a) Democracy,
b) Development,
c) African unity and non-alignment,
d) Self-reliance,
e) Good neighbourliness,
f) Peaceful resolution of conflicts,
g) Territorial integrity
h) Respect for the sovereignty of all nations (Motsamai, 2015).

Additional tenets, the 5Ds, namely democracy, dignity, development, discipline, and delivery were added during former President Ian Khama's tenure as guiding tools of the foreign policy during his tenure (Motsamai, 2015, p.10). China is Botswana's 12th largest export market and third most important source of imports, trade being the main driver of the ties between the two states (Sekakela, 2016). Chinese key export items to Botswana comprise of textile, garments, machinery, and electronic products (China

Embassy in Botswana, 2018). In terms of aid, Botswana started to receive aid from China in 1976, after signing an economic and technical cooperation agreement (Dintsi, 2019).

Taylor (1998) mentioned that Botswana mainly receives aid from China in areas of agriculture, medical, and technical assistance. Bolaane (2007, p. 162) wrote that the former Botswana Foreign Affairs Minister, Lt. Gen. Mompati S. Merafhe, highlighted how Botswana is one of the states that continue to benefit from the financial and technical support China offers.

Infrastructure advancement is a key building block for every industrialising nation. Botswana received soft loans for infrastructure projects, the renovation of the Botswana railway (such as the Letlhakeng-Kang Road project which was financed by a concessional loan), low-cost housing, land survey and planning, road construction, health facilities, agricultural technology, and human resource development (Dintsii, 2019). Another event worthy of note is the P110 million (USD 8,161,836.10) grant that was awarded during the signing of the MoU between China and Botswana to provide economic assistance for the Botswana government (Daily News, 2013). As part of health and social assistance, China also deployed a group of Chinese doctors arrived to work in Botswana (Dintsi, 2019).

2.6.2.2 Sino-Namibia Relations: Namibia's Foreign Policy

Article 96 (Foreign relations) of the Namibian constitution highlights five fundamental principles which serve as the guiding motivation in its conduct of foreign policy. These are:

(a) adopting and maintaining a policy of non-alignment

(b) promoting international co-operation, peace, and security

(c) creating and maintaining just and mutually beneficial relations among nations

(d) fostering respect for international law and treaty obligations

(e) encouraging the settlement of international disputes by peaceful means" (The Republic of Namibia, 2017).

Du Pisani and Tyitende (2022) wrote that foreign policies and relations wholly are historical and social constructs. Namibia's policy on international relations and cooperation mirrors the awareness in developing bilateral relations that help the country with its economic development goals. Du Pisani and Tyitende (2022) posited that 'foreign policy mirrors a pre-independence imprint that manufactures consent harking back to the former liberation struggle, informed by a seam of thinking consisting largely of a pastiche of clichés, harking back to pre-independence'. China established its official diplomatic relations with Namibia on the 22nd of March 1990, just a day after the nation gained its independence (Odada & Kakujaha-Matundu, 2008). Like the case of Botswana, Namibia expressed its support for the One-China policy and opposed the establishment of a Taiwan-Africa forum (Melber, 2018). Namibia maintains the importance of having relations with states in South East Asia (China) because of their fast-growing economy and high percentage of the world's buying power. Namibia established strong bilateral relations with China, Indonesia, India, Japan, North and South Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand with it having diplomatic missions in China, India, and Malaysia (Amadhila, 2012). It established an embassy in China in 1995 with parallel authorisation for Cambodia, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Republic of Korea, Laos, Mongolia, Pakistan, and Vietnam (Du Pisani, 2014).

Amadhila (2012, p. 39) submitted a remark made in 2010 by the former Prime Minister Nahas Angula that "Namibia appreciated the "disinterested assistance China has given to Namibia for its economic and social development" and hoped that the two states would make a "joint effort to promote bilateral cooperation in all areas and elevate the level of mutually beneficial cooperation". In 1991 (a year after independence) an agreement between Namibia and China on Economic and Technical Cooperation was signed and this agreement gave a distinct framework for trade and investment between the two states (Melber, 2018). As a result, in 2004, the two states signed an Agreement on the Establishment of the Joint Commission of Bilateral Economy and Trade (Melber, 2018).

Like other third- world nations including Botswana, Namibia was aided with weapons and military training for members of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) by the Chinese state during the liberation struggle, establishing a strong bond with the nationalist movement SWAPO (Melber, 2018). *"Namibia is a friend to all and enemy to none"* a phrase commonly used by the late Namibian president, Dr. Hage Geingob, when describing the country's foreign policy.

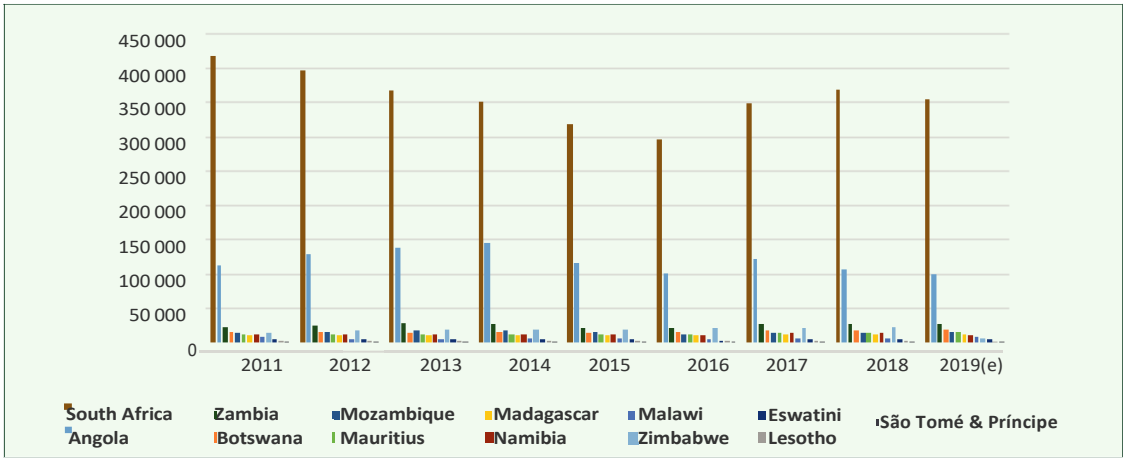
Sino-Namibia relations has been blossoming to an extent where agreements that were signed at the commencement of its official diplomatic ties are now expanded and more strategic in various economic sectors. To strengthen the ties, in 2004, the two nations signed an agreement on the establishment of the Joint Commission of Bilateral Economy and Trade. Closer ties emerged in areas of defence and security, as well as with the procurement of military gear from China and training of senior officers of the Namibian Defence Force at a military academy in Shanghai (Du Pisani, 2014, p. 125). The ties China has with Namibia and Botswana are growing on a more solid trajectory as China is praised, for the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other

states, an approach attractive to the leaders of these two African states. Ribao (1987, as cited in Yu, 1988) mentioned how the Chinese leaders expressed their interest and support for continued close relations with African nations and the Third - world.

In the context of Botswana and Namibia, constructivists adhere to norms for appropriate behaviour (Blanton & Kegley, 2020). These norms are incorporated into the governance structures of the governments of Botswana and Namibia. For instance, Sun (2019) discusses China's support of the notion of African solutions to African problems in this case to those of Botswana and Namibia. He added that China offers training courses to the military and police, both in China and Africa, for security forces capacity-building on bilateral level (Sun, 2019). Subsequently, mutual learning and common paths of development have strengthened exchange and co-operation in various social fields, and China's support for enhancing capacity building and sustainable development in Africa (Dent, 2011).

Historical and present commonalities are that the three states suffered from exploitation and various degrees of colonialism from giant powers. They share common ideas, norms, and interests on numerous local, continental, and global issues and they form part of various institutions with norms that need to be adhered to. China, Botswana, and Namibia shape their identities by engaging with one another, while at the same time protecting their sovereignty as a basis of their foreign relations. Fierke (2007, as cited in Storer, 2007) added that constructivist thinking implies that through interactions, states make choices that "bring historically, culturally, and politically distinct 'realities' into being." This perspective stipulates that these states thus ought to provide shelter for one another in international politics.

From an economic perspective, Botswana and Namibia, have similar abundant natural resources such as diamonds, copper, and silver, with Namibia also having gold, lead, zinc, uranium, salt, hydropower, fish, and timber (Index Mundi, 2016). Namibia additionally produces fish and fish products. The population size of the two neighbouring states is somewhat similar, with Namibia having 3.02 million people in 2023 (NSA, 2024) and Botswana 2,351,627 million (Worldometer, 2020). China's total population is 1,425,651 billion (Worldometer, 2023). Recent statistics highlight that Botswana is the 4th largest economy in southern Africa while Namibia is the 8th (African Development Bank, 2020). Below is the illustration of GDP by state in southern Africa.



Source: African Development Bank statistics, 2019.

Figure 2: GDP by country, 2011-2019 (million USD)

Over the years, China's involvement in Botswana has been relatively limited (Taylor, 2008). Youngman (2017) noted that Botswana, like other African states, has experienced growing tensions in its relations with China over the last few years. Issues regarding quality and pricing in construction projects and issues of foreign policy have been raised. Youngman (2017) however noted that there is a lack of evidence in the literature in the period prior to 2000 that shows that there were any issues within this

relationship. Despite this, over the years, China has kept its presence tied mainly around trade interaction and investment in Botswana, a need for these states to attain economic emancipation. This study will thus also seek to discover the features that result in positives in the current relations of the two states.

The Sino-Botswana education and human resource cooperation is within the framework of the Forum on China–Africa Cooperation, Education and Human Resource. It includes the establishment of the Confucius Institute at the University of Botswana (Sekakela, 2016). China has increased scholarships for Botswana students. In recent years, over 600 government scholarship students have finalised their studies in China and returned to Botswana to serve their country (Embassy of China in Botswana, 2019). Also, The Botswana Daily News (2013, as cited in Duntsi, 2019) reported that primary schools have been built with financial aid from China. Besides that, China has also rendered military training assistance to Botswana Defence Force. In 2006, China offered 32 training quotas, and this number was raised to 43 in 2007. Compared to the long-term study and training, more and more short-term training opportunities are offered to Botswana by China, which usually last from one week to half a year.

China has also actively provided construction services since 2003, mainly to the Government of Botswana and to parastatals. The estimated value of projects constructed by Chinese companies which commenced from 2003 to 2008 in Botswana amounts to US$741.88 million (Sekekela, 2016). The increased service provision by Chinese companies in the construction sector partly explains the rapid increase in trade between the two states. Regarding the mining industry, China has over the years played a pivotal role in Botswana's diamond sector. Since Botswana's economy depends on diamonds, and the world economic collapse of 2008 with a drop in the world's demand

for diamonds, China's improved demand for diamonds and activities both in the polished and rough diamonds market would contribute to Botswana's development (Moahi, 2016). Chinese aid to Botswana can be traced back to 1976 when the two states signed an economic and technical cooperation, Gaborone as a recipient of US$16.6 million interest- free loan to be used for development projects (Taylor, 1998, p. 84).

Botswana's export structure with China is mainly primary goods and intermediate goods, most with a low level of processing. They are highly concentrated in a few products including non-industrial diamonds, crude vegetable materials, and works of art. Botswana's exports of textiles, footwear, and clothing to China have collapsed.

In 2006, Botswana textile, clothing and footwear exports to China accounted for 35percent of Botswana's total exports destined for China, while in 2012, it accounted for a negligible 0.04percent (Sekakela, 2014). It is not clear as to why Botswana's footwear sector exports goods to China, considering that China has a competitive advantage in the production of these goods (Sekakela, 2014).

Imports for the year 2019 for Botswana, Asia was Botswana's second largest trading partner, with Hong Kong, Russia, and India being the main sources of imports and China contributing only 1.3percent (Statistics Botswana International Merchandise Trade Statistics, 2019, p. 8). According to Sekekela (2016) Botswana's imports from China are composed not only of consumer goods but also of intermediate and capital goods. While the significance of China's relationship with Botswana is acknowledged, there are cases which illustrate that China cannot be said to be an important driver in the development of high- value-added exports in Botswana (Sekekela, 2016). For instance, although the largest proportion of Botswana's exports (52.6 percent) went to

Asia, China was not on the list of recipient states (Statistics Botswana International Merchandise Trade Statistics, 2019, p. 9). Most of the exports go to the United Kingdom South Africa, Belgium and Israel. Considering the typical preference of Botswana's exports towards resource-based products, these results could not be surprising.

In Namibia, Chinese economic activities mainly included construction and retail as decades after the country gained independence, Chinese trading shops started to mushroom countrywide (Melber, 2018). In 2018, China became Namibia's largest export market, contributing 18 percent to the country's total exports. Of Namibia's top ten export markets in 2023, China emerged as Namibia's top export market, accounting for 24.1 percent, or a trade surplus of N$2.0 billion, as reported in the annual trade statistics bulletin (The Brief, 2024). China, with 6 percent of total imports, ranks third on the list of importers into Namibia, behind South Africa and Zambia, respectively (NSA, 2018, p.14). Also, dominating the competition for state tenders, Chinese firms secured substantial stakes in the Namibian public works sector and established control over large parts of the construction sector, particularly in office buildings, roads, railways, harbor, and airport upgrades (Melber, 2018).

The mining industry in Namibia has in recent years witnessed a rise in Chinese presence. For instance, the Eastern China Non-Ferrous Metals Investment Holdings, the investment arm of the East China Mineral Exploration and Development Bureau, in 2011 publicised the discovery of 2 billion tonnes of iron ore in the Kunene region and plans to open an iron mine and steel plant with an annual production of 5 million tonnes (Melber, 2018). State-owned Chinese entities control uranium deposits at Swakop Uranium (Husab) and Rossing uranium mines in the Erongo region (Iroanya & Nawases, 2022). Regarding Swakop Uranium (Husab), one of the world's largest

known uranium deposits is under Chinese ownership through a takeover of Kalahari Minerals by China Guangdong Nuclear Power Corp in a 632 million pounds (990 million US dollars) deal (Melber, 2018; Iroanya & Nawases, 2022).

The presented literature indicates that there could be substantial factors that influence the formulation and implementation of the foreign policies and economic agreements China has with Namibia and Botswana. China's engagement in trade and investment sectors in both Botswana and Namibia has made dissimilar contributions to the economic emancipation of the two African states. The study therefore intends to compare and analyse key factors that drive China's economic relations with Botswana and Namibia. Results stemming from this study intend to make a notable epistemological contribution to the Sino-Namibia and Botswana relations. Sekakela (2016) argued that China's world-wide expansion causes distress in developing states: its export growth displaces domestic production and employment, especially for low-cost products manufactured in labour-intensive industries, and negatively affects developing states' exports. This, however, is not the case with Chinese investment in Botswana and Namibia where inequality, poverty, and unemployment are similarly high.

2.7 Symbiotic Sino-Africa relations: African agency- Botswana and Namibia

While non-state actors are becoming more relevant in international politics, Wendt (1999, p. 9) suggested that for most constructivists, states "state-centrism" remains key actors as changes in the system will eventually have to go to states. States interact with other states through bilateral or multilateral (institutions) means, with the main aim to pursue goals that are aligned to their national interests. Onuf (2013) highlights that constructivism views agency as a social condition, and therefore, a state is a collection of the humans and a social construction. Agency in the context of this study is the

ability of states to act independently outside of the international structure. Shaw (2016) defined African agency as traditions in which Africa's political, economic, social, and security actors can and do apply influence both on the continent and in international politics instead of simply being passive targets or victims of others' actions.

Harman and Brown (2013) indicated that some critics argue that IR theory echoes a practice of IR that is fundamentally imperialist or colonial in its positioning towards Africa. As a result, it takes as its basis the need to civilize or modify Africa in a way that fits with western thoughts about society, politics, and IR. States ensure to maintain and uphold a certain global order. Despite the line of argument that state formation is as a result of western historical processes, the world has over the years witnessed renewed activism and diplomatic activities of African states in international politics. Africa has been making its mark largely in the multilateral organisations such as the UN, World Trade Organisation (WTO), intra-regional African Union (AU) sphere, bilateral sphere, and as individual actors.

The rise of China and India to contest the North-Atlantic axis has had a positive effect on Africa's partaking in global affairs (Zondi, 2011 as cited in Brown, 2011). African agency is apparent in their role in international trade negotiations, procedures governing the distribution of aid, discussions over military and humanitarian intervention as well as environmental issues (Brown, 2011; Brown 2012). They adopt 'soft balancing' which Flemes (2009) explains as institutional strategies like the formation of limited diplomatic partnerships or alliances to constrain the power established great powers such as the USA and others. This position was supported by Lyons (2014) when he wrote that Rwanda's post genocide leaders' strategic and articulate diplomacy to get international aid for state development echoes African agency. To add on, African governments are highly recognised in the diffusion of

power on multilateral platforms as in the absence of other avenues by which the leading economies can dominate multilateral forums, the ‘numbers count’/ ‘numbers game’ grants African states a crucial role (Zondi, 2011 & Lee, 2011 as cited in Brown 2012). The rise of more ‘small club diplomacy’ with an increase of blocs such as BRICS, G20 have enhanced African agency (Zondi, 2011 as cited in Brown, 2012). Brown (2011) added that African states contribute by strengthening the influence of developing state groupings, for instance in the WTO-based Group of 20.

Chipaike and Knowledge (2018) alluded that African agency has been effective and firm in global negotiations that have to do with the emancipation of markets. Over recent years, African states have made policy choices that are of great benefit to their economies and apply them to economic ties and related collaborations that they have established with other states. The Ezulwini consensus of 2005 is an evident projection of the African agency. The consensus highlights the AU’s stance on the modification of the UN, where African states are in quest of a permanent representation on the UN Security Council (Chipaike & Knowledge, 2018). Detailing peace and security issues, the African continent through the AU has put in effort to sustain peace, despite issues of capacity, and in some cases, unsuccessful interventions like in the case of the 2011 Libyan crisis. For instance, credit is given to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) for restored peace in Somalia, as well as the presence and improved troop deployment in Central African Republic and Mali (Chipaike & Knowledge, 2018). Further, the birth of institutions such as the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) in 2000 by the USA reflects the increasing importance of Africa in IR. Lyons (2014, p. 123) states that although this is probably what it ought to be, it seems to have come as quite a shock to some other international actors, that African states and nationals could be the masters of their own destiny.

Scholars such as Harman and Brown (2013) highlighted that mainstream theories of IR such as liberalism, constructivism, and realism are all vested on western origins of statehood, civil society, political processes, and rationalities. This present study is of the view that constructivism best elucidates the politics and economies of African states. Constructivism provides a valuable way of analysing African agency in IR and bilateral ties for this study.

To address African agency in IR, advance explanations that encourage theoretical innovation and historical accounts of social transformation is required (Jones, 2005 as cited in Harman & Brown, 2013). In summary, although Africa's theoretical literature on its agency in IR remains limited and notes shortcomings of African actors as weak and inactive in IR, the existing literature confirms constructivism and places interest in Chinese- African state and non-state actors as objects of study. This further provides a broader scale in explaining and understanding various dimensions of Africa's international relations. Also, much of the literature available on African agency is not extensively written by African scholars, or if so, not well visible, a ground that is yet to be well- trodden in the discipline of IR.

2.7.1 Africa's role and agency: Sino-Africa ties

It is critically important to understand Africa's role and agency, the nature and degree, as well as the consequences their growing interaction may undergo with the world in general and with China in particular. Brown (2011) posited that African governments engage with donors for aid, deals on trade, and conflicts, amongst others. The current nature of the Sino-Africa relations has revealed the prominence of Africa in the international system. Chinese economic activities in Africa were hardly visible from the 1960s to the early 1990s. This was not because of a lack of economic interest in Africa's natural resources, but to China's inadequate capacity to chase and achieve

such interests in competition with major global powers at the time (Iroanya & Nawases, 2022). However, in 2009, China became Africa's largest trading partner (Youngman, 2017). Over the years, China has played an important role in the economies of African states, especially in underdeveloped sectors such as construction, infrastructure, mining, and so on. Despite having good relations with the western partners, African States such as Ghana have over the years benefitted greatly from Chinese loans and grants in financing infrastructure projects and investments in hydro and gas infrastructure, forecasting positive future development outcomes for Ghana's domestic market (Odoom, 2013).

According to Albert (2017) and Tembe and Xu (2013), China's extraordinary hunger for natural resources due to its rapid economic growth and middle-class growth had driven the Asian state to turn to Africa. Thus, its increased involvement in political, economic, and now African security affairs has also become a source of FDI in Africa. Long (2005) wrote that FDI maximises economic development as host states employ a range of policies and measures. He further added that an influx of FDI is regarded as a major opportunity for integrating their economies into the global market and efforts to promote economic development for host nations (Long, 2005). The Asian giant has been offering development loans and credit to states like Angola which are resource-rich, states like Zambia and Nigeria making investments in sectors such as agriculture and developing special trade and economic cooperation zones (Albert, 2017). This has amounted to significant sustainable development for African states, highlighting the nature of Chinese FDIs comprising of either agreement-based partnership businesses, joint ventures, and/or sole foreign ownership in some instances, and the latest economic integration driver, the BRI.

Johnston (2016) suggested that these growing investments could be transforming developing African states, as much as it is for China, and can be practiced for their sustainable development. China's drive for economic success has ignited the government to execute different avenues for economic integration and development and, as part of its long-term plan, the BRI has magnified China's high demand for commodities (Johnston, 2019). To further drive the BRI in southern Africa and its markets, Namibia is seen as a point of entry for the Maritime Silk Road into Africa from Asia, particularly for landlocked states such as Botswana.

This study highlights the basis on which African states in general, and Botswana and Namibia in particular, showcase their agency in their interaction with China. It looks at how the capacity and economic policies of the two governments connect to the various opportunities they are presented with through their engagement with China to their economic advancement objectives.

2.8 Change in Political Leadership and Governance in Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibia relations

The aspect of political leadership change as a subject factor on Africa-China relations may influence the overall dynamics of the relations and discussed in this study. The theory of constructivism indicates that both structural continuities and processes of change are based on agency that is influenced by social, spatial, and historical context (Klotz and Lynch, 2015). Contemporary features of constructivism address the role of psychology and emotion in shaping ideas and practices applied by individuals to encourage change (Blanton & Kegley, 2020). Nussbaum (2013) submitted that emotions are a vital element of political reasoning and are central to the processes of persuasion and argument. Constructivists view ideas, norms, and individual speech as shaping the global structure and how succeeding attitudes shape perception (Simao,

2012). In constructivism, individuals form part of key actors in international politics. The theory highlights how, for instance, individuals share meanings and images; as well as "how ideas, images, and identities develop, change, and shape international politics" (Blanton & Kegley, 2020). Political leadership in this context refers to the governance of states and institutions by individuals (presidents) for economic emancipation and advancement of states through operational and political elements.

Over the years, the focus of China-Africa relations has evolved from building solidarity to fight colonialism to a more economic stance. While some African political leaders have been critical of Sino-Africa relationships, others support a strengthening of African-China relations (Albert, 2017). Despite that, the trade relations have been accompanied by growing concerns about China's policy of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other states. It is of great emphasis to note arguments about Chinese financial aid that is being used as leverage, which would for instance influence election outcomes and relations with the new administration to take over office.

There are also instances where political leaders are critical of Chinese presence and activities in the African states. An illustrative example of pro-Chinese activities is during former Zambian president Kenneth Kaunda's time, when China was seen as Zambia's "all - weather friends" (Hampwaye & Kragelund, 2013). In the same state, however, former President Michael Sata asserted that the Chinese are "the new colonisers of Africa" and criticised Chinese companies for exploitation (Youngman, 2017). China removed term limits in 2017 and successors for presidents, effectively making President Xi Jing Ping China's president indefinitely (Stephens, 2019). With this decision made by the Chinese government, macroeconomic policies are likely to remain stable with one leadership in power. This is not the case in Namibia or

Botswana, where political leaders (presidents) are elected for a statutory term and stand to be re-elected or removed when their term ends.

In highlighting Botswana's agency in this regard, Botswana was extremely strict regarding its engagement with China under president Lt. General Seretse Khama Ian Khama's tenure. During his tenure, there were reports of tension and criticism from politicians about Sino-Botswana relations. The leaders of the state were strongly against the substandard work done by Chinese companies on various public sector projects (Moahi, 2016). An example of this is the failure of the Morupule power project that president Khama blamed China, where he was even quoted as saying that "were it not for delays and problems with the Chinese-constructed power plant, Botswana would be self- sufficient" (Dintsi, 2019).

Likewise, in 2006, the former president of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, also cautioned African states not to fall into a colonial relationship with China. He reminded African states that they had already gone through years of exploitation and enslavement, politically and economically, and warned them to guard themselves against a repetition of those circumstances (Lubamba-Kasongo, 2011). The current Masisi administration, however, seems to have a much more deeply rooted relationship with China as it suffers claims that they experience pressure from the Chinese not to maintain contact with states that do not like China (Khama, 2019). Khama (2019) also argued that the ties African states have with the Chinese nation only cater to China's interests and not those of the African nations.

In the case of Namibia, the relations have been blossoming from the times of the liberation struggle to date. The late President Hage Geingob in 2014 April met with President Xi and asserted that Namibia would create complimentary environment for

closer ties with Chinese investors (Melber, 2018). In fact, in 2018, the Chinese government elevated the relations to the highest level of relations or the so-called Comprehensive Strategic Cooperative Partnership (CSCP), certifying a deep relation between the two states (Iroanya &Nawases, 2022). The nature of the ties has been consistent since Namibia gained independence and the two states enjoy what seems to be a healthy relationship.

It is important to highlight the type of political leadership styles the institutions of these three states promote. Liebenberg (2012) provided a distinction between visionary leadership, transformational leadership, contractual, and/or pacting-oriented leadership, and lastly realistic leadership). He highlighted that visionary leadership is the need to link vision to reality and added that a visionary leader possesses a positive effect on attitudes, structures, internal policies, and even the foreign policy of an international power (Liebenberg, 2012). This type of leadership may have its downside, particularly if the vision is not aligned with reality and might promote alienation if not carefully assessed. Transformational leadership, on the other hand, is of much relevance when a nation is faced with realities of division, war, as well as domestic and foreign policy. Liebenberg (2012) added that transformational leadership is imperative when a nation is challenged with issues of recession, economic crisis, and even with a well- performing economy, of course with the application of varying approaches. He added that 'transformation in its widest sense is multi-layered, people-sensitive and inclusive (Liebenberg, 2012).

The third type of leadership within the context of politics as submitted by Liebenberg is the Contractual/Transactional and/or pacting-oriented leadership. Liebenberg (2012) considers these three concepts as one and explains that there is a close relationship between three elements; '(1) making and maintaining a social, economic

or political contract; (2) entering a transaction with consistency and mutual accommodation; and (3) entering a pact to make the world – or just one small community – a better one'. This notion of leadership requires leaders to be vigilant and aware of the causes of division and unity among people. The leader should be able to identify sectional interests and essentially be able to demonstrate open-eyed shrewdness and deeper consciousness.

Lastly, a realistic leader exhibits a reflective look at the circumstances, the strengths, and weaknesses of the available material and human competence before making choices or executing policy (Liebenberg, 2012). This notion of leadership tends to pay attention to the effects of the policies that were implemented and further create space for re-evaluation if they do not produce positive results. The concepts or thoughts of visionary and realistic styles of leadership are pertinent in many African states as they often encounter many of the challenges the continent often face. This requires an upright attitude and a high level of equality within an all-inclusive society.

Over the years, the focus of China-Africa relations has evolved from building solidarity to fight colonialism to a more economic entanglement. However, while some African political leaders have been critical of Sino-Africa relations, others support strengthening the union (Albert, 2017). For instance, during former Zambian president Kenneth Kaunda's tenure, China was seen as one of Zambia's "all-weather friends" (Hampwaye & Kragelund, 2013). Contrary to that narrative, in the same country, former President Michael Sata during his tenure tapped anti-Chinese sentiment for political purposes after Chinese managers shot protesters at a large coal mine in Southern Zambia (Albert 2017). An increasing presence and investment of Chinese nationals in Zambia have fuelled tensions as the description of the Chinese has changed to "infestors" since 2000 (Hampwaye & Kragelund, 2013).

Finally, another instance is where Botswana seemed to have welcomed the Chinese differently during former President Ian Khama's era. The current Masisi administration has a deeply rooted relationship with China and has suffered claims that Botswana experiences pressure from the Chinese not to maintain contact with states that do not like China (Khama, 2019). This could be regarded as a neo-colonial tendency. In 2006, Lubamba-Kasongo (2011) wrote that the former president of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, cautioned African states not to fall into a colonial relationship with China. He reminded African states that they had already gone through years of exploitation and enslavement, politically and economically, and warned them to guard themselves against a repetition of those circumstances (Lubamba-Kasongo, 2011).

In the case of China, one would identify a somewhat combination of transformational, realistic, and visionary leadership style. Botswana and Namibia may have adopted the visionary leadership style. The question of whether this leadership style is sufficient for the two southern African states remains relevant. In highlighting the constructivist theory, the study thus investigates the political and economic policy implications due to changes in political leadership and governance in the two respective African States under study in their relations with China. This additionally provides an ontological contribution as the study would prove that political leadership change could indeed form part of the core bases which influence the foreign relations China has with Namibia and Botswana. While numerous studies have been conducted, scholarly studies on the specific focus of political leadership change and governance in Botswana and Namibia are rare.

2.9 Developmental State Discourse and Constructivism

For Socio-economic development and prosperity to take place, states should aggressively address issues of poverty, unemployment, and inequality by formulating and implementing effective policies. Waldner (1999, p.1 as cited in Meyns and Musamba, 2010) suggested four defining features of a developmental state. Firstly, development-oriented political leadership where in the matter of East Asian developmental states, there had been observations that the political elites were able to create functional state institutions that facilitated both political stability and economic development. Secondly, an autonomous and effective bureaucracy that has to deal with lasting career rewards which create commitment and a sense of "corporate coherence", giving the bureaucratic apparatuses a certain kind of autonomy (Evans, 1995 as cited in Meyns &Musamba, 2010, p.22). Thirdly, a production-oriented private sector. To meet their economic interests, developmental states embrace capitalism as they employ a wide range of institutional instruments to nudge and prod domestic firms to meet domestic and international business standards, productivity levels as well as organisational and technical capacities (Meyns &Musamba, 2010).

Worth noting is that the bureaucracy is not only able to guard itself against particularistic private sector interests, but it is also robust enough to cooperate with the same productively (Beeson, 2004 p. 29 as cited in Meyns & Musamba, 2010). Alluding to these, Gumede (n.d.) outlines several dimensions that characterise a developmental state. They are namely ideological (for example, the role of the state versus market force), institutional (for example, state autonomy and capacity), cultural (collectivism versus individualism), and socio-economic attributes (for example, economic growth, industrialisation, local economies). A developmental state has the advantage of a private business complementing the role of the government, and fourthly, a

performance-oriented governance (Bolesta, 2007). The ruling elites in developmental states demonstrate high levels of commitment to poverty reduction as they address equity concerns from the early stages of the transformation process (Booth, 1999, p. 304). These results in rapid industrial growth, as was the case in East Asia, paralleled by a positive pattern of income equality, low unemployment, and the near abolition of unending poverty (Deyo, 1987, p. 2).

The developmental state concept which was introduced to rather poor economies which require significantly better developmental dynamics gives priority to economic development and is conceptually placed between a centrally planned economy model and a liberal open economy model sustained by export-led growth whereby the volume of exports remains high, and the development is progressively fuelled by domestic consumption (Bolesta, 2007). Thus, the standard of living of the nation's citizens continuously improves.

Analysis by various scholars has shown that developmental states are best described by the experiences of East Asian states. The concept was used to explain the astonishing transformation in the economies after WW2 of East Asian states such as China, Japan and Singapore (Andrews & Nwapi, 2018, p. 49) and showcased a pattern defining an adequate developmental path (Bolesta, 2007, p. 109). Amuwo (2008) outlined three key features of a developmental state commonly applied in the East Asian region. Primarily, a developmental state is central to the economic and societal transformation that the region has experienced. Secondly, they have undergone, fluctuating proportions and significant and sustained increases in per capita income. Lastly, developmental states continue to be relevant in economic development, given the diverse levels of development and various state capacities at the disposal of each of them. The exceptional capacity of the East Asian states was entrenched in political

alliances, domestic authoritarian rule, and effective economic institutions (Deyo, 1987). This resulted in the effectiveness of state intervention in the marketplace (Deyo, 1987).

The most significant and well - discussed origin of a developmental state is Japan, the "Asian miracle", the first East Asian nation to be considered a developmental state. Its developmental state can be drawn back to the Meiji era, an undemocratic period in Japanese history (Bolesta, 2007). Chalmers Johnson's inventive work on the developmental state was fixated on Japan's very rapid and highly successful post-war reconstruction and industrialization process from 1925 to 1975 examining the specific events that shaped the country's history (Johnson, 1982). He wrote that a state striving to match the economic achievements must first embrace the same priorities as Japan. It must first of all be a developmental state – and only then a regulatory state, a welfare state, an equality state, or whatever kind of functional state a society may wish to adopt' (Johnson, 1982 p. 306).

An authoritarian developmental state encourages swift industrialisation processes. Solid collaboration between the state and capital characterizes the original concept of an authoritarian state, that would ensure that political and economic power strengthen each other in support of common developmental objectives (Van der Westhuizen, 2016). Evans (1995, p. 59) comprehensively described the concept as "a concrete set of connections that link the state intimately and aggressively to particular social groups with whom the state shares a joint project of transformation". China's experience in economic growth as an authoritarian developmental state was a result of the government adopting the Washington Consensus and applying it in the Chinese context (Yao, n.d.). Its notable economic advancement is often attributed to strong government intervention (Beijing Consensus) that can mobilize large amounts of

resources to clear any bottleneck to growth or institutional change (Yao, n.d.). He added that the Chinese economy has over the last 30 years progressed towards the market doctrines of neoclassical economics which include prudent fiscal policy, economic openness, privatization, market liberalization, and the protection of private property (Yao, n.d.). Inclusive of the before mentioned, the Chinese government apply the developmental state theory and concept as the main ideology of the state and to aid developmental advancements.

A democratic developmental state, conversely, is where citizens enjoy extensive protected rights, choose rulers who will govern them, and the capitalist activities for economic advancement are freely played out. Bolesta (2007) observed that in Western democracies, public administration appears to safeguard public interests from politicians and a structure to transform the ruling elite's ideas into policies. In a democratic developmental state, the private sector has more liberty and influence in the economic performance of a state. The above-mentioned features are linked to the tenets of constructivism, and by applying the theory, a more comprehensive understanding is presented in explaining the developmental state concept in Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibia relations.

2.9.1 Developmental State Discourse: Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibia relations

In the context of highlighting the concept of developmental state in Africa and Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibia relations, this study dates to the colonial times of the 1960s. Shivji (2005) stated that this is the period that was defined by state-led interventions and have been seen to be an expression of "developmentalism". This was before the burden of economic neoliberalism and the continent experienced deficits of all sorts for development. Two sub-Saharan African states, Botswana and Mauritius,

both embarked on development trajectories soon after gaining their independence in the 1960s, which avoided the pitfalls of overbearing statist intervention (Meyns & Musamba, 2010). The two were then identified as developmental states.

Putzel (2005) submitted that since the time of independence, African states have been ill-equipped for development as markets were poorly established, restricted productive capacity, badly designed and funded health and educational systems, very low skill levels, weakly integrated territories, and skeletal administrative systems.

Mkandawire (2001) argued that some African states, owing to the high economic performance of the 1960s and 1970s, were ideologically developmental and followed policies that produced high rates of growth in the immediate post-colonial era, gave rise to appreciable social gains and the accumulation of a great deal of capital. Meanwhile, for weak states to meet their developmental goals, they need to do away with the traditional traits of democracy. To support this, Amuwo (2008) wrote that Samuel Huntington claimed that poor states that aspire for development and industrialisation should suspend democracy until the goals of economic development and prosperity are accomplished, thus, development first, democracy later.

In the case of democratic Botswana, state bureaucracy tends to have a larger control over state governing than in other democratic states in southern Africa. Botswana, one of the fastest - growing economies in the southern African region, has evolved as a democratic developmental state through an amalgamation of various factors. These factors include a strong state, foreign aid a market economy, dynamic promotion of national interest, enlightened political leadership, a capable bureaucracy, sound statecraft, political openness, effective government performance, and respect for constitutional order and democracy (Amuwo, 2008). Others include the avoidance of

the predatory diversion of mineral resources such as copper, nickel, and diamonds, considerable (rural) infrastructural development since 1974, smart fiscal management, as evidenced by large interest-bearing foreign reserves and careful investment abroad (Amuwo, 2008).

China's contribution to Botswana's development has been beneficial in economic terms. This makes it important to consider theories of state use. While previous studies on developmental states have been confined to Theme1: The emerging developmental state in Africa's energy sector, Theme 2: The Possibility of Developmental States in Africa (Andrews & Nwapi, 2018; Hillbom, 2019), the aspect of state behaviour is missed and could be a vital factor that shapes the relations among various states. It can be argued that Botswana and Namibia could become stronger developmental states like China if they use their varying strengths and capacities to promote growth and undertake economic transformation. Yu (1988) stated that "Africa should use China's developmental experience as a reference, adopting those features that are usable". The specific focus in this context is the potential characteristics and behaviours of developmental states in foreign relations.

Assumptions will be used to interrogate whether the concept of a developmental state in Namibia (Democratic DS), China (Authoritarian DS) and Botswana (Democratic or a soft-dictatorship developmental state developmental state?), and whether it has an impact on the nature of relations between China and the two southern African states.

Also, results from this study are eminent as it intends to answer the question of political systems of developmental states or essentially the political environment that is needed for a developmental state to prosper. It seeks to address the question of whether the two African states are indeed democratic developmental states or limited democracies

by highlighting the magnitude of state intervention in developmental advancements and the extent to which they deliver on the defining features of a developmental state namely development-oriented political leadership; an autonomous and effective bureaucracy; a production-oriented private sector, and performance-oriented governance. For instance, in the case of contemporary Japan, democratically elected politicians seem to have limited influence on the running of the state as the bureaucratic structure is in control of the country's affairs (Bolesta,2007).

Nem Singh & Ovadia (2018) recommend that more research be done on the theoretical and methodological approaches that can be used by states with weak capacity and legacies of inequality, oppression, and colonial rule. This study has identified this issue as a serious gap with limited focus on relations between states and the behaviour of developmental states with one another, particularly African states. The study further examines a nexus between developmental state and its link to the tenets of constructivism, economic development, and the behaviour of states with one another.

In addition, no comparative study has been done that analyses Sino-Africa economic and political relations with particular focus on Botswana and Namibia as developmental states in their respective ways. As such, the study will fill this scholarly gap that has been identified. These observations contribute to the analysis in the succeeding chapters of factors that shape the nature of relations between China and the two African states under study.

2.10 Perceptions on neo-colonialism and Sino-Africa relations

In recent years, tensions between African and Chinese leaders have been brewing as the world is witnessing numerous cases of dissatisfaction and displeasure within the bilateral relationships China has with African states. Political leaders need to be viewed by their peoples as legitimate, effective, and just in distributing scarce

resources of the state (Liebenberg & Lorten, n.d.). Numerous scholars such as Youngman (2013 and 2017), Moahi (2016) and Bolaane (2007) argued that generally, the current status of relations is not pleasing, and they have termed the relations as controversial and problematic.

The rising oil discoveries in Africa and China's interests and attractive policies pose as a threat to western dominance in the international sphere anti-Chinese riots have taken place like in the case of Zambia in 2009, where anti-Chinese riots took place in Lusaka after the defeat of Michael Sata (Bwalya, 2011). In the case of Ghana, Odoom (2013) noted that there have been suggestions of resistance from certain quarters within the Ghanaian public about perceived competition from Chinese traders and miners at the micro level. Events of such nature have called for discussions around China's engagement with African states and neo-colonialism. Despite all these claims, Chinese leadership and some African leaders have advocated against the negative claims and over presence of China in Africa. President Xi Jinping, during his visit to Tanzania in 2013, noted the existence of problems in Sino-Africa relations and said, "In addressing problems in cooperation with Africa, China will be sincere" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, 2013).

Africa's strategic importance has seen several developed economies scramble to invest in the continent (Mlambo et al., 2016). With that said, China's dominance in the economic and political spheres of some African states has undergone increasing scrutiny from scholars and the media. Since the Asian nation became Africa's biggest partner in terms of large investments (Youngman, 2013, p.4), accusations of it exploiting African resources without advancing local economies have been on the rise (Albert, 2017). Chinese businesses are criticised because they import labour despite

high levels of unemployment in African markets and their goods and services are not of exceptional quality.

Mlambo et al. (2016) posited that Sino-Africa relations have been received with mixed reactions, particularly from the west. Mlambo et al. (2016) wrote that the Asian dragon is being accused of mining Africa's natural resources and exploiting the markets without any significant benefits to the African Continent. Similarly, the infiltration of Chinese SOEs in African markets could be influencing domestic policies and "day- to -day" activities of state affairs. Chinese SOEs, particularly in infrastructure development, have received critical review especially from non-state actors as they seem are referring to Chinese as posing a threat to local markets and industries. In some cases, infrastructure development comes in the form of aid and investments, seemingly attractive to African governments and thus awarding of tenders, especially in the construction industry, falls easily into the laps of Chinese companies.

The funds provided by the Chinese government in the form of aid, loans, or bids placed by Chinese businesses (with strikingly attractive terms and conditions) are to the detriment of local construction companies which lose out on business (Melber, 2018). This angers locals and other foreign companies that are operating in the same industry and viewed as the demise of local competition. In addition, these Chinese SOEs and companies are said to be returning profits made from these projects back to China, leaving the host country with nothing but a new building.

2.10.1 Neo-colonialism and Sino-Africa relations: Trade, loans and Investments

There have been growing concerns that the trade partnerships, loans, investments, and aid African states have been receiving from China are more of a rather "win-lose" situation for the African states. Trade flows between the two parties are broadly featured by how China purchases raw materials from Africa and then sells

manufactured goods back to the latter (Johnston, 2016). Although highlighted by scholars such as Li et al. (2012) that platforms such as FOCAC were formed for mutually beneficial South-South Cooperation, other scholars like Stremlau (2015) dismissed this and submitted that "China and Africa's relationship is not yet one of win-win economic cooperation". Bbaala (2015) also shares similar sentiments and states that dealing with China threatened the sovereignty of African States. However, Guimei (2010) argued that China-Africa economic and trade cooperation is a normal business relationship and has nothing to do with neo-colonialism. He contended that China is also exploited by the unreasonable and unjust global economic order dominated by Western states, the main beneficiaries of that economic order. A continent characterized by some scholars as underdeveloped, one could argue that China could be a potential contributor to altering the status quo. This conjugal could be viewed as a beneficial strive for industrialization, that is sustainable for African states. The question however, of whether China's presence in African nations contributes to the demise of various sectors, including that of manufacturing, remains unaddressed. As guided by the tenets of the constructivist theory and highlighting the arguments of neo-colonialism and China, there is a comprehensive discussion and analysis in academic literature.

Subsequently, these contrasting positions further make it evident that there is a need for the existing knowledge gap in the nature and purpose of China-Africa relations to be clarified. Also, events of such nature have severely contributed to questions about neo-colonialism and calls for this study to reflect on these perceptions and contribute towards this end. This multifaceted nature of cross-border relations calls for a theory that combines structure and agency of all types (Gros & Fung, 2019, p.39). Weins (2015) asserted that perceptions play a critical role in defining a state's identity. Weins

(2015) asserted that perceptions play a critical role in defining a state's identity. Thus, the study applied constructivism and further addressed the gap by examining critical trends identified in these relations.

Moreover, Gros & Fung (2019) highlighted neo-Marxist branches of dependency and world system theories would debate that the East Asian country is a capitalist state despite its claims of what they call socialism with Chinese characteristics. They further argued that the post- colonialists would view the presence of China in the African continent particularly in the natural resource rich African states as a replacement for Western (neo) – colonialism (Gros & Fung, 2019). Additionally, it could be that Chinese cheap and affordable products in various industries could be contributing to the weakening and slackening of the industrialisation process in Africa. To support this, Mlambo et al. (2016) noted that China is viewed as a backer of the African continent's deindustrialisation, which essentially results in underdevelopment and poverty.

Furthermore, China would ultimately attempt to establish its worldwide ascendancy by pushing the already transforming global balance of power in its favour and reshaping it into a multipolar construction (Farooq and Khan 2020). They added that since the outbreak of COVID-19, China, the 'global saviour', has been aiding developing economies during this period and thus may proclaim a new era of prospects for the swiftly rising great power in this regard (Farooq and Khan, 2020). Alves (2013) contended that the Chinese government's trade and economic cooperation in sectors such as infrastructure development and loans to developing states on the African continent is based on a win-win approach. According to Bbaala (2015, p. 97), China's engagement in Africa has been viewed as driven by its hunger for the continent's natural resources and the need to develop international markets for Chinese

manufacturers and multinational corporations, thus raising questions of neo-colonialism. It has also emphasised Africa's vulnerable role and position in the world economy as well as competition between industrial states and their ideologies (Lubumba-Kasongo, 2011).

2.11 Summary

The theory of constructivism, where people and society make each other, brings together agency and structure. African states no longer equate to worthless politics and the attention on African agency and the ways African states behave in the international system explains established ties between agency and structure. The rise of China and its increasing attempts for economic integration has been greatly welcomed by African actors. The presence of the African Agency in China-Africa relations is suggested by the application of the core tenets of the constructivist theory which intend to illustrate views of shared ideas as well as human association which indeed are the focal points of foreign relations China has with Namibia and Botswana. This approach adopted boosts an epistemological contribution of the study which aims at creating knowledge with intentions to contribute to the framework, existing knowledge and policies that are intersubjective. These interactions, shared ideas, identities, and interests shape relations and define the international structure and contributes to the discipline of IR. Noticeably, the impact China has on each states' economic advancement depends on the commodities the country specializes in and the resources at its disposal. The mounting hunger for energy resources and minerals contributes to the Asian country's promising role and influence in the global value chains.

The impact of trading with China on developing states has shown that many developing states have reaped enormous benefits from China's rapid growth and increasingly important trade links with the developing states, although other

developing states have suffered from increased competition both in the domestic and third markets. It should be noted that the impact of China on each country depends on the commodities in which the country specializes in including all the resources at disposal. Ontologically, China's relations with Africa in general and with Botswana and Namibia in particular show that China has multiple identities that are constructed based on the nature of its interactions with the two African states. Also, how state leaders and elites (non-state actors) influence and shape the nature of interactions results like the response to situations.

Bilateral relationships today are aimed at expanding global markets, strengthening diplomatic relations and supporting one another on an international level. The structures put in place influence agency and vice-versa. The changes that take place continuously between Botswana and Namibia in their relations with China depend on the beliefs and ideas held by these states. The two African states can act on what is brought by the international system through agency Therefore, the application of the constructivist theory for this current study allows for scrutiny of the nature of the reality of relations China has with Botswana and Namibia and magnifies the nature of knowledge and what ought to be known. Social structures through which knowledge is shared are therefore determined by shared ideas rather than imposed by nature. It is imperative to address the question of theory and epistemology when analysing relations between states as it contributes to the politics of knowledge production. While numerous studies have been conducted like that of Liebenberg (2012, 2022), scholarly work on the specific focus of political leadership, governance and neo-colonialism within the southern African context has received so far relatively limited attention in the academic literature. This study showcases an ontological view by investigating how these features amongst others affect the stability of economic

policies and principles (institution) of Namibia and Botswana in their relations with China. In addition, previous studies have hinted that there is some nexus between developmental states and the degree and nature of relations they share, and the implications of the political and economic systems of these developmental states for the nature of the relations. Therefore, this current study intends to identify and empirically analyse these comparative relationships.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines methodological choices for this study and comprehensively describes and justifies the selected methodological approaches. The research paradigm(s), research methodology, research design, the target population and sampling procedures, instruments and procedures used to collect data, research units, qualitative data analysis, and lastly, ethical considerations are discussed in detail. Methodological limitations encountered during the study and how these issues were mitigated are highlighted and explained. The employed research design and methodology are based on theory- derived research objectives that allow for a comparative investigation of various economic and political components influencing the Sino-Namibia and Sino-Botswana relations. This was conducted in the context of a developmental state discourse from a constructivist theoretical perspective.

3.2 Research paradigm(s)

An Interpretive paradigm (qualitative, inductive) is a paradigm that assumes that reality is socially constructed and is subjective. Interpretivists seek an in-depth set of data from participants by using instruments such as interviews. Post-positivist paradigm (quantitative; deductive) is of the view that the ideas and identities of researchers' influence what is observed and as a result impact what they conclude (E-international relations, 2021). This epistemological approach rejects inductive logic (interpretivism) and highlights that human intellectual is flawed.

This study is however of the view that interpretivism applies to the nature of this study as focuses on context and reinforces the reliability and validity of the data that is

collected with the applied research methodology and research instrument and not to predict phenomena. Interpretivism asserts that comprehending the beliefs, motivations, and reasoning of individuals in a social condition is essential to decoding the meaning of the data that can be collected around a phenomenon (Nickerson, 2023).

Frequently, political scientists refer to spectacles or lenses or theoretical approaches through which political scientists and IR specialists look at global politics (D'Anieri, 2014). The philosopher Wilfred Desan referred to "angular optics" in viewing the evolving world of politics (Liebenberg, 2013). Thomas Kuhn introduced the concept of scientific paradigms, a paradigm being a comprehensive worldview or fundamental encompassing understanding of the world comparable to a rather static *Weltanschauung* as a view on the reality, including science (Johnson, 1981, p. 49). In short, "a fundamental image, a static recipe-like disciplinary framework (and the scientific fraternity within that school or intellectual space strictly adhering to the paradigm – my insertion) has of its subject matter" (Johnson, 1981, p.50). Paradigms of inquiry are described as worldviews that signal a unique view of reality (ontological), view of knowing and the relationship between knower and to-be-known (epistemological), view of the mode of inquiry (methodological), and view of what is valuable positions (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Heron & Reason, 1997 as cited in Sandelowski, 2000).

It is worth noting that a researcher's view and beliefs about a particular research project inform the activities of that study. Ontologically, the researcher's views are on the current circumstances of knowledge on the subject matter, or what is known to be the nature of reality. Since various paradigms require contradictory viewing positions, fusions at the paradigm level are not true fusions, mergers, or reconciliations of worldviews, but rather the clear framing of inquiry in two or more worldviews, each

of which remains distinct from the other (Sandelowski, 2000). Within the broader philosophical tradition, whereby philosophy is viewed as the "mother of all sciences," and political philosophy as a precursor, political philosophers such as Jurgen Habermas and Herbert Marcuse argued that radical differences between thought patterns and the language used within such frameworks (or paradigms) lead to a radical short-circuit in communication. In contrast, the philosopher Heidegger held high hopes that continued dialogue between adversarial frameworks can bring together some contrasting viewpoints into a minimal consensus or an interlinkage between communication horizons. If that is so, contrasting paradigms, even clashing paradigms, may be able to some or other extent, to partially morph, or inform each other creating new insights which in this case may lead to more flexible, fluid, and interactive para*digms*, rather than ridged *paradigms* (Gouws, 1990 as cited in Liebenberg, 1995, p. 62). This however remains a complex debate on how such minimal consensus, or a form of intercommunication can be fruitful and lead to some shared *intersubjectivity* (Liebenberg, 2008; 2013).

Political scientists such as Di'Anieri's (2014) argues that various theories or theoretical frameworks (lenses) on international politics can fruitfully inform each other even if there are wide differences between their base assumptions and theoretical roots. Rather than enter this complex debate, the researcher chose, even while aware of these complexities, to opt for an applicable spectacle or lens that can inform the research approach and methodology used here.

3.3. Research Methodology: Qualitative research

According to Marczyk, DeMatteo and Festinger (2010), qualitative research entails studies that do not attempt to qualify their outcomes through statistical summary or analysis. Qualitative research is best suited in addressing what lacks clarity in literature and therefore sees the need to learn more from research participants through exploration and analysis. Qualitative research assists in harvesting "deeper data" within a specific socio-political context at a specific moment in time (Neuman, 2007). This is one of the strengths of a qualitative approach as it provides specific points of view and is relatively flexible, rather than rigid and controlled as in the case of the quantitative approach (Neuman, 2007; Bless et al, 2013, p. 16). Qualitative approach simultaneously brings us closer to a contextual understanding of how research participants view and experience the situation on the ground with different research lenses. In this comparative exploratory case study, qualitative data is collected and analysed to test the empirical findings of the study. Given that the principal concepts of IR are socially constructed and not inherent, the applied research methodology for this study, gives socially clear meaning and understanding to the nature of interaction these two southern African states have with China. It essentially improves the reliability and validity of the data.

Qualitative research is inductive in nature and allows for the researcher to use open-ended questions. These questions may also change or more questions added based on the responses of the research participants as the interview is conducted. Since qualitative research is fluid and inductive, new concepts are measured and created simultaneously with the process of gathering data (Neuman, 2014). "Measurement intimately connects how we perceive and think about the social world with what we

find in it" (Neuman, 2014 p. 203). This approach is more suited to seeking the meaning of events or circumstances and allows the researcher to make changes during the study.

The following important characteristics of the qualitative research process were identified by Creswell (2012):

- Exploring a problem and developing a detailed understanding of a central phenomenon (within a specific context)
- Having the literature review play a secondary role in justifying the problem
- Stating the purpose and research questions in a general and broad way to delve into and obtain in depth knowledge of the participants' experiences
- Collecting data based on words from a small number of individuals so that the participants' views and experiences are obtained
- Analysing the data for description and extract themes using text analysis and interpreting the larger meaning of the findings
- Writing the report using flexible, emerging structures and evaluative criteria, and including the researchers' subjective reflexivity and bias"

The qualitative research method is of a subjective nature as it believes that there is no preceding objective reality that can be observed. From a constructivist perspective, it permits multiple realities. Sukamolson (2007) submitted that "reality is not 'out there' to be objectively and dispassionately observed by us but is at least in part constructed by us and by our observations". While arguably an objective reality cannot be attained, nor guaranteed, qualitative research reports on the real-life views, the latter derived from real-life experiences of the chosen research participants. The emerging themes are not a matter of fiction or absolute relativity or "anything goes" as qualitative

research approaches are no less rigorous than other approaches (Liebenberg, 2008; Liebenberg, 2013).

Qualitative research opens perspectives on experienced realities and unearths insights relevant to the topic under investigation. Rather than imposed "objectivities" or "certain truths", the approach extracts valuable views to enrich the study. It evokes *inter-subjectivity*, rather than static "objectivities" or "truths" and such *inter-subjectivity* provides valuable views on an evolving reality, in this case relationships between states, which can broaden insights on the topic and the research questions and calls for reflection, further dialogue and invites more future research in search of knowledge generation in the field (Liebenberg, 2008; Liebenberg, 2013). Creswell (2012) stated that this approach befits to address a research problem when the researcher does not know the variables and need to explore. This study uses both primary and secondary qualitative data which is then described and analysed by using themes.

This approach aims to examine the acceptability of the theoretical approach of the study (in this case, constructivism) and is equipped to address the main research objective: To compare and analyse various economic and political components of Sino-Namibia and Sino-Botswana relations in the context of developmental state discourse from a constructivist theoretical perspective, as well as the specific research objectives addressed by the study: To investigate whether a change in political leadership and governance architecture in Namibia and Botswana has an impact on the nature of their foreign relations with China, and lastly, to investigate the neo-colonial perception of China's presence in Africa in general and Botswana and Namibia in particular. The study draws more data from secondary sources such as reports, journal

articles, case studies, book chapters, books, and available publications from recognised research platforms or think tanks as additional sets of data.

3.4 Research Design

The research design demands that a researcher keep numerous factors in mind during this stage of the research process (May, 1993; Neuman, 2007; Bless, Higson-Smith, and Sithole, 2013). For Bryman (2004), the "research design provides a framework for the collection and analysis of data". For Bless et al. (2013), the research design consists of the "set of procedures that guide the researcher in the process of formulating research questions or verifying a particular hypothesis". For this study, the researcher chose to follow Leedy. Leedy (1997) defined a research design as a plan which provides the overall framework for gathering data. This study employed a comparative exploratory case study design where sufficient data is collected to advance the consistency of the research outcomes. This approach is flexible and allows the researcher to gain credible and insightful information with an improved understanding of addressing and analysing the research objectives. It strives to highlight new insight and knowledge attempts to analyse and understand the factors that influence the nature of China's presence in Africa and its relations with Botswana and Namibia.

The current state of knowledge (ontology) shared by existing literature is well understood because of the interaction among states. From an ontological perspective, the tenets and elements of constructivism that were discussed earlier rationalise and justify the overall nature of relations, including the economic and political policy implications China has with Botswana and Namibia. This study applied the constructivist theory and the selected methods of research to address the research objectives and provide more knowledge, and a better understanding (epistemology) of the relations under study.

3.4.1. Case study

A case study as a methodological approach and research strategy is adopted for this study. Yin (2009) defined a case study as "an empirical inquiry that investigates the case or cases conforming to the abovementioned definition by addressing the "how" or "why" questions concerning the phenomenon of interest". This approach helped the researcher to fully understand and make sense of the factors that influence the nature of relations China has with Botswana and Namibia. It further provided a clear direction on lessons and experiences that are drawn and invited the element of peer learning on economic and political policies from each other. Frequently, during a case study approach, one case may inform other cases and provide valuable insights. In such a case, as part of the qualitative research approach (also about materials consulted during the literature review) reference is made to *broader casing* (Liebenberg, 2013), which in some instances may come to the fore in this study to add further value to the mixed methods approach here.

3.5 Study Population

Using expert knowledge and scanning the research setting, the target population of this study are various relevant institutions from Namibia, Botswana, and China. Political scientists and field experts form part of the population sourced from the three states and any other state across the world relevant to this study. The study population includes relevant departments from the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation (MIRCO), Ministry of International Affairs and Cooperation of Botswana (MIAC), the Chinese Embassies in both Botswana and Namibia, Ministry of Industrialisation and Trade Namibia (MIT), Ministry of Investment Trade and Industry- Botswana, National Planning Commission of Namibia (NPC), National Planning Commission Botswana, the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR), Botswana Research Institute, and

lastly, political scientists and field experts where oral interviews were conducted to subject experts.

3.6 Sample

The study further made use of the purposeful sampling method. This sampling strategy allowed the researcher to identify and select research participants that were particularly knowledgeable or experienced with a concurrence of interests (Creswell & Clark, 2011). Jansen (2023) stated that researchers adopting this sampling technique aim to gather deep information from a small population as it allows the researcher to target specific individuals who have unique knowledge or experience, rather than focusing on a generalised scale. This purposeful sampling method permits the researcher to look for and obtain a broader view of the research landscape as data is gathered from different viewpoints. This study intentionally selected individuals and organisations that would aid in developing a better and detailed understanding of the core phenomenon of the research to achieve the research objectives of the study.

Data was gathered through interviews from departments at embassies, ministries and institutions which are responsible for economic activities and specific relations on the two African states and its relations with China. MIRCO- Namibia (1), MIAC- Botswana (1), Chinese embassy in Botswana (1), Chinese embassy in Namibia (1), MIT - Namibia (1), Ministry of Investment Trade and Industry- Botswana (1), NPC- Namibia (1), NPC- Botswana (1), IPPR- Namibia (1), Botswana Research Institute (1), and political scientists, researchers, and field experts (10). Thus, the total sample size is 20.

3.7 Research units

Research units, (sample) units, or cases are defined as people or things where data is collected from (Sukamolson, 2007). MIRCO, formerly known as the Ministry of Foreign affairs, was established at Namibia's independence in 1990, with the function of formulating, promoting, and executing Namibia's foreign policy and the conduct of Namibia's international relations (MIRCO, n.d.). The Namibian government has identified key strategic foreign policy goals and objectives to be pursued by MIRCO, and at times, in collaboration with the relevant Ministries, Offices and Agencies (The Republic of Namibia, n.d.). The key strategic foreign policy goals are as follows:

- The promotion and protection of Namibian's sovereign, territorial integrity, national security, and social well-being.
- The promotion and enhancement of Namibian's prosperity through economic growth and sustainable development.
- The promotion of international peace and security, regional co-operation, especially through active support, collective initiatives and effective multilateralism.
- The promotion of Namibian's and African's standing and influence in world affairs.
- The protection of the welfare of Namibian citizen abroad; and
- The provision of professional and appropriate service to the Government and Private institutions and individuals with interests abroad.

The NPC of Namibia's mandate, derived from the Article 129 of the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia and the National Planning Commission Act 2013 (Act 2 of 2013), is to plan and spearhead the course of national development (NPC, n.d.). In an

effort to promote trade and investment, Namibia MIT developed four mandate programmes, namely, the International Trade Development, which is administered by the Directorate; International Trade in the Department of Trade and Commerce; Industrial and Enterprise Development, which is the responsibility of the Directorate; Industrial Development; Investment Promotion and Facilitation, which is the function of the Namibia Investment Centre. The centre was established in terms of the Foreign Investment Act (Act No. 24 of 1993 as amended). The Centre serves as Namibia's official investment promotion and facilitation agency and the first point of call for investors. The development of a vibrant and competitive domestic economy and market conditions function of the Ministry is administered by the Directorate: Commerce in the Department of Trade and Commerce (MIT, n.d.).

The IPPR was officially launched in April 2001 as a non-profit organisation with a mission to deliver independent, analytical, critical, yet constructive research into social, political, and economic issues that affect development in Namibia. It is independent of government, political parties, commercial interests, trade unions, and other interest groups (IPPR, n.d.).

The National Planning Commission (NPC-Botswana) was established under the Office of the President, through the public sector rationalisation exercise of 2022 with the functions of the former National Strategy Office, the Government Implementation Coordination Office, the Vision 2036 Coordinating Agency, and the planning function from the then Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (NPC-Botswana, n.d.). The Ministry of Investment, Trade, and Industry-Botswana creates a conducive environment for the promotion of investment and development of sustainable industries and trade, diversify and grow the economy, creating wealth and

employment, so that there is prosperity for all (Ministry of Investment, Trade, and Industry-Botswana, n.d.).

The primary responsibility of MIAC-Botswana is to manage and coordinate Botswana's foreign policy and advance the country's national interests abroad. Derived from the Government Notice No. 356 of 2002 in the Constitution of Botswana, the Ministry's mandate can be summarized as to:

- Promote friendly relations with the international community with a view to establish and secure goodwill towards Botswana.
- Articulate and defend Botswana's interests in the regional and international organizations.
- Develop bilateral frameworks to enhance the realization of Botswana's foreign policy objectives.
- Cross sectoral co-ordination of matters with a bearing on foreign relations.
- Management of Diplomatic immunities and privileges
- Formulate and articulate Botswana's foreign policy.
- Governance and the International Community.
- Major Communication channel between Botswana Government and the International Community.
- Promote and protect Botswana's interests and its citizens abroad and enhance Botswana's security and prosperity.
- To promote favourable conditions for Botswana's trade, foreign investments, tourism and to seek scientific, technological, and cultural cooperation with other states and institutions.
- Provision of service on behalf of other Government Ministries and Departments.

- Coordinates State and official visits by Heads of State; and
- State Protocol and State Functions (MIAC, n.d.)

3.8 Research Instruments

Based on the economic and political elements of this study, both primary and secondary data were utilised. The researcher carried out structured in-depth interviews by securing appointments with respective key research participants using the online and in person platforms. The study was guided by posing open-ended exploratory research questions. These aid in addressing the research objectives and to define the domains of investigation. Also, secondary qualitative data from books, journal articles, public and private records, official reports, publications by relevant departments and bodies were utilised. The selected research instrument further paves way to best describe how the selected study variables connect with each other. This approach was suited to gather relevant data for this research and to address the research objectives under investigation.

3.8.1 Structured interviews

Creswell (2012) noted that the researcher (interviewer) has a better control over the types of information received as they can ask specific questions to elicit information. Structured interviews were used for the qualitative research part of the study. During the interview sessions, questions and answers were recorded using a recorder by the researcher with one participant at a time and later transcribed. Following each interview, field notes on the interview and observations were written up to provide a fuller picture. This instrument provides rich information in the absence of observation.

3.8.2 Documents

The researcher gathered relevant documents such as books, journal articles, public and private records, government reports, publications by relevant departments and bodies meant for broader consumption, annual and interim reports (where available), databases from websites, speeches, newspaper articles (where applicable for illustrative purposes) and archival material in libraries for qualitative data. This data was convenient as it required no transcription and were directly analysed. These materials assisted in identifying recurring themes relevant to addressing the research objectives. Creswell (2012) stated that document sources provide valuable information in aiding researchers to comprehend central phenomena in qualitative studies.

3.9 Data Collection Procedure

As part of the interview protocol, structuring the interview is imperative. An interview protocol is viewed as a form created by the researcher that carries instructions for the process of the interview, the questions to be asked, and space to take notes of responses from the interviewee (Creswell, 2012). Creswell (2012) also stated that the audiotaping of interviews provides a detailed record of the interview. The researcher, as advised by Cresswell (2012) and Neuman (2007), took field notes and recorded the qualitative interviews, which was helpful during data analysis. Questions were posed to research participants strictly by the researcher only. The selected participants were allowed to opt out of the study at any given stage if they felt uncomfortable. In addition, qualitative secondary data was obtained from numerous sources such as online databases of various relevant institutions, libraries, government institutions, books, journal articles, reports, and websites amongst others.

3.10. Qualitative data analysis

Qualitative data collected through in-depth interviews and documents were analysed using the Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) approach. Shava, Hleza, Tlou, Shonhiwa, & Mathonsi (2021) defined QCA as an empirical methodological approach for the subjective interpretation of the content of data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns. A pile of raw data obtained were organised, transcribed, and interpreted using this approach as it best to analyse the specified characteristics and corresponds with the research objectives that relate to the study. Data was analysed in its original form. By applying this approach, the research is able to compare and contrast findings based on the research objectives.

Figure 3 illustrates the process of analysing qualitative data.

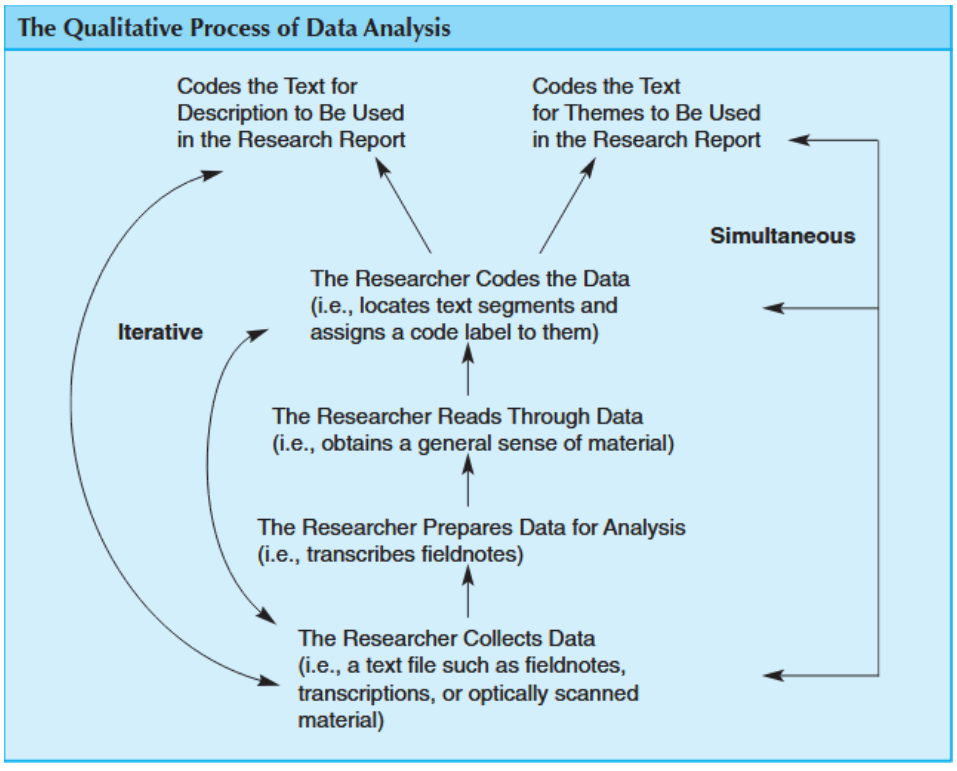


Figure 3: Qualitative data analysis process Source: Creswell (2012)

The inductive element of qualitative data involves detailed data being transcribed or typed to the general codes and themes. This study assessed, presented a perspective

to the interpretation of the data, and provide themes which encompassed categories of information. Tobi and Kampen (2018) claimed that like the quantitative data analysis plan, the qualitative data analysis presents the description of how the researcher will get familiarised with the data collected (for instance by constructing a narrative summary per interviewee or a paired comparison of essays).

3.11 Data triangulation

Data triangulation is an exercise where the researcher uses multiple data instruments and sources to collect data. Numerous scholars defined triangulation as a practice of searching for data from at least two sources, with harmonizing strengths and non-overlapping flaws in such a way that data from one source complements and extends the other (Sandelowski, 1995; Erzeberger and Kelle, 2003; Moran-Ellis et al., 2006 as cited in Bazeley, 2009). This study used both primary data such as in-depth interviews, and secondary qualitative data including annual reports, books, databases, journal articles, and document analysis. This allowed the study to achieve data saturation and answer the research objectives. Data triangulation also validates the research.

3.12 Challenges encountered and remedies

Efforts to obtain a research permit from the Botswanan government were a tedious process. The researcher started the application process in October 2022 and up until May 2023, the research permit was not issued by the government. As a result of the delay, more time was required, and the data collection process was delayed. Also, because the nature of this study comprises of three different states as case studies, logistics and location problems were encountered. Additionally, locating officials from the Chinese embassies in the two states and Chinese political experts was unfruitful. As an alternative, the researcher added political scientists and field experts to strengthen the basis of data and knowledge. The researcher also resorted to using the

latest and relevant secondary data to cover the parts of the research where research participants were not available. Also, some relevant institutions in Botswana were not keen on participating and were thus replaced with political experts from Botswana. During the process, the researcher noticed that some research participants were either reluctant to share information or the given information shared was less accurate. To remedy this, the researcher triangulated the questions and evaluated the responses and used secondary qualitative data to confirm the data collected. Lastly, some relevant information was not available to the public, and as a result, the researcher did not have access to some documentation. However, documents that are in the public domain were most helpful for this study.

3.13 Ethical considerations and consent for conducting the research

Ethics as a concept deal with the moral dimension in all spheres of human existence (Brody, 1983). "The moral sphere of our lives is heavily structured around our beliefs concerning the rightness and wrongness of actions" (Brody, 1983). In scientific research, in this case social-scientific research (including the realm of politics and economics), ethics are crucial (Neuman, 2007). Ethics and integrity start with the researcher and imply moral imperatives to be always abided by Sagarin (1973) quoted by Neuman (2007, p. 90). Research ethics is about the code of conduct a researcher must uphold as part of the norms and values of the scientific community. Dienar and Candrell (1978 as cited by Bryman, 2004) highlighted four main areas of focus when discussing the concerns of ethical principles in social research. Firstly, the principle of harm to participants, whereby the researcher needs to ensure that there is no harm of any sort to the participants, be it physical or mental (loss of self-esteem, anxiety, or stress). This also relates to the element of maintaining anonymity and confidentiality of records and individuals. Secondly, the principle of informed consent is whereby the

participant must be provided with enough comprehensive information regarding the research and the process, leaving them with the option to make an informed decision of whether they wish to be part of the study.

Thirdly, the principle of invasion of privacy which is also linked to the principle of informed consent where both must be secured to avoid the invasion of privacy of the participant (Bryman, 2004). Lastly, the principle of deception is when the researcher constitutes their research as something other than what it is (Bryman, 2004). The participant's understanding of the study is deliberately limited with the expectation that the participant will respond more naturally. Researchers should avoid letting on the participants to believe what is not as this is an unethical practice in research of any kind.

For this research, the protocols on research integrity as required by the University of Namibia were always followed. Data collection processes were accounted for to safeguard reliability and at the same time ensure the rights of the participants were also safeguarded by the researcher. An introductory session which duly informed participants before any interviews were conducted. Participants were informed about the aim of the study, that participation is voluntary and the nature, purpose, and duration of the study. Confidentiality was always ensured during and after the fieldwork.

Upon agreeing to partake in the research, participants were presented with the Informed Consent form (Appendix 5). This form contained all the necessary information regarding the research. Each participant was expected to sign the consent form before the interviews were conducted. Any questions or reservations of the potential participants were addressed beforehand to ensure the voluntary participation

of each participant. Interview guides (Appendix 1) were forwarded to participants before the interview and recordings of the sessions were done with the permission of the participants. The researcher also took notes of key points while conducting the interviews. Ninety percent of the interviews were conducted via various online platforms. All the recordings (saved on a USB) will be stored and discarded after five years.

Lastly, the researcher obtained a research permit from the Government of Botswana, valid for one year (from 8th May 2023 to 7th May 2024). An ethical clearance certificate and a Letter of Permission to conduct research were issued by the University of Namibia's Centre for Research Services. The National Commission on Research Science and Technology issued a research permit letter.

3.14 Summary

For this exploratory comparative case study, the qualitative research method presents an interpretive and descriptive element to the research, providing a deep systematic data analysis without including any form of numerical measurement. The qualitative content analysis approach provided a great opportunity to analyse various aspects of the problem statement.

It was presented to produce new knowledge and confirm existing knowledge based on constructivist paradigm and within the context of developmental state discourse. This cross-sectional inductive bottom-up approach allows the researcher to use empirical data and experience, and ultimately draw specific findings to address the study's research objectives.

Qualitative research aids in seeking clarity in the meanings of events and what shapes and maintains relations under study and actions taken by and rationale for courses and

decisions taken by actors. Lastly, the selected research design and methodology are best suited to bringing out the elements that influence the formulation and implementation of policies and interactions states create with each other.

CHAPTER FOUR

SINO-BOTSWANA RELATIONS – DIVERSE COMPONENTS

4.1. Introduction

The optimism that reality is socially constructed leads constructivists to give significance to norm development, identity, and ideational power than the other major theoretical approaches (Cristol, 2019). Constructivism highlights features that are distinct from neo-liberalism and neo-realism. D'Anieri (2014, p.103) concurred and stated that 'constructivist approaches differ fundamentally from the realist, liberal, and economic structuralist approaches. This theoretical approach takes into cognisance factors that other theories largely ignore and makes fewer categorical statements when analysing international politics. There are many different constructivist approaches, "but they all share a focus on how ideas influence international politics … they look at the powerful role ideas play in international politics … although they do not deny the material factors …" (D'Anieri, 2014, p.103).

Against this background, data relating to Sino-Botswana relations from a constructivist perspective is discussed. Shared beliefs (norms), social structures, and agency of Botswana in international politics and how these norms shape this relation are also highlighted in the discussions. This entails deeply dissecting and interpreting interview results and by comparing responses relating to various political and economic factors which influence the nature of Sino-Botswana relations in the context of developmental state discourse from a constructivist theoretical perspective. To address the main research objective, the analysis of primary data derived from responses of a wide range of institutions, field experts, academics, and researchers is done, and the extent to which results agree with findings from secondary sources shown. Themes directly

derived from research instruments were applied and data analysis is geared towards answering research objectives.

For a systematic analysis of data on Sino-Botswana relations, a brief discussion of the history of Sino-Botswana is necessary. From the sample size of 20 research participants, 17 research participants agreed to partake in this study. This has covered 85 percent of the targeted sample size. The Interpretivist paradigm applied to this study allows for the researcher to pay attention and to understand the selected participants' reasoning, ideas, and beliefs on the subject matter. This aided the study in gaining a better understanding of social interactions. While some participants out rightly declined to partake in the study, other participants were not comfortable being recorded because of the sensitive nature of the research.

The researcher thus took detailed field notes during interview sessions and relied on secondary data which were already analysed with no need for transcription. The researcher also accepted written responses from participants who did not want to be recorded. Lastly, as part of the qualitative nature of this research, both solicited material and unsolicited material were gathered, whereby some participants referred the researcher to specific documentation as well as other field experts.

4.2 Historical Origins of Sino-Botswana Relations

Botswana enjoys a long-standing mutual relationship with China. This stable, mutually trusting, and wholesome relationship was established in January 1975, following the establishment of the Chinese Embassy in Botswana. The initiating of political relations with PRC marked the end of Botswana's relations with the Republic of China, Taiwan. Botswana voted with other African states to restore the permanent seat in the UNSC for the PRC in 1971. China's diplomatic and political support for Botswana was vital during the 1970s and 1980s, precisely because of South Africa's aggressive

and offensive military posture, which threatened the security and sovereignty of smaller southern African states such as Botswana. China, as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), shielded Botswana when the UNSC 'adopted two resolutions in support of Botswana and China was a vocal supporter of this motion, castigating both Pretoria and Salisbury for violating in Botswana's territorial integrity' and attack on Gaborone in 1977 and 1988, respectively (Taylor, 1998 p. 82; Xinhua, 1988).

Relations between the two states have been characterised by official state visits. President Seretse Khama visited China in 1976 and again in 1977. President. Festus G. Mogae first visited as Vice-President in June 1996 and as President in June 2000. In 2018, President Masisi made his high-profile visit to China to attend the FOCAC Beijing Summit. Among Chinese state officials to visit Botswana were Mr Wei Jianxing, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China in June 2002, followed by a visit by Foreign Minister, Councillor Wang Yi, in 2021.

4.3 Mutual Sino-Botswana political and economic relations

Sino-Botswana relations have been characterised by various agreements and events aimed at strengthening economic and political ties. As a developing state, Botswana seeks rapid infrastructural development and China seeks sustained industrial expansion. China invests in Botswana's Infrastructural development while Botswana supplies China with natural resources required for sustained industrial expansion. In this regard, Research Participant 9 views the Sino- Botswana relationship as a mutual one, both in politics and economical aspects. Similarly, Research Participant 12 stated that the two states have demonstrated mutual understanding in their relationship informed by history, and mutual political and economic interests. This observation

aligns closely with constructivists' viewpoint. Prior to Deng Xiaoping's 1978 economic modernisation, China's presence in Botswana as in other African states was driven by support to national liberation movements. The historical developments in the political sphere between Botswana and China was marked by less economic content since Botswana was a British protectorate.

Botswana was one of the poorest and least developed states in the region and globally (Research Participant 16), a commonality shared with China. From a constructivist viewpoint, this common identity once shared by these two states in the past has resulted in a strong alliance and cooperation between them. Botswana started from a very low level of development after independence, until the discovery of diamonds in the country. The economy is mainly based on these three sectors, namely diamonds, tourism, and livestock (beef) (Research Participant 16). Both Botswana and China have adopted aggressive approaches to economic prosperity over the years and have been distinctly clear in terms of the foreign policy principles which guide them when interacting with other states. China admires Botswana's approach and experiences to economic development and identifies similar trends from its own trajectory to development (Research Participant 14).

Research Participant 11 provided a comprehensive assessment of the principles which were articulated by the first President Sir Seretse Khama from the time Botswana attained independence. These principles are the basis of the success of Botswana's economy. The first principle is about development, whereby Botswana knew that it needed to interact with other states that subscribe to the efforts of how the government moves forward in terms of development. This include bilateral partnerships that are of mutual benefits, where the government would ultimately see the positive outcomes for themselves and not necessarily only advancing another state's development aspiration.

The second principle is about self-reliance, where Botswana intends to be independent from other states. Batswana remain self-reliant, confident and delighted with their position in the world.

Research Participant 11 added:

> "…As we engage with other states, we do not want to see ourselves necessarily as a recipient for aid, as aid cannot really address our long-term plans and problems. We need to engage on issues that we know can in the long run sustain the economy and our development agenda…".

Democracy is the third principle as Botswana strives to see that democratisation prevail when engaging with other states. Botswana believes that if the world is democratic, then that will ensure that Botswana government focuses on development and on issues that can improve the living standards of the people instead of killing each other or fighting wars (Research Participant 11). The last principle is unity in Botswana and globally. Botswana has been working to advance the concept of unity. This then translates into issues of regional integration, at AU and at the UN level. These are the principles that were articulated by Sir Seretse Khama, and they guided how affairs should be conducted domestically and how to engage internationally.

To add to this, Sir Khama was one of the leaders to establish the idea of having Frontline States (FLS) as he spoke about Ubuntu, human dignity, and human rights as issues that are critical in terms of how a state should be perceived and accepted by other states (Research Participant 11). Botswana has also gone all the way to prove its loyalty to China, particularly with the issue of Taiwan. This points sharply on the norms, values, and ideas the two states share (Research Participant 10). There are quite a lot of Chinese commercial activity, particularly in the construction sector, as

well as a reasonable amount of Chinese financial support to the Botswana government in terms of aid projects (especially in the health sector) (Research Participant 8; Research Participant 10).

4.3.1 Sino-Botswana relations: Foreign Direct Investments, Trade, and aid

From the response from some of the research participants, it was revealed that China contributes to Botswana's nation- building endeavours. China has availed certain amounts of financial assistance including grants and preferential loans. In addition, China has completed more than 26 projects which include renovations of the Botswana railway, low-cost housing, land survey and planning, road construction, health facilities, agricultural technology, and human resources development amongst others (Keins, 2017). Research Participant 9 in response to a question relating to China's assistance to Botswana provided context with appreciation of the relations and stated that "the Chinese have given a leading growth in the industrialisation process of Botswana, especially in the construction sector".

In terms of aid, Research Participant 9 pointed out that economic and financial aid is a tool utilised by powerful states to retain presence in developing states and build strong international support. This has been particularly observed in Botswana where Chinese presence is strongly felt. In the words of Research Participant 10:

> "…China's aid to Botswana commenced after the official diplomatic relations were established, a period when aggressive economic activities kicked off like in the medical front, where China's government donated medical supplies to Botswana to support the fight against COVID-19…".

Research Participant 9 corroborated the views of Participant 10 when she stated that China has been assisting Botswana in different ways, especially in the healthcare industry. Specifically, she noted that:

> "…China donated anti-pandemic supplies such as masks, goggles, and protective suits to Botswana Red Cross Society (BRCS). Through this anti-pandemic cooperation and in defeating the virus together, Botswana and China have deepened their ties…".

Other Research Participants also revealed that the Chinese government provided scholarships to Botswanan citizens. This is well captured in the words of Research Participant 9:

> "…Over the years, the Chinese Government Scholarship Program (CGSP), the Confucius Institute at the University of Botswana (CIUB) and other donations also formed part of Chinese aid to Botswana. Besides promoting Chinese language and culture, the CGSP promotes mutual understanding and intends to stimulate cross-national collaboration in education, technology, economics, science as well as trade… CIUB was officially launched in 2008 following a partnership between University of Botswana (UB) and Shanghai Normal University… CIUB comprises

> two Chinese language teaching points at Francistown and Botswana International University of Science and Technology (BIUST) as well as four Confucius classes at Westwood, Maru a Pula, Legae and Rainbow high schools in Gaborone…".

While Research Participants 9 and 10 were positive about Chinese support to Botswana and its contribution to Botswana's economy, Research Participant 11 shared a contrary review:

> "…for us (Batswana), aid from China is peanuts. I mean if it's a grant once in a while they would build a school, scholarships and within the health sector, they provided aid for Covid-19. For them (Chinese), this is a way to try to elicit the support of Africa. How they (Chinese) present themselves is in a way that 'we mean well for you; we trade as equal partners and whatever we do for you there are no strings attached. There is mutual respect and no interference.' But whatever they put in to help you is peanuts compared to what they benefit from you…".

4.3.2 Sino-Botswana ties and effect on key industries

In response to questions relating to the impact of Sino-Botswana relations on key industries, research participants expressed mixed views. In this regard, Research Participant 15 noted that there has been limited contribution from China towards the development of key industries in Botswana. However, it was noted that China has been providing financial support to the Botswana government. However, in terms of financing of key industries, research participants noted that there is no direct assistance to key industries. Indirect support does however exist. Thus, Research Participant 5 highlighted that:

> "…there have been government guaranteed loans sourced from China for the financing of Botswana Power Corporation projects… China is a big player in the implementation side of the NDPs…big projects in the energy sector are built by Chinese contractors …using funds sourced from China…".

In contrast to the response of Research Participant 5 regarding indirect contribution to key industries, Research Participant 9 expressed the view that China has been contributing to the growth of Botswana's economy and its process of industrialisation, particularly in the construction sector despite several controversial issues regarding the quality of their work being questioned by locals and some government officials.

Research Participants disagreed among themselves regarding the involvement of China in the retail and textile sectors of Botswana's economy. Those who expressed positive views about China's involvement in these sectors as represented by Research Participant 9 who stated that:

> "…Chinese businesses are penetrating and are dominating the retail sector as they built the Chinese Oriental Plaza in Gaborone and Francis Town creating a platform of diverse options for customers on affordable prices…".

Despite these advantages, the dominance of Chinese shops in the retail sector has affected local retailers as the Chinese have eliminated local retail businesses from the sector according to Research Participants 10 and 17. In the words of Research Participant 17:

> "…in fact, the local retail business owners are now purchasing products from the Chinese shops and are reselling them at a higher price to make profits… the overall role of the Chinese retail businesses is limited in comparison to the South African retail businesses operating in Botswana…".

Research Participant 10 supported the observation by stating that "…In terms of volume and small shops, Chinese retail businesses are well off.… but in terms of quality, the larger retailers are South African and most of the malls are stocked by South African retailers…". In response to the question relating to China's role in FDI in Botswana, Research Participant 11argued that:

> "…When it comes to FDI, I can tell you that in Botswana, we don't have any big investments from China. I don't call them investors, I call them traders because if you

> invest do not create employment but sellto make profit, that is trading. We should understand who an investor is and who is a trader. An investor is someone that you know can create employment for one of the issues for any government which is employment creation…".

In support of the previous assertions, Research Participants 8, 9, and 10 opined that other sectors such as the agricultural sector is dominated by Japanese and Turkish nationals, and the health sector is mostly dominated by local medical practitioners, while the Cuban health officials also play a key role.

Regarding the mining sector, Research Participant 11 shared that the mining industry is the backbone of the economy and there is no Chinese involvement in that area. The Botswana government is in partnership with DeBeers Pty. Ltd, a partnership that goes a long way back into history and so far, the best one across the globe. Research Participants 11 and 16 added that from the start, our negotiators have always been very smart in this area, and we have been doing quite well. We make sure that we do not allow the Chinese to get involved in that important sector because it is a very crucial sector of the economy, including the tourism sector and livestock.

On issues of procurement, the Botswana government is exceptionally stern as the government ensures that Batswana are empowered. Whenever there is a project that needs to be worked on, priority is given to the local nationals with capacity. Research Participant 11 supported the observation and added that in cases where there is no capacity, the government advertises the tenders internationally, including advertising

on all the diplomatic missions abroad to publicise. In that way, the government can get the best companies that would deliver quality work. Research Participant 17 stated that Botswana's economy is stronger than that of Namibia and that also has an impact on how these two states relate with external partners. He further alluded that Botswana has done well in managing its natural resources, particularly the diamonds which is not the case for states such as the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), South Africa, and Namibia which have a lot of natural resources but do not use it to increase and flex their economic muscle.

4.4 Change in political leadership and governance and the Sino-Botswana relations

Foreign policy formulation and implementation encompass cognitive processes, personal characteristics, motives, and beliefs of those with decision- making powers. As a state leader, a display of high level of interest in foreign affairs must come to being. Research Participant 11 submitted that apart from foreign policy principles as guiding values in state interactions, foreign policy posture is dictated by the Head of State (Chief foreign policymaker), whereby a state leader can still subscribe to the principles but take either a constructive engagement, silent diplomacy, or an aggressive posture. Research Participant 8 added that the personality of a state leader may also influence foreign policy formulation, implementation, and essentially the posture. It may play a role in determining to what extent pieces of advice by experts are accepted by the Head of State.

In response to the question on whether the personality of a state leader and/or foreign relations minister influences state to state relations, Research Participant 14 pointed three types of foreign minister personality traits and explained:

> "…An obedient foreign minister takes whatever the president is saying, an independent foreign minister who runs foreign policy independently and the president hardly monitors the minister as there is a trust element involved. The third type involves equality where the president and the foreign minister where they both respect each other…".

He provided an example that Botswana was rough on Zimbabwean issues during President Khama's era. The tone of Botswana's foreign ministers reflected the view. Ministers of foreign affairs get a mandate from presidents. When Phandu Skelemani was a Foreign Minister, President Khama's position towards Zimbabwe was harsh. However, during Pelonomi Venson-Moitoi's tenure, his approach was softer. President Masisi on the other hand has a different foreign policy posture as his approach is friendly towards neighbouring states. Research Participant 10 added:

> "…President Ian Khama has his issues with China, which back then made the relationship awkward. The current president Masisi has been trying to prove that he is different from Khama. He wanted to change policies and show himself as the better person in terms of IR and China was the best area to hit Khama…".

Research Participant 17 responded that on one hand, a state's foreign policy dictates what the sitting president must and must not do. However, change in political

leadership has a direct influence either in the strengths or weaknesses of these relations. In the case of Botswana, Ian Khama operated differently from the current president, and it is not a coincidence that the two do not see eye to eye to the point of wanting the former president to be arrested. In response to the question on the impact of change in political leadership and governance may have on Sino-Botswana relations, Research Participant 3 stressed that change in political leadership and governance has implications to some extent, as every leader has his/her personality and trust in terms of foreign policy and diplomatic engagement. He added that another influence may also be that despite the foreign policy postures, there could be instances where presidents do not fully comprehend foreign relations. Hence in democracies, foreign affairs portfolios and committees are formulated to exercise oversight functions.

Research Participant 16 responded:

> "…Botswana has always prided itself on having a principle-centred foreign policy. Namibia has been mostly focused on the issue of sovereignty, as a country that was occupied and fought for its sovereignty, and does not want anyone to infringe on the sovereignty of other states. Therefore, the relations with China are important as China respects the sovereignty of states…".

Research Participant 3 stated that since Seretse Khama's era to date, there have been differences in terms of approach, but political governance remains institutionalised rather than personalities of leaders driving the foreign policy of the state. Research

Participant 11 expressed said, “The principles of Botswana are as valid now as they were at the time of their conception, and they are the ones guiding us now. The articulation may change but the principles and policies remain the same”. He further added that the foreign policy postures of presidents have indeed varied from time to time. For instance, Presidents Quett Masire and Festus Mogae used silent diplomacy, but during President Ian Khama’s time, Botswana adopted an aggressive posture in its foreign policy, as his era was also known for issuing quick press releases on key issues. Research Participant 11 argued that “Khama’s administration felt it needed to tell the world when it did not like something happening in another sovereign state like with the case of Zimbabwe or even with China’s human rights and other related issues…”.

Research Participants 10 and 11 shared similar sentiments and stated that President Mokgweetsi Masisi also applies silent diplomacy but with more constructive engagements. They added that his posture emphasises mutual respect and conducting of cordial and meaningful dialogues to address disagreements. He believes in multilateral institutions such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) having created a platform for states to engage and where these states are guided by the same norms and values. Research Participant 11 added that bilaterally, there are structured mechanisms like the Joint Permanent Commission of Cooperation (JPCC) and the Binational Commission which are used as dialogue platforms to address problems for mutual benefit.

To further demystify the nature of the Sino-Botswana relations during the two most recent political leaderships, Chinese presence has now increased because during Khama’s time, it was not easy for them to enter the country. Research Participants 3 and 4 are of the view that Botswana has a strong Western connection, tying into the western capitalist liberal ideology. Research Participants 10 and 8 opined that there

has been a noticeable chasm between President Ian Khama's and President Masisi's approaches when engaging with China, as the former seems to have been more hostile to the Chinese compared to the current president. Meanwhile, Research Participant 12 shared critical views and stated that:

> "…The aggressive involvement of the Chinese government in Africa is well documented and in the construction industry we see that it spiked when Masisi came into power. Publicly President Ian Khama had a problem with the involvement of the Chinese as he expressed his frustrations openly that he doubted the quality of the work of the Chinese. During Khama's administration, the Chinese were not awarded a lot of tenders. Also, I do not see a significant role of the Chinese in the mining sector, particularly the diamond industry…".

Adding to the abovementioned, Research Participants 9, 10, 12, and 13 expressed the view that President Khama did not hide his disdain for China as he found it to be exploitative, while President Masisi is softer on the Chinese as investors. This could be viewed as a good thing for the country's economy. Research Participant 13 somewhat corroborated to this and added that "…During the time of President Ian Khama, however, the emotional ties were British. I don't think he wanted China around. However, political leadership represents the party stance and change in political leadership of individuals bears little change. There is a little shift in policy implementation and the way of doing things, but the policy stances remain…".

Research Participant 12 also elaborated that from the records, President Ian Khama went once to China with his father in 1976. Another dynamic was presented by Research Participants 10 and 12 that President Khama's close relations with Taiwan resulted in a controversial plan to host the Dalai Lama, which was not condoned by China. They added that President Khama's administration at some point organised an academic seminar in Gaborone where the Dalai Lama was supposed to participate, but the the visit did not take place due to diplomatic issues.

Critical views were presented by Research Participant 12 when comparing the leadership fashions of the two presidents thus:

> "…Masisi is generally new in politics, this by Botswana's standards. Masisi is clumsy as he sometimes does crazy things like overcompensate because of his lack of experience. He says things that are not necessary and wants to prove himself like inviting Zimbabweans to cross the border for health treatment. Chinese involvement in Botswana has increased because of business. When Masisi came to power, China was one of the states he travelled to first. In terms of aid, China wrote off some of Botswana's debt and in return, the Chinese companies would win big tenders. Overall, there is still control over Chinese access to some sectors…".

Research Participants 8 and 17 further submitted that the current president (Masisi) has been much more open to China and the relations have been constructive and warm compared to his predecessor. This does not mean the government has given up on its guiding principles. As a result, there are more Chinese people present in Botswana as the market and the environment is more accommodative to them. Participant 9 was of the view that President Masisi has been visible with his approach and what he is doing for the people of Botswana about China, sourcing for FDIs. Regarding the question relating to China's financing model whereby China is the creditor, insurer and contractor, particularly within the construction sector, Research Participant 8 disclosed that this is not the case with Botswana as the government avoids accepting every deal that seems favourable. The Botswana state continues to maintain the initiative in deciding what investments, projects, and developments the state needs to undertake that will yield the best outcomes for the people of Botswana. These are absolute gains rather than relative gains.

Research Participants 8 and 15 provided an example whereby the Chinese would often offer a package where they lend a country funds to build a road, but the Botswana government would at times refuse such offers because it has been observed that when there is Chinese funding available, it is tied to the use of a Chinese contractor(s). Some loans were called 'design and build' and all the material would be imported from China.

Research Participant 8 noted that in some cases, the prices that the Chinese offer for building of roads, for instance, are outrageous and it is impossible for a government to decide to take a Chinese loan and then open for an international tender bid to build the road. Another neo-colonial tendency, the same practice as Western states. In this instance, what the Chinese wanted to charge was nearly double compared to what the

government knew they could get if they went for open bidding. Also, another instance would be that there might be three Chinese companies bidding for the job, but that would not be viewed as competitive bidding. This is labelled as 'collusive bidding.' This is how these firms raise the prices and the factor that most Chinese firms are subsidised by the Chinese state. Research Participant 15 submitted that Botswana has learned from past mistakes when it comes to loans and the terms and conditions attached to those loans.

To add to this, Research Participant 8 disclosed:

> "…Botswana has choices, it's not like Namibia. When we want to, we have lots of options and are not obliged to borrow Chinese money. A lot of people are happy to lend Botswana money at very good rates and the country uses that freedom. We do not take these offers if we feel they are not attractive, and we can choose to go elsewhere…".

Similarly, Research Participant 13 explained:

> "…Botswana has more freedom of action and option when it comes to who they deal with. Botswana does not feel the obligation of friendships unlike Namibia and South Africa and that gives them a certain freedom in decision making and I don't see their foreign policy orientation changing in any way soon…".

On the same question regarding financing in general and China's financing model in particular, Research Participant 8 responded that Botswana prefers to separate the funding and the construction of projects, whereby the state can raise funding from institutions such as the World Bank (WB), the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and Fund for International Development. and treat the procurement process separately. This approach allows for open international bidding for projects and the Chinese companies are then welcome to bid, but they compete with other companies from Korea, the European Union, South African companies. Research Participants 8 and 16 disclosed that Botswana and the founding president were from the start clear on their position of non-alignment. The state could engage with any state such as Russia, China, the US, etc. Superpowers like America or China could be a friend, but have no position to choose for Botswana who they should form friendships with.

Research Participant 11 added,

> "…We deal with China as friends, but we cannot always agree on events and situations. The mere fact that you helped us does not mean you can take away our sovereignty. So, we have been clear on that and for instance on the issues of human rights, we have always not been voting with China…".

To corroborate this, Research Participant 6 added that "Botswana is not into some strategic partnership which then turns into ideological imprisonment, like in the case of Namibia for instance with the refusal to condemn the Russian invasion in Ukraine". Also, the way the Botswana administration runs its governance and economic affairs

is in fact deemed credible by several international partners. This is why whenever there are issues in southern Africa, most of these Western states find it easier to work closely with Botswana instead of other states apart from South Africa (Research Participant 17).

Seemingly, Research Participant 3 shares a diverse perspective and submitted that there is not much difference in the basis of engagement China has with Namibia and Botswana. China has been consistent in the manner it engages with nations because China appears to be cognisant of what it wants, hence the China-Africa policy. From the perspective of China, since it commenced with the policy programme and cooperation during Deng Xioaping's era of reform, China has been very consistent in terms of its approach in dealing with African states. African states on the other hand lack Africa's policy for China.

4.5 The Developmental State concept and the Sino-Botswana relations

In response to the question regarding developmental state behaviour, Research Participant 5 was of the view that as an authoritarian developmental state, China's approach has been rather successful as millions (over 800 million) of people have been taken out of poverty since the commencement of its economic reform era. Research Participant 14 added that for China, the power is vested in the government for all decision-making processes, whether agreed upon by the public or not, if it is in the best interest of its people. Everything that the Chinese government does comes from the CPC.

Research Participants 1 and 11 expressed the view that in China, anything in terms of development is dictated by the state and state firms conduct business in foreign states on behalf of the government. For instance, the drive for foreign investments is to promote its people. In this regard, Research Participants 6 and 7 commented that the Chinese ideology is very clear. The roadmap of where the country wants to be is translucent and followed without any question as guided by the principles and policies. The nations' economic activities are guided by what is referred as 'socialism with Chinese characteristics or a mixed economy with socialist characteristics and the space for the private sector is limited. They anticipate who they want to establish a medium to long-term partnerships with. In line with this articulation, Research Participant 8 pointed out that:

> "…Although Botswana has a different history compared to other states in the southern African region that were under apartheid (like Namibia) or other regimes, Botswana and Namibia are similar on the democratic front, but Botswana is more

> democratic in a sense that it has a more vibrant opposition…".

China, in contrast, is a communist state and is regarded as an authoritarian developmental state. China as an authoritarian developmental state explicitly delivers on development-oriented political leadership, it demonstrates an autonomous and effective bureaucracy, a production-oriented private sector, and performance-oriented governance which forms some of the multi-dimensions of a developmental state. To support this, Research Participant 16 mentioned that there is quite a lot of admiration for the Chinese version of a developmental state, where the state takes an active leading role in investments, financing, and industrial development. Research Participant 10 said that for Botswana, the concept of development is more of an ideological move which is inscribed in its formation documents, as one of its four pillars as discussed earlier. This has aided the government with the continuous expansion of its economy and ultimately advancing the livelihood of the Batswana people.

While Research Participants 8, 10, and 17 are of the view that Botswana is a democratic developmental state by ideology and practice as all the sectors are deliberately funded, Research Participants 14 and 16 pointed out that Botswana is not a developmental state and that Botswana is noticeably an open economy in all areas, except the mining industry. The private sector also plays a vital role in terms of advancing the state's economy. Research Participant 11 added that the Botswana government is actively involved in the mining industry, particularly the diamond sector, and remains the key stakeholder in partnership with external partners. Research Participant 10 noted that "since independence, the diamond sector has played a pertinent role in Botswana's development and noticeably none of the other sectors can

match what diamonds have done for the economy, establishing what is referred to as 'Diamonds for Development".

Research Participant 11 outlined the three-legged approach to development applied by the Botswana government. The government is there to create an enabling environment for the private sector to thrive, and civil society forms part of the three-legged approach. Botswana has been viewed as a role model in the African continent because of the way it utilises the revenue from diamonds as a singular resource (Research Participant 6). To support this, Research Participant 10 disclosed that:

> "…Since independence, the one good thing Botswana did was to ensure that all the mineral resources belong to the state. Botswana is more ideological in terms of being a developmental state. The model makes sure that anyone who tries to do mining has to do it together with the state…".

Participants 10 and 11 added that China has a limited role in the mining sector, particularly the diamond industry. If China ever intends to aggressively engage in the diamond sector, then it must go through the already existing strong ties between Botswana and De Beers. In terms of FDIs in Botswana, the investments are commercially sustainable and promote the advancement of the economy and governance. Environmental benefits are also considered.

Research Participant 15 submitted that:

> "…Chinese and other foreign investors are forced to invest slightly a bigger portion of their funds locally, which means the government can now be able to borrow locally and have the money to drive the development for the country and providing more options for the government to get money from. This influences how other external players including China are involved in funding our development…".

Research Participant 15 submitted that in Botswana's legal standing, the government does not borrow above 40 percent of the GDP. In terms of financing of the debt, 20 percent of the 40 percent should be local and 20 percent from foreign entities. For instance, in 2021, Botswana's foreign debt stood at 17 percent of GDP. He added that "Botswana has a lot of options in terms of borrowing and the driving factor is cost, depending on the cheaper lender with better conditions".

4.6 China's presence in Botswana and the concept of neo-colonialism

In response to the question about whether China is neo-colonising Botswana, some scholars contend that China is not neo-colonising Botswana, if relations between them are a matter of a win-win situation, according to the needs of each state (Research Participants 9 and 3).

Research Participant 12 noted:

> "…Botswana sees China as an equalizer to Western imperialism. The thinking in the government is that the US and Europe tend to treat

> African states with much respect when it becomes apparent that China's presence in Africa is more beneficial to African economies…".

Research Participant 3 added that any good thing the Chinese do for other developing states; the West would view it as China neo-colonising these states. One would then want to ask why the Chinese are not equally accusing the West of neo-colonising African states since the patterns seem similar. The way China has managed its IR is extremely prudent as they do not want to be seen as saying anything in a negative light about the African governments and therefore, African leaders out of convenience think that the Chinese are better friends than the Europeans or the West (Research Participant 7).

Research Participant 3 noted that China scores big by rolling out the red carpet for African leaders, something that the West never learned to do. He added that African leaders are always playing second to the West, whereas in China, they are welcomed as the biggest players in the world. African leaders want to feel recognised and respected and in contrast, the Western leaders, maybe unintentionally, but so much internalised as a notion of white supremacy continue in their behaviour to humiliate African leaders (Research Participant 3).

In support to the above statement, Research Participant 6 responded to the questions and contended that:

> "…The West is failing in diplomatic skills, they still maintain the finger wrecking attitude, while China says that 'you are all equal partners' even when everyone knows they are not, because they

> pretend and host African leaders as kings of the world, while African leaders never received anything similar from the West…".

Several research participants, however, disclosed contrasting and opposing perspectives and stated that the Chinese are undeniably neo-colonising African states in general and Botswana and Namibia in particular because of the weakness of African political leaders (Research Participants 5, 7, and 10). From this viewpoint, a large chunk of the blame is shifted to these governments and their superficial ways of managing their affairs. Research Participants were of the view that these African leaders seem not to be cognisant of where they want to be and how to get there. Research Participant 7 stated that China is going everywhere in the world on the terms and conditions of various states, but since the Chinese have hyped African leaders, the Chinese cannot be reprimanded for any wrongdoing.

Research Participants 10 and 12 argued that China is very good with kickbacks. As a result, some African leaders and elites give away the resources of their states. Research Participant 12 noted that "…In Botswana for instance, the symbiotic relationship between the government and the Chinese construction companies is noticeable. Surprisingly, there seem to be other players like the major South African companies, but because of the extreme dominance of the Chinese in big tenders, the South African companies seem to disappear and become irrelevant …".

Chinese presence has also been met with more criticism in the recent years. Research Participant 10 argued that the Chinese have initiated a win-win approach when engaging with states. However, in reality, there is no win-win cooperation if one party is more powerful than the other party. Research Participant 11 further reported that

tensions grew to a point where former President Ian Khama sent the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr Venson-Moitoi, to China to file Botswana's complaints with Chinese government -owned construction companies. He highlighted the failure of the multi-billion Morupule B power station and the Sir Seretse Khama International Airport. Botswana accused Chinese companies of not only leaving Botswana construction projects in a mess, but also 'milking' the country, making millions of monies (Pula) in government contracts, and taking the money out of Botswana instead of investing it in the country, as well as issues on the quality of the work of the Chinese companies (Research Participant 11).

He stressed that there were also instances whereby Chinese companies were accused of bringing corruption to Botswana as they would pay officials who were supposed to be inspecting the projects for them to be given a pass. Some of them, as a result, were subjected to court procedures and others were blacklisted and cannot do business with the Botswana government.

Research Participant 11 argued that:

> "…The other problem was about various ways in which they would enter Botswana. The Chinese would give you a grant where they will build a school for you. Then they would say that all the labourers will come from China. But we want to create employment for our people, but their argument would be that they want to bring in certain expertise. These people that they bring here just disappear in the country instead of going back to China…".

He further added that the retail sector is a foreign policy strategy. The things that they sell here are so cheap you sometimes ask yourself whether they are making a profit. They are making profit because they are subsidised by their government, and it is a way of sending them out to other states. As a result, the Chinese have killed the local retail market. Research Participants 11 and 13 further observed that FOCAC could be seen as a foreign policy instrument that is intended to advance China's interest, but in a way, it is portrayed as something that means well for Africa. When you go to the meetings of FOCAC, everything is written, including what is going to be the outcome of the meeting, even before the meeting starts, and you cannot change what is already documented. The meetings will continue and at the same time, we say that these relations do not have conditions.

Research Participant 11 stressed that:

> "…The West came to Africa to aid Africa on the development front and presented the concepts of good governance, accountability, transparency, inclusiveness, participation, rule of law and so on as conditionalities of development aid. The Chinese however are not concerned about these principles and imposing them on another sovereign state, and they abide by the 'no strings attached' rule. This approach builds loyalty, and all the assistance is packaged in a manner that China means well for African states. Through loyalty from Africa, China advances its other foreign policy agenda globally…".

Research Participant 3 mentioned that China's development history is one of the greatest lessons learned as its development status is rests well in its domestic policies. The Asian giant has a fast-developing economy, and its long-term social development plans remain stable and united, reaching the point of eradicating absolute poverty. China has lifted over 800 million people out of poverty since the 1970s. China has a long-term vision and strategic interests in how it wants to become a global power. It is aware that it can only achieve that vision with strategic alliances (Research Participant 11). He added that African states feel forever indebted to China and are aware of the repercussions should they not support China on the international front. This is however not the case for Botswana as "…We (Botswana) will not accept that to happen…" (Research Participant 11).

Another argument brought forward by Research Participant 7 is that African leaders are prone to start over all the time. He stated that if a new president comes in, "he or she starts with a new thing and abandons the old things even if it was working". Research Participants 6 and 10, however, thought that the Chinese policy is tailor-made for China, with good and bad effects. For states to copy the Chinese policy is a not a sound path to follow as every country needs to find its own best trajectory that is based on local conditions.

Constructivists believe that historical political events bring about change and thus contribute to the continuous shaping of national identities, ideas, and interests. The theory also brings forward the national identities, norms, values, and ideas in the Sino-Botswana ties which essentially affect the national interests mentioned above. This helps in understanding why these two states behave the way they do, particularly when engaging with each other (individualism and materialism). Whether Botswana, a small landlocked state benefits greatly from the relations is open for debate. The foregoing

discussions show that China and Botswana are two different states and they both subscribe to principles which bring about economic success to varying degrees.

Botswana is a developing southern African state whereas China is more of a developed state, although it claims to be a developing state. Also, as national interest are predetermined, China's interest and identity in Botswana varies just as Botswana's interest in China does. This is contrary to constructivism. Sounds more like a realist argument. From a constructivist perspective interest may not be pre-determined but comes through interactions with others based on multiple identities. Botswana's interest would be to attain rapid industrialisation of its economy while China's strategic interest in attaining natural resources to sustain its industrial expansion remains obvious. Although both states were once upon a time regarded as extremely poor in their respective regions and globally, the two states differ historically and developmentally, based on the models adopted. Botswana has indeed over the years strive to maintain solid ties with China, enabling an environment nurtured by the two governments to develop and foster development partnerships. The ongoing interactions and social practices have resulted in advanced economic advancements for the two states. This has been an edge for Botswana's economy as Chinese firms now provide job prospects, technical expertise in various fields, and budgetary revenues through taxes amongst others.

Equally, as a state that was once largely agricultural and underdeveloped becoming industrialised and building a prosperous society, China lacks some resources, and these resources can be attained from Botswana. Therefore, the tenacity of the Chinese in these engagements should be highly admired. Despite the positive outcomes in the relations, terms and conditions that are tied to Chinese loans, particularly in the construction industry, has created tension between the two states. During President Ian

Khama's administration, for instance, there were contracts which brewed a lot of frustration, especially on the labour side. Chinese companies were accused of bringing their own people as labourers while the Botswana government would be paying back the loan and local nationals were not recruited in those projects. Other issues such as unfair labour practices and allegations of poaching were also deemed not desirable.

There has been a difference in approach to some of these allegations. Research Participant 6 added that most projects are still constructed by Chinese companies, with more local nationals recruited. Regardless of the change in political leadership and administration, Botswana has managed to follow this through because state affairs have been better managed, and the state continues to keep its options open and avoid being restricted from receiving international competitive bids, with the main goal of advancing its economy and increasing the living standards of its people.

4. 7 Summary

The study concludes that state behaviour is a factor that shapes relations among various states. From a constructivist perspective, interactions play an integral part in the formation of national identities and interests. States can have multiple identities that are socially constructed through interaction with other actors. National identities are representations of an actor's understanding of who they are, which in turn signals their interests inclusive of the good foreign policy and varying foreign policy postures that the Botswana government has been showcasing, the government is known to treat all international donors and financiers in a particular way when it has to do with commercial projects. Donors cannot come along, suggest projects, and receive a thumbs up from the government. Also, the Botswana government has been stern of some of these issues, particularly during Ian Khama's era. Some of the financial offers

presented by states such as China may appear to be beneficial but could be detrimental to long- term economic development goals if not carefully scrutinised.

The vision and dedication of Chinese leadership could be copied by African states as the Chinese leadership style demonstrates consistency. The strategies and approaches of the Chinese might change but the aggressiveness in pursuing overall development objectives and interests remains. The clarity of China's development route, policies, and political stability is worth emulating. Lastly, the Botswana government could be classified as a democratic developmental state as it continues to cater to the socio-economic needs of its people and taking control of sectors that are key drivers of the economy. Within the education sector, the Botswana government continues to avail funds to cater for tuition fees from primary level up till the tertiary level, both nationally and abroad.

CHAPTER FIVE

SINO-NAMIBIA RELATIONS – DIVERSE COMPONENTS

5.1 Introduction

In addition to principles that are enshrined in Article 96 of the constitution, Namibia's foreign relations are founded upon principles of democracy and the rule of law, whereby all people and institutions are governed by laws that must be applied and enforced fairly and justice for all (human rights).. Mushelenga (2014) stated that foreign policies, by their true nature, are prompted by both national and international trends and look to maximise national interests of respective states. Namibia and China have developed unique national identities built on mutual historical interactions and have identified their national interests through knowledge sharing and in-depth engagements. Specific areas that are being promoted in Namibia are energy, manufacturing, mining, tourism, and infrastructure development.

In constructivism, the state remains the core unit of analysis. The theory places a greater role on the gravity of norms and ideas which are in the state's collective awareness linked with conceptions of national identity (Erbas, 2022). Namibia and China see each other as important partners in terms of ideas, norms, and national identities and how their unique national interests are similarly socially constructed. By addressing the main and specific research objectives, data relating to Sino-Namibia in the context of developmental state discourse from a social constructivist theoretical perspective is discussed in this chapter. Results emanating from the interviews that were conducted are interpreted and the responses on the comparisons of various political and economic features which influence the nature of ties under study are highlighted. Lastly, responses from research participants on the historical aspect of the relations are also analysed.

5.2. Historical Origins of Sino-Namibian Relations

Constructivism describes how past events shape the way Namibia and China understand their current situation. Regarding the historical aspect of Sino-Namibia relations, Research Participant 14 submitted that there are two levels to describe the Sino-Namibia political relations: party level and government level. As established before, Namibia formed formal diplomatic relations with China on March 22, 1990, the day after Namibia gained its independence. Research Participants 1, 6, and 17 added that the Sino-Namibia political cooperation was essentially based on the historical ties between SWAPO and the CPC and has since created a very strong continuity of close relationships between the Namibian government and the Chinese government. Similarly, Research Participant 14 stressed that at the party level, SWAPO and CPC have been in close ties since the 1960s. To date, ongoing regular engagements on the party level, popularly known as personal diplomacy take place, are featuring high -level visits. The secretary generals (SGs) of SWAPO regularly visit China for engagements with the CPC, bilateral talks on issues of common interest of the sister parties and areas of collaboration, particularly training. Party members go through party school training in China. This essentially translates to government as several cabinet ministers that belong to the party attend these trainings.

At government level relations, the two states have maintained a rather strong and consistent economic relationship since the establishment of the official diplomatic ties. Strategically, Namibia's embassy in China was established in 1995 with the first minister of defence, the late Peter Mweshihange, as the first ambassador appointed to China. Research Participant 14 noted that when a state sends a defence minister from the first cabinet to become an ambassador, it speaks volumes of strong political ties between two states. The bond was sealed by the frequent high-level exchange visits

between officials of the two states at various levels, including Heads of State, a similar case to that of Botswana and most African states. These visits date back to the 1960s when Namibia's first President, Sam Nujoma, visited China and engaged with the Chinese Chairman Mao Zedong.

In 1995, Namibia opened its embassy in China and as Head of State, President Sam Nujoma took on five official visits to the People's Republic during his three-term tenure in 1992, 1996, 1999, 2000, and 2004 (Du Pisani 2014, p. 116). Former President Hifikepunye Pohamba visited four times. The late President Hage Geingob went on an official visit in 2014 while still Prime Minister and met Hu Jintao at the occasion of the FOCAC summit in South Africa in December 2015. From the Chinese side, top officials like former President Hu Jintao, Vice Premier Hui Liangyu, Wu Bangguo, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC) of China, and others also visited Namibia (Amupanda, 2016, p.60).

Notwithstanding these high-level engagements, Research Participant 16 disclosed that the Chinese were late comers in supporting Namibia's liberation struggle and that they were also not the strongest supporters at that time. To support this, Research Participants 14, 16 and 17 disclosed that other relevant states such as the Scandinavian states and Russia have greatly assisted Namibia during the liberation struggle. Since the Sino-Soviet Split and Soviet Policy towards Southern African Liberation Movements in the history of the cold war and the early 1960s, SWAPO was greatly supported by the Soviet Union while China supported *South West Africa National Union* (*SWANU*). Research Participant 14 noted that: *"…China initially started relations with SWANU and at the time of the Sino-Soviet Split, SWAPO did not take sides, it remained neutral and therefore could continue with the support of both China and the Soviet Union…".*

China gave support to the liberation groups that were fighting the Portuguese: the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA), Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), and National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), while the Soviet Union supported Zimbabwe-Rhodesia (ZANU-PF), Namibia (SWAPO), and South Africa's African National Congress (ANC). China at a later stage started to support SWAPO because of the close ties that both Namibia and China share with Tanzania. China gave support to Namibia during the case of the South African occupation in the UN Security Council (UNSC) and gave military assistance to SWAPO combatants at the training centre in Tanzania. Both China and the Soviet Union then supported SWAPO and the Liberation Front of Mozambique (FRELIMO) of Mozambique.

The CPC collaborated with the ruling parties in South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, and Mozambique to build the Julius Nyerere Leadership School in Tanzania, a political training academy for local leaders that includes the African Political Party Leaders training program. The construction of the school began in 2008 and was completed in February 2022. Since Namibia's independence, two significant agreements were signed by China and Namibia. In 1991, the Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement was signed. In 2018, a Comprehensive Cooperative and Strategic Partnership was signed, which is a modernised version of the 1991 agreement which looks at trade, education, health, agriculture, and security. This updated bond has been the driver of the economic agenda between the two states.

5.3 Mutual Sino-Namibia political and economic relations

Historical events and gatherings have given a great momentum to the development of bilateral relations between the two states. History has formed a key part of forming national identities for Namibia and China, birthed by the aid China provided for Namibia during the liberation struggle. As a result, the two states enjoy an ongoing 'All -Weather friendship' which further strengthens China and Namibia's foreign ties. This economic cooperation framework is comprised of diverse areas of cooperation in sectors of common interests to benefit both economies. An occasion of such nature paved the way for the Chinese to venture into the Namibian market with further objectives on, for instance, joint ventures with local entrepreneurs.

Responses from some of the participants revealed that the 2018 agreement is the current driver of the relations as the 1991 agreement no longer addresses issues Namibia is faced with presently. In this regard, Participants 4 and 12 submitted that the two states have had numerous cooperation initiatives in place, particularly in the construction sector, which is an immense component of the relations. However, some agreements have expired and take time to be revived. Research Participants 1 and 5 hence argued that there is a need to renew some agreements, although the Chinese side is not coming forth as they want to introduce new elements within those agreements (for instance tariffs), as they may not have been benefiting from previous agreements.

Despite the continuous demonstration of close ties, Research Participant 7 submitted that Namibia is not explicitly clear about its relationship with China, except for the political aspect of the relations. He noted that:

> "…If you listen to the political interaction and talks between Namibia and China, which I assume might be the same with Botswana, is that Namibia mainly talks about the support China offered during the

> liberation struggle, but China does not mention that aspect of the relations in most cases. China talks about how the relationship came a long way but has jumped in front to advance its strategic interest. It is a cordial relationship on the assumption that Namibia thinks China is here as a trusted friend because of the support during the liberation struggle, while China is here because of the resources and other economic interests…".

To corroborate this, Research Participant 4 added that Namibia is dominated in the relations because of China's need for vast natural resources to cater for its population and their big market. In addition, it has been established that as a large global player, China has the power to influence the prices of these minerals.

5.3.1 Sino- Namibia relations: Foreign Direct Investments, Trade, and Aid

In response to the question about FDI, trade, and aid in the Sino-Namibia relations, Research Participants 1 and 2 stated that the two states have been vigorously building an all-round and mutually beneficial relationship by way of broadening development cooperation in areas such as manufacturing, human resource development (capacity building, scholarships), agriculture, technology transfer, tourism, industrialisation, energy, and aid.

Research Participant 5 stressed that China's investments in technology transfer, infrastructure development, and job creation have been a crucial element in the advancement of Namibia's economy. To add to this, Research Participant 2 responded that in recent years, agreements between the two governments were narrowed down to those specifically on trade and investment protection, some of which are still ongoing. He noted that this reflects the comparative advantage of the developing partners and determines the areas of cooperation that are in line with Namibia's development

agenda, which is informed by the state's long-term plan Vision 2030, taking into consideration the African Development Agenda 2063, the Sustainable development Goals (SDGs), and the state's National Development Plans 5 (NDP5). Regarding trade, Research Participant 4 noted that Namibia is a primary resource provider for China, exporting raw materials to China. In such a circumstance, the state that is manufacturing these raw materials tends to benefit more. In this case China benefits more.

5.3.1.1 Beef, fish and fish product exports to China

The animal health and quarantine agreement culminated in beef exports to China in 2018. Signed in December 2011, the agreement on Animal Health and Quarantine facilitates trade in meat (beef), fish, and other aquatic animals and their products. Further protocol on the quarantine and veterinary health conditions for beef originating from Food and Mouth Disease was established in August 2015 (Research Participant 1).

Research Participant 1 argued that the agreement on trade and industrialisation omits the importance of the Namibian manufacturing sector which remains non-existent to date. There is a need to relook at the agreement and policies to go along with the Growth at Home strategy of Namibia. For instance, the mining of Chinese companies in Namibia was with the aim of setting up manufacturing plants, but instead raw materials are exported, resulting in an absence of value addition and no beneficiation for Namibian nationals.

5.3.1.2 COVID-19 Relief: Namibia

From March to November 2020, after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Chinese government provided logistical support for COVID-19 response for case detection, case management, and infection control. In March 2021, one hundred thousand doses of COVID-19 vaccine were donated to Namibia through the Ministry of Health and Social Services, as well as laboratory equipment utilised by COVID-19 Rapid response teams for testing, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for healthcare workers, and assisted in general infection control (Research Participants 1, 5, and 8).

5.3.2 Sino-Namibia ties and effects on key industries

Research Participant 3 stated that the effects of the ties between China and Namibia are not significant, looking at the period Namibia has had economic relations with China (1990) and how far the economy has developed in various industries because of the FDI and trade with China. Research Participants 14 and 16 argued that Namibia's foreign policy is rightly formulated, effective, and beneficial for national development. They however raised the issue of ineffective implementation procedures that are in place. These participants were of the view that Namibia faces difficulty in enforcing value chain and mineral beneficiation policy for its natural resources. Following on this, Research Participant 3 noted that:

> "…African states in general are challenged as they are more reactive than proactive and as a result have broad foreign policies and no specific economic policy engagements, economic policy, and engagement points. African states thus end up accepting any investments in any sector, and in some cases these investments do not yield to sustainable jobs for the African people…".

As a result, and broadly put, Botswana and Namibia seem to not be getting that much out of their relationships with China. The National Development Plans of the two African states show that they are middle-income, even though statistics show that a significant percentage of their populations live below the poverty line (Research Participant 3).

Research Participant 3 was also of the view that the trade relations between the two states seem not to grow as Namibia is still trading in raw commodities and importing manufactured products from China. Research Participant 3 further highlighted that China was a very poor nation in 1978 when it started the development initiative. He added that presently, China is the second largest economy in the world, which is a significant change. Since 1990, Namibia has been exporting raw and semi-processed resources and not manufactured goods. Research Participant 14 argued that the manufacturing industry in Namibia is still at its infant stage, and this contributes gravely to the performance of the economy.

Research Participant 3 further noted that:

> "…To verify the impact of trade relations on an industry, you need to look at the quality of trade and the share of exports from the manufacturing industry. Namibia's share of exports remains low (0.5percent) and the current FDI is not exploiting Namibia's comparative advantage, which is their high precious mineral…".

Research Participant 17 observed that:

> "…The Namibian government is trying but not hard enough. For many years, Namibia was controlled by South Africa and most of the decisions were taken

by the South African authorities. South Africa stands to benefit more in the trade relations it has with Namibia…".

Regarding the question about China's role in Namibia's construction industry, the results show that China has been dominating the construction industry in Namibia. However, Research Participant 7 aired that despite the notable presence of the Chinese in the construction industry, questions are continuously raised regarding the quality of the job and in terms of deliverables within a given time frame. Research Participant 7 also stressed the uncertainty about the role Namibia plays and to what extent the government is in charge in terms of quality assurance. He provided an example of the Chinese company that was involved in the National Youth Centre in Rietfontein. When the company handed over the project, government officials reported that the building was falling apart already. In addition, Research Participant 9 stated that people in rural areas are of the view that they are buying goods from the Chinese that are not of good quality. Research Participant 7 argued that "what the Chinese have brought to Namibia is not unique to Namibians, Namibians can produce it themselves".

Research Participant 1 brought a diverse point and stated that Namibian entrepreneurs conducting business activities with China have been faced with difficulties due to strict Chinese policies and trade regulations and of registering and operating a business in China. He submitted that equal opportunities are not presented to Namibian businesses when they want to showcase their business ideas to the Chinese communities. This is noted to be the opposite for Chinese entrepreneurs in Namibia. Research Participant 6 stated that Namibian construction firms have been long complaining that they were being undercut in bidding for government tenders by Chinese companies using cheap, imported labour. These Chinese firms also violate Namibia's affirmative-action laws under which preference is to be given to local Namibian workers.

Research Participant 1 argued that:

> "…The dissimilarity could be because Namibian entrepreneurs lack finances and resources to travel or even present a platform locally to showcase what they have to offer. This is an advantage for the Chinese entrepreneurs, and they can now push their agendas for businesses with their customised terms and conditions and the Namibian entrepreneurs abide regardless…".

Concerns of environmental issues that is identified in terms of mining between the two states were brought forward by Research Participant 4. He noted that Namibia is a price taker and makes money from trade relations in general but might experience negative environmental impact (for example, deforestation) in the long run. The question of whether provisions about such issues have been calculated in these negotiations and prices that would aid in tacking them remains relevant and therefore, the inclusion of people from grassroots level in the policy formulation and implementation processes is vital (Research Participant 4).

The Namibian government owns very little, and in some cases, no share at all as in the case of Langer Heinrich Uranium and Rossing Uranium. The remaining shares are owned by other entities such as the Iran Foreign Investment Company (15.29 percent) and the Industrial Development Corporation of South Africa (10.22 percent) (Research Participant 4).

In terms of the diamond industry, Research Participant 6 drew a comparison and stated that Namibia has vaguely copied and adopted Botswana's model and partnered with DeBeers and DebMarine to mine diamonds. Research Participant 8 noted that:

> "…Our (Botswana) diamond industry is bigger than the Namibian and has been very important from a public finance point of view. We have been more

> disciplined in the public finance field and that has been Namibia's problem. Namibia's public finances are dreadful and ours are much better because there is more discipline. That is why we have more options, and you (Namibia) don't have…".

How Namibia spends the revenue income generated from minerals is still not clear as debates continue to unfold. To support this, Research Participant 4 stressed that what Namibia does with the revenue from the trade ties is worthy of note. Research Participant 8 added that question of whether the government reinvests in renewable energy, infrastructure that is beneficial, reclamation plants, agriculture, SMEs, schooling, health. remains relevant. Also, whether the Namibian pays off foreign debt is questioned as not much literature is available on the subject and economic development in the state remains low. Research Participant 4 added that it would therefore be senseless to blame China for how the Namibian government is spending their profits.

Another element highlighted in the mining sector is China's role in job creation for local nationals. Research Participant 4 stated that although China is an important trade partner as they have saved a lot of jobs mainly in the mining industry, there might however be issues of development for Namibia. Research Participant 4 noted that:

> "…For instance, from the jobs that have been created because of the relations between the two states, one cannot help but wonder how many of the executive positions at the mines are filled by local nationals…".

Research Participant 6 expressed that the Chinese are accused of being racist, probably more racist than the whites. Namibian nationals feel exploited and humiliated. There is a huge gap between the government and the Namibian people when it comes to the

perceptions of Namibia-China relations. Despite the deepened ties between the two states, there have been numerous criticisms against the Chinese for bringing their own unskilled labourers instead of employing the local nationals, especially during President Hifikepunye Pohamba's era (Research Participant 6). Research Participant 6 went on to state:

> "…there may be a lack of data on the exploitation of local employees by the Chinese, but states such as Namibia have taken initiatives to introduce measures where local nationals must be recruited in positions, goods and services have to be from local sources such as creating the Employment Equity Commission (EEC). Initiatives of such nature essentially address issues of workplace imbalances birthed from discriminatory socio-economic challenges…".

Research Participant 5 argued that enforcing these measures may be cumbersome on its own because of monitoring and evaluation difficulties. In response to the question on the retail industry, Participant 5 argued that Chinese companies have been taking over the retail sector and to remedy this, Namibia plans to introduce sector reservations where certain sectors will be reserved for local nationals, including the taxi and beauty industry. This will allow locals to promote entrepreneurship and skills and State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) should be used to optimise economic growth (Research Participant 5).

The drawback is that Namibia has limited negotiation competency and capacity. Other states send many experts for every clause, while Namibia has only a handful (Participant 6). Also, the importance of scientific research and research-based solutions should be highlighted (Research Participant 9). The Chinese have done for

development much better than a lot of states. China however goes hand in hand with an authoritarian, undemocratic regime that also deliberately includes the violation of human rights. So, it might not be the best way to go about (Research Participant 6).

Despite these observations, Research Participant 7 submitted that there have been notable benefits for Namibia such as the uranium mines that are being operated by the Chinese, which place Namibia amongst the top 10 suppliers of uranium globally. He added that one-third of Namibia's foreign aid and development assistance comes from China, through grants and educational support, although Germany remains relevant.

5.4 Sino-Namibia relations and change in political leadership and governance

It is important to note that factors influencing relations between states may vary depending on political leadership and system. In response to the question on whether change in political leadership and governance has any influence on Sino-Namibian relations, Research Participant 5 argued that the nature of African politics plays a major role in foreign relations, as most of the "foreign policies of African states are decided in the corridors of political parties". He added that in the case of Namibia, no significant difference or varying approaches have been observed since President Sam Nujoma's administration. Research Participants 1 and 3 however noted that the only noticeable difference is that the relationship between the two states has been elevated to a bilateral comprehensive strategic partnership. This elevation is attributed to the historical linkages they share. Research Participant 7 commented that:

> "…In my view, I have not seen any fundamental change because of different leaderships in the Sino-Namibia relations. This is because Namibia's focus is on the political side of the relations. The language of support during the liberation struggle has been consistent…".

Research Participant 6 submitted that Namibia's foreign policy is firmly pursuing a Go East Policy. He added that since the 1990s, Namibia under the SWAPO leadership has been constant in showcasing its support for China and the CPC. Namibia maintains to support the One China policy, principles around the national issues of Taiwan, the Xinjiang and Tibet autonomous regions, and the Special Administrative Regions (SARs) of Hong Kong and Macau. For instance, when it comes to certain decisions taken at the UN, Namibia in most cases tends to collaborate and share a common position with China or does not comment.

Research Participant 4 added that:

> "…for a democracy like Namibia, foreign policy decisions are made by consensus and public opinion, however, within the SWAPO government, there is a very strong affiliation towards anti-capitalist, a more socialist and less liberal state control approach…".

Research Participant 1 voiced that:

> "…China, a socialist government's foreign policy decisions may however not entirely include public consensus but ought to have a long-term national agenda. Therefore, changing political leaders in China does not change how they govern the affairs of the state as they are guided by the institution, together with their short, medium and long-term goals. They groom each other for the future of the CPC and the government as a whole…".

In fact, to continue with constant development, the Chinese government amended the constitution and scrapped the presidential term limit, making President Xi Jinping's presidency indefinite.

5.5 Developmental State concept and the Sino-Namibia relations

In a developmental state setting, a state must control its finances to drive its economic development process. In response to the question of whether Namibia is a developmental state, Research Participants 7, 8, 10, and 17 regarded Namibia as a democratic developmental state, while also noting that the stakes owned by the government in key sectors such as the mining industry are trivial. Research Participant 5 stated that only four mining companies are controlled and administered by Chinese entities, and the only area where the Namibian government owns at least 50 percent share, is the diamond sector (Namdeb Holdings (Pty) Ltd), with the other 50 percent owned by DeBeers Group. In contrast, Research Participants 3, 14, and 16 argued that Namibia is not a democratic developmental state.

In support of the aforementioned, Participant 16 submitted that:

> "…Namibia is not a developmental state as the Namibian government does not own economic equity. This is because of a Laissez-faire economic policy, where open and foreign businesses play by their own rules if they do not violate Namibian laws. Namibia gives foreign companies explicit rights and that is where the issue of a developmental state comes from. Also, conceptually, Namibia has not pronounced itself as a developmental state. We are more of a social democratic model, and we have not defined ourselves…".

He added that Namibia gives licences to foreign mining companies, giving them exclusive rights instead of going into partnerships like the one with DeBeers. "…A developmental state would never give exclusive rights to their natural resources to foreign businesses…".

Research Participant 14 however provided a different perspective that even though Namibia should not be regarded as a developmental state, the government plays a huge regulatory role and has created a conducive environment for business to be conducted. He added that the shares that the Namibian government owns in various mines might be minimal, but the government is influential in terms of decision-making, particularly at mines where it has stakes. In instances where the government may not be influential, is when those appointed directors of boards at those mines do not fulfil their duties. Some board members believe that their board fees are paid by the company and think they are part and parcel of that company and not part of the government. They feel they owe their allegiances to the company and not the government. The problem is not with the government but rather the government representatives (Research Participant 14).

Research Participant 14 further argued that if all the directors as government representatives would fulfil their fiduciary duties, then the government would have more influence in those structures. Even when the government has a minimal stake, there is an opportunity to have more influence. Still, these opportunities might be affected by the fact that some of the boards of directors do not distinguish their actual fiduciary roles and obligations towards the shareholder and their role as directors of the company. Also, Research Participant 14 stressed that it is wrong to offer exclusive rights for natural resources to foreign companies. For instance, states like Zimbabwe have the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act where no foreign company has a stake of more than 50 percent, the rest is for Zimbabwean nationals. In the case of Namibia, stakes as large as 90 percent are owned by foreign companies, and due to such instances, Namibia is not a developmental state.

Namibia's economic agenda is not clear because there is no consensus at the domestic level. Research Participant 14 disclosed that:

> "…There are numerous domestic disagreements, for instance, there are cases of ambassadors not being aware of plans introduced and, in some cases, advanced between ministers of the Namibia government and governments where these ambassadors are hosted. These ministers are introducing these things without checking with ambassadors about whether it should be agreed upon and some of these could be raw deals for the government. We are not clear because we are not consulting. If we consult and go through representatives of the country in those host states, then we would address some of these problems…".

In response to the question on whether Namibia is more focused on the political dimension or the economic aspects of its relations with China, Research Participant 14 argued that "…the focus is dependent on individuals involved, not only those that are corrupt, but also some individuals and their way of thinking…". He added that a popular statement made by Namibian Policymakers, 'Friend to everyone, enemy to none,' is not practical as one cannot be friends with everyone and an enemy to none. Friendships ought to be with those that pursue progressive policies and that are intended with the set objectives for Namibia. Research Participant 14 argued "…When you say you are friends with everyone, are you saying you are friends with Israel that is killing Palestinians? Is that what it means? ...".

As previously noted, the Namibian mining sector is largely under the control of foreign business entities. Research Participant 16 argued:

> "…Namibia has a state-based economy as the government is the largest player, provider, and buyer of services in terms of the development of infrastructure.

> However, there is no coherent policy and I do not see the elements of a developmental state in Namibia. I see a state that is involved in an economy where there are no clear principles that are being followed…".

Other findings of such nature suggest that both Botswana and Namibia are not democratic developmental states, as expressed by Research Participant 16:

> "…The Namibian government makes the policies and then the private sectors play their role whichever way they want. The government is not even directing and there is a need to direct the trajectory of development. It is a whole economic policy issue and Namibia is not a developmental state. The issue has to do with economic policy and the orientation as a whole…".

A developmental state in conceptual terms aims to use state resources to influence economic development, eradicate poverty and expand economic activities for its people. Research Participant 3 submitted that in the context of this research, developmental states are tackling trivial challenges of unemployment, inequality, and poverty, but in both Namibia and Botswana, unemployment remains high, so also inequality and poverty levels. He argued that Botswana and Namibia are therefore developmental states on paper only.

In response to the question on whether there is influence in ties because of China's authoritarian developmental state behaviour, Research Participants 1, 5, and 8 were of the view that China's developmental state behaviour and internal affairs do not directly influence the relations it has with Botswana and Namibia. Research Participant 3 stated that China's developmental state status has not had any influence on the nature of relations China has with Namibia and Botswana, as the two southern African states have not accepted FDIs that do not benefit their economies effectively. He added that

both Botswana and Namibia have not prioritised strategic areas of development that would have a significant impact on unemployment, poverty, and inequality. However, China alters the norms of African states towards their own preference and as part of its foreign policy (Research Participant 3). Also, whether China has been succeeding in projecting its national identity to African states remains relevant.

5.6 China's presence in Namibia and the concept of neo-colonialism

In response to the question on China's presence in Namibia and neo-colonialism, Research Participant 1 stated that China respects the Namibian laws. The problem, however, has to do with the Namibian government and how some officials tend to prioritise the interests of foreign employers at the expense of Namibian nationals. He added that for instance, Namibia's labour laws are explicit on the issues of minimum wages and working conditions. However, these laws are not followed by Chinese employers as the Namibian government does not enforce the laws properly when it comes to foreign employers. Research Participant 6 also noted that anti-Chinese sentiments continue to rise as there is a deep divide in public perceptions on the Chinese and the official government policy.

Observations made are that the Namibian government seems to be very lenient when it comes to control mechanisms of labour issues. Research Participant 6 drew reference to the May 2022 peaceful protest which was organised by the Namibia Economic Freedom Fighter (NEFF) members to fight for the rights of the nationals at the Windhoek China town, resulting in a stern response from the Namibian Police force. The reaction from the police force according to Research Participant 6 was over the top, taking a stance in favour of Chinese interests.

Research Participant 6 submitted that:

> "…Most Namibians are 'gatvol' when it comes to the Chinese. The Chinese exploit Namibians and put their survival strategies on the day-to-day pavement subsistence sector, at risk with their cheap goods…".

Research Participant 7 disclosed that:

> "…Independence means self-reliance and taking control of the affairs of the state, including the resources. We (Namibia) claim that the reason why we want independence is to take charge of our affairs. Now, if in terms of the natural resources someone else is exploiting these resources without it developing us, what was then the purpose of us getting independence? How can we allow it when it was the main reason? I do not blame them, but it is very clear that it is neo-colonialism, in terms of external influences. They are influencing our political and developmental direction with our accomplices, with us allowing it. We (Namibia) were saying we want to be free; we want to take charge, we do not want to be influenced by foreign powers, but the fact that the foreign powers are influencing us therefore its neo-colonialism…".

Research Participant 12 opined that:

> "…In my view, China is taking advantage with the carrot they are dangling and knows our willingness to swallow that carrot as political leaders in Africa. Chinese negotiations are done in bad faith knowing very well that African states are weak. Look at Zambia and its debt to China. The colonialists at least created a standard and pretended to worry and pay a bit of attention to the standard. They would tell us to adhere to the standards and if we did not, we

would not get funding from the IMF or violating human rights was an issue. China does not care about such…".

Research Participants 11 and 17 noted that the Chinese government needs numerical strength from Africa at the UN, World Health Organisation (WHO), Human Rights Council to influence decision-making and essentially shape the global order according to the way they view the world. For instance, China has its way of defining human rights and could apply some of its beliefs as part of resolutions at the UN with the support of Africa. In this regard, Research Participant 3 noted that:

"…One could look at these relations as political blackmail as China always reminds African states of how they were aided by China during the liberation struggle. They then do whatever China wants. States like Botswana however do not comply as their relations with China are not as deeply rooted as some African states, for instance, Namibia. Colonial backgrounds may also influence the nature of relations with China, in this case for Botswana and the Western connection…".

Research Participant 7 argued that:

"…the Chinese government has a strategy of depopulating their country, so they are advancing their economy and not on issues of politics. For instance, how can someone just decide that they are going to Okongo or Khorixas (In Namibia) that they have no knowledge about. The issue is, they do not teach a lot about the African continent in their education system. It is a strategy of the Chinese government as these people are not on their own…".

Chinese and African political leaders in general use natural resources and only the politically connected elites benefit at the expense of local nationals. This is because of the historical past China has with Botswana and Namibia and the feeling of forever

indebtedness, particularly from Namibia's side. Research Participant 13 noted that the presence of China in Namibia and Botswana only serves a small group of people, the elites, and that is a danger to any state. There is no guarantee that all the citizens will benefit from the relations as only a small network of closely tied elites get to decide on the economic activities of the state because of the political power they hold.

The BRI is nothing new and they flourished throughout history (Research Participant 13). The Chinese are not forceful but in reality, of business, they will protect their national interest. They use such initiatives and platforms to grab the attention of powerful individuals and supporters to meet the Chinese demands.

In terms of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Research Participants 1 and 7 commented that what the Chinese are benefiting is more than what they are giving out to Namibia. Research Participant 1in particular stressed that with reference to CSR in the mining sector, Namibian elites that are involved directly in the sector are immensely benefiting, while the local communities are not gaining anything from the mines located in their towns. For instance, mining towns such as Arandis, Tsumeb, Otjiwarongo, and Otavi are not well developed through initiatives birthed from CSR for community advancement. Due to this lack of community development, this might create conflict in the long run between community members and foreign investors, resulting in a decline in investor confidence (Research Participant 1).

In contrast, Research Participant 3 argued that the Western world through the IMF and the WB launched the Heavily Indebted Poor States (HIPC) Initiative in 1996 to ensure that no poor country faces an unmanageable debt burden, and, in some instances, debts of some African states were to be written off. That could be viewed as debt diplomacy. He stated that the Chinese are writing off debts of poor states globally, a practice now

being labelled as ‘debt trap diplomacy’ by some and ‘HIPC with Chinese characteristics’ by others. Research Participant 7 noted that:

> “…One would hear China saying that they have overtaken everyone and are the major exporter of uranium and other raw materials from Namibia. But in fact, Germany and the European Union (EU) are the major funders for the development in Namibia…”.

Research Participant 7 mentioned that “when one focuses on China and how they articulate the China-Africa ties, especially in the case of Namibia and maybe the same for Botswana, the type of loans they give to Namibia are on a lower rate and they justify that because of the friendship”. Research Participant 4 also claimed that China at times may have miscalculated the terms on these loans and have now realised that states are finding it difficult to repay the loans from Chinese financial institutions. Eventually, they write the debt off and make a huge loss.

African states do not need to be beggars because they are the ones with natural resources, hence global interests (Research Participant 11). If African governments promote state- led growth and have their policies and procedures in order, then there will not be any reason for external forces to intervene. If one thing to be emulated from Asian states in general is to avoid blaming colonialism for Africa’s underdevelopment. Asian states too have a history of colonialism, but they have been prospering economically since after the era because they do not blame colonialism for their mishaps.

Instead, Asian states know that colonialism is long gone but African states are allowing colonialism in different forms (Research Participant 11). African people should know their political rights, for example, checks and balances and hold governments

accountable. There is also a need to strengthen the already existing institutions and get rid of those that are not performing within the right mandate. States such as Namibia have so many SOEs with many birthing little results, providing poor services, and even to the point of bankruptcy for some (Research Participant 4).

Economic diplomacy is a long-term strategy for economic advancement and missions are in place to promote trade and investment, looking at both inward and outward development strategies from both governments. From a constructivist perspective, since the establishment of formal relations, diplomatic political consultations between Namibia and China have been maintained. The strategic comprehensive political and economic relations between China and Namibia have demonstrated solid ties as they share norms, and ideas, and take common positions at multilateral institutions. China has demonstrated its national interest and intentions for its presence in Namibia. The Asian power is willing to spend a lot of capital to secure natural resources in efforts to maintain its industrial expansion. China has political rhetoric accompanied by the business aspect while Namibia's economic agenda, particularly in the Sino-Namibia relations, remain unclear. While China as an authoritative developmental state is not so much concerned with finances as its main aim is to secure resources for its people, Namibia showcases more interest in political relations, at the expense of the economic aspect of the ties. Some of the existing agreements do not birth long-term benefits and do not fully cater for the needs of the Namibian people.

Some of the agreements signed between these two states are outdated and require urgent revision to produce fruitful outcomes for their economies. For instance, the Space Station and Satellite agreement requires modification as it poses a national security threat to Namibia. There is also an observed absence of Namibian space engineers on site. Similarly, health cooperation between the two governments has been

ambiguous and vague, particularly in its implementation. Robust cooperation in critical areas of development in the health sector such as training of health professionals in areas of neurology, cardiology, and nuclear medicine, amongst others remains limited.

The support China provided Namibia during the liberation struggle has given China a sense of entitlement to Namibia's natural resources. Namibia somewhat feels forever indebted to the Chinese, and therefore welcomes the Chinese presence openly despite all the criticism they face. China however is not the only state that assisted Namibia as other states have done more than what China had to offer at that time. Russia and some Scandinavian states assisted Namibia to a great extent, but they do not demand even if they could legitimately show to what extent they have supported Namibia.

While noting that most of the mining sector is controlled by Western entities, corrupt political leaders, and office bearers also contribute to China's sense of entitlement and access to natural resources. The form of international neo-patrimonialism comes into play, particularly in the case of Namibia. Drawing focus on the concept of a developmental state, Namibia's natural resources are not the equity of the state and socio-economic attributes such as industrialisation and improving the local economy have remained a challenge. The role of the government and the extent of intervention and influence in the affairs of economic development and the social well-being of its people need to be scrutinised. Therefore, it would be unjust to regard Namibia as an explicit developmental state but rather a democratic developmental state. Lastly, change in political leadership and governance has remained institutionalised and has thus not had any negative influence on the nature of ties Namibia has with China. It continues to grow stronger.

5.7 Summary

Constructivism points out the importance of national interest. In the case of Namibia, it boils down to governance issues and its domestic policies. If a nation is rich with resources, major international interests follow in accessing the resources. Namibia has the assets that can be used for bargaining and it is in a strong position to negotiate and set the rules of the game, even when considered as a small state and irrelevant in international policies. Namibia has the liberty to pivot on the best offer they can get and specify by looking at the form of investments brought to them, for instance, the willingness to pay a certain amount of revenue income, invest in local capacity building, and plans to train local competent labour force, willingness to add value to the manufacturing industry before exporting raw material, investing in infrastructure development and education.

Namibia and other African states need to hire competent experts that willing to support Namibian resource nationalism. African states need to be smart and have proper policies and professionals from different fields, involving important stakeholders in the development process and drawing proper lessons on how best to address African problems. The Namibian government is open and presents a conducive environment for the private sector and FDIs in other industries. The Foreign Investment Act of 1990 (FIA), which will soon be replaced by the Namibia Investment Promotion Act (NIPA), governs investments in Namibia, guaranteeing equal treatment for foreign investors. Also, to safeguard domestic local markets to reserve certain sectors for local nationals, the Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board (NIPDB) aims to ensure policy, regulatory, and legislative laws and regulations are followed. Also, the government has numerous social protection programmes to ensure the livelihoods of its people are met. It also ensures free education is provided from primary to secondary

level amongst others. As has been established earlier, there are comparative elements in this study, making use of insights gained through broader casing. These comparisons will be comprehensively addressed in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER SIX

DATA COMPARISON AND ANALYSIS: SINO-BOTSWANA AND SINO-NAMIBIA RELATIONS

6.1 Introduction

In the constructivist's theoretical paradigm, the world is viewed from both epistemological and ontological perspectives (Wendt, 1992). The application of the tenets of constructivism throughout this study allows for new information found through experience to be incorporated into the already existing knowledge on the nature of the official relations Botswana and Namibia have with China. It provides a scope to apply and comprehend the nature of the relations of the states under study. Erbas (2022) stated that the intermediate classification of ideas, general attitudes, and frames connect the core values of national identity to the influential ideas that shape policy choices. The focus on national identity and national interest in foreign policy context magnifies norms, ideas, and other tenets, including values and state interactions.

Constructivism in this study looks at the extent to which the established national identities and interests of the three case studies influence the bilateral relations China has with Botswana and Namibia. Worth noting is that foreign policies are not static as they respond to issues in the global political system (Mushelenga, 2014). Thus, national identities and interests constantly change as well. Constructivism is relevant for this study and in foreign policy analysis as national identities are formed through state interactions and social relationships. Through interactions, states share knowledge and understanding, they share opinions, shared knowledge, shared understandings, shared opinions, expectations, relations, activities, and engagements (Erbas, 2022). Although all three states under study are guided by policies and

principles, in practice, numerous factors influence and shape the ties dissimilarly, which may result to more gains for some, more than others.

It is in this context that this chapter provides a comprehensive comparison and analysis of various economic and political components that have been influencing the nature of relations under study from a developmental state discourse and as highlighted in Chapters 4 and 5.

This chapter compares the practical similarities and dissimilarities between Botswana and Namibia with identified factors that may influence the nature of their ties with China. The qualitative content analysis approach adopted by this study allows for the release of valuable information about the relations under study. Although considered to be subjective, this versatile and transparent approach considers all the aspects (participant and context) when sorting text into groups of related categories to identify similarities and differences, patterns, and associations (Kleinheksel, Rockich-Winston, Tawfik & Wyatt, 2020). The study further presents a summary of lessons that can be drawn from China's modernisation and domestic policies by African states in general, and Botswana and Namibia in particular.

China has been known to be a large recipient of Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs). However, since opening up, the Chinese state developed initiatives and policies which resulted into it becoming an active investor in foreign states (Bellabona, Spigarelli, 2007). A study by Long (2005) supported this by submitting that since 1993, China has been pumping large amounts of FDI to developing nations across the world, introducing a series of FDI policies such as tax incentives. Moving further from opening up to going global, the initiation of the "Go Global Strategy", also known as the "Go Out Policy," came to pass in 2001 (Li, 2018), a policy which incentivized China's outbound investment since the late 1990s (Johnston, 2016). Through this

strategy, the Chinese government in the early 2000s encouraged local enterprises to invest abroad and actively participate in international capital markets (Hong and Sun, 2004; Li, 2018). The policy formed part of the reformation, development, as well as the modernization processes for all-around integration into the global economy. Bellabona & Spigarelli (2007) highlighted how the Chinese government acted in different phases since 1979 and incorporated the Go Global strategy until 2005, to advance its economy since opening up.

The phases include:

Phase 1 (1979–1983) Case-by-Case approval	• Notice about principles and the scope of authority for examination and approval of establishing non-trading enterprises in foreign states, HK, and Macau
Phase 2 (1984–1992) Towards standardisation of approval procedures	Interim regulations on the administration and approval of establishing non-trading enterprises abroad
Phase 3 (1993–1998) Tightening of management of overseas investment	Regulations on the administration of the overseas enterprises • Measures for the administration of overseas trading companies and their representative offices
Phase 4 (1999–2002) Encouraging overseas projects in processing trade	• Some suggestions on encouraging enterprises to develop overseas businesses in processing and assembling the supplied materials

Phase 5 (2002–2005) Implementation of the Go Global strategy	• Decision on reforming the investment system • Interim measures for the administration of the examination and approval of the overseas investment projects (by NDRC) & provisions for the examination and approval of investments to run enterprises abroad (Mofcom) • Statistical system of direct overseas investment (National Bureau of Statistics of China), measures for overseas investment comprehensive performance evaluation and joint annual inspection & the prophase reporting system for the overseas merger and acquisition-related matters of enterprises (SAFE), internet registration system of exploring overseas mineral resources (Ministry of Land and Resources)

Table 1: Go Global Strategy phases and government actions. Source: (Bellabona, Spigarelli, 2007)

In 2015, the Asian giant became the second largest outward investor (Li, 2018), accelerating during recent years as one of the largest sources of Outward Foreign Direct Investment (OFDI) (Hong & Sun, 2004; Li, 2018). Johnston (2016) highlighted some benefits China has from the Go Global policy namely: the attainment of natural resources, seizing foreign market shares, building several global Chinese brand names, for example, Tsingtao, Great Wall Motors (GWM), and acquiring foreign technologies.

As previously stated, the bond between China and Africa, which developed in the 1950s during the struggle for independence, gained more significance, grew speedily, and has been deepening in terms of scale and scope since the 2000s. Since then, the Asian power marked the initiation of contemporary China-Africa trade and economic relations amongst others, aiming to safeguard its territorial integrity and sovereignty (China-Africa Trade and Economic Relationship Annual Report, 2010). In efforts to realise those above, establishing the Forum on Africa-China Cooperation (FOCAC) in 2000 came to pass as an all-embracing framework for these unions. FOCAC was formed to strengthen relations through the promotion of equally beneficial cooperation founded on mutual respect and non-interference in the internal Affairs of African states (Li, Liu, Pan, Zeng & He, 2012). As a matter of fact, in 2009, China became Africa's largest trading partner (Johnston, 2016). Equally important is the 2015 mark of an advanced comprehensive strategic and cooperative partnership for the two parties (Sun, 2019). Traits of such magnitude tend to elevate mutual trust and bring closer economic cooperation in bilateral relations as economic interests converge and overlap.

Echoing the 1955 Bandung Conference guiding development principles, President Xi, in his 2018 speech at the Beijing summit of FOCAC, announced the 'five-no' approach to describe its relations with Africa (Xinhua, 2018):

> "no interference in African states' pursuit of development paths that fit their national conditions; no interference in their internal affairs; no imposition of China's will on them; no attachment of political strings to assistance; and

> lastly, no seeking of selfish political gains in investment and financing cooperation".

This argument seems to be strengthened by the utterances made during the Communist Party of China (CPC) national congress of 2022 in terms of relationships with the rest of the world including Africa (Yunbi, 2022 p.7; Omoruyi, 2022 p. 20). Tremendous progress has since been witnessed in the amalgamation as areas of trade, investment, and aid forms part of a larger foreign policy China has for the African Continent. Relations of such nature strive to offer more clarity to foreign policy choices as well as exterior political structures and processes (Haugevik, 2018). Numerous scholars argue in a similar vein that the economic advancement objectives of the Chinese tend to be more balanced and produce a win-win outcome compared to the political and economic cooperation and policy-based development lending African states have with the West (Mlambo, Kushamba & Simawu, 2016; Hartmann and Noesselt, 2020).

This contrast is clearly visible as the Chinese economic development approach for developing nations is also clearly stipulated in the 2004 Beijing Consensus, coined by Joshua Cooper Ramo, as a counter to the Washington Consensus (Breuer, 2017). China's presence in the world's least developed region is now more relevant than ever. Its demand for resources is due to the expanding economy (industrial sector) and growing population in China and has resulted in its re-engagement and strengthening of relations with African states (Enuka, 2010). The Chinese government's latest economic integration and advancement initiative, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) (also known as the One Belt One Road Initiative (OBOR)), introduced in 2013, strives to engage through land and maritime routes with different parts of the world in infrastructure developments amongst others, linking from China through to Asia, Middle East, Europe and now also to Africa (Liebenberg & Van der Merwe, 2020).

This connection is via land and maritime networks, increasing trade and fuelling economic advancement through integration. As a centrepiece of President Xi Jinping for his foreign and economic policy, the BRI promotes trade and cultural development between China, Asia, Africa, and Europe (ZiroMwatela & Changfeng, 2016). President Xi Jinping has praised it as "*the project of the century*." where they hope to create a big family of harmonious coexistence (Ang, 2019), as China's implementation of the BRI mainly in Africa is part of its domestic development strategy of securing its economic interests and overall satisfying, its appetite for the unexploited natural resources in Africa (Noesselt, 2019).

Worthy of note is that the need for Africa's political and economic growth, as well as, African Agency in international relations remains relevant. This is important to highlight in this study to drive Africa's need for China's positive investment and vice-versa for relevance in international politics. Brown (2011) stated that arenas of African Agency, namely multilateral, bilateral, intra-regional and sub/non-state raise practical issues around the importance of geopolitical contexts, as well as state capacities and leadership amongst others. It will help look at the realities of Africa's international relations.

6.2 Political Cooperation: Comparing Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibia ties

Wendt (1992) noted that identities of the actors are not given or fixed but develop and transform within communication processes. Botswana's case may not entirely be like that of Namibia as there are quite a few strands worth magnifying. For instance, Botswana has a long-standing relationship with China compared to Namibia. Therefore, there is a time-bearing factor in the relations China has with Botswana and Namibia. When comparing Namibia's political history with a focus on China's role during the fight for independence, it is observed that China was largely involved in the liberation struggle of Namibia while it was not largely involved in Botswana's fight for independence. Botswana's whole history was oriented towards the British, the commonwealth. The state did not have a close relationship with China during the Cold War while Namibia had a closer tie with China within the context of the liberation struggle.

Also, another critical observation here is that no Chinese president has visited Botswana since the establishment of their relations. This could be because of the nature of the historical background between the two and also because Botswana is a small state and not of geostrategic importance to China. China regards Botswana as a junior partner. While Namibia is also a small state and a junior partner, former Chinese President Hu Jintao visited Namibia in 2007. This could be because of the varying historical background China shares with Botswana and Namibia, and therefore, differences in the ideological histories of Botswana and Namibia are worth noting. Also, because of these ideological historical differences from a political perspective, it was easier for Botswana to swiftly transform from a political-based to an economic-based tie with China while Namibia continued to nurture the political relations instead of focusing on benefiting greatly from China's economic agenda.

Concerning the theoretical paradigm guiding this study, the unequal relationship can be seen because of historical origins. Some scholars submitted that historical understanding not only shapes the comprehension of the past and present design of ties, but it also highlights the future trends of relationships of such nature (Iroanya and Nawases 2022; Iroanya, 2019).

Furthermore, the ventures of the PRC into Africa have been interpreted as the export of Chinese authoritarianism to Africa and China's pursuit to influence African states' governance systems despite Beijing's persistent insistence on non-intervention (McKinley & George, 2022; Scott, 2021 as cited by Monyae, 2023). Relations between Botswana and China are different from the relations between Namibia and China in terms of foreign policy orientation. Namibia firmly showcases its support for China, particularly on the international front while Botswana tends to follow normative frameworks rigorously, for example, taking decisions that condemn violations of human rights by the East. China on the other hand engages with Botswana and Namibia while cognisant of their economic agenda and what it wants to achieve from the agreements. For instance, China ensures to maintain sustainable FDI projects, which would serve her interest.

6.3 Economic Cooperation: Comparing Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibia ties

Constructivism emphasises the ontological reality of intersubjective knowledge. It highlights that the material world does not define how states behave. The agency of Botswana and Namibia in international affairs remains relevant because of their natural resources. In Namibia's case, economic relations are more government-to-government, and this could be the same for Botswana. In terms of the economic climate after independence for Namibia and Botswana, both Namibia and Botswana

inherited economies. Namibia was already a diversified economy under the control of foreign powers, a common practice to date. Botswana was extremely poor after independence and depended on foreign aid for economic advancement and had to develop a lot of economic sectors from scratch. However, since the discovery of ‘diamonds for development’, Botswana’s economic prosperity after independence has been regarded by some as an African economic miracle. Taylor (1998 as cited by Xinhua, 2018) highlighted that it is apparent that China saw Botswana as an 'exemplary model in the development of a national economy'. Besides democracy, Botswana’s principles resonated with China's own perceived path to development. This approach could be deemed as one from which other developing states could draw lessons from.

However, Patel (2022) argued that Botswana has had no structural economic transformation since independence, and as a result, cannot be regarded as a role model to more populous African states. Taylor (1998) is of the view that Botswana’s model of development birthed one of Africa's few economic success stories. Because of this, Gaborone was of particular significance to Beijing and was regarded as being instructive for China's own economic establishment. Taylor (1997) further submitted that states such as Botswana are constantly under the shadow of a regional hegemony and China’s position against the giant powers go in hand with Botswana’s foreign policy agenda. This has facilitated a relationship of enduring strength and mutual benefit, and from the point of view of Beijing, developed an amicable relationship which has been relatively cost-effective.

During the 1980s, China embarked on a variety of modernisation programs/reforms around education, agriculture, technology, infrastructure, and defence (Wenming, 1982 (a); Wenming, 1984 (b)). By as far back as 1988, the first results could be seen (Qi, 1988). By 2010, many of the goals set in the 50-year plans for the great

modernisation were achieved (Liebenberg and Van der Merwe, 2020). When focusing on the perspective of China in Botswana and Namibia, specifically within the broader context of its latest BRI, the realisation is that Botswana and Namibia are not fully of significant relevance to the Chinese BRI. The BRI does not reach that far south and if it does, the initiative will aim for South Africa because of its resources and the economic muscle. That does not however mean that China would ignore the minerals of Botswana and Namibia. A very pragmatic leader will see the benefits for Botswana and Namibia in its relations with China. It is an overwhelming posture from Chinese businesses in Africa.

Nedopil (2022) added that since its inception, the BRI has accumulated engagements amounting to USD962 billion, an estimate of USD573 billion in construction contracts, and USD389 billion in non-financial investments. This also includes projects undertaken in Botswana and Namibia. These investments entail building and networking of roads, harbours, network of trade links, and to facilitate overall economic activities where China is providing finances and expertise.

China places great emphasis on the BRI as a big and most relevant component in Sino-Africa relations. The Chinese government affirms its effort to promote win-win cooperation, allowing African states to access China's finances, expertise, and developing aid without any prerequisites. These conform to China's Foreign Policies. As the Asian nation continues to become a modern socialist state and to support and achieve the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of Agenda 2030, President Xi Jinping launched the Global Development Initiative (GDI) in September 2021 titled "Bolstering Confidence and Jointly Overcoming Difficulties to Build a Better World" (UN, n.d.). The GDI promotes international cooperation in priority areas such as poverty alleviation, food security, pandemic response and vaccines,

financing for development, climate change and green development, industrialization, digital economy, and connectivity in the digital era. Christian (2023) reported that the GDI aims to put "development high on the global macro policy agenda" and its key constituency is the Global South that comprises mostly developing and less developed states. In the first quarter of 2022, China increased the value of its exports in the manufacturing sector, mainly of automotive products with 30 percent year on year (World Trade Organisation (WTO), 2023). The Chinese state used its strong position in the production of lithium-ion batteries to become the world's second-biggest exporter of electric motor vehicles, following the European Union (EU) (WTO, 2023).

6.3.1 Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibia relations and its effect on key industries

From an economic viewpoint, China's increasing influence in developing states such as Botswana and Namibia is mostly because of its thirst to promote its economic activities and to leave its print globally. In terms of resource potential, there seems to be not much of a difference between Botswana and Namibia, uranium is relevant in Namibia's case and Botswana is mainly associated with diamonds. Diamond production in the two states is somewhat similar as both states have a partnership with DeBeers. The utilisation of revenue from natural resources for public expenditure between the two states varies. Namibia has established the Welwitschia Sovereign Wealth Fund in 2022. The fund collects some of the royalties from all mineral resources sold as well as some tax revenues and money raised by the government divesting from its investment holdings (Aljazeera, 2022). However, findings from study participants stressed that Namibia does not utilise revenue income and public finance as Botswana does.

Although not as prominent as the states in northern and eastern Africa, the Chinese government, through the BRI, provided massive financing and investments of USD67.8 billion in 2022 compared to USD68.7 billion in 2021 for projects in more than 140 states, including Namibia and Botswana (Nedopil, 2022). To demonstrate this continuous economic success, to strengthen its path to economic development, and to benefit extensively from the relations with China, Botswana became the 46th member state of China's BRI programme, following the signing of the MoU in January 2021 (Asala,2021; Dikobe, 2021). Xinhua (2020) added that over forty China-aid projects in the areas of infrastructure, agriculture, education, health, and housing have been covered in Botswana. By 2020, the two nations had signed over 30 bilateral agreements and MoUs in social, economic, technical, and technological cooperation, and human resource development (Xinhua, 2020).

Highlighted and subsequently discussed are some Chinese-funded and executed projects in Botswana.

Morupule B Power Station

The coal-fired Morupule B power station is a 600 MW expansion of Botswana Power Corporation's (BPC) supply in Palapye, Botswana. The project was undertaken by China National Electric Equipment Corporation (CNEEC) and most units were completed by 2014 (Global Energy Monitor, n.d.).

Francistown Obed Chilume Stadium

Before its completion in 2015, the project was stalled for six years as China Jiangsu had to take over from the initial contractor, Tuwana Construction, which was removed due to poor workmanship.

Sir Seretse Khama International (SSKI) Airport

The construction contract to expand the Sir Seretse Khama International Airportwas awarded to China-based Sino Hydro in 2008. The expansion included a new terminal, the existing 3km runway be extended by 1km, a new 4km parallel asphalt taxiway, and the expansion of the car park. The project was however halted and the contract was terminated in 2011. There were major faults identified, and the contractor failed to meet the targeted deadline despite several extensions from the government (Sunday Standard, 2013).

Lobatse Water Master Plan

In 2020, China State Construction and Engineering Corporation (CSCEC) (Pty) Ltd was awarded the Lobatse Water Master Plan package for the construction of a pump station at Forest Hill (Kgale) and the instalment of a reservoir in Lobatse (Mpuang, 2021).

North-South Water Carrier 2.3

CSCEC was also awarded a tender to construct the North-South Water Carrier 2.3 new pump station and associated accessories at the Mmamashia Water Treatment Works. This was for pumping treated water to the Forest Hill Reservoir, and interconnecting pipe work and site works and telemetry (Mpuang, 2021).

Gumare Water Scheme project

This project involved pumping water from lagoons and was also undertaken by the Chinese state-owned construction company, CSCEC (Mpuang, 2021). The project, commenced in 2020 and was scheduled to be completed in the 2021/2022 financial year.

In terms of trade, Wesgro (2022) noted that Botswana is ranked as the world's 116th largest exporter of goods which accounts for 0.4 percent of global exports, and 117th largest importer of goods accounting for 0.3 percent of world imports. In 2020, Hong Kong/China ranked 7th trading partner, with Botswana exporting goods to the value of ZAR 3.05 billion, a 21.94 percent growth from 2016 to 2020 (Trade Map, 2022). In the same year, Botswana imported goods worth ZAR 2,63 billion from China.

The Bank of Botswana (2022) reported that in 2021, Mainland China's FDIs in Botswana were USD 4,937,000.00. Also, the two states have a noticeable record of imports and exports. Below is a detailed figure of Botswana's total exports to China from July 2019 to July 2023, and the figure for Botswana's imports from China for the same period.

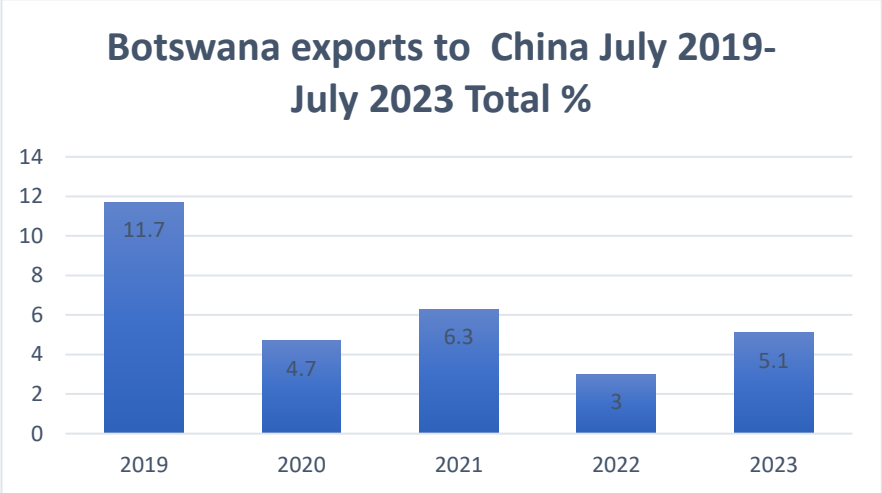


Figure 4: Botswana's total exports to China (2019-2023). Source: Statistics Botswana

In 2019, a total of 11.7 percent equivalent to P308.9 million worth of merchandise was exported from Botswana to Hong Kong China. 2020, 2021, and 2022 showed a huge drop of 4.7 percent, 6.3percent, and 3 percent, respectively due to fall in all commodity groups except copper. A peak was witnessed in July 2023 of 5.1 percent (Statistics

Botswana 2019-2023). Major commodities comprised of diamonds and copper, and were mainly exported to Asia (Statistics Botswana, 2023).

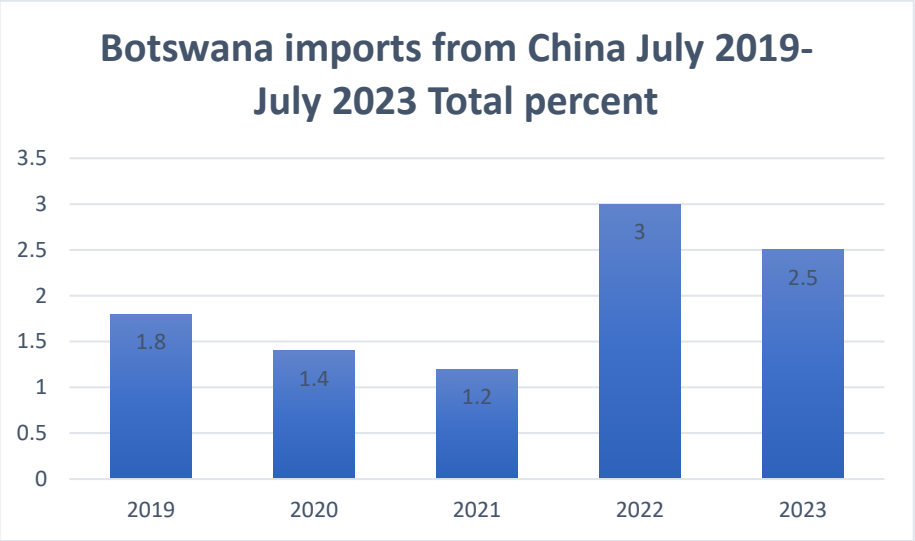


Figure 5: Botswana's total imports from China (2019-2023). Source: Statistics Botswana

According to Statistics Botswana's International Merchandise Trade Statistics reports of July 2019 to July 2023, China supplied imports to Botswana worth 1.8 percent, equivalent to P108.2 million (USD 8,028,278.78) in 2019, a noticeable drop in 2020 and 2021 from 1.4 percent to 1.2 percent respectively. This was during the Covid-19 epidemic. A peak in July 2022 of 3 percent, equivalent to P239.5 million (USD 17,770,543.14) of total imports, a significant rise from 2021. Imports mainly comprise electrical, and electronic equipment, machinery, nuclear reactors, and boilers (Trading Economics, 2023).

Wesgro (2022) reported that Botswana documented 55 inward FDIs between 2003 and 2021. South Africa was Botswana's largest source market for FDI in terms of the number of projects invested over the period during that same period. As a result, a total capital spending of ZAR12,661.93 million (USD 699,671.07) and an estimated 5,745 jobs were created (Wesgro, 2022). Botswana's outward FDI developed into 140 capital projects invested worldwide, with a capital spending value of ZAR111,244.29 million

(USD 6,147,555.74) and created 24 425 jobs worldwide (Wesgro, 2022). Kline (2012) submitted that FDI is of great advantage to host states as it brings about technology transfer, market access, and managerial skill as part of the functional business package where risk is endured by the investor, rather than by public sector agencies.

In fact, in June/July 2023, the Botswana government re-negotiated its share with De Beers to double from 25 percent to 50 percent over the next 10 years (Jeffay, 2023). The new agreement allows for the state-owned Okavango Diamond Company (ODC) to receive a 30 percent share of diamond production with immediate effect, an increase from 25 percent (Jeffay, 2023).

Moreover, there has been a growing presence of Chinese nationals in Namibia in the recent years. In 2023, 56 Chinese firms were reported to be conducting business in Namibia as well as about 1700 Chinese nationals residing in the state (Zhao, 2023). He further reported that as of 2023, Chinese businesses had created over 10,000 jobs for Namibian nationals (Zhao, 2023). After Namibia's independence, the Sino-Namibia relations grew to include an agreement on the establishment of the Joint Commission of Bilateral Economy and Trade in 2004 (Melber, 2018). As part of the Bilateral Comprehensive Cooperative and Strategic Partnership, Namibia signed a MoU on September 1, 2018, to join the BRI. Some of the projects under the BRI which have been ongoing are highlighted below.

China Space Tracking, Telemetry, and Command Station in Namibia

Namibia and China signed a MoU in 2018 for the establishment and operation of the China Space Tracking, Telemetry, and Command Station in Namibia. Namibia availed space for China to build a station in Hentiesbay, which is operational to date. However, this ongoing agreement needs to be revised as there are issues of national

security and knowledge transfer. Namibians are not involved and the whole site is controlled by the Chinese.

Expansion of the Hosea Kutako International Airport

In 2018, as part of the BRI, an agreement on the upgrading of the Hosea Kutako International Airport was signed between the two governments. A loan which included a grant component package, offering a 90 percent concession loan (at the interest of 2 percent per annum for 20 years, inclusive of 5 years of grace period) with a 0.25 percent management fee and commitment fee, respectively, was handed to Namibia.

New Airport Road Project: Windhoek, Namibia

An implementation agreement on the Hosea Kutako International Airport and Dordabis Interchange (21.3km) road construction in the Khomas Region to the value of N$830 million (USD 45,867,383.84) was signed in August 2017. This was phase 2B of the road since phase 2A between Avis and Dordabis Interchange (15 km) road was funded by the African Development Bank and had been under construction. The Chinese government provided a list of shortlisted Chinese Companies, which are registered and have a plant in Namibia for evaluation by the Namibian Authorities in line with the local tendering process.

Education and Capacity Building Programmes

Over the years, China has been providing capacity building to Namibia in the form of either short course, scholarships for master's and PhD programmes to Namibian people and government employees as part of development support to the Namibian government. The University of Namibia (UNAM) received equipment worth N$ 10 million for academic and research purposes. UNAM also has MoUs with various

Chinese universities in areas of research and learning. China further provided grant aid in 2017 of RMB 150 Million (about N$ 343 million) to Namibia for the construction of 4 rural schools: Liselo Combined School, Masokotwani Combined School in the Zambezi Region, and Satotwa and Simanya Combined Schools in the Kavango West Region to aid in putting up additional facilities. These included hostels, classrooms, public toilets, dining halls, science labs, computer labs, sports fields (netball and soccer fields) and teachers' houses.

China offers aid to Namibia for specific projects, for instance, schools like Mao Zedong School in Otjomuise, Windhoek, and a project with the National Youth Service at Rietfontein, expanding the centre.

Satellite Data Receiving Ground station

China provided grant aid of about N$ 370 million (USD20,446,906.05) to Namibia for the construction of the Satellite Data Receiving Ground Station. The feasibility study was done in March 2018, with a lease of land for 99 years. The Design team of experts was to come to Namibia in February 2020 after which the construction was to start. However, this could not materialize due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and is yet to be pursued.

Chinese Medical Services (Acupuncture Clinic)

Since 1996, the Chinese government has been sending a group of four medical officers to Namibia, initially after every second year, now changed to after every three years, to provide quality Chinese traditional medical treatment. This includes acupuncture, herbs, massage, moxibustion, and cupping. However, this agreement on health cooperation, was signed a long time ago (20 years ago) where China would assist Namibia in the health sector. China brings its own health professionals and experts for

instance acupuncture clinic. In the past, the acupuncture clinic was only to cater to the Chinese in Namibia, but at a later stage, it had to be used by Namibians as well.

The agreement however does not cover the critical areas that would benefit Namibians around health. There was a proposal to revisit the agreement and to include the training of local health professionals in the areas of nuclear medicine and cardiology. The progress of the revision of the agreement is however still not clear.

The Mining industry

A total of 26 mines (some on care and maintenance) operate in Namibia, four of which are controlled and administered by Chinese entities. They are Langer Heinrich Uranium, where 25 percent of the mine is owned by China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC) and 75 percent is owned by an Australian company, Paladin Energy Limited; 68.62 percent of Rossing Uranium Limited is owned by China National Uranium Corporation (CNUC) and 3.42 percent is owned by the Government of Namibia; 90 percent of Swakop Uranium (Pty). Ltd (Husab mine) is owned by China General Nuclear and 10 percent by Epangelo Mining company (Government of Namibia); and lastly, the Ohorongo Cement (Pty). Ltd (Chambers of Mines of Namibia, 2022). According to the UN international trading database, Namibia exported USD 553.07 million worth of uranium to China in 2022 (Brandt, 2023).

China controls the whole uranium mining in Namibia to secure the uranium supply they need for their own nuclear industry amongst others. Chinese firms entered the uranium market in Namibia when the world market prices for uranium were high at that time and was suggested that it was not commercially viable to purchase uranium as the cost of uranium in Namibia was higher than the world market price. However, for the Chinese, the world market prices were not a decisive factor as their main aim

was to secure access to the uranium supply that they need to have to cater to their domestic market.

Also, West China Cement, a Chinese firm, made a bid to acquire a 69 percent stake in Namibia's Ohorongo Cement for approximately N$1.5 billion (USD 82,892,862.37) (Bank of Namibia, 2020). Most recently, China has commenced with mining of lithium in small town called Uis. Askari Metals, an ASX-listed lithium explorer, has signed a N$42 million (USD 2,318,462.73) deal with Zhejiang Huayou Cobalt Co., a Chinese battery metals giant. The agreement, which is subject to the completion of the Uis Acquisition Agreements and other conditions, will see Huayou receive 4.5 million shares at an issue price of 55 cents each (BoN, 2023). In 2022, Namibian exports such as meat, fish, and seafood preparations to China stood at US$678 million (Trading Economics, 2023). Sikongo Haihambo, the Executive Director of the Ministry of Industrialisation and Trade, disclosed that in 2022, trade between Namibia and China stood at N$ 22.1 billion (USD1,219,953,008.18), an increase of 28.1 percent in comparison to 2021 (Haihambo, 2023). Below are the export and import figures, highlighting the percentages of trade for 2019-2023.

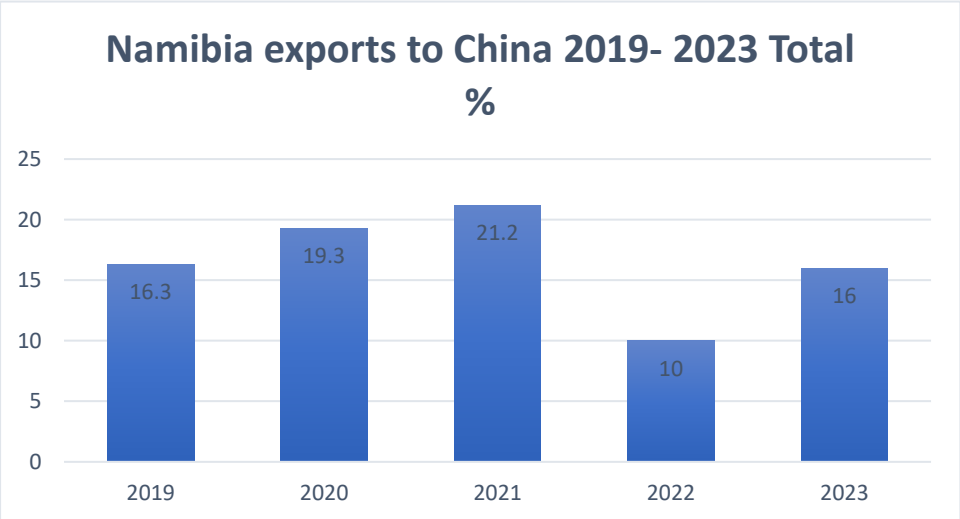


Figure 6: Namibia exports to China (2019-2023). Source: Bank of Namibia; Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA)

The Bank of Namibia annual reports from 2019 to 2023 reported that in 2019, exports to China stood at 16.3 percent of total exports consisting mainly of uranium oxide, an increase from 11.6 percent that was reported in 2018. Another sharp peak of 19.3 percent and 21.2 percent were reported in 2020 and 2021, respectively. A significant drop of 10 percent was recorded in 2022, and a moderate increase in exports in 2023 of 16 percent in the latest report (BoN, 2023). Haihambo (2023) added that electrical and electronic equipment, steel, iron, meat, and meat products formed part of the exports.

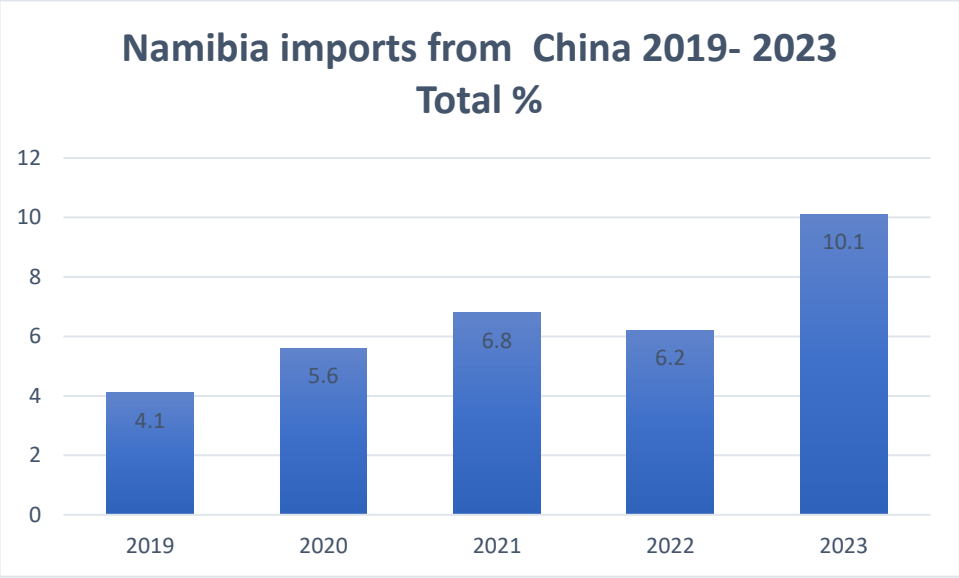


Figure 7: Namibia imports from China (2019-2023). Source: Bank of Namibia (BoN); Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA)

A decrease was recorded in China's share total imports in 2019, which stood at 4.1 percent compared to 6.6 percent in 2018 due to weak domestic demand for machinery and base metals (BoN, 2020). The BoN annual reports of 2020-2023 further reported that imports rose to 5.5 percent and 6.8 percent in 2020 and 2021, respectively. In 2022, a drop to 6.2 percent was highlighted and a sharp increase to 10.1 percent in 2023. Worth noting is that like the case with Botswana, South Africa continued to be

Namibia's main source of merchandise imports during the period that is recorded (BoN, 2023).

Poverty, inequality, and unemployment are also worthy of consideration. Inequality and unemployment have been on the rise and poverty has not reduced in both Botswana and Namibia. The two southern African states are not fully industrialised. The ties they have with the China have not aggressively impacted the industries of the two African nations since the 1970s and 1990s to address poverty, inequality, and unemployment. According to the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) of 2023, in 2021, 40.9 percent of the population in Namibia (1,034 thousand people) and 7.2 percent of the population in Botswana (446 thousand people) are multidimensionally poor (UNDP, 2023). The overall unemployment rate of Namibia stood at 36.9 percent in 2023 (highest in SADC), China stood at 5.1 percent (Trading Economics, 2023), while for Botswana it stood at 25.9 percent in the 3rd quarter of 2023 for persons 15 years old and above (Statistics Botswana, 2023). China on the other hand aims to industrialise and ensures that its foreign policy feeds its people out of poverty and essentially competes globally.

The mining and manufacturing industries are the two main sectors where Botswana and Namibia have a comparative advantage as they produce strategic minerals. The two states however do not have manufacturing Value Addition Plants for these minerals. The two states, like many African states, aim to actively pursue FDIs as one of the enablers to meet the objectives of industrial policies. These visions have however not been realised and Africa has not benefited from these investments, particularly those from China. Botswana's stern policy formulation and implementation has counted to their advantage in this regard, while Namibia remains to fall back behind because of the controversies around the agreements that are signed.

President Pohamba was quoted as saying 'firms should desist from importing labourers to perform unskilled work' and added that employers who do not comply with Namibian laws must be called to order (Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), 2012).

6.4 Change in Political leadership and governance: Botswana and Namibia

From a political perspective, the relations China has with some of the African political parties are historically rooted and as a result change in political leadership and governance does not affect the nature of the relations as African leaders are compelled to engage with China. This is the case with Sino-Namibia ties. However, where there is no historical background between the political parties and China, political leadership change may likely influence the kind of engagement. In the case of Namibia, since the relations started at the party level, it is not an isolated government position because the party president becomes the president of the government. It is difficult to detach the two. In the case of Botswana, the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) and CPC do not have a strong party-to-party -relations and are focused more on a government-to-government relations. Therefore, it would depend on the foreign policy doctrine of the state. Botswana is rated as a democracy, but some scholars highlight shortcomings as some marginalised groups have little say within a somewhat peculiar democracy, described by a theorist as a country whose politics borders on authoritarian liberalism (Edge & Lekorwe, 1998). Edge and Lekorwe (1998) further pointed out that Botswana is bound to balance its foreign policy with survival as a democracy and for economic development. They added that foreign policy may adapt to changing circumstances in the future.

Moreover, foreign policy posture and personalities of individuals in position vary. Jensen (1982, p.13 as cited in Smith, 2012) is of the view that individuals make decision and not states because the role of personality in foreign policy encompasses

cognitive processes, background, personal characteristics, motives, beliefs and supposes that decision making is the result of individual 'human agency'. For instance, during the period of President Ian Khama's administration, there were two different ministers of foreign affairs at different stages. Relations between a president and his/her foreign minister is of great significance. In events such as the Dalai Lama incident as discussed earlier, the Chinese government through the Embassy in Gaborone was quoted as saying that 'the Chinese side has made clear through the diplomatic channel that Dalai Lama is the head of a well-organized political group who has long been engaging in anti-China separatist activities with the attempt to split Tibet from China' (Powell, 2017). Therefore, permitting the Dalai Lama's visit is an act of providing a stage for him to carry out anti-China separatist activities, which is an unfriendly behaviour of apparently interfering with China's internal affairs' (Powell, 2017).

Despite this, the Sino-Botswana relations remain strong and progressive as relations between states go beyond individuals. The state remains while individuals in office change. Wang (2021) reported that China and Botswana signed an agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation and the Extradition Treaty which highlights the comprehensive cooperation at a whole new level. China and Namibia however do not have an extradition treaty. It is observed that there has been a smooth transition in the relations since its formation and Namibia has remained one of the states that openly support the one -China policy. Institutionalisation of power intends to move away from clientelist, non-transparent decision-making of 'Big men rulers' in Africa's presidentialism and neo-patrimonialism (Tull & Simons, 2017). Although change in political leadership and governance has been ongoing in Botswana, Namibia, and China, governance and power have remained institutionalised and are guided by

principles regardless of the individuals' personalities and dissimilar foreign policy postures.

Despite reports as such by Carrai (2021) and Greiger (2021 as cited in Monyae, 2023) that China's one-stop-shop financing model in which the creditor, insurer, and contractor are all Chinese is marked by lack of transparency. Due diligence in assessing the economic, environmental, and social risks involved, the whole package remains attractive to many governments, which is expressed as an economic conditionality in China's finance model by Shinn (2019).

6.5 Developmental state behaviour: Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibia ties

Scholars such as Mkandawire (2001) defined developmental states as "social constructs" by various role-players in a certain society, namely the political elite, industrial elite, and civil society. Social Constructivists view the world as a project under construction, as becoming rather than being (Erbas, 2022). States such as China, Namibia, and Botswana continuously face developmental changes, both politically and economically as their interests and identities also change. While there is no clear definition of what a developmental state is, Gumede (2019) lists a few features or dimensions a developmental state has: ideological (the role of the state versus market forces), institutional (state autonomy and capacity), cultural (collectivism versus individualism), and lastly, socio-economic attributes (economic growth, industrialisation, improving local economies). A vital feature of a developmental state is economic development as a priority in state policy. The government plays a pivotal role in meeting the economic interest of a state and to be developmental in its thinking and when executing. This mainly includes the formulation and implementation of industrial policies and other effective instruments to advance both economic and social development. Amupanda (2016) wrote that despite the historical relations and

platforms such as FOCAC, many African states failed to copy China's successful trajectory from a colony to a successful developmental state and world economic powerhouse'. Ng, Preston, Boot and Jardine-Smith (2008) wrote that profits and investment depend on decisions made in the state and that there is extensive discourse on 'developmentalism', the essential requirement of industrialisation and of state intervention to promote it.

From a constructivist viewpoint, Grad and Rojo (2008) noted that every identity is established by social interaction and open to challenges and reconciliations. The question of the extent to which the governments of these states are involved in dictating the economic development of their states remains relevant. Also, worth noting is that a successful economic growth of a state is not necessarily because of it being a developmental state as there are success stories of states are prospering economically but are not regarded as developmental states. Gumede (2017) noted that though there are some states in Africa that can be regarded as re-emerging developmental states, there is still a long way in having robust developmental states in Africa.

Gumede (2017) describes a democratic developmental state as a "state that pursues higher levels of socio-economic development, in a participatory manner, guided by a robust long-term plan and that the state has the requisite capacity, the elite is developmental in its approach influenced by a developmental ideology, and the state is appropriately organised for predetermined goals".

Botswana and Namibia are both democracies. Democracy in Botswana and Namibia entails consensus, and the opinion of the people matters, particularly on issues of economic development and overall governance proceedings. In this case, government

influence remains somewhat assertive in key economic sectors to continue to drive the economy, in some governments more than others.

The question of whether Botswana and Namibia are democratic developmental states remains relevant for this study. The magnitude of state intervention in developmental advancements for these two southern African states vary to a greater degree. Some of the findings from this study suggest that both Namibia and Botswana are both Democratic developmental states. Gumede (n.d.) wrote that from a state that was "incredibly underdeveloped" at independence in 1966, as written by Taylor (2002, p.7), Botswana is very often cited as a case of an African developmental state owing to its impressive economic growth, relatively low levels of corruption and crime, political stability, and efficient public bureaucracy. The Botswana government plays a pivotal role in the mining sector, particularly diamonds, the key driver of the economy. Nagra (2020) added that the Botswana economy is a combination of the free market and the command economy, with the government applying direct control over certain parts of the economy.

Hill (2003) described national interest as a concept that speaks on the interest that serves the public good and is of a collective worry. Namibians need to understand what the national interest of Namibia is as 'your national interests should speak to your economic benefits'. Namibia has not collectively and commonly defined what its interest is as a country. Mushelenga (2017) noted that Namibia's policy documents speak on the concept of 'national interest', however, neither the policy documents nor the statements made by national leaders provide a clear definition and clarification of this concept. The Chinese on the other hand are organised because everything comes from the CPC, they discuss at the party level and then take it to the government level.

Mushelenga (2017) added that 'Namibia is a small state and accordingly power cannot determine her interests'.

When foreign companies mine in Namibia, the Namibian government does not have to put down money to own the natural resources because they should be the equity of the state.

6.6 Neo-colonialism and China's presence in Botswana and Namibia

Wenping (2007) disclosed that it is common for Western media and scholars to attribute the development of China-Africa relationship mainly to the Chinese demand for resources, in particular, energy resources. This has led to numerous accusations of China neo-colonising African states. Botswana exports diamonds, copper, large construction vehicles, amongst others to China (OEC World, 2022) while Namibia exports diamonds, beef, uranium, fish, raw copper, and zinc ore. China on the other hand exports electrical and electronic machinery, textiles, clothing, agricultural products, footwear, chemicals (Britannica, n.d.). China has a trade surplus, and the two southern African states have a trade deficit. The perception of China as a neo-colonial state because China enjoys a trade surplus with all other states is not convincing in Africa. It is not sufficient to conclude that China's trade surplus in Africa in general, and Botswana and Namibia specifically, make it a neo-colonial state. This conclusion is supported by constructivism in which the relations of the states are not based on the absolute value of benefits.

Although one state might lose on trade relations, it might gain in other aspects where its comparative advantage lies and therefore there are mutual benefits in the relations. In constructivism, the states remain in mutually beneficial relations and tend to respect each other. The trade relations that the two southern African states have with China are in line with their developmental objectives. Namibia's Vision 2030, NDP5 and

Botswana's Vision 2036 and NDP11 point to enhancing and expanding trade relations with states such as China amongst others. Therefore, they do not regard their relations with China as neo-colonialism. African states also have trade deficits with other Western states.

Hengari (2011) wrote that China's involvement in the Namibian economy has resulted to a subject of debate among ordinary citizens and the business community who are becoming increasingly unhappy with the Chinese presence in the state. For instance, there have been reports on protests by local nationals about Chinese employers violating minimum labour standards and the government was with very few acceptances, very reluctant to take a stance. Another aspect to investigate is the establishment of FOCAC (formed 10 October 2000) and the influence it has on the presence of China in Africa. Having grown in scale and scope, FOCAC is comprised of 53 African states, except for Eswatini as they remain engaged in diplomatic relations with Taiwan. The Forum creates a platform for member states to dissect on matters of mutual benefit in areas such as political cooperation, international solidarity, peace and security, media cooperation, development finance, and infrastructure (Monyae, 2023). After the establishment of FOCAC, China introduced the China Africa Development Fund (CAD Fund), the first of funds to be established for the relations with US$10 billion capitalised by China Development Bank (CDB) (Larsen, Voituriez & Nedopil, 2023).

Forty percent of the fund's investments are in mining and other key sectors such as manufacturing, telecommunications, and agriculture (Li, 2020). Key projects include a uranium mine in Namibia, a coal-fired power plant in Ghana, and SEZs in Egypt and Nigeria amongst others (Larsen, Voituriez & Nedopil, 2023). Forums such as FOCAC create a dynamic platform where ideas and interests are shared and where norms and

values are instilled through strategic dialogues. This is of great importance to African states such as Botswana and Namibia as they demonstrate their unified agency. In terms international solidarity, this platform is vital for China because of its need for African states including Namibia and Botswana to a certain extend exhibit support at international institutions, particularly on the UN resolutions.

Although FOCAC visualises a "win-win" tie through equal consultation, improving understanding and expanding consensus, strengthening friendship, and promoting cooperation (FOCAC, 2018) it has been observed that discussions that have been taking place at FOCAC gatherings are mainly around what China thinks is beneficial for Africa, and not necessarily what Africa believes is in their best interest as consultations are not fully carried out, creating an issue of balance of power. Jakobowski, (2018) alluded that there has been an asymmetric balance of power that decisively favours China in the FOCAC framework. Monyae (2023) concurred that the proneness toward Sino-centrism, weak institutionalisation, and lack of accountability amongst others have become problematic for FOCAC. Jakobowski (2018) also added that it is observed that nearly all initiatives in FOCAC and its sub-forums are started in Beijing and adopted after consulting African states. Alden and Alves (2017) mentioned that FOCAC gatherings are financed by China with no contributions from the African side.

China's economy is over five times as large as Africa's economy. This economic asymmetry ensures that China's interests take precedence over African interests in the FOCAC processes (Shinn, 2019). Sun (2015 as cited in Monyae, 2023) stated that as a result, Africa's primary interests, including agricultural development, structural reforms, and capacity building, play second fiddle to China's priorities. While maintaining the narrative that Africa's development is the key objective of China-

Africa cooperation as promoted by Chinese scholars, developments happen in Chinese interest as a motivating factor too (Li et al., 2012 p. 57 as cited in Melber, 2013). Melber (2013, p.440) added that "The nature of trade between China and Africa lacks any alternative to other exchange relations with external players. It continues to reproduce a classical skewed pattern: raw materials on the one side (Africa), in exchange for (value-added) manufactured products on the other (China)".

The nature of China's presence in Africa in general, and Botswana and Namibia in particular, could also be regarded as international neo-patrimonialism. Mkandawire (2015) highlighted that neo-patrimonialism is held accountable for 'trade policies, hyperinflation, economic stagnation, low investment in infrastructure, urban bias, and ultimately, the lack of economic development in Africa'. Van Wyk (2007) added that African politics and political organisations do not conform to the notion of the predominant institutionalised Western-type state system and a performance-based understanding of leaders and the state. As African politics continue to be patrimonial, power is centred around one individual applying it for his self-interest and loyal supporters are rewarded and selectively favoured (Good, 2005; Van Wyk, 2007). Tull and Simons (2017) wrote that in systems such, formal political institutions were insignificant, as rulers had the flexible power to ignore or override formal institutions and laws, turning government into a highly personalised tool, guided by the interests and whims of the ruler and his entourage.

Also, aspiring parliamentary candidates such as Motlhaleemang Moalosi claimed that the Chinese bring more harm than good to local businesses. He told Al Jazeera that 'they have killed local contractors by offering cheap prices for sub-standard work, (Ndlovu, 2014). This was about the controversial Morupule B power plant which was faced with delays in completion due to mismanagement by the CNEEC. The

Chairperson of the Botswana-Chinese General Chamber of Commerce (BCGCC), Ben Liu, however dismissed these claims and stated that Chinese businesses were all being decorated with the same brush by local critics and added that 'All Chinese contractors have been pigeon-holed into one category and the result is that the delay of the Morupule B project has been attributed to 'Chinese contractors' and not the Chinese contractor that is doing the job'(Ndlovu, 2014).

However, this study has established a few neglects of these accusations. China has only become an energy importer since 1993, yet the Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibia relations have been developing greatly since the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949. Furthermore, China's interaction with Botswana and Namibia, both past and present, is not limited only to natural resources. The two states also benefit from China's policy efforts, including debt reduction, low or zero-tariff trade agreements, and aid. China's African policy transcends a mere quest for resources (Wenping, 2007, p. 24).

Worth noting is that Botswana and Namibia owe the West and their private more than they owe China. Debt Justice Organisation (2022) reported that about 12 percent of the African government's external debt is owed to China, while 35 percent is owed to multilateral institutions such as the IMF, WB, and private creditors who are mostly dominated by the Western powerful states. Additionally, the average interest rate that are being offered by the West (5 percent) on private sector loans is more than China's public and private lenders which is 2.7 percent (Debt Justice Organisation, 2022).

Below are figures which indicate the figures Botswana and Namibia owe China.

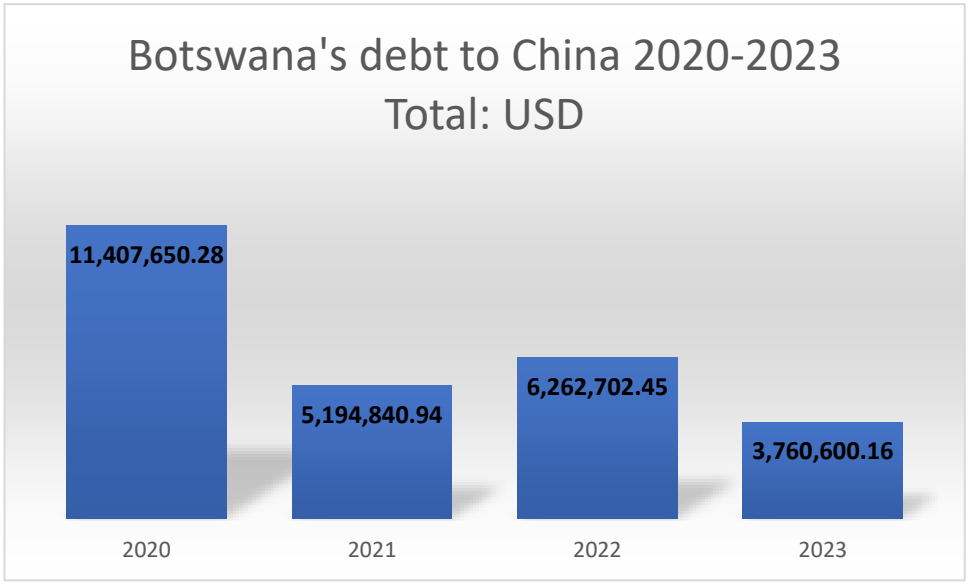


Figure 8: Botswana's debt to China (2020-2023). Source: CEIC Data; Bank of Botswana

On the day of conversion from Botswana Pula to USD, Botswana's outstanding debt to China stood at USD 11,292,788.35 (P153.190 million) in 2020. A significant decrease was reported in 2021 of P69.760 million. The following year recorded a noticeable increase to USD 5,142,534.86 in 2022 and then reduced to USD 3,693,248.23 in 2023 (Bank of Botswana, 2023.p. 140).

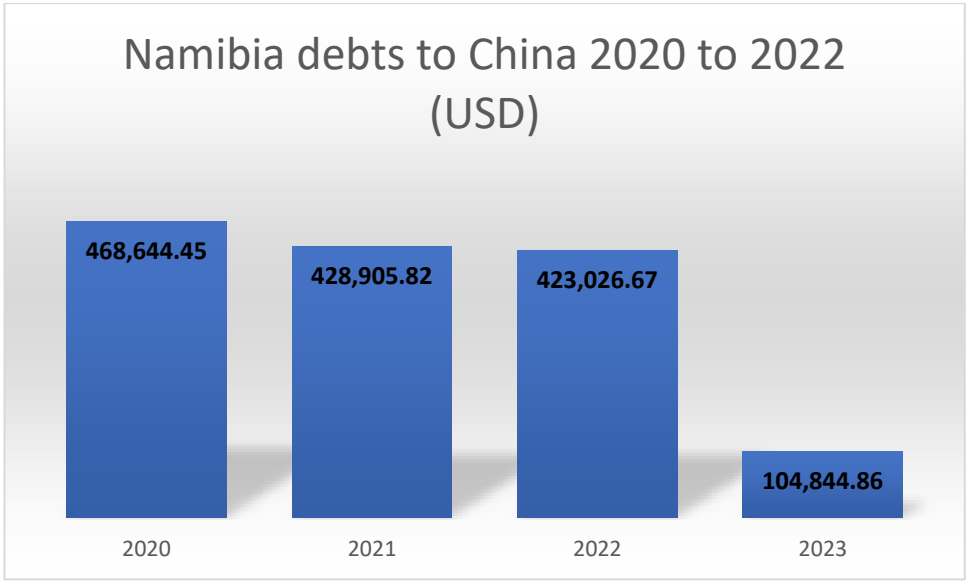


Figure 9: Namibia's debt to China (2020-2023). Source: Bank of Namibia

On the day of conversion from Namibian Dollars to USD, Namibia owed China USD468,644.45 in 2020, thereafter witnessing a noticing drop the following years to USD428,905.82 and USD423,026.67 in 2021 and 2022 respectively. In the first quarter of 2023, the debt stood at USD104, 844.86. Chinese loans continue to play a significant role in the socio-economic development of both Botswana and Namibia. Findings of this study has shown that indeed, the Namibian government owes China less than the Botswana government.

The figures that indicate how much Namibia and Botswana owe China in comparison to other key states.

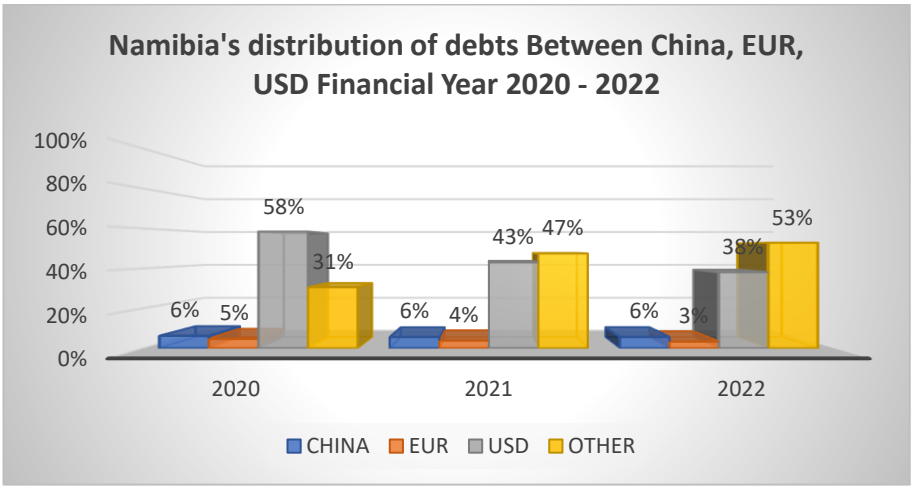


Figure 10: Namibia's distribution of debts Between China, EUR, USD Financial Year 2020 – 2022.Source: Bank of Namibia

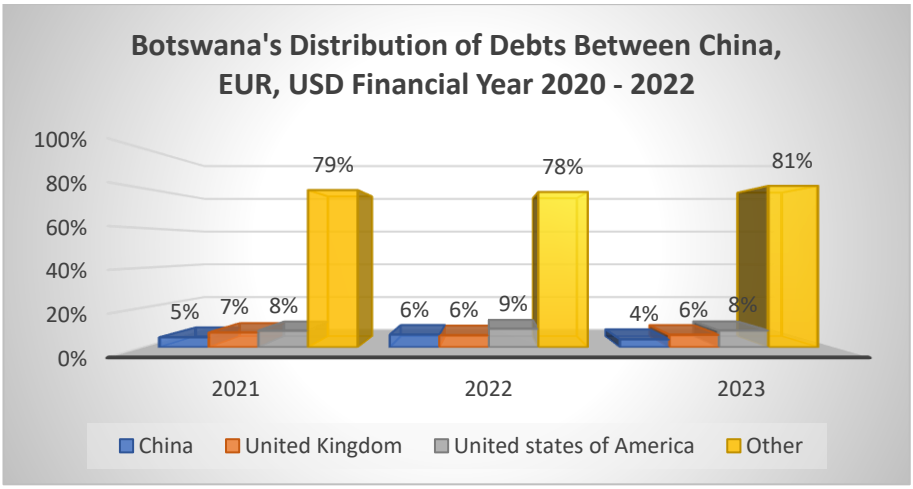


Figure 11: Botswana's Distribution of Debts Between China, EUR, USD Financial Year 2020 – 2022. Source: Bank of Botswana

During the reported years, Namibia and Botswana owed China less than what it owed the UK and the USA. States indicated as 'others' include Angola, Botswana, Brazil, Greece, Mauritius, Namibia, Japan, and South Africa amongst others. While some scholars argue that China is not neo-colonising Africa, pointing out that the Western states and think tanks have on various occasions accused China of promoting debt-trap diplomacy, opposing scholars are of the view that the West have been practising debt-trap diplomacy through institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank. The amounts that Botswana and Namibia owe China are less than what they owe Western states, institutions, and Western private creditors.

Regarding government debt, European and other western states remain the highest lenders to Africa despite what has been insinuated that the Chinese lend huge amounts to African states and are now labelled as promoting debt trap diplomacy. Namibia's mining sector for instance, however, remains in the control of foreign companies, mainly from the western world as 22 out of the 26 mines are operated by foreign nationals that are not Chinese. This, in comparison to the industries of Botswana, the government plays the key role, particularly in the mining sector.

The way China operates in Botswana and Namibia is slightly different from how the colonisers operate. When Britain, Germany, and other colonisers came to Africa, they imposed themselves, whereas China's approach was different. China provides financial support to Botswana and Namibia and the relations have been for long-term strategic goals. There are however visible neo-colonial patterns that China seems to practice in African states.

Constructivism as a theory applied in this study has allowed for the national interests and identities of each of these states to be magnified. Whenever a state gets involved in bilateral or multilateral relations, they share norms and ideas with other states which essentially strengthens the relations and develops onto further interests as each state determines its foreign policy agenda. Chinese modernisation is deeply rooted in the country's historical practices (cultures) and ideologies. Today, China rose from an impoverished nation to the second largest economy in the world as well as the largest manufacturer. Modernisation is a common cause for all states and there is no fixed model, or formula of a one-size-fits all solution to the process of modernisation. Botswana and Namibia can both draw lessons from China and the way it runs its current affairs as a developmental state.

Amupanda (2016) wrote that even though China is the world's second-largest economy, like African states, it remains a developing economy. This is because 'it's per capita income is still a fraction of those of in advanced states and its market reforms are incomplete. Official data shows that about 98.99 million people still lived below the national poverty line of RMB 2,300 per year at the end of 2012, with the second largest number of poor people in the world after India, poverty reduction remains a fundamental challenge" (World Bank 2015 as cited in Amupanda, 2016). Namibia and Botswana should own the characteristics that make them unique states. These states

should find solutions to their economic problems based on their own characteristics and consider the local context of affairs of their nations (Amupanda, 2016).

To further demystify Africa's position in the global front and the need to prosper, African states need to investigate resource nationalism that other states also have as well as the soft aspects of governance like the experiences of the Nordic states. They managed to establish something which brought them through to democratic governance, to being the top industrialised, technologically most advanced states in the world. These states started off with wood (forest) and agriculture (Denmark) to drive their economies, where they built a social contract between the government, capitalism, and the labour force, facilitated by a civil service that saw the idea of serving the best interest of the people.

During a public seminar on 'Chinese Governance Reforms: Lessons for Namibia' which was held in Windhoek on 19 June 2023, the Vice-President of the Chinese People's Institute of Foreign Affairs (CPIFA), Ambassador Li Jie, noted that the CPC has led China to a successful, bright, and optimistic path to modernisation. Ambassador Li added that for states to mechanically follow foreign modernisation techniques would be counterproductive. Therefore, each state including Namibia and Botswana should have their techniques and ensure that during modernisation the rich should not become richer, and the poor become poorer. However, in terms of regional integration, African states can learn a lot from China's domestic policies and emulate their well-thought- out investment and infrastructure.

China's modernisation techniques offer solutions to numerous challenges faced by developing states. With pointers borrowed from the Chinese model, African states need to deliberate and make their own decisions. From constructivist perspectives of

identity and interests, independence is the first vital element for development. Developing states need to cherish the concept of being independent and ensure that it is rooted in their culture and choosing their own path. They need to be independent in terms of policies and decision-making. Also, there should be mechanisms of cultural encouragement and development in place. Ambassador Li highlighted that the cure to Chinese problems depend on their own awareness of the problems and the valuable route they choose to address these problems. He emphasised those economic instructions for reform and domestic and friendly recommendations from the outside for example from states like Russia are equally important. Secondly, states should put the nation's people first as this is a common practice for prosperity to all. Economic development models should not only serve the interest of a few. Equality in development and putting the needs of the people first create social stability that is eternal. Thirdly, Ambassador Li emphasised openness and inclusiveness and worked hard in unity. Ethical values encourage people to work hard, and China's success proves that working in disunity bares fruitless outcomes. The Chinese believe that efficiency is life and time is money. Ambassador Li stressed that "…Namibia should obtain its unique path to modernisation and also note that Modernisation is not equal to westernisation…".

At the same public seminar, Ms. Liu Haifeng, the Director of the Centre of African Studies, and Associate Professor in the School of International Studies at Peking University, noted that China is still considered as a developing state although many like to believe otherwise. For economic development, states need to have a strong government and an efficient market, Ms Liu submitted that developing states like those in Africa have a comparative and 'late comer' advantage as industries have the lowest factor cost of production in the world. She gave examples of Prof. Justin Lin's

Industrial Policy as well as case studies of Ethiopia (Huajian Shoes) and Rwanda (C&H Garments). These are seen as quick wins for both these states and their economies. Developing states need to be cognisant of the fact that there must be constant reform. There must be strong measures in place to overcome corruption and to reward those that work hard.

According to Onuf (1989), cited in Behravesh (2011), the social world is the making of the people, powerful actors, and influential leaders who continually shape the nature of international relations through interaction and actions made. The theory of Constructivism revolves around socially constructed identities, interests, ideas, and norms of individuals, groups, and states (Grieco, Ikenberry & Mastanduno, 2015). Ontological assumptions suggest that these interests are shaped by identities of various actors and the way they see themselves, resulting to changes in national interests within the international politics sphere. Grieco et al (2015) added that identities are cast by factors such as culture, religion, science, and lastly, normative beliefs, but that constructivists do not fully markdown the role of the material setting of individuals in shaping their identities. They further wrote that elite persons in both society and state are seen as vital actors as their ideas and identities shape the way states and groups behave within the international system (Grieco, Ikenberry & Mastanduno, 2015). Gros and Fung (2019) identified one key idea of constructivism that while visibly influenced by the environment (structure), humans are not captive of it. Focusing on similar traits between humans and state behaviour, Wendt (1992) wrote "People act towards objects including other actors, based on the meanings that the objects have for them". This shows that humans (state actors) have choices, be it selfish, cooperative, or otherwise in the anarchic world we live in. Constructivism does not view the world and words as independent, but instead sees them as mutually constitutive (Onuf, 1989). It is based

on the nature of reality as well as that of knowledge as it includes the effects of ideas and beliefs on international politics, and reality is seen to be always under construction allowing for change.

The above goes hand in hand with modern bilateral relations which are aimed at expanding global markets, strengthening diplomatic relations, and building mutual support at international level. Scholars such as Ted Hopf highlights how constructivism offers substitute understandings on various themes. These themes include "the meaning of anarchy and balance of power, the relationship between state identity and interest, an elaboration of power, and the prospects for change in world politics" (Hopt, 1998).

6.7 Summary

Constructivism promotes stable and peaceful foreign relations. The discussions made in this chapter demonstrated that through constructivism, ideas, norms, values, interests, and identities are created and constructed. It explained how states understand and deal with certain situations they are faced with. The guiding principles and extent of action taken in foreign policy implementation for each government are contrasting for Botswana and Namibia. The fact that Botswana is stern on abiding to the principles regardless of the state it interacts with and explicitly communicate what it believes is ideal for the people of Botswana in terms of development. The Botswana government tends to hold a firm position on global issues, demonstrating her beliefs and stances on certain issues. Such practices have gained Botswana a more respected position on the international front.

From Namibia's side, the focus is mainly on the historical political linkage at the expense of the economic benefits for the country when engaging with China. The 'forever indebted' notion affects the economic negotiations for Namibia. Namibia's

public finance is not maintained properly compared to Botswana. Change in political leadership and governance does not entirely influence the nature of relations China has with Botswana and Namibia as power and governance is fully institutionalised and the foreign policy and principles of a state remain the guiding mechanisms in state interaction. Foreign policy posture on the other hand is what brings the change in interactions and dictates the outcomes of these engagements. A state can put measures in place to ensure absolute economic gains, even to the extent of amending the constitution. Also, the continent needs to get rid of megalomaniac leaders. 'Power corrupts but absolute power corrupts absolutely' - John Dalberg-Acton. Leaders should not stay in power for too long.

In terms of the developmental state concept, the political and economic systems of Botswana, Namibia, and China come with varying features. In the case of China, as an authoritarian developmental state, the government has full control over the decision-making processes for the economy of the state. Botswana and Namibia do not have the same capacity as China to lead in the same way and that could be the cause of the two African states failing to emulate China's path to economic emancipation. To achieve high-quality development, developing states such as Botswana and Namibia need to establish their own distinction between political relations and economic relations when formulating foreign policies. This distinction will help them negotiate better economic development deals without feeling forever indebted to the Chinese for their aid during the liberation struggle. The Namibian government should incorporate CSR and investment into communities to form part of its mining policy. The researcher is immersed in the findings of an assessment of perceptions about the concept of neo-colonialism and China's presence in Botswana and Namibia. The systematic ignorance of some African leaders has costed the continent ownership and control of most of its

natural resources. Final analyses show that there is indeed room for more benefits for the southern African nations under study through the relations, provided their economic agendas are explicit and they clearly establish their national interest.

CHAPTER SEVEN

EVALUATION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

This study centred on the nature of China's relations with African states with specific reference to Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibian relations. The study was approached from constructivist perspective and within the context of a developmental state.

National identities and national interests are regarded as fluid and of an imposing nature. China's global relations with various states, both big and small, have gained prominence as the Asian powerhouse has been securing natural resources and strengthening its economy to meet the needs of its huge population. Its loyalty towards socialism with Chinese characteristics as well as the people-centric governance approach is worth noting. The epistemological findings in this study provide an alternative to better understand the relations China has with Botswana and Namibia, by seeking additional information about the case studies by applying the tenets of constructivism. The theoretical contributions introduce diverse factors that shape the relations under study. The tenets of constructivism such as interests, norms, identity, values, and others are incorporated to analyse the findings of this study. They provide a scope to better apply and understand the study as it explained. The current state of knowledge is comprehended because of state interaction.

This chapter aims to indicate how the research objectives of this study were addressed by explicating the relationship China has with Botswana and Namibia. In the previous chapter, a discussion from a comparative perspective of the Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibia relations was carried out in fulfilment of the four research objectives. This chapter presents the summary of previous chapters, an evaluation of research objectives, and highlights the study's contribution to the body of knowledge. It further

provides practical and policy recommendations to be implemented where relevant and identifies areas for further research. Lastly, the chapter concludes by summarising the political and economic relation similarities and dissimilarities from a developmental state discourse amongst three case studies, including change in political leadership and governance and to the perceptions of neo-colonialism and China's presence in Botswana and Namibia.

7.2 Summary of Chapters

The study sought to analyse the nature of relations China has with African states, with specific focus on the Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibia relations as case studies. Chapter One provided the orientation and the background of the study. It encompassed the research background to the study, the problem statement, research objectives, the significance of the study, limitations, delimitations as well as the structure of the study. This chapter provided a brief historical background of the study and highlighted other themes that are of great significance to the study. These themes include the BRI and Sino-Africa relations, as well as Africa's security dilemma and China's economic development.

In the second chapter, the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study were discussed and analysed. Core tenets of the theory of constructivism and its application to the ties China has with Botswana and Namibia were explained. The theory places great emphasis on how history, political culture, domestic debates, and type of government shape the foreign policy of these states. Further discussions included a review of literature on norms, national identities, interests, and ideas that are applied to best describe the nature of ties China has with Botswana and Namibia. States interact with other states through bilateral or multilateral means to pursue their national interests.

Chapter Two further examined the agency of Namibia and Botswana regarding change in political leadership and governance, and how this change influences the economic and political aspects of the Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibia relations. It is imperative to discuss how Botswana and Namibia as specific references influence both continental and international politics instead of simply being passive targets or victims of others' actions. Developmental state discourse is also shown to share some similarities and dissimilarities of the selected case studies. In a democratic developmental state, the local nationals enjoy extensive rights which are protected as they choose their rulers who will govern them. Capitalist activities for economic advancement are freely played out. A literature review on perceptions on neo-colonialism and China-Africa relations was discussed. China's desire for vast amounts of natural resources to cater for its fast-growing population has attracted negative criticism, especially from the Western world. Accusations of debt trap diplomacy continue to grow at a fast pace. Diverse views on what is known by some as a 'win-win economic cooperation' are greatly discussed.

Chapter Three provided an overview of the selected research methodological approaches. The chapter covered research design, research methodology (qualitative research method, the target population and sampling procedures, instruments applied to collect data, procedures to collect, research paradigms, research units, qualitative data analysis and lastly ethical considerations and consent for conducting the research. Research methodological limitations encountered during the research and how these issues were mitigated were explained. Qualitative research method assists in collecting comprehensive data, particular for the nature of this study. This inductive approach aids the study in providing a greater understanding of how key research participants view the Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibia relations.

Chapter Four covered data relating to Sino-Botswana. Interview results were presented by comparing responses relating to various political and economic factors which influence the nature of Sino-Botswana relations in the context of developmental state discourse from a constructivist theoretical perspective. This chapter also highlighted and discussed the influence that change in political leadership and governance has on the relations Botswana has with China. In this discussion, elements of poverty, unemployment and inequality were highlighted. Since China's economic reform, millions of people have been taken out of poverty, while the figures of poverty, unemployment and inequality continue to grow in Botswana. Finally, neo-colonialism and China's presence in Botswana were discussed.

Chapter Five was centred around conceptual issues from the data collected on the Sino-Namibia relations. Since their historical union, Namibia and China have developed unique national identities with explicit national interests discovered through knowledge sharing and in-depth engagements. Ongoing party-to-party engagements between SWAPO and the CPC continue to strengthen the ties between the two states. High- level visits on the government level continue to take place. The chapter also covered aspects of change in political leadership and governance and how it influences the Sino-Namibia ties. Lastly, China's presence in Namibia and neo-colonialism are discussed.

Chapter Six presented discussions and analysis of the comparative findings of the study, fulfilling the first three research objectives. In fulfilment of the fourth research objective, this chapter focused on neo-colonialism and China's presence in Botswana and Namibia. Perceptions of Africa's neo-colonial state comes from so many relations China has with African states in general. As highlighted in this study, China has numerous trade items with Botswana and Namibia, however, trade figures have

indicated that China has trade surplus and Botswana and Namibia have trade deficits. As a result of these, many scholars view that the economic relations are asymmetrical. It is however noteworthy that national interests of every state vary as China also has trade relations with other states such as the USA, EU states, and so on.

7.3 Contribution to the existing body of knowledge

This section evaluates the four research objectives and aims to improve the theoretical understanding by adding new insights to the existing body of knowledge. The study presents a fresh approach and new findings to the nature of relations of great powers such as China with small states, particularly in the southern African region, Botswana, and Namibia. It demonstrates how the application of the constructivist theory best explains the relations in comparison to the existing traditional theories.

Main Research Objective One:

- To compare and contrast various economic and political components of Sino-Namibia and Sino-Botswana relations in the context of developmental state discourse from a constructivist theoretical perspective.

The relations between China and Botswana have produced several benefits as well as downsides for Botswana. The same goes for Namibia. The discussion from this study shows that while China is very clear about its economic interest in Namibia and how it wants to achieve it, Namibia appears to be more interested in maintaining historical ties with China rather than benefitting greatly from the economic content, which is more skewed to China. China is more interested in driving its economic interest agenda in Namibia than singing praises of history. China is very clear about its national interests and how it wants to advance in Namibia while Namibia is yet to explicitly define its economic relationship with China, except for the support during the

liberation struggle. China even went to an extent of bringing its former President to Namibia, while none of the presidents ever visited Botswana. However, evidence presented in this study also shows that Namibia has not only benefitted from presidential visits alone. As alluded in Chapter 6, there have been socio-economic benefits such as the reconstruction of roads and many other projects. Despite this, Namibia could benefit more from the relations.

From an economic perspective, economic diplomacy encouraged in the Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibia relations involves overall prudently targeted investments, trade, and aid promotion despite the disparities. Namibia and Botswana deeply emphasise on the trade agreements that result to sustainable industrialisation as there is a need for productive transformation in numerous strategic sectors such as agriculture, mining as well as energy. This essentially promotes a sustainable path to inclusive growth and development catering to the dilemma of skyrocketing unemployment rate, economic inequality and to alleviate poverty in the two southern African states, especially for Namibia as the rates are higher compared to that of Botswana.

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that Botswana and Namibia have their plans, policies and strategies in place. However, the implementation and execution of plans and programmes to a large degree has been challenging for both states, more for Namibia than Botswana. Foreign ownership and control of key sectors remain high in Namibia than Botswana. For instance, while the second-hand clothes being sold in advanced states are manufactured there, the ones sold in Botswana and Namibia are imported mainly from China. Also, the Chinese incursion into the informal/semi-informal sector of retail has negatively impacted local retail businesses

in the country. South Africa dominates the bigger chunk of the industry as biggest shops are owned by South African entities.

In terms of the mining industry, having certain aspects and ratifications to international law regarding ownership of natural resources, the structures do not favour many African states. For instance, both Botswana and Namibia have 50/50 percent shares with De Beers in the diamond sector. However, in the other mining companies, the shares are little to none in some cases, particularly for Namibia. In dealing with China and other foreign mining entities, the conditions should also be 50/50. This also means that Namibia should also provide equal funding for the development in terms expertise, marketing, and technology amongst others.

The empirical context from this study reveals that in comparing Botswana and Namibia and which benefit more from their relations with China, findings from this study indicate that Botswana benefits more as it does with any other foreign relations mainly because of their strong policy implementation strategy and income revenue spending strategies compared to Namibia's implementation policy and revenue spending. For instance, since Botswana has protective policies such as not owing more than 40 percent of the GDP in debts, its foreign debt generally remains low. The fact that the Botswana government aggressively explores all options and selects the one with the best terms and conditions in terms of procurement, allows it to get the best out of the agreements it signed with China.

In this study, these states have different identities, where two are small, developing and democratic (Botswana and Namibia) the other is big, developing, technologically advanced and communist in political orientation and practice (China). However, their interests converse in the believe in peaceful co-existence, bilateralism and

multilateralism as relating to approaches. These states dwell in the believe in anarchy and all of them consider the international system as what we make of it.

Moreover, in a developmental state, the government is required to perform an active role in protecting and controlling the national economic interest, despite the roles of external actors, both local and global. Although the governments of Botswana and Namibia play a vital role in the economic developmental agenda of the two states, findings have shown that there is still a long way to go for the two states to be inducted as developmental states as the two states do not have the full capacity to be in control to pursue their development objectives.

Infrastructure development is fundamental to any government's long-term economic development plans. Chinese construction work faces a lot of allegations about the quality of work and using substandard Chinese products in both Namibia and Botswana, despite the Chinese contributing greatly to the infrastructure development of the two states. Both southern African states under study have created a reasonably conducive environment for FDI as well as active participation of the private sector and civil society. Botswana's governments intervention and influence in national economic activities, mainly in the key industries of the state is much stronger than the Namibian government. The Botswana government continues to play a huge role in safeguarding the diamonds, its tourism sector as well as the livestock industry. The conclusion that the Botswana government's influence and intervention in key industries are much stronger than Namibia's is based upon the fact that for Namibia, the natural resources, particularly in the mining sector, which is one of the key sectors in the economy remains under the control of foreign companies. Most if not all the uranium mines are administered by Chinese businesses, while the rest such as gold, copper, and zinc are dominated by Western companies amongst others. In the case of

Botswana, the Chinese have no share in the diamond industry and sectors like agriculture is dominated by other players. The Chinese government continues to demonstrate strong state intervention in the economic development agenda, reduced the number of SoEs to a manageable number that can deliver for its people. The government also subsidises Chinese businesses that are operating in foreign states. As a first of its kind for both Botswana and Namibia as case studies, this study fills the empirical gap identified in the literature, particularly for southern Africa. This study develops perspective and provides a foundational explanation of the subject matter.

Research Objective Two:

- To appraise whether change in political leadership and governance architecture in Namibia and Botswana has an impact on the nature of their foreign relations with China.

Generally, change in political leadership is thought to affect internationally more greatly. Relations between China and Namibia on the one hand China and relations between Botswana and China on the other hand, have undergone tremendous changes, influenced by among other things, changes in the political leadership of Namibia and Botswana.

Evidence presented in this study shows that governance has been institutionalised and guided by principles regardless of the individuals and their dissimilar personality traits as well as varying foreign policy postures. Therefore, change in political leadership and governance has not entirely influenced the foreign policy formulation, implementation and overall nature of relations China has with Namibia and Botswana as the principles of the relationships remain unchanged. However, diverse foreign policy postures of presidents influence the nature of Chinese presence in Botswana

especially during the tenure of Ian Khama. Ian Khama's personal touch, influence and orientation which is pro-west may have forced China to be more pro-active in terms of aid and strive for more beneficial outcomes in the relations. China's approach has worked with President Masisi' administration as they actively started looking East and welcomed China's presence in Botswana which is accompanied by more favourable terms of trade and loan interests. Lastly, ethics and national institutional norms should not be compromised, particularly when engaging with other states. Sustainability and stability of political leadership is essential in maintaining strong political and economic relations. The focus on change is political leadership and governance architecture by this study thus brings a fresh contribution in the sense that China is now known to be working with stable leadership, whether democratic or undemocratic.

Research Objective Three:

- To interpret the neo-colonial perception of China's presence in Botswana and Namibia.

The nature of Sino-Namibia and Sino-Botswana relations is highly debatable. While some regard it as neo-colonial, others see it differently. Like in many African states, neo-colonial perception is based on trade deficits for Botswana and Namibia, and trade surplus for China. The differential levels of development and size of economies largely determine. The Namibian and Botswana economies are small relative to that of China and are not as diverse and advanced as that of China. China is highly industrialised and offers more commodities required in these states. Hence, the reason for its trade surplus and trade deficit for Namibia and Botswana.

Initiatives such as FOCAC are also regarded as a driving force of neo-colonialism as it promotes Chinese narratives and what the Chinese think is best for African states

instead of African leaders voicing their economic development goals and how they want to achieve them on such platforms. The Western institutions continue to label China and promote debt trap diplomacy, whereby China provides loans to poor states who essentially default on these. As a result, smaller states lose out on infrastructure in some cases and leave control of their natural resources to the Chinese in other cases. There is collateral if the loans are defaulted and therefore the Chinese including Chinese Banks, which African states borrow from, follow the agreements, and take national assets if the loans are not repaid. This should not be regarded as neo-colonialism or that China is projecting its national identity to African states. What China is doing is not only unique to Africa but also to other states in the world, both big and small.

In addition, what China is being accused of is what the colonial powers and the Western world continue to do to weaker states, including African states. A large proportion of Chinese investment in Africa is the mining industry. This is similar to European adventures in Africa which considers Africa as a source of raw materials rather than a manufacturing hub. This tendency is neo-colonial and based on this, China is neo-colonial. More findings from this study suggest that China is applying cultural policy and soft power to create positive affinities to China, for instance, stipends to foreign students which has become a vital tool in diplomacy. China's cultural policy is very attractive to African states. It offers stipends while in Western states, the walls are becoming higher and difficult to study there for educational purposes. China offers educational opportunities, and they are not imposing their values, but the intention is to provide a degree of education and once the student returns to their home states, the students would have a positive affiliation with China. This is viewed as cultural policy and not necessarily cultural imperialism. China is willing

and able to recognise that the trajectories ought to be different and they are not expecting Namibia to turn into a minion to China, if Namibia in its way becomes a reliable all-weather friend as it is.

Furthermore, evidence from this study sums up that Botswana and Namibia owe China less than what they owe the Western states and Western private lenders. It cannot be said that China is neo-colonising Botswana and Namibia in particular, and Africa as a whole. However, Chinese approaches to dealing with Africa, granting soft loans, and insisting that Chinese companies must be involved in utilising Chinese resources in African development should be reviewed.

Lastly, China should not be entirely blamed for the nature of its presence in Africa. Neo-patrimonialism comes into play, particularly as the level of corruption of African leaders, the flaws identified in African laws and regulations by African governments, has contributed to China dominating various industries on the continent. Botswana however, does not have many cases of corruption compared to Namibia. Political cultures are different and therefore to trade with one another, some of these cultural differences (corruption) need to be addressed. The systematic ignorance of some African leaders has cost the continent ownership to most of its resources. In terms of Chinese leadership qualities, the CPC and the Chinese state has demonstrated great strength in managing affairs of the state by appointing capable officials to drive the implementation of policies. China has invested in capable bureaucracy and people can facilitate industrialisation negotiations. China's government assign high-level officials to assess and give the mandate to fix underdeveloped areas. These officials engage with the local people and local authorities, and they come up with solutions for them to develop those towns.

7.4. Research Objective Four: Policy contribution and Recommendations

Policy contribution and recommendations highlighted in this section emanate from the research findings. They are measures that could be adopted to solve practical problems that have been identified in this study. Firstly, both Botswana and Namibia should craft a 'China Policy'. Africa in general needs an African foreign policy to China. These relations should be institutionalised and have strategic policy documents with clear ideologies in place that would guide the relations China has with Namibia and Botswana and Africa as a whole. There is a need for policy implementation dynamics for Namibia and Botswana and also strive to protect certain industries from full control by foreign entities.

Second, findings from this study recommend that Botswana and Namibia need to ensure that the loans they receive from China boost production, value addition, and manufacturing to address the issues of unemployment, inequality, and poverty. To be successful in dealing with China, small states need to ensure that they do not borrow more than their GDP. This will aid in escaping from the debt trap. Botswana does not borrow beyond a certain percentage of its GDP. This is an exercise of agency and also demonstrates that China does not dictate for Botswana and cannot be ruled as a neo-colonial state.

Chinese presence in Botswana and Namibia is for business. Each partner should ensure that they get what benefits them out of the deals. Botswana and Namibia need to utilise aspects of resource nationalism mainly to promote industrialisation, build local capacities, create employment and create value-added activities thereby reducing poverty amongst the ordinary people. These two states should invest in economically viable projects instead of redundant infrastructure that does not raise revenue. There is

a need to readdress and ensure that African states are given equal access to their own natural resources.

Thirdly, more findings suggest that Botswana and Namibia need to incentivise production in the agriculture industry, manufacturing, exportation, and mining. They need to be export-oriented and be a source of FDI and investment in other states. They should promote sustainable FDI for sustainable development. Research participants recommended that Namibia needs to strengthen policy implementation dynamics. The revenue spending needs to be clarified and transparent. The opportunity now is with the new sectors such as the green hydrogen and the oil and gas. The Namibia government can now regulate them and see an opportunity to start afresh. Sturdy institutions should be in place and implement the correct policies that would enable a business environment for the formalisation of the private sector. Also, appropriate monitoring and evaluation channels should be in place to yield appropriate outcomes. These would enhance the industrial policy coherence that is necessary for the effective implementation of industrial development programmes and projects.

In the case of Namibia, there is a need for the state to build a new national identity in its relations with China. The government needs to shift its focus from the political aspect of the relations and investigate avenues to feed off from China's economic agendas. This study concludes that Chinese businesses are always accompanied by government officials and agents, so they mix political rhetoric with business interest and that is where the catch is. Namibia falls for the political rhetoric and does not scrutinise the business aspect. The Chinese economic agenda is open, and Namibia does not have a counter agenda. As a result, Namibia misses out on the opportunity to tap into the Chinese capacity and to find the agenda and scope of Chinese engagement in the Namibian economy.

China has a political angle to their economic agenda, therefore Namibia should exploit that political agenda and make proposals for partnerships, instead of China coming into the open market and competing with the local businesses. Namibia needs to revise some of its agreements. For instance, the government needs to introduce new elements to redundant agreements such as issues of national security, particularly at the Hentiesbay, site to boost skill transfer. The non-existence of an agreement in the manufacturing sector between the two governments, hinder the sector to grow. More findings suggest that Namibia does not have a solid, globally competitive fishing industry, producing bi-products for fishing. The government needs to revisit the laws in the fishing sector that are loyal to the interest of the ordinary people with a very strong ethical and moral obligation and benefit the nation.

Fourthly, most research participants and literature are of the view that China's development history is the greatest lesson learned as it has managed to invest in attracting FDI from worldwide. China develops a catalogue every year of encouraged industries foreign investments, all priorities for that particular year are displayed and they only focus on those investments for that year. Botswana and Namibia can emulate and domesticate China's modernisation model for economic prosperity. Lessons and best practices from Chinese policy as discussed in Chapter 6 can be brought forward as there might be one or two elements that can be borrowed if it is properly studied and applied to practice. The Chinese knowledge systems, their epistemology, and their way of knowing and seeing the world is worth emulating. The two southern African states can learn about the Chinese doctrine and strategy, eastern with a mix of Confucianism, Maoism and modern capitalist thinking liberalism. That mix is exclusive to the Chinese but at the end is about the way they see the world and there is timelessness to their strategies.

The Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibia relations could bring in high-tech plants and types of machinery that would validate and benefit these minerals and resources instead of Namibia, for instance, importing finished products from China with their minerals. Namibia should issue tender rules which seek the best opportunities in the interest of the ordinary people. This might imply that foreign and local bidders that are interested are not making the highest profit margin. There is an urgent need for strong civil society and civil liberties which provide opportunities. The government should negotiate laws that would benefit the local nationals, creating opportunities for disgruntled voices.

In the case of Botswana, the BRI and channels brought forward by FOCAC could be beneficial for Botswana in terms of further financing, infrastructure development, technology transfer, as well as expertise and capacity building. Botswana can learn the Chinese spirit of 'State first, then your family and then you come last'. In Africa, it is 'me first, my family and the lastly the state'. For the Chinese, it is a developmental philosophy whereby 'if the state is doing well, everybody else will do well. If the family is doing well, everyone and I will do well because they will support me.' The spirit of patriotism and political will is an important value to do well. Pro-Chinese policy undermines the local economy and what Botswana can learn is to be a responsible state and avoid the Chinese example of being an authoritarian state. This study reiterates that joint negotiations would be of great benefit for African economies which form part of the BRI. Lastly, Constructivism through this study advocates and recommends for a status of strong developmental state for economic and political development in Namibia and Botswana and to do away with or rather limit the level of autonomy regulatory agencies practice.

Below are two frameworks informed by the ontological and epistemological findings of this study.

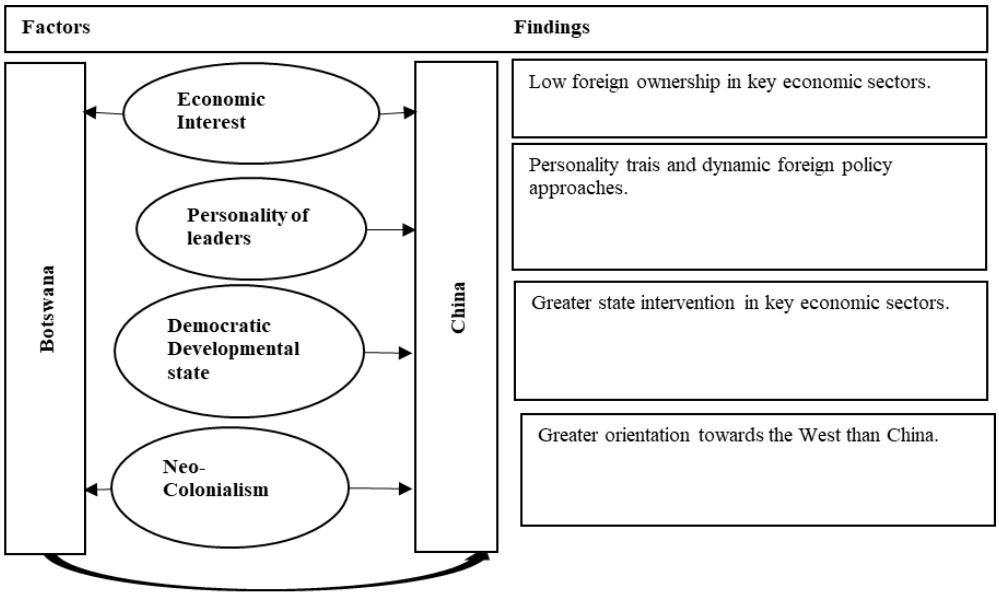


Figure 12. Sino-Botswana Political and Economic relations framework

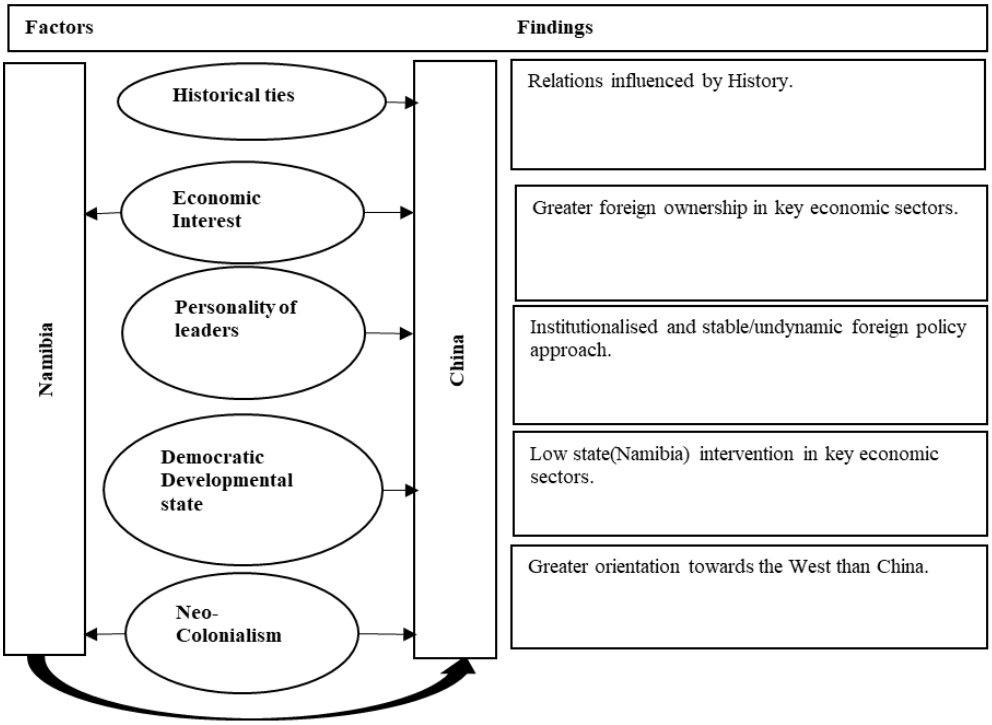


Figure 13. Sino -Namibia Political and Economic relations framework

7.5 Areas of further research

This study has identified several areas that require further academic research. It has been observed that not many international academic studies on small states like Botswana and Namibia on such detailed topics, including the theoretical perspective, have been conducted. Finding relevant data and literature was thus challenging. Similar studies with different states as specific cases with further conceptual analysis and empirical research are vital, particularly in the southern African region. Further studies can expand on the theory of constructivism as addressed in this study. Further studies can expand the introductory framework on the Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibia relations. The question of whether China has been succeeding in projecting its national identity to African states remains relevant. This is an area that needs to be explored in greater depth. Another area to look at is to explore Botswana and Namibia's policy reference documents on their relations with China. An analysis on the policies and laws that protect the domestic markets of Botswana and Namibia is also worth researching. Further research can be conducted on the assessments of the nature of Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibia ties by Civil Society Organisations and nationals. Another area to consider is the Agency of Botswana and Namibia in their engagements with China. Lastly, a study can be conducted on the maintenance of public finance: an analysis on how Namibia spends revenue income from its natural resources.

7.6 Conclusion

The theory of constructivism as applied in this study elaborates on national interests, idea sharing and interaction as socially constructed concepts. Botswana, Namibia, and China showcase interests in each other because they share knowledge. In the 1970s, China, like Botswana and Namibia, was equally faced with challenges of unbalanced

regional development. At the time, Western analysts and political scientists still referred to China as a Second World country and the rest as so-called Third World states. It took the method of combining the market and the developmental state concept for China to address her challenges. Some scholars refer to this Chinese method as State Communism guided socialism, or a state-guided mixed economy with socialist characteristics.

Similarly, Botswana and Namibia have over the years strived for economic emancipation through strong foreign relations and economic diplomacy, essentially promoting FDIs and trade interactions. At present, all three states are experiencing poverty, inequality, and unemployment at varying degrees. The nature of the Sino-Namibia ties has been constant since 1990 and is driven by the historical linkage where China played a vital role during the liberation struggle of Namibia. This has been the driving force of the relations. The Sino-Botswana ties have been long standing even though China was not largely involved in Botswana's struggle for independence. The state should remain influential and strive to intervene in the prioritisation of key development sectors. Findings on whether change in political leadership and governance architecture influences the Sino-Namibia and Sino-Botswana foreign relations show that the relationships continue to strengthen regardless of change in political leadership.

As highlighted before, the Asian nation upholds to the belief in policy of sovereignty and territorial integrity, in line with its five-no approach. However, some scholars are of the view that there is a real danger of neo-colonialism from China and that is why African governments need to be well informed about the deals they enter and avoid one sided deals with hidden risks. It is imperative that African states avoid being objects of charity and beggars of aid at all costs. Despite the tension brought forward

by this incident, both Botswana and Namibian governments remain to maintain the friendly position and the reliable development partnership they share with China as it continues to support to the One China Policy. China's access to key economic sectors in both Botswana and Namibia remains dissimilar, particularly mining industry as a vital sector in both states. In conclusion, the research objectives as formulated in this study were achieved. The study provides an epistemological understanding to the constructivist theoretical contribution in shaping the Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibia relations.

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Appendix 1: Ethical clearance certificate

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

Ethical Clearance Reference Number: DEC FOC/09/07 Date: 17/09/2021

This Ethical Clearance Certificate is issued by the University of Namibia Ethics Committee (REC) in accordance with the University of Namibia's Research Ethics Policy and Guidelines. Ethical approval is given in respect of undertakings contained in the Research Project outlined below. This Certificate is issued on the recommendations of the ethical evaluation done by the ethics committee. **Title of Project**: The nature of China relationships with Africa: A comparative analysis of SINO Botswana and Sino Namibian relations

Student: Roseta Nawases

Student Number: 200536753

Supervisor(s): *Prof, Richard Obina Iroanya*

Centre for Research Services

Take note of the following:

1. Any significant changes in the conditions or undertakings outlined in the approved Proposal must be communicated to the ethics committee. An application to make amendments may be necessary.
2. Any breaches of ethical undertakings or practices that have an impact on ethical conduct of the research must be reported to the ethics committee
3. The Principal Researcher must report issues of ethical compliance to the ethics committee (through the Chairperson) at the end of the Project or as may be requested by the ethics committee
4. The ethics committee retains the right to:

i) Withdraw or amend this Ethical Clearance if any unethical practices (as outlined in the Research Ethics Policy) have been detected or suspected,

ii) Request for an ethical compliance report at any point during the course of the research.

iii)

The ethics committee wishes you the best in your research.

Precious Mushendami (Chairperson Ethics Committee)

Appendix 2: Research Permission letter

CENTRE FOR RESEARCH SERVICES
Office of the Pro-Vice Chancellor: Research, Innovation & Developinent
University of Namibia, Private Bag 13301 , Windhoek, Namibia
340 Mandume Ndemufayo Avenue, Pioneers Park, Office F223 - Fblock, Second Floor
☎ +264 67 206 4673; E-mail:kmbulu@unam.na; URL: http//www.unam.edu.na

UNAM

UNIVERSITY OF NAM I BIA

RESEARCH PERMISSION LETTER

Date: 31/03/2022

Student Name: Roseta Nawases

Student Number: 200536753

Programme: PhD: Political Studies

Approved Research Title: The nature of China relationships with Africa: A comparative analysis of SINO Botswana and Sino Namibian relations

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I hereby confirm that the above-mentioned student is registered at the University of Namibia for the programme indicated. The proposed study met all the requirements as stipulated in the University guidelines and has been approved by the relevant committees.

The proposal adheres to ethical principles as per attached Ethical Clearance Certificate. Permission is hereby granted to carry out the research as described in the approved proposal.

Best Regards

CENTRE FOR RESEARCH SERVICES
Office of the Director
2022 -03- 31
University of Namibia
UNAM

Dr. AEE Shikongo
Head: Postgraduate Support Services
Tel: +264 61 206 3129
E-mail: aeshikongo@unam.na

Appendix 3: Botswana Research Permit

TELEGRAMS: PULA
TELEPHONE: 3950800
TELEX: 2655 BD

Dear Madam,
MINSTRY FOR STATE
PRESIDENT
PRIVATE BAG 001
GABORONE

REF: OP 5/59/8 XXIII (22)

Ms. Roseta Mersia Nawases
P.O. Box 98452
Pelican Square
Windhoek, NAMIBIA

8th May, 2023.

Contact: +264812333733 email:
rosetanawases@gmail.com

APPLICATION FOR RESEARCH PERMIT

Reference is made to the above subject matter,

You are hereby granted a research permit to conduct a study titled: "The Nature of China's Relations with Africa: A comparative analysis Of SinoBotswana and Sino- Namibian Relations"

The permit is valid for 1 year, from 8th May 2023 to 7th May 2024.

i. Copies of any report/papers written as a result of the study are directly deposited with the Office of the President.

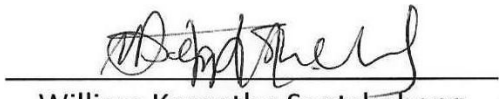
ii. The permit does not give authority to enter any premises, private establishment or protected area. Permission for such entry should be negotiated with those concerned.

iii. You conduct the project according to the particulars furnished in the approved application taking into account the above conditions.

iv. Failure to comply with any of the above stipulated conditions will result in the immediate cancellation of the permit.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully



William Kemotho Sentshebeng

DEPUTYPERMANENTSECRETARY

BOTSWANA GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

CC; Dr. Richard Obinna Iroanya, Senior Lecturer - riroanya@unam.na

Appendix 4: Namibia Research Permission letter- NCRST

NCRST

AUTHORIZYION OF RESEARCH PROJECTS

Authorization is hereby granted in terms Of Section 21 of the RSV Act No. 23 Of 2004, to:

Name: Roseta M. Nawases

Address: P. O. Box 98452, Pelican Square
Windhoek

Coworkers: N/A

Certificate Number (if applicable): RCIV00022018 Authorization No: 202209001

Type of Research:
Non- Commercial research and the use of resources be limited to what is in the proposal.

Title Of Research Authorized:

The Nature of China's Relation with Africa: A Comparative Analysis of Sino-Botswana and Sino-Namibia Relations.

Locality:

Ministry of International Relations and cooperation, Ministry of Industrialization, Trade and SME Development, Chinese Embassy in Namibia and National Planning Commission.

Duration: 05 September 2022 - 30 September 2023
Research / Sample Collection Conditions:

Yours sincerely,

National Commission on Research Science & Technology
05 SEP 2022
P/Bag 13253
Windhoek, Namibia

Ms. Albertina Nguvare
Acting Chief Executive Officer

Head Office:

Innovation Hub:

Appendix 5: Participant Information Sheet (Informed Consent)

ANNEX 5

PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT/ ASSENT FORM

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT: THE NATURE OF CHINA'S RELATIONS WITH AFRICA: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF SINO-BOTSWANA AND SINO- NAMIBIAN RELATIONS

REFERENCE NUMBER: 200536753

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: ROSETA NAWASES

ADDRESS: 1051, Samuel Maharero Street, Academia

CONTACT NUMBER: +264 812333733

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Please take some time to read the information presented here, which will explain the details of this project. Please ask the study staff any questions about any part of this project that you do not fully understand. It is very important that you are fully satisfied that you clearly understand what this research entails and how you could be involved. Also, your participation is **entirely voluntary,** and you are free to decline to participate. If you say no, this will not affect you negatively in any way whatsoever. You will also be free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if initially you do agree to take part.

This study has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee at The University of Namibia and will be conducted according to ethical guidelines and principles.

1. What is this research study all about?

This research study looks at the nature of China's presence in Africa in general and Namibia and Botswana as specific case studies. A comparative analysis is done with focus on various aspects which describes the Sino- Namibia and Sino-Botswana relations are looked at. For instance, the study looks at the economic relations China has with these two African states and how the relations benefit their economies and whether the discourse of a developmental state plays a role in the outcome of fruits beared from the economic relations. Additionally, the study addresses the notion of change in Political leadership and the impact it has on the nature of the relations Namibia and Botswana has with China. Lastly, the study dives into the perceptions of neo-colonialism in Africa and the brewing claims about China neo-colonising African states. Results drawn from this study will be shared and can be used to better economies of developing nations that are in ties with china and how they can utilize these efforts to for their own sustainable development.

The study will be conducted in Namibia and the researcher is willing to travel to Botswana to collect data should financial and other factors such as the current global issue of Covid-19 permit. The total number of participants for this study will be 16. Interviews will be conducted by the researcher and the researcher will take field notes and recordings. This will help the researcher to analyse the qualitative data that will be gathered. Questions will be posed to participants strictly by the researcher only.

2. Why have you been invited to participate?

You have been identified as one of the key participants for this study because of your in -depth knowledge and experience which will aid in addressing the research objectives of this study, of the Sino-Africa relations. Your participation to this study will be of great importance.

3. What will your responsibilities be?

The participant is expected to answer questions posed by the researcher during an interview session about the research title and elaborate in some cases it comfortable to do so. Answers provided by the participant will help address the research objectives and contribute to the findings. When the participant agrees to take the interview, the interview process will not be longer than 2 hours.

4. Will you benefit from taking part in this research?

The participant will not directly or in financial form benefit from this research study. The participant will however, gain more the in-depth knowledge from the study once the study as the final findings will be published.

5. Are there any risks involved in your taking part in this research? There are no risk involved for the participant taking part in this research.

6. If you do not agree to take part, what alternatives do you have?

The participant is allowed to opt out of the study at any given stage if they feel uncomfortable with it. Also, the participant may freely decline to participate in the study without opposing consequences.

7. Will you be paid to take part in this study and are there any costs involved?

The participant will not be paid to take part in this study. Additionally, there are no other cost involved for the participant in taking part.

8. Is there anything else that you should know or do?

a) *You can contact the Centre for Research services at research@unam.na you have any further queries or encounter any problems.*

b) *You can also contact the Research Ethics Committee* **at +264 061 2063061.** *If you have any concerns or complaints that have not been adequately addressed by your study doctor.*

c) *You will receive a copy of this information and consent form for your own records.*

9. Declaration by participant

By signing below, I ……..……. agree to take part in a research study entitled *(insert title of study).*

I declare that:

a) I have read or had read to me this information and consent form and it is written in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
b) I have had a chance to ask questions and all my questions have been adequately answered.
c) I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurized to take part.

d) I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be penalized or prejudiced in any way.

e) I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the study doctor or researcher feels it is in my best interests, or if I do not follow the study plan, as agreed to.

Signed at (*place*) .....…..…….. on (*date*) ……...…….. 20...

....

Signature of participant Signature of witness

11. Declaration by investigator I Roseta Nawases declare that:

- I explained the information in this document to ……..
- I encouraged him/her to ask questions and took adequate time to answer them.
- I am satisfied that he/she adequately understands all aspects of the research, as discussed above.
- I did/did not use an interpreter. (*If an interpreter is used then the interpreter must sign the declaration below.*

Signed at (*place*) .....…..…….. on (*date*) ……...…….. 20…..

....

Signature of investigator Signature of witness

12. Declaration by interpreter I *(name)* declare that:

I assisted the investigator (*name*) ……. to explain the information in this document to (*name participant*)……..…….

using the language medium of (Oshiwambo, Otjiherero, Afrikaans, etc.)

Appendix 6: Research Participants interview guide

Dear participant,

My name is Roseta Nawases, the principal investigator for this study. You are invited to take part in this research project by providing the principal investigator with answers to the questions addressed to you. Please take some time to read the information presented in **Annex 5** which provides in-depth details of this project. Please ask the Principal Investigator any questions about any part of this project that you do not fully understand. Also, please note that your participation is entirely voluntary, and you are free to decline to participate. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part. Before the session commences, the principal investigator will ask for your permission to record the interview.

This study has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee at The University of Namibia and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines and principles of the international Declaration of Helsinki, South African Guidelines for Good Clinical Practice and Namibian National Research Ethics Guidelines.

Questions

Political scientists and Field Experts -Botswana

a) How would you describe the nature of Sino-Botswana political and economic relations from a constructivist lens?
b) How has the change in political leadership and governance in Botswana in the recent the years affected the nature of the Sino- Botswana relations?
c) In what ways have China's ties affected the industries of Botswana?
d) How has the concept of Developmental States affected the nature of the Sino-Botswana relations?
e) What is your assessment on the perceptions around China neo-colonising African states?
f) What lessons and experiences can be drawn from the Chinese domestic policies and be adopted by African states?

Political scientists and Field Experts- Namibia

a) How would you describe the nature of Sino-Namibian political and economic relations from a constructivist lens?
b) How has the change in political leadership and governance in Namibia in the recent the years affected the nature of the Sino- Namibian relations?
c) In what ways have China's ties affected the industries of Namibia?

d) How has the concept of Developmental States affected the nature of the Sino-Namibia relations?
e) What is your assessment on the perceptions around China neo-colonising African states?
f) What lessons and experiences can be drawn from the Chinese domestic policies and be adopted by African states?
g) What lessons and experiences can be drawn from the Chinese domestic policies and be adopted by African states?

National Planning Commission- Botswana

a) What bilateral trade, aid and investment agreements have been signed between the Botswana and China in the recent years?
b) How has the Sino- Botswana relations contributed towards reaching the goals and targets outlined in National Development Plan eleven (NDP 11) towards achieving Vision 2036?

c) Discuss how change in political leadership and governance over the years have affected the nature of Sino- Botswana relations.

National Planning Commission- Namibia

a) How have the relations Namibia has with China contributed towards reaching the goals and targets outlined in National Development Plan 5 (NDP5) towards achieving Vision 2030?
b) What bilateral trade, aid and investment agreements have been signed between the Botswana and China in the recent years?
c) Discuss how change in political leadership and governance over the years have affected the nature of Sino- Botswana relations.

Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry –Botswana

a) What bilateral trade and investment agreements have been signed between the Botswana and China in the recent years?
b) How have these agreements been of benefit to the economy of Botswana?
c) Have there been any agreements that have run its cause? If so, kindly elaborate on what led to such events.
d) What challenges are experienced which have caused a hindrance to the further growth of the relations?
e) What is your assessment on the perceptions about China neo-colonising African states?
f) What lessons and experiences can be drawn from the Chinese domestic policies and be adopted by African states?

Ministry of Industrialisation, Trade and SME development – Namibia

a) What bilateral trade and investment agreements have been signed between the Namibia and China over the recent years?
b) How have these agreements been of benefit to the economy of Namibia?
c) Have there been any agreements that have run its cause? If so, kindly elaborate on what led to such events.
d) What is your assessment on the perceptions about China neo-colonising African states?
e) What challenges are experienced which have caused a hindrance to the further growth of the relations?
f) What lessons and experiences can be drawn from the Chinese domestic policies and be adopted by African states?

Research institutions in Botswana and Namibia

a) How would you describe the nature of China-Namibia political and economic relations?
b) How would you describe the nature of Sino-Botswana political and economic relations?
c) How would you describe the nature and outcomes of businesses conducted by the Chinese in Botswana?
d) How has the change in political leadership and governance in Namibia and Botswana over the years affected the nature of Sino- Namibia relations in comparison to the Sino- Botswana relations?
e) In what ways have China's relations with these two states affected their industries?
f) How has the concept of Developmental States affected the nature of the Sino-Botswana and Sino- Namibia relations?
g) What is your assessment on the perceptions around China neo-colonising African states?
h) What lessons and experiences can be drawn from the Chinese domestic policies and be adopted by African states?

Ministry of International Affairs and Cooperation- Botswana

a) What bilateral trade and investment agreements have been signed between the two nations?
b) How have these agreements been of benefit to the economy of Botswana?
c) Have there been any agreements that have run its cause? If so, kindly elaborate on what led to such events.
d) What prospects do you foresee that would contribute to the advancement of the relations between China and Botswana?
e) How has the concept of two developmental states (both China and Botswana) affected the nature of the relations?
f) What is your assessment on the perceptions around China neo-colonising African states?

g) How has the change in political leadership in Botswana over the years affected the nature of Sino- Namibia relations in comparison to the Sino- Botswana relations?
h) What challenges are experienced which have caused a hindrance to the further growth of the relations?
i) What lessons and experiences can be drawn from the Chinese domestic policies and be adopted by African states?

Ministry of International relations and Cooperation in Namibia

a) Discuss Namibia's foreign policy strategy (2017) on economic advancement in its relationship with China.
b) What bilateral trade, investment and aid agreements have been signed between China and Namibia? Kindly provide most recent agreements and activities.
c) How has economic diplomacy with China been beneficial to the advancement of the Namibian economy?
d) Are there any agreements that are no longer relevant and requires revision? If so, kindly elaborate on what led to such events.
e) What are the challenges the two states have been experiencing in successfully executing objectives of their foreign relations/ policy?
f) What prospects do you foresee that would contribute to the advancement of economic relations between China and Namibia?
g) How has China's Development-state behaviour affected the nature of the relations it has with Namibia?
h) How has the change in political leadership and governance in Namibia over the years affected the nature of Sino- Namibia relations?

Chinese Embassy in Botswana, Chinese Embassy in Namibia

a) How would you describe the nature of the relationship China has with Botswana?
b) How would you describe the nature of the relationship China has with Namibia?
c) How have the trade and investment engagements contributed to the economic advancement of China?
d) What prospects do you foresee that would contribute to the advancement of the relations between China and the two Southern African states?
e) What is your assessment on the perceptions around China neo-colonising African states?
f) What challenges are experienced which have caused a hindrance to the further growth of the relations?
g) What lessons and experiences can be drawn from the Chinese domestic policies and be adopted by African states?