

FRAMING THE CHINESE INVESTMENT IN AFRICA: MEDIA COVERAGE IN AFRICA,  
CHINA, UNITED KINGDOM, AND THE UNITED STATES

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## ABSTRACT

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News media coverage plays an important role in influencing people's perception and opinion toward public affairs. This study is grounded on the framing theory to understand the tones and the frames adopted by media from various regions in the coverage of Chinese investment in Africa. Relying on the news articles collected from Factiva and Nexis Uni databases from 2013 to 2018, this study examines the media coverage in Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, China, United States, and United Kingdom.

This study conducts a quantitative content analysis by focusing on four tones (i.e., positive, negative, neutral, and mixed tones) and five generic frames (i.e., conflict, human interest, attribution of responsibility, morality, and economic consequences). The results indicate that Chinese, Kenyan, South African, and Nigerian media reported Chinese investment in Africa with a positive tone while media in the U.S. and the U.K. adopted a negative tone. Furthermore, each generic frame was adopted with varying levels of intensity across the countries investigated in this study. Implications are discussed in terms of how each country's economic and political interests involved in the Chinese investment could exert influence on the news media coverage.

I am dedicating this study to the Jumas, my beloved maternal grandparents Pius Juma and Victorine Juma and my uncle Roy Philip Juma for their love for me that knew no bounds and taught me the value of hard work and determination in life.

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## **CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 Background of the Study**

For several decades, media have been an important source of information for masses around the globe. Particularly in the field of development communication and social empowerment, and political communication, media play a huge role in promoting cultural diversity, bridging digital divide, promoting human social welfare, bringing to light community-oriented participatory initiatives, and facilitating fight for social justice (Melkote & Steeves, 2015). When the audience largely rely on media as their main source of information, news coverage is likely to shape the public opinion on various political issues (Ball-Rokeach & DeFleur, 1976).

Determining the content of what is to be disseminated to the audience and what is to be left out plays a huge role in determining how societies perceive or adopt new ideas. Media framing enhances audience processes where news information disseminated to the audiences enables them to construct meaning using their preexisting cognitive representations (Graber, 1988).

Another way that media play a role in persuading the audiences is by disseminating news content with a bias. For instance, news can be covered with a positive tone, negative tone, or a neutral tone towards a topic of discussion with an intention of persuading the audience in a certain way. For example, Melkote (2003) examined how media covered the USA-Iraq war and found that the New York Times covered weapon of mass destruction that Iraq was perceived to be in possession negatively even though no one was certain if Iraq really possessed these weapons.

## 1.1 Scramble for Africa

It was during the 19<sup>th</sup> century that the first scramble for Africa led by the European powers emerged. This scramble was instigated by among other factors: the British, Germany and French military rivalry, need for new cotton supply sources due to the American civil wars, and “new markets as a result of the European economic depression” (Mamdani, 1996). Centuries before and during colonization, close to 20 million slaves were bought and exported from Africa (Nunn 2008) to several parts of the world. Towards the end of slave trade and the beginning of colonial rule in Africa, Belgium’s King Leopold II objectified Africa as a ‘magnificent cake’ which he saw as a continent that would yield a lot of wealth and resources for the growth of Europe (Pakenham, 1991; Mamdani, 1996).

Germany held the Berlin Congress in 1884-5 where its first chancellor, Otto von Bismarck, came up with the rules of how the continent Africa would be divided (Pakenham, 1991). In the Congress, rules were established for colonial division of the continent Africa under the principle of effective occupation. The colonial rulers were expected to claim and establish any part of the continent as their territory by showing that they had effective control by establishing troops on the ground and also have administrators based on the ground to rule the territory (Carmody, 2011).

When the African countries gained independence, it was simply a flag independence as quoted by President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania. The colonial masters still influenced and controlled the continent. Neocolonialism took over. At some point, the British Empire’s influence stretched from Cairo in Egypt to the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa. The global leadership switched from the European countries to USA during the cold war (Carmody, 2011). USA being the global leader exerted it a great influence over what happened on the African

continent in terms of African politics and business (Gore, 2012). Entrance of USA into Africa was an addition to other countries that had colonized the region such as the French, Germany, Belgium, Spain, Portugal and Italy.

During the cold war times, USA played a huge role in Africa especially supporting military dictators such as Joseph Mobutu in Zaire, despite him having plundered billions of dollars leading to economic ruins in Zaire. During his visit to Washington, US President Nixon claimed that the US could learn on how to handle government resources and economic management from Mobutu (Meredith, 2005). As a result of colonization and military superiority, most of the western countries have extensive economic, political and cultural, and military engagements in Africa.

The African dream that its founding fathers such as Kwame Nkurumah of Ghana, and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania had for the continent died during the cold war period. The African continent was then regarded as a hopeless continent. It was a continent branded as lagging on modernization. It was also referred to as a continent that had been bypassed by globalization (Carmody, 2011).

All of a sudden, the story has changed in recent years. Africa has suddenly changed to a strategic region for business for the great established, and the emerging powers. “Africa is in play like never before” as reported by (Raine 2009, p. 9, quoting Final Report of the Africa-China-USA Trilateral Dialogue on China’s African challenges). In recent years, the game seems to be changing towards the East. Most of the African countries are now switching their attention from the old economic powers to China (Gore, 2012). According to van Dijk (2009) the greatest African trading partner is now China, which has overtaken USA and all the European powers. Therefore, this thesis focuses on media coverage of Chinese investment in Africa, an

underexplored area in the scholarship of international communication. The turn of events from the European colonizers being the sole African trading partners to USA during the cold war to now China is likely the reason why we might have different media organizations frame their news about foreign investment in Africa differently. The different framing is a result of each country or region that wants to do business in Africa reporting news about the continent in a way that will favor and serve their own interests.

## **1.2 Media Frames and Tones**

The term framing is defined by Entman (1993) as “a scattered conceptualization” (pg. 51) with a number of locations depending on the news content conveyed. Locations such as the culture, the receiver, the communicator or the text have a great influence on how news are framed. Media frames can also be described as an angle that a media story takes in order to try and influence people’s opinion about it (McCombs, 2005). Entman (1993, p. 52) also observed that to be able to determine frames from a news text, examining “the presence or absence of certain keywords, stock phrases, stereotyped images, sources of information and sentences that provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgments” gives a huge indicator on how to understand which frames have been adopted within that news story. Different kinds of frames activate different kinds of knowledge within our cognition, stimulate different kinds of cultural values and morals, and helps us create contexts within the story (Cappella & Jamieson 1997). In so doing, frames are able to define our problems, diagnose causes attributed to societal challenges, help us make moral judgments, and as well suggest remedies that can be accepted by the majority in the society (Entman, 1993). How media frame a certain event, such as the foreign investment in Africa, plays a huge role in how the public perceive the issue. If it is framed negatively, there is a high likelihood that the public will be influenced to become repulsive

against that investing country and might make the projects initiated by the country to be rejected by the public. There has been little literature about how media frame Africa in terms of foreign investment. How news media cover investment in Africa has a huge impact on the prospective investors and the retention of those that are already investing on the continent. Media framing of doing business in Africa also influences how citizens vote their political leaders (Rosenthal, 2004) and whether they will see the investment as being beneficial to them.

This study is aimed at understanding how media from various parts of the world frame their news coverage about the Chinese investments in African countries. It will focus on the five news frames proposed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000), including; human interest frame, economic consequence frame, morality frame, conflict frame, and the attribution of responsibility frame. The research will also look at the tones adopted by the news media in different countries. This study's geographical focus will be news articles published in USA, United Kingdom (UK), African countries (Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa), and China.

When covering any kind of news, journalists are usually expected to adhere to the most important part of their professional standard by being objective or neutral. Is media coverage of the Chinese investment in Africa, termed by some authors as the Scramble for Africa 2.0 (Giammittorio, 2014), primarily neutral in tone? Or does it tend to be negative or positive depending on the interests of the regions examined in this study? These are some of the questions this thesis will seek to understand and answer.

### **1.3 Overview**

In Chapter II of this thesis, I reviewed the literature on the four tones and five generics frames that were proposed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000). In addition, I also outlined a hypothesis and eleven research questions in this chapter.

In Chapter III, I extensively described the research design of this thesis. Newspapers from the six selected countries were downloaded using Nexis Uni and Factiva databases ranging from 2013 to 2018. This study used the quantitative content analysis and a detailed explanation of the coding scheme was also outlined in this chapter.

In chapter IV of this thesis, I report the results of my findings. My findings indicate that media from the selected countries adopted different tones in the coverage of Chinese investment in Africa. Kenyan Daily Nation used the positive tone more frequently than the media in the other two African countries. Also, while China Daily extensively adopted the positive tone, the New York Times and Guardian portrayed the Chinese investment negatively. Furthermore, my findings indicated that news media from the selected countries also adopted different frames in the news coverage.

Chapter V interpreted the results and discussed the implications of this thesis. The chapter also discussed the limitation of this study and the recommendation for future studies. Lastly, this chapter ends with a conclusion summarizing the importance of the findings.



## CHAPTER II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.0 Framing

According to Entman's definition of the term media framing (1993, p. 52), "to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation." Ghanem and McCombs (2001) also defined media by exploring "how" specific devices employed by the media can shape our understanding of that topic in discussion. Goffman (1974) in his study of framing theory first termed frames as "schemata(s) of interpretation" that makes it possible for individuals "to locate, perceive, identify, and label" (p. 21) issues, topics and events. Since this theory's intellectual origin, media scholars applying its concept to mass media research have used a wealth of different approaches and definitions in the application of the framing theory (D'Angelo & Kuypers, 2010; Reese, Gandy, & Grant, 2001). Scheufele and Tewksbury (2007) described media framing based on the notion that it is how an issue is featured and presented in news and have impacts on how the audience interprets the story being disseminated.

Scholars from different disciplines have come up with the definition of the term framing, some focusing on how media present news while others focus on the comprehension of the news by the audience (McCombs, Shaw, & Weaver, 1997). Semetko and Valkenburg (1998) defined a media frame as a specific way in which journalists develop a news story to ensure optimized media audience accessibility. This news framing concept has psychological and sociological derivations. Psychologists define framing as variations in judgment caused by alterations to its definition of judgment or choice difficulties (Tversky & Kahneman, 1989). Goffman (1974)

posited that the sociological and communication perspectives affects framing by focusing on the use of story lines, symbols, and stereotypes in media presentations.

Frames, or media framing has got no single definition, but several. Most of the definitions of the concept framing that are being used have similar characteristics. Other scholars also define news frames as “conceptual tools which media and individuals rely on to convey, interpret and evaluate information” (Neuman, Just, & Crigler, 1992, p. 60). The frames set the parameters “in which citizens discuss public events.”

The process by which media personnel or journalists develop particular concepts, issues or angle their thinking and attitude about an issue is also another definition of news framing (Chong & Druckman, 2007). According to de Vreese (2005), the possibility of framing the concept lies in the focus on communication as a process. This study while looking at how various news media frame their stories about the scramble for Africa, will focus on the definitions proposed by McCombs, Shaw and Weaver (1997) where they emphasized on how media present news to their audiences. Entman’s (1993) definition where he focused on media selecting some aspects of their news and giving them more prominence than other aspects will also come in handy in this study.

De Vreese proposed that communication is not static, but a dynamic process which involves how frames emerge (frame-building) and the interplay between news consumers’ predispositions and the media frames (frame-setting). The meaning of these two terms is discussed below.

*Frame-building* is the process by which some factors define or influence the structural qualities of how news is framed. According to Shoemaker and Reese (1996), how journalists and news organizations frames their news is determined by journalism’s internal factors. The frame-

building process usually takes place in a constant and regular interactions between journalists, the elites (Gans, 1979) and social movements (Cooper, 2002; Snow & Benford, 1992) with the aftermaths of the frame-building process manifesting as frames in the journalistic text.

*Frame-setting* can be defined as the interaction between framed media news and individuals' prior knowledge and predispositions (Brüggemann, 2014). Frame-setting can also be viewed as those instances of strong media interventionism, understood as the diverse ways in which journalists intentionally or unintentionally shape news content (Lundby, 2009). Hence news framing may affect learning, interpretation, and evaluation of issues and events. The consequences of framing-setting can be pictured on the individual and the societal level. An individual level consequence may be changed attitudes about an issue based on exposure to certain frames. On the other hand, the consequence under societal level, frames may contribute towards shaping social level processes such as decision-making, political socialization, and collective actions (de Vreese, 2005).

## **2.1 Generic Media Frames and Frame Building**

According to Lengauer, & Höller (2013), communicational content-related characteristics of horse race, drama, conflict, or negativity can be categorized as generic frames. As distinguished from issue-specific frames, generic frames are not characteristically bound to specific issues but rather refer to the narrative context in which a debate is engaged.

De Vreese (2005) states that one group of studies of generic frames concentrates on the coverage of politics, election campaigns or international politics. A second group focuses on generic news frames that are structural and intrinsic to the concords of journalism. In politics coverage, Cappella and Jamieson (1997) investigated the consequences of strategically framed news on political cynicism. 'Strategic news is defined as news that (1) focuses on winning and

losing, (2) includes the language of war, games, and competition, (3) contains ‘performers, critics and audiences’, (4) focuses on candidate style and perceptions, and (5) gives weight to polls and candidate standings’ (Jamieson, 1992).

Therefore, generic frames hold the ability to ‘transcend thematic limitations’ (de Vreese, 2005, p. 54; Iyengar, 1991) and refer to how topics may be framed by journalists. Noticeable examples of generic frames are game, conflict, or episodic frames (Iyengar, 1991). Hence, the process of generic frame building involves the formation of generic media frames and the underlying bargaining process between political input, media input (intermedia frame building), and media output, for example, in setting the level of negativity, conflict, drama, and substance in the public electoral discourse (Jamieson 1992). This study will focus on the five generic frames proposed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) and discussed below to study the media coverage of the Chinese investment in Africa. Several scholars have confirmed that the five generic media frames account for all the possible media frames that have been found in media covered stories (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000; Brants & Neijens, 1998; Neuman et al., 1992). This is the reason why this research also adopts all the five frames.

## **2.2 The Five Generic Frames of News Media**

Neuman, Just and Crigler (1992: 74) identified five generic frames utilized by the media. These frames are: human impact; powerlessness; economics; moral values; and conflict. The human impact frame focuses on “descriptions of individuals and groups affected by an issue”; the powerlessness frame refers to “the dominance of forces over weak individuals or groups”; the economics frame reflects “the preoccupation with profit and loss”; the moral values frame refers to “morality and social prescriptions”; and the conflict frame deals with the news media “game interpretation of the political world as an on-going series of contests, each with a new set of

winners and losers.” Semetko and Valkenburg (2000, in de Vreese 2005: 56), took Neuman, Just and Crigler’s research further. They came up with five frames: conflict; human interest; attribution of responsibility; morality; and economic consequences. Their definitions for these frames is similar to that of Neuman et al.’s, apart from the human interest frame, which they defined as “bringing a human face or an emotional angle to the presentation of an event, issue or problem”. Semetko and Valkenburg’s frame typology does not include powerlessness. Instead their fifth frame is attribution of responsibility (2000, in de Vreese 2005: 56). The advantage of adopting generic frames is their applicability to a variety of settings, contexts and scenarios under media coverage.

### **2.2.1 Conflict Frame**

A conflict frame is a frame that depicts a conflict between individuals, institutions, organizations or governments with the aim of capturing the attention of the audience. Neuman et al. (1992) found that the conflict frame was the most dominant frame used to capture the audience’s attention in their analyses about US news coverage. For example, presidential campaign news and presidential debates are usually covered as conflict frames, and they attract the highest number of audiences. Conflicts between nations also usually get the highest attention. A good example will be amount of airtime that was given to the political conflict between USA and North Korea in 2017, and the attention that the audience gave to it. If a story discusses winners or losers or discusses about the effect of an individual or country on another, then that story will be regarded as a conflict frame.

### **2.2.2 Human Interest Frame**

This frame brings an emotional angle or human feelings to the presentation of events, problems or issues that are affecting people within a society. Neuman et al. (1992) described

human interest frames as “human impact” frame. He found it to be the second most common frames in the news after the conflict frame. With the demand for high quality news, journalists are usually forced to frame news with a human-interest inclination. They usually achieve human interest frames by personalizing the news, emotionalizing or dramatizing the news. This usually helps them to capture and retain their audience interest. By bringing out how individuals or groups are affected by the story or the event in discussion, journalists evoke feelings of empathy or caring, outrage, compassion or sympathy towards their audience or towards the victims or the people being discussed.

### **2.2.3 Economic Consequence Frame**

This is a story that reports the economic consequence that the issue in discussion will have or affect a country, institution, or an individual (Neuman et al. (1992; Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). News articles that touch on international trade, local and foreign investment, economic development, or those that mention economic activities pursuing a course of action such and betterment of people’s lives or infrastructural development can be categorized under this frame.

### **2.2.4 Morality Frame**

News framing where the question of right or wrong arises can be categorized under this category. Some of the journalistic topics discussed are usually under the religious tenets or moral norms within a society. Since most of the societies are guided by religious and societal norms, most of the journalists make reference to this frame either directly or indirectly. Usually, journalists communicate the frame indirectly by having someone else quoted raising the issue in their news articles (Neuman et al., 1992). Some stories offer prescriptions on how residents of a community are expected to behave. The same framing strategy also applies to people who are not

member of the society who are expected to respect the moral values of that new society if they go against the norms. A good example is a story written by Wafula and Ngina (2018) in the Kenyan Standard Newspaper where a Chinese man named Liu Jiaqi called President Uhuru Kenyatta and all Kenyans ‘monkeys’. This is against the Kenyan cultural norms, and hence the writer of the story adopted the morality frame.

### **2.2.5 Attribution of Responsibility Frame**

This is a frame that journalists use to attribute a cause of an issue within the society for its cause or solution to an individual, a group or the government. For example, Iyengar (1987) found that the U.S government was blamed by media for causing key problems with the society such as poverty to some communities. Attribution of responsibility can also be defined as “presenting an issue or problem in such a way as to attribute responsibility for causing or solving to either the government or to an individual or group” (Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000, in de Vreese 2005: 56).

## **2.3 Tones**

The tone of media content can be positive, negative, mixed or neutral, and has the effect on how people perceive a certain issue (Brunken, 2006). Melkote (2009) analyzed the media coverage of USA-Iraq war and posited that an unfavorable sentence within a story can have a negative meaning towards the subject and hence have a negative tone. He also noted that a sentence coded as favorable towards the topic of discussion will have a positive tone. Furthermore, a sentence that portrays the topic of discussion as being neither favorable nor unfavorable will be coded as having a neutral tone.

Deephouse (2000) argued that an organization can be covered in a favorable tone by media if the activities that it is involved in are considered to be acceptable by the society.

Unfavorable coverage may be due to the media condemning the organization for its unacceptable engagements, or neutral coverage if no evaluative modifier is used in the media text that is disseminated to the audience. Several scholars such as Nijkraak, Gosselt, and Gutteling (2015), and Carvalho and Cooksey (2007) found in their studies that tone in media coverage has got a significant influence on public opinion.

## **2.4 Research Questions and Hypothesis**

This research first focused on African media (i.e., Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa) and explore how they cover the Chinese investment in Africa differently. These countries are comparable because they are all English-speaking regions and have been affected by foreign investment. In addition, these three countries are located in different regions of the Africa continent. It is thus important to examine whether and how their media covered the Chinese investment in Africa differently in terms of tone and frames. The following research questions are proposed.

RQ1: How did Kenyan media, South African media, and Nigerian media cover Chinese investment in Africa in terms of tone?

RQ2: How did Kenyan media, South African media, and Nigerian media cover Chinese investment in Africa in terms of (a) the attribution of responsibility frame; (b) the human interest frame; (c) the conflict frame; (d) the morality frame; (e) the economic consequence frame?

In addition, this thesis explored how Chinese media, American media, and UK's media covered the Chinese investment in Africa differently. This is an important area because these three countries have been significantly involved in the African continent in terms of political power and economic investment. Previous literature has indicated that Chinese media are primarily controlled by the communist party and thus tend to praise its government's investment



in Africa (Leung & Huang, 2007; Zhang & Fleming, 2005). On the contrary, media in the U.S. and U.K have a long tradition of covering China and its relevant issues negatively (Sparks, 2010; Wu, 2006). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed.

H1: Chinese media will cover Chinese investment in Africa positively while American and UK's media will cover the issue negatively.

This thesis will also explore how Chinese media, American media, and UK's media use different frames to cover the Chinese investment in Africa. Therefore, the following research questions are proposed.

RQ3: How did Chinese media, American media, and UK's media cover Chinese investment in Africa in terms of (a) the attribution of responsibility frame; (b) the human interest frame; (c) the conflict frame; (d) the morality frame; (e) the economic consequence frame?

## CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY

### 3.0 Introduction

This study adopted a quantitative content analysis to analyze the frames and tones adopted by Kenyan, Nigerian, South African, Chinese, American, and UK's newspaper organizations when reporting the Chinese Investment in Africa. Quantitative content analysis was first applied in political sciences by Laswell (1942) to research on propaganda during the two World Wars. Unlike discourse analysis which is a purely qualitative research approach that focuses on the meaning of text with respect to its linguistic, semantic, and argumentative dimensions (Gee 2010), content analysis allows the researcher to analyze secondary communication data and draw (statistically tested) meaning from manifest as well as latent content (Lock, & Seele, 2015). The phrase quantitative content analysis was first defined by Berelson (1952:18). According to him, quantitative content analysis is “a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication.”

Neuendorf (2002) posited that content analysis is a fast-growing technique in the field of quantitative research (p. 1). She defined content analysis as “the systematic, objective, quantitative analysis of message characteristics” (Neuendorf, 2002, p. 1). Content analysis was used in a comparative study by Semetko, and Valkenburg (2000) when they investigated the prevalence of five frames identified in earlier studies by other scholars on framing and framing effects: attribution of responsibility, human interest, conflict, economic consequences and morality.

### **3.1 Newspaper Overview**

#### **3.1.1 The Daily Nation**

Daily Nation is the biggest independent daily newspaper in not only Kenya but the whole of East Africa region (KAC, 2011) founded in 1958 as *Taifa* (Swahili word for Nation). It was bought by the Agha Khan family under the Nation Media Group in 1959 and changed its name to Taifa Leo (Nation Today). The name was changed to the Daily Nation in 1960 even though its sister publication *Taifa Leo* is still being published (Editorial Staff, 2013).

#### **3.1.2 The Vanguard**

Vanguard Newspaper is one of the independent daily newspapers published by the Vanguard Media and established in 1983 in Nigeria. The Newspaper was commended by Niger Delta peace activist in December of 2009 for the role it played in reporting government's intentions, which encouraged and persuaded militants in the Niger Delta region to accept amnesty from the government (Amaize, 2009).

#### **3.1.3 Mail and Guardian**

Mail & Guardian was established by the M&G Media in South Africa in 1985. The newspaper was called the Weekly Mail until in 1995 when the publisher of The Guardian, the London-based Guardian Media Group (GMG), became the majority shareholder of the news print. This led to the name being changed to Mail & Guardian. Mail & Guardian Online launched in 1994 was the first internet news publication in Africa.

#### **3.1.4 China Daily**

China Daily is a daily newspaper established in 1981. The newspaper is owned by the Chinese Publicity Department of the Communist Party. China Daily, an English-language newspaper has the widest print circulation as compared to any other English-language newspaper

in China. The paper has its editorial office in China with satellite offices around the globe with the international audience as its main target and mostly serves as a guide to Chinese government policy. China Daily's African edition was launched in 2012 in Nairobi Kenya. The edition is aimed at dissemination of information about China to the African audience hence boosting China's interests in Africa (Thussu, De Burgh, and Shi., 2017).

### **3.1.5 The New York Times**

The New York Times was founded in 1851 in New York City, USA. The news media is ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in the US and 17<sup>th</sup> globally in terms of circulation. The New York Times International is its international print edition which is tailored for the international audience. The Times has been accused of bias with accusations of unsubstantiated reporting that led to the Iraq war in which the newspaper inaccurately reported that Iraq was in possession of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) (The New York Times Company: Our History).

### **3.1.6 The Guardian**

The Guardian, a British independent daily newspaper was founded in 1821 as The Manchester Guardian as part of the Guardian Media Group owned by the Scott Trust. It changed its name in 1959 to The Guardian. The Scott Trust was created in 1936 to ensure the newspaper's editorial and financial independence that would result in liberal values and freedom as well as freedom from political interference and commercials. Even though the paper is independent and is expected to be unbiased, it supported the NATO's military intervention of the 1998 – 1999 Kosovo war (Kaldor, 1999).

### **3.2 Time Frame**

The newspaper articles were downloaded from the year 2013 to 2018. The year 2013 was selected because it was the time when the Chinese president, Xi Jinping, visited Africa and put forth principles of sincerity, affinity, real good faith and results, with the target of combining efforts to support Africa achieve its economic independence, fair trade, equitable and sustainable development and hence achieve win-win cooperation and mutual development between China and the African continent (China Daily, 2013). It is during the same year that the former US President, Barack Obama launched the Trade Africa, a partnership between the Sub-Saharan Africa and USA. This partnership was especially meant for member countries of the East African Community (Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and Tanzania) and the United States. This partnership sought to increase regional and global trade within Africa, and other global markets (The White House, 2013). During the same period, the European Union in collaboration with EuropeAid organized an Agriculture and Rural Development workshop whose aim was to assess the potential of cooperation between Africa and the European Union to support rural development and empowerment of farmers across the African continent (European Commission, 2013).

### **3.3 Research Design**

For this thesis, I collected news articles from Factiva and Nexis Uni news databases about the Chinese investment in Africa. Same key words (i.e., “China AND investment AND Africa”) were used for searching each region’s news articles.

A total of 6,518 news articles from the six newspaper websites were mined. News articles from the mined corpus were randomly selected for analysis as follows: The Daily Nation (Kenya, 85 articles), Mail & Guardian (South Africa, 81 articles), Vanguard Newspaper

(Nigeria, 80 articles), China Daily (China, 83 articles), The Guardian (UK, 82 articles), and The New York Times (USA, 79 articles) (total N = 490). The researcher restricted the search to only English-language publications, which have significant readerships in Africa. The unit of analysis for this study was each news story retrieved from Factiva and Nexis Uni.

*Table 1: Explanation of the news articles mined and coded*

<b>Country</b>	<b>Media</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Sample</b>
Kenya	Daily Nation	351	85
South Africa	Mail & Guardian	293	81
Nigeria	Vanguard	304	80
China	China Daily	4,586	83
United States	New York Times	577	79
United Kingdom	The Guardian	407	82
<b>Total</b>		<b>6,518</b>	<b>490</b>

### **3.4 Independent Variable**

The independent variable in this study is the country of the news organizations under study, including Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, United Kingdom, China, and the USA.

### **3.5 Dependent Variable**

This research adopted the five generic frames proposed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) and tones of the news as the dependent variables. These five frames include: conflict, human interest, economic consequence, morality, and attribution of responsibility frames. The researcher also examined the tone of the news as being positive, negative, neutral and mixed tones.

### **3.6 Measurement of Frames and Tones**

I used a series of binary questions (1: yes; 0: no) to measure the presence of each frame in each of the selected articles. Then, the Cronbach's alpha was calculated to determine the internal consistency of the items used for each frame (Cronbach, 1990). Finally, a scale was created by adding up the scores of the items used for each frame. Eighteen questions proposed in Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) were adopted for this study. The wording of the questions is outlined below.

#### **3.6.1 Attribution of Responsibility Frame (Cronbach's $\alpha = .74$ ):**

Does the story suggest that some level of government has the ability to alleviate the problem?

Does the story suggest that some level of the government is responsible for the issue/problem?

Does the story suggest solution(s) to the problem/issue?

Does the story suggest an individual (or group of people in society) is responsible for the issue-problem?

#### **3.6.2 Human Interest Frame (Cronbach's $\alpha = .69$ ):**

Does the story provide a human example or "human face" on the issue?

Does the story employ adjectives or personal vignettes that generate feelings of outrage, empathy caring, sympathy, or compassion?

Does the story emphasize how individuals and groups are affected by the issue/problem?

Does the story go into the private or personal lives of the actors?

Does the story contain visual information that might generate feelings of outrage, sympathy, caring- sympathy, or compassion?

#### **3.6.3 Conflict Frame (Cronbach's $\alpha = .91$ ):**

Does one party/individual/ group/country reproach another?

Does one party-individuals-group-country reproach another?

Does the story refer to two sides of the problem or issue?

### **3.6.4 Morality frame (Cronbach's $\alpha = .75$ ):**

Does the story contain any moral message?

Does the story make reference to morality, God, and other religious tenets?

Does the story offer specific social prescriptions about how to behave?

### **3.6.5 Economic frame (Cronbach's $\alpha = .48$ ):**

Is there a mention of financial losses or gains now or in the future?

Is there a mention of the costs/degree of expense involved?

Is there a reference to economic consequences of pursuing or not pursuing a course of action?<sup>1</sup>

For the tone, a story was considered to be positive if it is written in such a way that it conveys a positive meaning or would cause the reader to form positive feeling towards Chinese investment in Africa. For example, if a story proposes that Chinese investment in Africa will lead to betterment of infrastructure on the African continent, it will be coded as 1 to mean presence of positive tone. A story was considered to have a negative tone if it is written in such a way that it conveys a negative meaning or would cause the reader to form a negative feeling towards Chinese investment in Africa. For example, if a story suggests that Chinese investment in Africa is not a win-win trade, but that China is exploiting African resources or Chinese people

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<sup>1</sup> The Cronbach's Alpha for this frame is low but is similar to other studies such as Semetko and Valkenburg (2000). The low score is attributed to the second item. I decided to keep it because the item captures an important component of the economic consequence frame. When I drop the item and test the hypothesis and research questions, the result turns out consistent.



are taking away African jobs, then it will be coded as 2 to represent a negative tone. A story was coded as neutral if it is neither positive nor negative and if it does not condemn or support the Chinese investment in Africa. For example, if a story states that China has been investing on the African continent for the last two decades without outlining the positives or negatives of the investment, it will be coded as 3 to represent a neutral tone. A story was mixed if the positive and negative tones are mentioned almost equally in terms of the amount of space. Such stories outline the benefits of Chinese investment in Africa and at the same time condemn the investment (Melkote, 2009). For example, if a story suggests that Chinese investment in Africa is good since it is uplifting people from poverty but is also likely to cause the second colonization of the African continent, then its tone will be considered mixed. A story with a mixed tone was coded as 4.

### **3.7 Inter-Coder Reliability Analysis**

Two coders, including the main researcher, analyzed the news articles in the sample. Cohen's Kappa was used to measure the inter-coder reliability between the two coders. Inter-coder reliability score of more than 0.60 was adopted as the minimal accepted reliability level. Before coding, the main researcher used six news articles to train his co-coder on the characteristics that were to be looked for in the news stories. This training was important to ensure that both coders understood the traits of the variables under study.

The first round of inter-coder reliability check involved 50 news articles randomly selected from the sample. Out of the 18 frame items and tones that were under study, five items did not meet the Cohen's Kappa's minimum score of .60. These items included two questions for the human interest frame (Does the story employ adjectives or personal vignettes that generate feelings of outrage, empathy caring, sympathy, or compassion? Does the story emphasize how

individuals and groups are affected by the issue/problem?), one question for the conflict frame (Does one party/individual/ group/country reproach another?), one question for the morality frame (Does the story make reference to morality, God, and other religious tenets?), and one question for the economic frame (Is there a mention of the costs/degree of expense involved?).

The two coders discussed the disagreement about the five items and then conducted a second round that involved 30 more news articles randomly selected from the pool. In the second round, the five items had a minimum score of .78 which met the requirement. This paved way for the researcher to code the remaining news articles. Details about the inter-coder reliability check can be found in Table 2.

*Table 2: Explanation of inter-coder reliability on five generic frames and four tones*

FILENAME	Intercoder_reliability_CSV.csv	
	Percent Agreement	Cohen's Kappa
Tone	78.00	0.69
Attribution of responsibility		
Item 1	98.00	0.94
Item 2	96.00	0.78
Item 3	96.00	0.92
Item 4	98.00	0.96
Human interest		
Item 1	96.00	0.90
Item 2	96.67	0.79
Item 3	96.67	0.93
Item 4	96.00	0.73
Item 5	98.00	0.90
Conflict frame		
Item 1	90.00	0.79
Item 2	96.00	0.91
Item 3	100.00	1.00
Item 4	96.00	0.88
Morality frame		
Item 1	94.00	0.77
Item 2	100.00	1.00
Item 3	90.00	0.78
Economic Frame		
Item 1	92.00	0.63
Item 2	96.67	0.91
Item 3	94.00	0.86

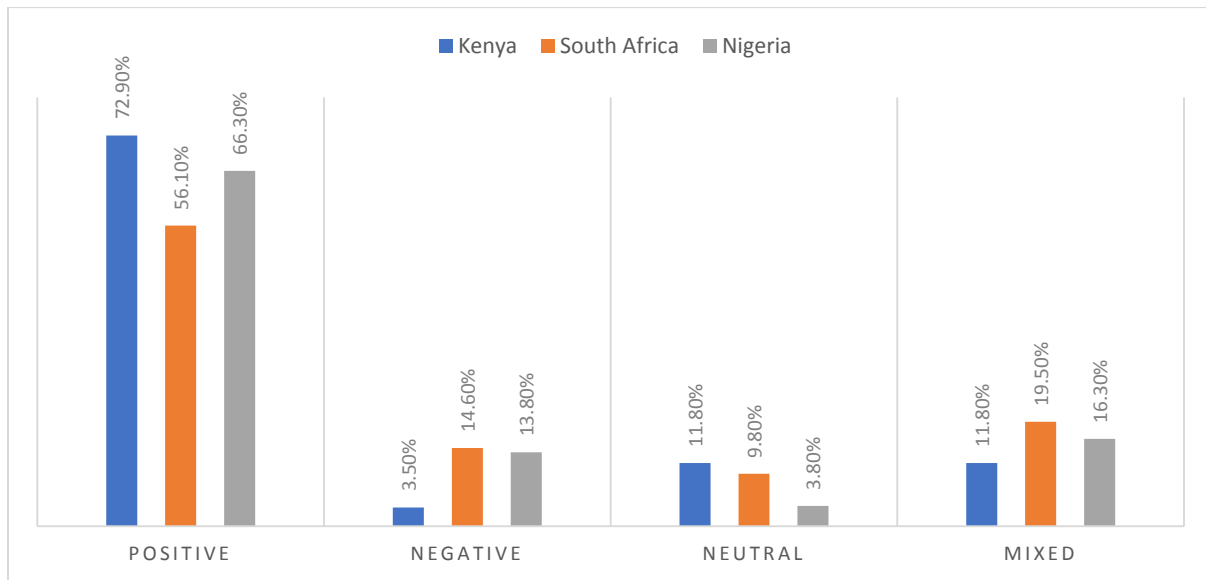
## CHAPTER IV. RESULTS

### 4.0 Introduction

To investigate whether the use of tones and frames varied depending with the countries under study, I conducted Chi-square tests on RQ1 and H1 to investigate variations in tone and a one-way ANOVA on RQ2 and RQ3 to investigate the use of different frames among different countries. In order to understand the comparisons between different pairs of countries, a post-hoc analysis (i.e., Tukey's HSD) was conducted.

### 4.1 Tone Analysis Results

The first research question (RQ1) investigates how Kenyan media, South African media and Nigerian media covered Chinese investment in Africa in terms of tones. Generally speaking, a majority of the media coverage in these three African countries covered Chinese investment in a positive tone, as indicated in Figure 1 and Table 3.



*Figure 1: Percentage of tones used among the media in African Countries*

Chi-square tests indicate that media in these three African countries used different tones to cover Chinese investment in Africa ( $\chi^2 = 12.1838$ ,  $df = 6$ ,  $p < .05$ ). As shown in Table 3, news articles from Kenya (72.9%) covered the Chinese investment in Africa with a more positive tone than South Africa (56.1%) and Nigeria (66.3%). At the same time, Kenya (3.50%) had fewer negative articles than South Africa (14.60%) and Nigeria (13.80%).

*Table 3: Chi-square results of the tone variations among African Countries*

			Tone towards Chinese Investment in Africa - News Article				Total
			Positive	Negative	Neutral	Mixed tone	
Country of Study	Kenya	Count (% within Country of Study)	62 (72.9%)	3 (3.5%)	10 (11.8%)	10 (11.8%)	85 (100.0%)
		Expected Count	55.4	8.9	7.2	13.4	85.0
	South Africa	Count (% within Country of Study)	46 (56.1%)	12 (14.6%)	8 (9.8%)	16 (19.5%)	82 (100.0%)
		Expected Count	53.4	8.6	7.0	12.9	82.0
	Nigeria	Count (% within Country of Study)	53 (66.3%)	11 (13.8%)	3 (3.8%)	13 (16.3%)	80 (100.0%)
		Expected Count	52.1	8.4	6.8	12.6	80.0
	Total	Count (% within Country of Study)	161 (65.2%)	26 (10.5%)	21 (8.5%)	39 (15.8%)	247 (100.0%)
		Expected Count	161.0	26.0	21.0	39.0	247.0

The hypothesis (H1) states that Chinese media will cover Chinese investment in Africa positively while American and UK's media will cover the issue with a negative tone. In general, China covered Chinese investment in Africa in a more positive tone while the UK and the US were more negative, as indicated in Figure 2 and Table 4.

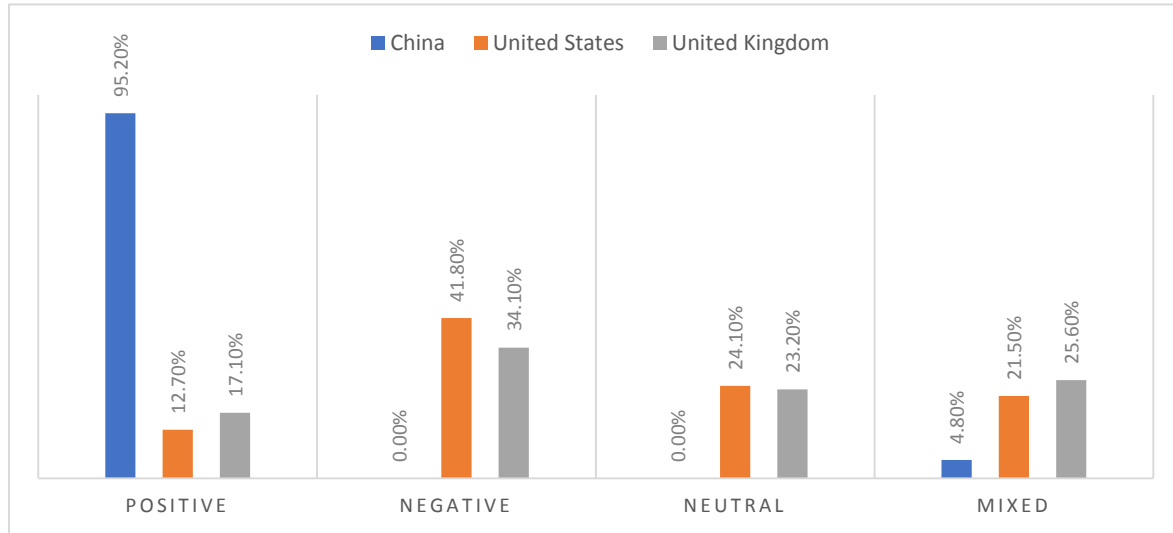


Figure 2: Percentage of different tones used among the media in China, US and UK

Table 4: Chi-square results of the tone variations among China, US, and UK

			Tone towards Chinese Investment in Africa - News Article				Total
			Positive	Negative	Neutral	Mixed tone	
Country of Study	China	Count (% within Country of Study)	79 (95.2%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (4.8%)	83 (100.0%)
		Expected Count	35.0	20.8	12.9	14.3	83.0
	United States	Count (% within Country of Study)	10 (12.7%)	33 (41.8%)	19 (24.1%)	17 (21.5%)	79 (100.0%)
		Expected Count	33.3	19.8	12.3	13.6	79.0
	United Kingdom	Count (% within Country of Study)	14 (17.1%)	28 (34.1%)	19 (23.2%)	21 (25.6%)	82 (100.0%)
		Expected Count	34.6	20.5	12.8	14.1	82.0
Total	Count (% within Country of Study)		103 (42.2%)	61 (25.0%)	38 (15.6%)	42 (17.2%)	244 (100.0%)
	Expected Count		103.0	61.0	38.0	42.0	244.0

Chi-square tests indicate that media in these three countries used different tones to cover Chinese investment in Africa ( $\chi^2 = 147.397$ ,  $df = 6$ ,  $p < .001$ ). As shown in Table 2, China (95.2%) covered the issue with a more positive tone than the US (12.7%) and UK (17.1%). Media in the US (41.8%) and UK (34.1%) had more negative articles than the Chinese media (0%). Therefore, the hypothesis is supported.

#### 4.2 Frame Analysis Results

In terms of framing the news stories by the respective newspapers from the three African countries, five generic frames developed by Semetko & Valkenburg (2000) were analyzed. The descriptive statistics of the five frames adopted by the three African countries' media are illustrated in the Table 5.

*Table 5: Descriptive statistics of the media frames adopted by African Countries*

Country	Attribution of responsibility M(SD)	Human interest (SD)	Conflict M(SD)	Morality (SD)	Economic (SD)
Kenya	2.84 (1.35)	1.96 (1.35)	.52 (1.25)	.85 (.99)	2.75 (.46)
South Africa	2.57 (1.62)	1.89 (1.53)	1.28 (1.73)	1.04 (1.13)	2.52 (.79)
Nigeria	3.18 (1.21)	2.27 (1.25)	1.14 (1.63)	.98 (1.08)	2.76 (.48)
Range	(0 – 4)	(0 – 5)	(0 – 3)	(0 – 3)	(0 – 3)

For RQ2 (a), the results of one-way ANOVA indicate that the presence of attribution of responsibility frame differs significantly across the media coverage from the three African countries ( $F_{\text{attribution}}(2, 243) = 3.78$ ;  $p < .05$ ). In order to examine if there are significant differences in framing the attribution of responsibility frame among the three African countries, Tukey Post Hoc multiple comparisons tests analysis indicate that the presence of attribution of responsibility frame is significantly different between South Africa ( $M = 2.57$ ,  $SD = 1.62$ ) and

Nigeria ( $M = 3.18$ ,  $SD = 1.21$ ,  $p < .05$ ). However, no significant results are found between Kenya ( $M = 2.84$ ,  $SD = 1.35$ ) and the other African countries (South Africa:  $p = .44$ , Nigeria:  $p = .27$ ).

As for RQ2 (b), no significant differences were found among the three African countries in their adoption of the human interest frame  $F_{\text{humaninterest}}(2, 242) = 1.66$ ;  $p = .19$ ). Human interest frame's Tukey Post Hoc multiple comparison test analysis indicates no significant difference between Kenya ( $M = 1.96$ ;  $SD = 1.35$ ) and South Africa ( $M = 1.89$ ,  $SD = 1.53$ ,  $p = .93$ ), Kenya and Nigeria ( $M = 2.27$ ,  $SD = 1.25$ ,  $p = .35$ ), and Nigeria and South Africa ( $p = .20$ ).

In response to RQ2 (c), there was a significant difference in adopting the conflict frame,  $F_{\text{conflict}}(2, 243) = 5.62$ ;  $p < .01$ ). Tukey Post Hoc analysis indicate that conflict frame is significantly different between Kenya ( $M = .52$ ,  $SD = 1.25$ ) and the other two African countries: South Africa ( $M = 1.28$ ,  $SD = 1.73$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and Nigeria ( $M = 1.14$ ,  $SD = 1.63$ ,  $p < .05$ ). No significant difference was observed between South Africa and Nigeria ( $p = .83$ ).

For RQ2 (d), no significant differences were found among the African countries in the adoption of the morality frame,  $F_{\text{morality}}(2, 244) = .69$ ;  $p = .50$ ). The Tukey Post Hoc multiple comparison test indicates there were no significant differences between Kenya ( $M = .85$ ,  $SD = .99$ ) and South Africa ( $M = 1.04$ ,  $SD = 1.13$ ,  $p = .49$ ), Kenya and Nigeria ( $M = .98$ ,  $SD = 1.08$ ,  $p = .72$ ) and South Africa and Nigeria ( $p = .93$ ).

To answer RQ2 (e), there was also a significant difference in adopting the economic consequence frame among the three African countries,  $F_{\text{economic}}(2, 244) = .69$ ;  $p < .05$ ). A Tukey Post Hoc multiple comparisons tests analysis indicate that the presence of economic frame is significantly different between Kenya ( $M = 2.75$ ,  $SD = .46$ ) and South Africa ( $M = 2.52$ ,  $SD = .79$ ,  $p < .05$ ), and between South Africa and Nigeria ( $M = 2.76$ ,  $SD = .48$ ,  $p < .05$ ). No significant differences were observed between Kenya and Nigeria ( $p = .99$ ).



Table 6: Descriptive statistics of the media frames adopted by China, US and UK

Country	Attribution of responsibility M(SD)	Human interest (SD)	Conflict M(SD)	Morality (SD)	Economic (SD)
China	2.54 (1.23)	2.11 (1.05)	.36 (97)	.71 (.95)	2.66 (.55)
United States	1.99 (1.31)	2.01 (1.34)	2.37 (1.76)	.90 (.11)	2.24 (.91)
United Kingdom	2.48 (1.39)	2.46 (1.10)	2.15 (1.70)	.99 (.99)	2.41 (.82)
Range	(0 – 4)	(0 – 5)	(0 – 3)	(0 – 3)	(0 – 3)

Next, the media coverage in China, US, and UK were analyzed to examine their adoption of the five generic frames as illustrated in table 6.

For RQ3 (a), the results of one-way ANOVA indicate that the presence of attribution of responsibility frame differs significantly across the media coverage from the three countries,  $F_{\text{attribution}}(2, 239) = 4.17; p < .05$ . To examine if there are significant differences in framing the attribution of responsibility frame among the three countries, a Tukey Post Hoc multiple comparisons tests analysis indicate that the presence of attribution of responsibility frame was significantly different between China ( $M = 2.54, SD = 1.23$ ) and the United States ( $M = 1.99, SD = 1.31, p < .05$ ). However, no significant results are found between China and United Kingdom ( $M = 2.48, SD = 1.39, p = .95$ ), but a marginal difference was observed between the United States and United Kingdom ( $p = .051$ ).

In response to RQ3 (b), there were significant differences in adopting the human interest frame,  $F_{\text{humaninterest}}(2, 239) = 3.32; p < .05$ . A Tukey Post Hoc multiple comparisons tests analysis indicate that the adoption of the human interest frame was significantly different between United States ( $M = 2.01, SD = 1.34$ ) and United Kingdom ( $M = 2.46, SD = 1.10, p < .05$ ). However, no significant results were found between China ( $M = 2.11, SD = 1.05$ ) and United States ( $p = .86$ ), and between China and United Kingdom ( $p = .14$ ).

As for RQ3 (c), there were significant differences in the adoption of the conflict frame among the three countries,  $F_{\text{conflict}}(2, 241) = 43.30; p < .01$ . A Tukey Post Hoc multiple comparisons test analysis indicate the adoption of the conflict frame was significantly different between China ( $M = .36, SD = .97$ ) and United States ( $M = 2.37, SD = 1.76, p < .001$ ), and between China and United Kingdom ( $M = 2.15, SD = 1.70, p < .001$ ). No significant difference was exhibited between the United States and United Kingdom ( $p = .63$ ).

For RQ3 (d), the presence of the morality frame showed no significant differences among the three countries;  $F_{\text{morality}}(2, 240) = 1.76; p = .17$ . A Tukey Post Hoc multiple comparisons test analysis indicates that no statistical significance was exhibited between China ( $M = .71; SD = .95$ ) and United States ( $M = .90, SD = .11, p = .43$ ), between United States and United Kingdom ( $M = .99, SD = .99, p = .83$ ), and between China and United Kingdom ( $p = .16$ ).

Lastly, the test of RQ3 (e) indicates that the adoption of the economic consequence frame exhibited significant differences among the three countries,  $F_{\text{economic}}(2, 241) = 3.16; p < .01$ . A Tukey Post Hoc multiple comparisons test analysis indicate that the presence of the economic consequence frame is significantly different between China ( $M = 2.66, SD = .55$ ) and United States ( $M = 2.24, SD = .91, p < .01$ ). No significant difference was exhibited between the United States and United Kingdom ( $M = 2.41, SD = .82, p = .33$ ), and between China and United Kingdom ( $p = .10$ ).

## CHAPTER V. DISCUSSION

### 5.0 Introduction

This study examines how media from different countries (i.e., China, United Kingdom, United States, Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa) covered the Chinese investment in Africa. The tones adopted by the different news media and the five generic frames proposed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) helped the researcher analyze the differences in media coverage across these countries. The interpretation and implications of the results are discussed below.

### 5.1 Interpretation of Tones

The results indicate that the issue of Chinese investment in Africa was portrayed differently based on the country of news publication. The analysis of the three major African countries (Kenya, South Africa and Nigeria) offer insights about how the media in the African continent portrayed the Chinese involvement on the continent. Likewise, the Chinese, American and UK's media offered insights of the media's portrayal of Chinese investment in Africa based on their political and economic interests.

In general, media coverage in the three African countries reported Chinese investment in Africa with a more positive tone. Similar sentiments were echoed by Afrobarometer, an African-led research organization that conducts surveys in 36 African countries. Sixty-three percent of the respondents in these African countries think that Chinese political and economic influence in Africa has more merits than demerits (Afrobarometer, 2016).

Despite of the general positive tone, the three African countries also covered the issue with some significant difference. Specially, media coverage in Kenya was particularly likely to portray the Chinese investment in a positive tone. These results are similar to results reported by the Global Construction Review (2014) in a survey conducted by the Ethics Institute of South

Africa to understand the Africa's attitude towards Chinese companies. The survey's findings indicated that majority of Kenyans (77%) as compared to Nigeria (46%) and South Africa (29%) thought that Chinese companies were having a positive impact on the economy and the development of the country. My findings revealed that Kenya's media, Daily Nation was more positive as compared to the other selected African countries can be derived from projects such as the construction of Thika super highway in Nairobi, the standard gauge railway from Mombasa city to Naivasha via Nairobi and the construction of the Confucius Institute Building at the University of Nairobi among other projects funded by the Chinese government that have immensely contributed to Kenya's economic growth. These projects among others might have contributed to the positive tone in Kenya's media. For the South African media, there were reports of Chinese media buying shares in the South African media companies. This could be due to the fact that South Africa has a higher negative tone among the African countries and hence Chinese government, or companies would like to use the media to create a positive and conducive image.

Compared with the differences among the media coverage in the three African countries ( $\chi^2 = 12.18$ ), the variation in tones was significantly more salient between China, US, and UK ( $\chi^2 = 147.40$ ). While China Daily had a very strong positive tone with no negative toned news articles, New York Times and Guardian covered Chinese investment in African with an extensively negative tone. This can be attributed to the fact that Chinese media are controlled by the state and hence largely disseminates positive toned news towards Chinese investment in Africa as per the government's requirement. From this perspective, China Daily can be considered a tool of mediated public diplomacy, which refers to "the efforts by the government of one nation to influence public or elite opinion in a second nation for the purpose of turning the

foreign policy of the target nation to advantage” (Manheim, 1994, p. 4). As the world changes from the “hard power” diplomacy where military is involved, governments are now implementing “soft power” diplomacy by taking advantage of mass media utility (Nye, 2008).

With China being a Mandarin speaking country, media such as the *Radio China Kimataifa* (Swahili service) and its mother station China Radio International (CRI), StarTimes, and China Global Television Network (CGTN) all based in Nairobi, Kenya and the involvement of Chinese investors in the purchase of shares in the South Africa’s Independent Media are indications that they are targeting the African audience. This are meant as persuasion tools for selling the Chinese policies globally. This has led to outcomes such as the Kenyan Jubilee Party taking its members to China to learn from the Communist Party of China on grassroots mobilization skills, party management and democracy (The Standard, 2018).

On the other hand, media from the Western countries covered the Chinese investment in a negative tone because China is often viewed as a competitor by the Western countries. The New York Times and the Guardian were more likely to represent Chinese investment in Africa as a bad idea. The negative narrative was aimed at portraying Chinese investment in Africa as causing more negative effects on the African continent and having fewer positive effects. These two news media were more likely to use phrases such as “new colonial power” and “Chinese colonialism” when covering Chinese investment in Africa. Such phrases are meant to change African’s attitudes towards Chinese investment in Africa as an investment that should be rejected.

The different tones adopted by media from China, US, and UK may exert influence on how the African public think of the Chinese involvement in this continent. Readers of the Guardian and the New York Times may perceive Chinese investment in Africa as exploitative

and Africa as a dangerous or unfruitful place to invest at. These news sources also remind the readers that Africa is headed towards being colonized by China and that China is setting a debt trap and financially “weaponizing” capital in Africa. Readers of China Daily may perceive Africa as a place of opportunities for new investments and a continent where China is generating opportunities for the continent to develop in terms of the African countries’ economy and infrastructure. The pronounced differences in the media coverage of Chinese investment in Africa could have a greater division of public opinion, making it hard to reach a global agreement on the importance or the side effects of Chinese investment in Africa (Kahan et al., 2011).

## **5.2 The Interpretation of the Generic Frames**

Another contribution of this thesis is to assess differences in the usage of different generic frames proposed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) among different countries and their selected media outlets. Unlike issue-specific news frames which are defined by de Vreese (1999) as frames that make use of “specific topics or news events,” generic frames are broadly applicable frames that can be applied to a variety of news topics and events over times and sometimes over diverse cultural settings (de Vreese, Peter, & Semetko, 2001). Previous studies have adopted this framework to examine the media coverage of society issues such as economic issues in Switzerland (Guenduez, Schedler, & Ciocan, 2016), the launch of the Euro (de Vreese, Peter & Semetko, 2001), and the immigration debate in the U.S. (Kim & Wanta, 2018). Theoretically, the study extends the applicability of generic frames by using it in the context of Chinese investment in Africa.

Attribution of responsibility frame was reported differently among the African countries. A high score on the attribution of responsibility frame suggests that the Chinese investment in

African can be attributed to the governments' initiatives that facilitated or opposed the Chinese involvement in the continent. Nigeria's Vanguard used the attribution of responsibility frame the most as compared to the other African countries. The factors leading to Chinese investment in Nigeria were mostly attributed to the government of Nigeria signing agreements with the Chinese government or the government officials of the two states meeting to discuss about the economic ties and relations. Quotes such as this one were eminent in most of the articles, "President Goodluck Jonathan and his Chinese Counterpart, Xi Jinping, Wednesday, presided over the signing of five agreements to boost financial, trade, economic, technical and cultural relations between Nigeria and China" (Vanguard, 2013).

For human interest frame, there were no significant differences among the media in the three African countries. All of these three newspapers spent some space on discussing how the Chinese investment affected people's life in terms of many aspects such as job opportunity and infrastructure. For example, Daily Nation (2013) published a story that featured the Chinese involvement in Africa, especially focusing on the projects that concern people's lives. China has also been on the upper hand when it comes to the number of technicians, medical workers, volunteers, and agricultural experts that go to Africa to support African workers. This has promoted industrialization and production in Africa by Africans hence enhancing technological transfer to the African population from the Chinese expertise.

Compared with Kenya, South Africa and Nigeria's media adopted the conflict frame more frequently. This finding may be attributed to the fact that the media in South Africa and Nigeria were more likely to challenge the intention and impact of Chinese involvement in the Africa continent. By definition, the conflict frame puts more emphasis on conflict between two or more countries, institutions, groups, individuals or organizations when reporting an issue

(Neuman, Just, & Crigler, 1992). For example, one news story of the Mail & Guardian (2014) featured a survey conducted by a Pretoria-based Ethics Institute of South Africa (EthicsSA). The story indicated that South Africans and Nigerians had conflicting opinions about the Chinese investment and were far more in disagreement against Chinese businesses than Kenyans. In other words, the news coverage in South Africa and Nigeria reflect the public opinion in these two countries which acknowledged the benefits of Chinese investment but also considered China as an exploitative partner. On the contrary, most of the Kenyan media coverage reported Chinese investment in Africa as beneficial and supporting the growth of the Kenyan economy and hence used less of the conflict frame. In the rare cases where the conflict frame was adopted, the Kenyan Daily Nation referred to the Western countries' media which described Chinese investment in Africa as unbeneficial to the continent.

The morality frame was rarely adopted in the media coverage in Kenya, South Africa, and Nigeria, and there were no significant differences between these countries. Nevertheless, a closer look into the measurement indicated that one aspect of the morality frame was quite salient in the news coverage about the Chinese investment; that is, several news articles offered "specific social prescriptions about how to behave" so as to address the opportunities and challenges brought by the Chinese investment. For instance, during the opening speech of the BRICS meeting in South Africa, Naledi Pandor, the Higher Education and Training Minister asked academics in South Africa to (Bond; Mail & Guardian, 2018) "develop a collaborative set of interventions that advances the agenda of the bloc. The BRICS formation is one that is based on a progressive view of how the world should develop; and the world is in need of progressive ideas, ideas that come from issues of social justice and inclusion." In addition, the Mail & Guardian (2015) reported that Nhlanhla Nene, the South Africa's finance minister, advised



authorities to implement policies that would ensure that the economic benefits of the Chinese investment should be shared by taxation, ensuring redistributive and progressive development, translating national and continental economic growth into economic transformation that will create employment and curb poverty on the continent.

The news media in Kenya and Nigeria were more likely to adopt the economic consequence frame than South Africa. This frame focused on the economic utility of the Chinese investment in Africa. Most news articles focused on the positive impact of the investment, though others focused on the negative aspect of the investment as well, especially segregation of the African employees in Chinese investments. For instance, Chinese investment in Africa was regarded by the Kenyan Daily Nation as a two-way economic collaboration that has improved both African countries and China exponentially. This exponential economic improvement was attributed not just to the Chinese remarkable development but also to the African countries' fast economic growth.

When it comes to the media coverage in China, UK, and US, they presented significant differences in the adoption of four frames and only exception was on the morality frame. With Britain having extensive economic, political, military, and cultural engagements in Africa such as the permanent military base in Kenya and the economic ties with South Africa, China is viewed as a direct competitor. The US also set up the Africa Command in the Pentagon (AFRICOM) with a permanent military base in Djibouti. According to McFate (2007), AFRICOM serves several of the US interests on the African continent among them: combating terrorism, containing terrorism and armed conflicts, and responding to the growing Chinese influence especially in terms of natural resource acquisition and search for market for their industrial produce. There are fears that the Chinese influence might prevent this African

continent exploitation now that the Chinese are not scared of flexing muscles with the US and UK. This explains why China and the two Western countries framed Chinese investment in Africa differently.

As for the attribution of responsibility frame, it was adopted more frequently in the Chinese and UK's media than the American media. The China Daily often attributed the Chinese investment in Africa to the efforts by both the Chinese and African countries' governments. For instance, China Daily (2015) quoted Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, the former chairperson of the African Union, that African governments expected Chinese government to help build "the Africa we want." She lauded China for supporting African development initiatives and helping the continent fight against colonialism during the struggle for independence and neocolonialism from the Western powers. The Guardian focused on relating the Chinese investment with the UK's government's slow response to the Chinese competitiveness, especially in terms of their business deals with the African countries. The New York Times attributed the Chinese investment to the Chinese government attempting to colonize the African continent. There was less attribution of the Chinese investment to the progress of the African countries. Most New York Times news articles focused on portraying Chinese investment with a negative image and on limited occasions attributing the governments to the Chinese investment in Africa. Future research is needed to investigate why the Guardian was more likely to adopt this frame than the New York Times.

The human interest frame was also frequently used by the three media organizations from China, UK and the US. The Guardian was more likely to adopt this frame in the coverage of Chinese investment than the New York Times. This significant difference may be attributed to the fact that the UK has strong ties and a "shared history and cultural ties" with Africa, as Prime

Minister Theresa May said when she visited Africa. Most of the African countries are former British colonies and hence British have a clear understanding of the African continent, framing their news on how the Chinese investment is impacting lives on the African continent. As one of the Guardian news articles reported, in addition to the Chinese investment, Africa needs more focus on its domestic manufacturing, especially agricultural production and machinery, to utilize the local market for domestic consumption. This will help the African governments to generate job opportunities for the local people and hence pulling them out of economic misery that the African continent has been subjected to for decades. On the other hand, the New York Times mainly focused on discrediting the Chinese investment in Africa.

Conflict frame, which emphasizes a rift between individuals, institutions or groups as a method of attracting the audience attention (Neuman et al., 1991), was used more frequently by the Guardian and the New York Times than the China Daily. While the China Daily concentrated on why the China-Africa cooperation was thriving and how the Chinese investments and businesses in Africa were helping pull the African continent out of poverty through the win-win cooperation, the Guardian and the New York Times focused on branding China as a country exploiting African resources. For example, one article of the New York Times reported that John Bolton (President Trump's national security advisor) blamed China for aggressively and deliberately targeting its investment to the African continent to gain a competitive edge over the United States by using opaque agreements, bribes, and applying the 'debt trap' diplomacy to hold African countries as a captive to the Chinese demands and wishes. News media in the two Western countries often accused China of having a predatory and negative motive towards African economies, only caring about its own economic interests and not concerned about the African interest and progress.

The morality frame was the least used frame among the three countries and there was no significant difference in the adoption of this frame. Other media framing studies such as Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) also found that the morality frame was not adopted as often as the other frames. A similar study of four Dutch regional newspapers also could not identify this morality frame as a consistent frame in the coverage of asylum seekers (d'Haenens and de Lange, 2001). This frame pertains to news stories that make reference to morals, God and religious tenets that dictate our lives (Dirikx & Gelders, 2010). Such tenets were not expected to come out prominently in a study that was focused on the Chinese investment in Africa.

The economic consequence frame was the most used frame during the reporting of Chinese investment in Africa. This frame was popular among the three countries since the coverage was mostly focused on the economic impact of the investment on the African continent, the Chinese economy, and the economy of the Western countries that consider China as an economic competitor. The China Daily associated the economic frame with the win-win economic cooperation between China and Africa while the New York Times accused China of exploiting Africa and branding China as the big exporter of pollution. The findings indicated that the China Daily adopted the frame more frequently than the New York Times. This is probably because the American politicians focused on more issues than the economy when they were talking about the Africa continent. For example, when President Obama visited Africa in 2013 and 2015, he put little focus on the economic progress of the continent but primarily warned the African governments against Chinese investment and advocated for human rights and democracy. The UK's Guardian not only criticized the Chinese investment in Africa but also blamed their own government for not being as aggressive as China in the global investment. For example, one news article published by the Guardian referred to Chinese investment in Africa as

“the scramble for Africa” and claimed that the UK government was lagging behind in this scramble.

### **5.3 Limitations of the Study**

Comprehensively, this research achieved its intended target of studying the tone and frames adopted by media from various regions when reporting Chinese investment in Africa. However, it has a few limitations.

To begin with, I only examined news framing by newspaper organizations. Even though newspapers still play a huge impact on delivering news to the audience and set the agenda of other news media such as TV and radio (Lewis, Broitman & Sznitman, 2015), future research can extend this study by examining how television news and documentaries cover the Chinese investment in Africa.

The selection of the newspapers also had limitations. It was assumed that the selected newspapers were a representation of the tone and frames adopted by the whole media industry within the selected countries. There is a possibility that different media from the same country might report an issue by adopting different tones and frames. Future research could include a variety of sources in the analyses.

Expanding this study beyond the English articles will also give a clear understanding of the frames and tones adopted by other media in different regions that do not use English language as their medium of communication. Even though most news media in China are hypothesized to report Chinese investment in Africa with a similar tone and frames, some African countries where China now has a huge influence use different lingua franca such as Swahili, French, Portuguese and Afrikaans etc. and hence diminishing the thoroughness and scope of the project. A comparison with newspapers written in different languages other than

English would have been a source of a broader framework for comparison and contrast.

Combining this study with survey, interviews of the local people on the ground, editors and reporters could also have given a vivid insight of the public opinion about Chinese investment in Africa.

This research was also restricted to the five generic frames proposed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000). This hindered the researcher from coming up with issue-specific frames and hence leaving out important frames that would have created even more new knowledge. It is hence worth to acknowledge these limitations that help to identify and highlight gaps and questions that can be addressed by future studies.

While this study identifies each country's media coverage, future work should extend this line of research by investigating the effect of these frames and tones on public opinion in each country. Newspapers are written and easily accessible to the elites in societies. This makes it hard to influence the public opinion of the general public. Hence, such source of information is not a clear and authentic information that can be trusted to represent the feeling of the general public towards Chinese investment in Africa. For example, maybe the positive media coverage in Kenya is one possible reason why Kenyans have a relatively favorable opinion on China and Chinese people.

## **5.4 Conclusion**

This study was aimed at studying how the news media in various countries (China, UK, US, Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa) covered the Chinese investment in Africa differently in terms of the adoption of tones and frames. The examination of the media coverage in the three African countries suggested that most African countries favor Chinese investment though the extent of the favorability varies. Specifically, the South African media were more critical of the

Chinese investment with citations of cases of racism and mistreatment of the African employees working in Chinese investments contributing to the poor perception. In general, South Africa is considered more xenophobic in comparison to other African countries. This might have contributed to the negative perception of foreign investments too. Criticism can also be attributed to the fact that Chinese businesses are considered a threat to the domestic manufacturing sector especially the textile industry in South Africa and fishing industry in Kenya.

When it comes to the Chinese media, the China Daily portrays Chinese investment in Africa as a win-win cooperation. As a propaganda and public diplomacy tool, the tone and frame adopted by the Chinese media conforms with President Xi's proclamations during FOCAC meetings that Chinese economic engagements with Africa are based on an equality model which brings mutual benefits to both China and the African continent. The political influence of China on the Africa continent has been increasing over the past decade. Such political influence can be observed when more than 50 African leaders attended the 2018 FOCAC meeting in Beijing while fewer than 30 were in attendance during the United Nations General Assembly in New York City. Another sign of Chinese political power gained from investing in Africa is the isolation of Taiwan. In 2013, four African countries gave diplomatic recognition to Taiwan. Today, only Eswatini (formerly known as Swaziland) still has diplomatic ties with Taiwan.

On the contrary, the New York Times and the Guardian adopted mostly an unfavorable tone towards Chinese investment in Africa. A majority of the articles criticized the investments as aimed at extracting African raw materials to feed the hungry growing Chinese economy. China is also viewed by the Western media as a direct competitor for the African market and resources that the West has enjoyed for decades. To portray China as an enemy of the African continent, these two media organizations used terms such as "China being a new African

colonial power” and “Chinese colonialism of the African continent.” This is also a form of mediated public diplomacy aimed at changing attitudes of the African nations against Chinese investment in Africa to the West’s advantage. For example, the New York Times (2018) reported a program announced by Mr. John Bolton, President Trump’s national security adviser, called “Prosper Africa”. Mr. Bolton warned African nations that the greatest threat to the African continent was neither poverty nor Islamist extremism but the expansionist China.

The most vivid depictions that can be observed from most of the stories published by these media organizations can be categorized into two: the zero-sum game and the ‘Western modernity’ as a hegemony where Western countries believe that they have authority to teach Africans on what is best for them. The zero-sum game model can be used to sum up the relationship between colonial and post-colonial Africa and the West where gains made by the West were losses or near-losses for the African continent (Amaizo, 2012). According to Amaizo, the colonial masters and the United States for decades and China (of recent) have formed partnerships with African nations that are based on a full exploitative zero-sum dependency game whose results are the continued inequality in terms of economic development and growth. A story published by the Guardian (2018) acknowledged the fact that British companies operating in Africa were still make an eye-watering amount of money as profits out of their investments while leaving the ordinary Africans living very poorly. This story among others explains why the West feel threatened by the Chinese investments in Africa, a continent that they have benefited from for centuries. Unfortunately, neither the West nor Chinese investments can be termed as a win-win cooperation in the ideal situation.

Western modernity as a hegemony, also referred to as orientalism and Occidentalism by Said (1979), was also vivid during the analysis. Venn (2000) suggested that Occidentalism puts



more emphases on becoming modernized by adopting westernization, which has progressively become established as the privileged, and the only recommended way of doing things. Most of the stories published by both the New York Times and the Guardian took this approach of teaching the African continent of what they think is best for the continent. For instance, the Guardian (2018) acknowledged that Britain's imperial domination of the African continent and its resources has continued decades after the African nations gained independence from their colonial rule. The New York Times (2018) also reported a program announced by Mr. John Bolton, President Trump's national security adviser called "Prosper Africa". Mr. Bolton warned African nations that the greatest threat to the African continent was neither poverty nor Islamist extremism but the expansionist China. This is contrary to what is actually on the ground in Africa where poverty is the greatest challenge that the continent faces. These can be viewed as Western countries' old postcolonialism discourses, presenting Western dominance on the African continental development paradigm (Shome & Hegde, 2002) and the western superiority over developing nations (Said, 1979) which is exercised by teaching the African nations what they thing is "right" for the continent.

In summary, the economic competition for resources and market in Africa by China may have posed threats to Western traditional interests in Africa leading to the Western media to adopt a negative tone when framing Chinese investments on the continent. On the other hand, the Chinese media consider Africa as a trade partner and referred to the relationship between China and Africa as a win-win cooperation for both parties. At the same time, the African media adopted varying levels of favoritism towards Chinese investment in Africa based on their experiences with the Chinese people and the Western influence.

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## APPENDIX A. CODING INSTRUCTIONS

**Unit of Analysis:** Whole story for both frames (human interest, economic consequence, morality, conflict, and the attribution of responsibility) and tones (Positive, negative, neutral and mixed)

**Date:** Between January 1, 2013 and December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018

**Coder Name:**

**Date:** Date of publication

Enter actual date as mmddyy with no spaces or punctuation (ex. 071010 = July 10, 2010)

### Independent Variables

Media Origin: the country where the news story was published

1. Kenya
2. South Africa
3. Nigeria
4. China
5. United Kingdom
6. United States

News media name

1. Daily Nation
2. Mail & Guardian
3. Vanguard
4. China Daily
5. The Guardian
6. The New York Times

## Dependent Variables

**Tone:** Tone toward Chinese investment in Africa within a story from all the countries under study

1. = Positive (clearly positive toward investment in Africa)
2. = Negative (clearly negative toward Investment in Africa)
3. = Neutral (neither positive nor negative)
4. = Mixed tone (both negative and positive)

**Frame:** frame towards investment in Africa within a story from all the countries under study.

Frame items proposed by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000), answer the following questions with 1 indicating presence of frame and 0 indicating absence:

### Attribution of responsibility frame

Does the story suggest that some level of gov't has the ability to alleviate the problem? (1) (0)

Does the story suggest that some level of the government is responsible for the issue/problem?

(1) (0)

Does the story suggest solution(s) to the problem/issue? (1) (0)

Does the story suggest an individual (or group of people in society) is responsible for the issue-problem? (1) (0)

### Human interest frame

Does the story provide a human example or "human face" on the issue? (1) (0)

Does the story employ adjectives or personal vignettes that generate feelings of outrage, empathy caring, sympathy, or compassion? (1) (0)

Does the story emphasize how individuals and groups are affected by the issue/problem? (1) (0)

Does the story go into the private or personal lives of the actors? (1) (0)

Does the story contain visual information that might generate feelings of outrage, sympathy, caring- sympathy, or compassion? (1) (0)

### **Conflict frame**

Does the story reflect disagreement between parties-individuals-groups-countries?

Does one party/individual/ group/country reproach another? (1) (0)

Does the story refer to two sides or to more than two sides of the problem or issue? (1) (0)

### **Morality frame**

Does the story contain any moral message? (1) (0)

Does the story make reference to morality, God, and other religious tenets? (1) (0)

Does the story offer specific social prescriptions about how to behave? (1) (0)

### **Economic frame**

Is there a mention of financial losses or gains now or in the future? (1) (0)

Is there a mention of the costs/degree of expense involved? (1) (0)

Is there a reference to economic consequences of pursuing or not pursuing a course of action? (1)  
(0)