



Sino-African Relations: How Chinese Cultural Project Affects Perceptions of China as a Global Actor

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How chinese Cultural Project Affects Perceptions of China as a Global Actor: A Case Study of the Mozambique-China Cultural Centre in Maputo

Background

China has emerged as a significant global actor, expanding its economic, political, and cultural influence. In Africa, partnerships have grown under the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Mozambique is one of China's key partners, where cultural diplomacy plays a growing role.

Research Problem & Questions

Problem: While China promotes a 'Win-Win partnership,' criticism exists over transparency, exploitation, and debt concerns. Cultural projects are a form of soft power to shape perceptions.

Main Research Question:

What are the effects of a Chinese-built cultural project on Mozambicans' perceptions of China as a global actor?

Sub-questions:

- How does the Mozambique-China Cultural Centre affect perceptions of China?
- What do people think of bilateral cooperation?
- How does soft power help China develop a positive image?

Methodology

Case study of the Mozambique-China Cultural Centre in Maputo. Data collected through semi-structured interviews with 26 Mozambican participants representing different backgrounds.

Findings

- Younger generations view China more positively through exposure to cultural projects.
- Cultural centres help reduce xenophobia and promote cultural understanding.
- However, concerns remain about exploitation, lack of transparency, and debt issues.

Conclusion

Cultural projects can improve China's image and expand its influence in Africa. The Mozambique-China Cultural Centre shows how soft power can build positive perceptions among youth, though long-term impacts depend on transparency and inclusivity.

Keywords

China, Mozambique, Soft Power, Cultural Project, Perceptions, Global Actor



The Mozambique-China Cultural Centre in Maputo
Source: Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Mozambique, 2022



L: Signing Ceremony between the Minister of Culture and Tourism of Mozambique and the Ambassador of China (2022)
R: The construction site of the Mozambique-China Cultural Centre at the Eduardo Mondlane University in Maputo (2020)
Source: Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Mozambique

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