

Journalism Reporting Comparison on China-Tanzania Road Projects A Case Study Based on the Xinhuanet.com (China) and Pambazuka News (Tanzania)

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Abstract

For decades, media has been a powerful instrument globally with an advancement of technology which simplifies availability, reliability and accessibility of information particularly in news reporting. This advancement enables societies from different countries and cultures to access news from different media regardless of national boundaries and distance from one place to another. Therefore, this article compares news reporting by Pambazuka News from Tanzania and Xinhuanet.com from China on coverage of China-Tanzania road projects. China-Tanzania road projects are the project contracted between Chinese companies and Tanzania government. This comparison is parallel with the objective of the article which is to analyze journalism reporting between the two media. Pambazuka News is an independent media from Tanzania, while Xinhuanet.com is the state owned media and controlled news agency from China. Both publish news in different languages, but for this case study, was based on English publications, distribution electronically and on their websites. The research paper content contains introduction on how did the two countries established friendship, research methodology, and journalism differences of reporting between Xinhuanet.com and Pambazuka News. Others are reporting types, pictures, layout, type of articles, content and title analysis, themes, and why the two media differ in their style of reporting before conclusion. The study finds that, information published by Pambazuka News has more comparative advantage, more analytical and objective with more detailed than Xinhuanet.com. It further revealed that, Pambazuka News consulted more sources, well detailed stories in terms of figures in its publication than Xinhuanet.com which depended only on government sources of information.

Keyword: Journalism reporting, road projects, analysis, source, news,

1.0 Introduction

Historical facts tell us that China established diplomatic relations with Tanganyika and Zanzibar on December 9, 1961 and December 11, 1963 respectively. Tanganyika and Zanzibar were united and become Tanzania on April 26, 1964, and it was natural for China to extend its diplomatic ties (<http://www.china.org.cn>).

The relationship between the People's Republic of China and Tanzania goes back to the Bandung Conference, in Indonesia, 1955, where by major countries of the Global South in essence denounced the rivalry between the USA and USSR best known as the period of Cold War (Tanzania Daily News). During the meeting, China was represented by Premier Zhou Enlai, and at that time, Tanganyika was still under British rule.

In 1965, Tanzania and China signed the Treaty of Friendship between the People's Republic of China and The United Republic of Tanzania. The two countries also signed many other agreements on bilateral cooperation in the field of economy, health and culture (<http://www.china.org.cn>).

Since then, Tanzania has had good relations with the People's Republic of China, recently receiving Chinese Presidents on February 2009 and on March 2013. Also, Tanzanian Presidents and other top government officials have been visiting China to cement relationships. This relationship is linked with bi-lateral co-operation including railway project on the Tanzania mainland. Also Chinese companies have handled in many infrastructures' construction deals. In the past 10 years (2004-2014), 14 Chinese companies have entered 58 roads construction projects of 3,140.85km long worth US\$1.75billion (*Pambazuka News January 2014 report*).

China-Tanzania roads' construction project deals were covered by the press at different stages of development and reporting about them provided an opportunity study e-mail and online electronic news letter (*Pambazuka News*) in contrast with the state news agency of the People's Republic of China (*Xinhuanet.com*) (*Pambazuka News* January, 2014 report and *Xinhuanet.com*.2013-08-29).

2.0 Research Methodology

The objective of this paper is to explore general content of *Pambazuka News* and *Xinhuanet.com* media in China-Tanzania roads project coverage by evaluating their different reports (source, content, details of the stories, figures in terms of costs of the project, names of construction companies, and distances in terms of kilometers). The research survey adopts analytical research design and explores the online publication. The analysis considers websites; www.Xinhuanet.com, <http://aiddatachina.org/projects/30183>, www.pambazuka.org, http://en.Wikipedia.org/wiki/Xinhu_News_Agency, and <http://allafrica.com/stories/2014013519.html> as case study for analysis. In order to achieve the goal, a report from *Pambazuka News* of January, 2014 was selected as a sample since it contains China-Tanzania road projects from different reports for more than 10 years while on the other side, *Xinhuanet.com* has been publishing information about roads project in Tanzania in several occasions. We have lead and collected more than 80 news stories, feature stories, opinion and analytical reports about China-Tanzania road projects. We have collected reports that only were published in *Pambazuka News* and *Xinhuanet.com* only.

2.1 *Pambazuka News*

Pambazuka is an open access, Pan-African e-mail and online electronic news letter. It is published weekly in English, Portuguese and French by Fahamu. It is written and produced by a Pan-African community of over 1,200 people including academics, social activists, and analyst. The word *Pambazuka* means dawn or rise in Swahili language ("*Pambazuka News.*" *Eurasia review website. Access 16 December 2013*). It has been operating since 2000 and its mission has been to provide a platform for social justice in Africa. *Pambazuka News* provides commentary and analysis on political and current affairs.

Pambazuka News is Fahamu's flagship publication founded in Africa with estimate weekly readership of 500,000 people

2.2 *Xinhuanet.com*

Xinhuanet.com is the central approving authority for news in China (*Jim Schnell. "Varied Journalistic Reporting of a Specific issue in China."*) It is the state press agency of The People's Republic of China (*Jump up to a b J.C. Well: Longman Pronunciation Dictionary, 3rd ed. For both British and American English*). *Xinhuanet.com* operates in more than 100 foreign bureaus worldwide. It is the sole channel for distribution of important news related to the Communist Party of China and the Chinese Central government. Most of the Newspapers like *People's Daily* rely on *Xinhuanet.com* to fill their pages. *Xinhua* established in 1931 as the Red China News Agency and changed to its current name in 1937, it is a publisher as well as news agency, it own more than 20 newspapers as well as dozen magazine and prints in different languages for example; Chinese, English, Japanese, Spanish, French, Russian, and Portuguese (*a b c Pares Susan. (2005). A Political and Economic dictionary of East Asia Routledge. ISBN 978-1-85-743-258-9*).

3.0 Journalism differences of reporting between *Xinhuanet.com* and *Pambazuka News*

3.1 Source

Reporting about China-Tanzania road projects events exercises in the United Republic of Tanzania. Source refers to a person who initiates communication. Reporting by *Pambazuka* and *Xinhuanet.com* China-Tanzania road projects events, are evaluated. Reporting by *Pambazuka* on its January, 2014 report "*Tanzania Becoming the New Chinese Province in Africa; Road Construction.*" Main sources of the journalism report is Tanzania National Roads Agency- TANROADS. Other sources of information are independent people outside the

government agencies e.g Rev. William Mwamalanga an economist and human rights activist a resident of Mbeya City in Tanzania who acknowledges China's pivotal role in the infrastructural development. Another source is Mabere Nyaicho Marando, a lawyer and politician who argues that the aid China offers is so little to address Africa's developmental needs and that this aid goes essentially to nations with endowed natural resources. We have to take into consideration that some of road projects in Tanzania are sponsored by Chinese government.

Xinhuanet.com reports news about China-Tanzania road projects from government sources without the views of independent commentators. In March 28,2013, it covered the story of President Xi visit to Africa with the following headline, "*What's Behind Xi's Visit to Africa?*" By He Wenping. Views of independent people were not included in the article. The source of the story was the speech given by President Xi Jinping at the Julius Nyerere International Convention Centre in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania where he said that, China differs from the West by providing infrastructure construction and large investment as an exchange. In March 25, 2013, Xinhua carried the story with headline, "*China, Tanzania issue joint communiqué on boosting friendly cooperation.*" The source of the story was the joint statement between leaders of the two countries which was released at the end of the visit. The story mentioned areas of cooperation including infrastructure construction, elaborating that China government will encourage Chinese financial institutions to actively explore the possibility of providing financial support for Tanzania's infrastructure construction.

3.2 Report type

3.2.1 Pictures

Pambazuka News portrayed a picture that show Chinese expansion in acquiring road tender building construction in Tanzania by mentioning all of the companies that had extended their projects. Xinhuanet.com published news with Chinese leaders accompanied by picture of both Tanzanian and Chinese officials during their visit in the country (Hun Jintao and Xi Jinping). Xinhuanet.com is creating the picture of engagement and friendship. It is expressing that China is prepared to do business with Africa generally, without mentioning of a specific country and specific support to its development plan including communication and infrastructure.

3.2.2 Layout (figures)

To the best of our knowledge on any issue where Xinhuanet.com has ever revealed figures in terms of cost for road projects in Tanzania apart from the fact that most of the roads projects since 2004 have been done by building companies of Chinese origin. But on the other hand Pambazuka News gave a well detailed article on its January, 2014 reports that shows all of the costs in each road project that a Chinese company engaged in. They quoted a reliable source of TANROADS saying that in the past 10 years, 14 Chinese companies have earned US\$1.75 billion. The issue explained in depth the amount of money in terms of US dollars that each company has earned in each project.

Table 1 below show one of the Chinese company SINOHYDRO its road construction projects, the amount of money that the company has earned and distances in kilometers.

No	Project name	Distance in Km	Amount of money (in US\$)
1.	Sengerema-Usagara	40 km	21.724 million
2.	Buzirayombo-Geita	100 km	25 million
3.	Geita-Sengerema	50 km	24.034 million
4.	Dodoma-Mayamaya	43.65 km	25 million
5.	Manyoni-Itigi-Chaya	89.3 km	66.56 million
6.	Nzega-Tabora Lot:2 Puge-Tabora	56.1 km	35.085 million
7.	Handeni-Mkata	54 km	34.81 million
8.	Korogwe-Handeni	65 km	38.4 million
9.	Katesh-Dareda	73.8 km	38.94 million
10.	Singida-Katesh	65.1 km	31.34 million
11.	Tanga-Horohoro	65 km	42.43 million
12.	Peramiho Junction-Mbinga	78 km	48.444 million
TOTAL	12 projects	779.95 km	431.77 million

Source: TANROADS report

3.2.3 Type of articles

Pambazuka News issued news report originated from TANROADS. It also carry opinion from analysts like Rev William Mwamalanga and Mabere Marando who commented on acknowledge Chinese role in the infrastructure development. The report includes the entire project that the agency contracted to Chinese building companies. In the past 10 years, 14 Chinese companies have entered 58 roads construction projects of 3,140.85km long worth US\$ 1.75 billion (Pambazuka News). Xinhuanet.com carried news stories originated from leader speech.

3.3 Content analysis

3.3.1 Theme

The main theme for Pambazuka News is on how Chinese building companies gaining roads tender construction in Tanzania. It shows that Chinese constructions companies are increasing competition in road projects in Tanzania unlike Japanese and European companies that used to win road tenders in previous years. It gave a well detailed article on its January, 2014 report that show all of the costs in each project that a Chinese company is engaging in. But Xinhuanet.com's theme is basing on engagement and friendship between China and Tanzania. It shows importance of Africa continent to China, development to mutually beneficial cooperation to the whole continent without mentioning a specific country and Africa continent as main dependant. Part of an article was quoted as saying that, *Africa is the main dependant strength of China's diplomacy, Xi's Africa trip enhances*

friendship with emerging countries and strengthen foothold of China's diplomacy (Xinhuanet.com). No cost or distance of any road project mentioned in an article in Xinhuanet.com.

Table 2. Show the amount of money in terms of UD\$ that each Chinese company earned in road construction in Tanzania between 2004-2014. In one deal, CHICO jointed venture with CRSG worth US\$ 116.2 million

Name of Chinese company	Amount earned in US\$ (MILLION)
CHIKO	490.26
SIETCO	123.03
CICO	23.82
CGC INT'L	151.2
SINOHYDRO	434.36
CHIKO	7.9
CCECC	95
CCCC	178.333
BCEG	8.91
CHCEG	50.3
CR 15G	80.912
China Newara	46.812
Jiangxi Geo-Eng	49.9

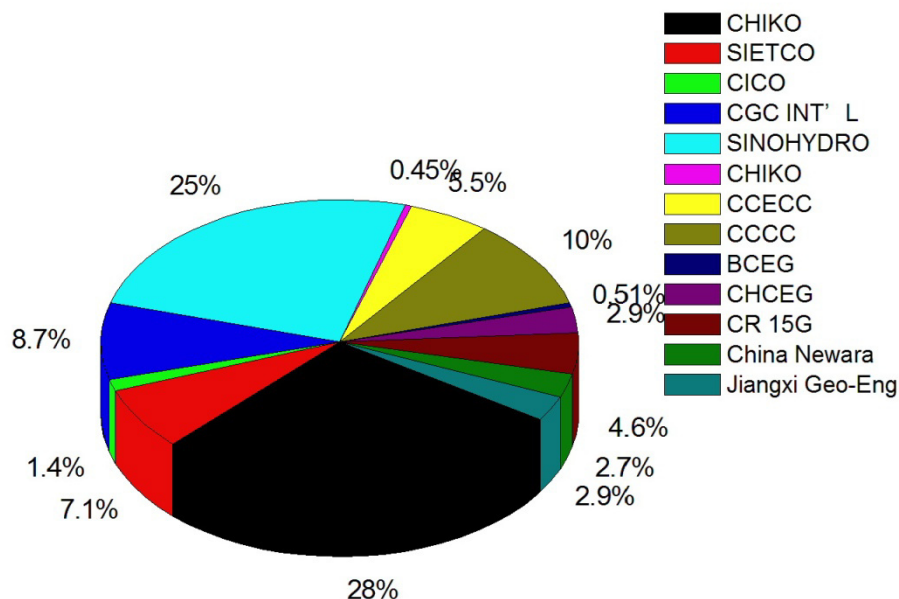


Fig 1. Show the amount of money in terms of USD\$ that each Chinese company earned in road construction in Tanzania between 2004-2014. In one deal, CHIKO jointed venture with CRSG worth US\$ 116.2 million

The pie chart above shows that CHIKO Company earned about 28% of all of the money that Chinese companies acquired for 10 years.

Referring to the tables and pie chart above, Pambazuka News is more detailed and analytical to report China-Tanzania road projects than Xinhuanet.com

Source: TANROADS report

According to Pambazuka News, analysts views the situation of Chinese building companies won road tender amounting more than 1 billion US\$ within 10 years as increased tremendously in terms of contractual activities especially in construction.

Either, Pambazuka News reported news of names of roads projects and their distances in terms of kilometers for each project (*Pambazuka News*). The article included a report of CHIKO which alone has entered with Tanzania 13 contracts that cost US\$490.26 billion with total of 705.2 kilometers. Some of the projects are; Singida-Igugumo (33km), Sekenke-Shelui (60km), Mwandiga-Manyovu (35.7km), Kyaka-Bugene (84.6km), Dareda-Minjingu (76.6km), and Kagoma-Lusahunga joint venture construction with CRSG (154km). Sichuan International Cooperation Co.Ltd (SIETCO) has a total of 283.9km, CGC INT'L (525.9km), SINOHYDRO (779.95km), CCECC (48.6KM), CCCC (273.5km), BCEG won the tender for Dar es Salaam Bus Rapid Transit to construct Ubungo Terminal, feeder station and up-country Bus station worth US\$8.91 million, Jiangxi Geo-Eng (75km), China Hunan Construction Engineering Group Corporation-CHCEG (76.6km), China Railway 15th Bureau Group Corporation- CR15G (112km), and China Newera (64.2km). Although some of the companies like SINOHYDRO are believed to be owned by the People's Republic of China government and that Xinhuanet.com is also controlled by the same government, there is no fact that gave mention of a Chinese company that won road project tender in United Republic of Tanzania. Analysts' viewed SINOHYDRO has

aggressively gone on the path of international expansion that becoming a face of China expansion across the world by pursuing operations in 55 countries across Asia, Africa, North America, South America and Europe.

In 2012 SINIHYDRO was selected by Nigerian government to construct the Zengeru hydropower station, project worth USD 1.013 billion and in the same year it was selected by a local government in Georgia to construct ring road, project worth USD 129 million.

Table 2, below show Chinese companies in Tanzania name and distance constructed in terms of kilometers

Companies' name	Distance in kilometers
CHICO	705.2
CRSG	154
SIETCO	283.9
CGC INT'L	525.9
SINOHYDRO	779.95
CCECC	48.6
CCCC	273.5
Jiangxi Geo-Eng	75
CHCEG	76.6
CR 15G	112
China Newara	64.2

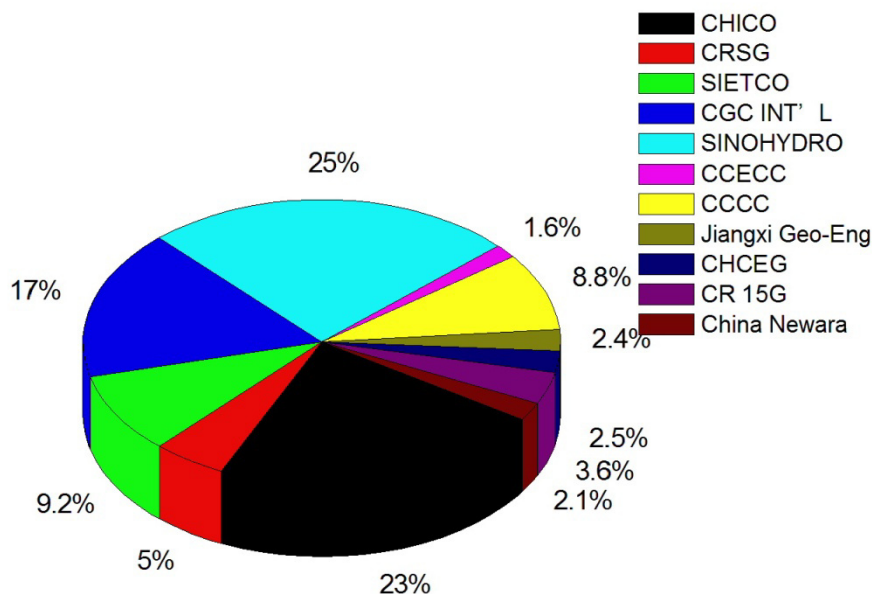


Fig.2 Below show Chinese companies name and distance constructed in terms of kilometers

The Pie chart above shows that SINOHYDRO won long distance in kilometers of 25% of the road tender for the period of 10 years. The 25% is the longest distance compared to other Chinese companies during the same period. CCECC won the shortest distance of 1.6% compared with other companies. An average distance is 9.1%.

Source TANROADS report which show that SINOHYDRO won more distance than other companies with 779.95 km, while CCECC had the least distance of 48.6km.

3.3.2 Title analysis

Comparing Pambazuka News and Xinhuanet.com title about China-Tanzania road project are different from each other. Pambazuka News came up with title which says, “Tanzania becoming the New Chinese Province in Africa.” The title portrays a picture of biasness and it is not diplomatic type of title. The report did not prove beyond reasonable doubt on how Tanzania is becoming new Chinese province to support the title because road tender it is a competitive according to TANROADS. Xinhuanet.com came up with title like, “Xi’s foreign tour fruitful: experts, Chinese president conclude state visit to Tanzania, China, Tanzania issue joint communiqué on boosting friendly cooperation and Chinese president speaks on Africa policy, pledges assistance.” All of these titles are composed in a diplomatic way and are promising to China-Africa future cooperation.

4.0 Reasons for differences in journalism reporting

Reporting in Xinhuanet.com was not sufficient in comparison with reporting in Pambazuka News because of differences in media news policy. Xinhuanet.com is government owned/controlled and operates under more constraints since it reports information that portrays government views on different issues unlike Pambazuka News which allow views from different sources including ordinary citizens and sources with divergent views. Basically, Pambazuka News is independent, and depends on different sources, it can be more objective and

analytical in its reporting. Because it is not owned by the government, it is not bounded to select sources of the informations, which are one of advantage it has to make different in news coverage over Xinhuanet.com.

Xinhuanet.com it is a Ministry-level department subordinate to the state council (*en.Wikipedia.org/wiki/Xinhua_News_Agency*). Its policy is to distribute important news related to the Communist Party and the Chinese Central government. It is described as the eye and tongue of the Party. Observing what is important for the message and passing on (*Male, Abbas&Kavoori, Ananadam.(1999)*). Xinhuanet.com is regarded as the bridge between Party, government and people communicating both the demands of the people and the policies of the party (*Markham, James. (1967)*). But Pambazuka News is an open access mail and online electronic newsletter. Its mission has been to provide commentary and news analysis on political and current affairs, it is not representing any political party and not a state-owned which is why it reports more information and analytical compared with Xinhua net.com . In similar comparison, independent media will be more objective and analytical than government owned media has Pambazuka News has been in this study. Language barrier is another reason which causes difference in news coverage. In China where there are most of Xinhuanet.com audiences, people do not prefer media that issues news in other language than Chinese. To have news in English from Tanzania that talk about road project might not attract their attention. Also road project in Tanzania might not be important news related to Chinese Communist Party and central government that's why its coverage is very limited although most of the technicians in the said projects are Chinese.

5.0 Conclusion

This paper shows the difference of journalism reporting from Pambazuka News an independent e-mail electronic newsletter and Xinhuanet.com a State owned and controlled news agency. The two media report China-Tanzania road projects in different ways while Pambazuka News has given more detailed news unlike Xinhuanet.com which only depends on government visit to Tanzania to report on events. Pambazuka News gave more detailed to the audience to understand the current situation of roads project in Tanzania in which Chinese companies are engaged, but Xinhuanet.com did not reveal either any construction company or distances and name of the project done in Tanzania apart from the research paper to revealed that the number of Chinese building companies won road tender in the country. Through our study in this paper we learned that there is an increasing number of Chinese owned companies in Tanzania roads project since 2004 where us there a decrease in numbers of Japanese and European companies. All in all, the study revealed that journalism styles of reporting in both media are different because of the policy, interest and audience of the compared media. Media policy has a direct impact in journalism reporting and news coverage. Either audience demand what kind of news they want media to publish. We recommended further study about China-Tanzania road project to visit China and Tanzania media libraries digging more information related to building construction companies and come up with advanced objective reporting.

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