Open Journal of Political Science, 2024, 14, 258-279
https://www.scirp.org/journal/ojps
ISSN Online: 2164-0513
ISSN Print: 2164-0505

Assessing Africa-India Relations, from the 15th-21st Century

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How to cite this paper: Obuah, E. E., & Komi, G. B. L. (2024). Assessing Africa-India Relations, from the 15th-21st Century. *Open Journal of Political Science, 14,* 258-279.
https://doi.org/10.4236/ojps.2024.142016

Received: February 14, 2024
Accepted: April 21, 2024
Published: April 24, 2024

Abstract

This study assesses the relationship between Africa and India from the 15th to the 21st century. The main objective here demonstrates that the basis of their relationship was commerce, which started before Europeans showed up on either continent or it is the glue that continues to bind them. The study examines the cultural, economic, and political relations that had evolved between the African continent and the Indian sub-continent. The study showed that Africa and India have had extensive and multi-pronged relationships over the centuries based on economic diplomacy very early on. Early relationship provided Africa and India prosperity based on geographical proximity, trade, financial and cultural affinity. The Indian Ocean highways, the sailor's navigational expertise help fudged this early relationship. African and India shared a common experience of European colonialism. Both worked in tandem in the struggles against colonialism. India's anti-colonial leader and head of Indian National Congress (INC) in 1894, Mahatma Gandhi started his struggles in South Africa. Following its independence in 1948, India advocated for the decolonization of Africa at all relevant international forums. It pioneered the interest of developing African nations through the Group of 77 formed at the Bandung Declaration of 1955. Both Africa and India formed the Non-Align Movement (NAM) whereby India provided both political and ideological impact on Africa during the years of liberation of Africa. In 2008, India and Africa formed the South-South cooperation. This study shows that Indians were assimilated into various East African countries. Africa is home to a large population of Indians in countries such as Mauritius, Kenya, and South Africa, etc. To examine these issues and developments, the study used content analysis of existing written sources to interrogate Africa-India relations.

Keywords

Assessment, Relations, Diplomacy, Colonization, Issues, Development

1. Introduction

Ancient maritime commerce connected the Indians through the Ocean with Africa, this was followed by religion, then a shared struggle against colonialism. India and Africa have multidimensional relationships from ancient times. There exists geographical proximity between Africa and India through an easily navigable Indian Ocean. This route fudged a trade relationship between the sub-Indian continent and Africa. Both relationships were also molded in British colonialism. The African continent and Indian post-colonial relationship was reflected in their south-south cooperation with shared developmental aspirations. Trade relationships started when Indian sea merchants sailed from the Gulf of Kutch in the western coast of India to East African coastal regions in pre-colonial times using alternative winds for navigation. They sailed to as far away as Zanzibar formerly known as Zenji Coast where they bought incense, palm oil, myrrh, gold, copper, spices, ivory, rhino horn and wild animal skins. In exchange, the Indian merchants sold to East Africa markets; cloth, metal implements, wheat, rice, jiggery, porcelain and glass wares (Sheriff, 2010). The North-East Monsoon wind currents which India had the skill to harness was very helpful for the navigation.

The *Periplus of Erythraean Sea*, the merchants' sailor's logbook written in the first century AD provides an early history of sailing records in East Africa and the Red Sea coast, which also shows ancient India's sea-faring culture and maritime activities. It gave a picture of flourishing trade between India and the western Indian Ocean region, extending from Somali Horn up to the Red Sea route to Egypt with other African littoral countries. The benefit of the Periplus is that it helped in the understanding that India's trade and contacts with Africa were not confined only to Egypt and coastal states but included northern Somalia, ancient land of Punt which are currently inhabited by Ethiopia and Djibouti, the kingdom of Kush (Sudan) and Axum (Dubey, 2016). When Vasco da Gama got to East Africa on his way to India in 1497, he found Indian merchants at Mozambique, Kilwa and Mombasa. The use of Indian system of weights and measures, the use of Indian cowries as currency were indications that Indians were playing huge roles in the commerce of the area (Polo & Masefield, 2009).

The areas this study investigated included the slave trade and plantation economy, how both Africans and Indians were unwillingly sucked into this economy. It examined how Africans found themselves absorbed into India and political relationship between Africa and India as well as the British legacies bequeathed to both Africa and Africa. We examined both the colonial and post-colonial diplomatic relations of Africa and the subcontinent of India, Africa-India Forum Summit, the South-South cooperation, Africa-India economic relations, and India's access to major Africa's resources. The study investigated India's investment in other economic sectors in Africa, its humanitarian assistance to Africa, and its geopolitical economic involvements in Africa.

2. The Slave Trade and Plantation Economic Era

Trade was the basis of the relationship between the free peoples of India and Africa from medieval times. By the 17th century Indian slaves constituted a large population of slaves who were brought to the Cape of Good Hope. Data on British, Dutch, French, and Portuguese slave trading in the Indian Ocean indicate that between 1500 and 1850, Europeans shipped between 431,000 to 547,000 slaves of African, Indian, and Southeast Asian origins to destinations within the Oceanic basin. These data point to an increasingly integrated global movement of forced labor from the 16th to the 19th centuries (Allen, 2010: p. 45).

The French who colonized western Indian Ocean islands in the 18th century brought Indian slaves to Mauritius and Reunion between 1664 and 1718. By the 19th century, about 13% of the slave populations of these Western Indian Ocean islands were of Indian descent. Indians were taken as indentured labor to other lands in the 19th and early 20th centuries. During the time of the Raj, Indians were moved to faraway Empires in the 19th and early 20th century as indentured workers in i) the sugar plantations of the Caribbean, Oceania and Africa, ii) as free or passenger Indians to primarily East Africa (Dubey, 2010: pp. 1-2). Indian populations of Mauritius between 1829-1924 were about 769,437 South Africa, Reunion Island, Seychelles and East Africa (Kadekar, 2005: p. 36). There were also migration of domestic servants, soldiers and seamen to these Islands. Mauritius and Reunion recruited Indian masons, carpenters, blacksmiths, and lascars, eventually the Indian slave population became economically viable. Indian tailors, cobblers and jewelers opened shops, some overseas Indian workers became land and slave owners on these islands. By the 18th century Indian workers almost always married Indian women from amongst those who were freed slaves (Carter, 2006).

Indentured labor was introduced after the abolition of the slave system to replace freed slaves in the plantation economies. This was done under the British government who was a key player in the global indentured scheme. When the need arose for labor for agriculture, mining or railway construction, the request often was for either Indians or Chinese who were collectively referred to as Asiatic (Tinker, 1977). Soon after the abolition of slavery in the British colonies which was in the 1830s, the plantation islands owned by the British started to experience severe labor shortages because the ex-slaves were reluctant to provide their labor at the wage rates prevailing at the time. The British planters therefore sought an alternative source of labor which would be political acceptable form of unfree labor. They found this in the indentured population from the British colonies of India (Sen, 2016: p. 35).

Indian indentured laborers were first sent to Mauritius in 1832, by the 1850s the British realized the potential for the cultivation of sugar plantations in the Natal region in South Africa.

> After the abolition of the slave trade within the British Empire in the 19th century more than 1.3 million Indian subjects of the British Raj migrated to other parts of the world under the indentured contract, with 152,184 indentured laborers traveling to the South African colony of Natal between 1860 and 1909. This wave of imperially regulated migrations to South Africa was followed by a second, smaller group of Indian traders, known as "passenger Indians" (Boer, 2016: p. 21).

They already had successes with Indian indentured labor in other tropical territories like Jamaica, Trinidad, Mauritius, etc so they had an established system of supply to tap into (Freud, 1995). In 1860, the British brought indentured Indian laborers into East Africa for the construction of railway lines between Mombasa and Kampala beside working on sugar plantations. Beside indentured servants, some freed Indians went on their own as entrepreneurs therefore millions of Indians settled in different African countries of Indian Ocean littoral countries. The sizeable Indian populations there were not just investors, some of them became opinion-makers in these African countries of their domicile. Some held important positions in government and in vital non-government sectors in the country of their adoption. Consequently, they Spread Indian languages and culture, they formed Indian associations and organizations at local, regional and national level. These organizations are based on Indian regions, religions and castes etc., creating mini-India in those countries. They acted as true cultural diplomats and messengers of India. A perusal of Indian organizations/associations in the states of Indian Ocean region reveals various patterns of migration from India, preferred destinations from Indian regions and communities, and the kind of activities they indulged in to keep Indian languages and culture alive (Ali et al., 2014: p. 4). A report on Indian diaspora released in 2001 estimated that Indian Diaspora population in Africa was 2,063,178 made up of 1,969,708 people of Indian Origin (PIO), 89,405 Non-Resident Indian (NRI) and 3,500 stateless people. By 2012 the figures released by the Indian government (Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs) have Indian population in Africa increased to 2,710,645 (Gupta, 2014: p. 1).

3. Africans in India

According to Alpers (2003), African experience in India dates back so many centuries. This knowledge was gleaned from the history of navigation and commerce on the Indian Ocean as exposed by the Periplus of the Erythraean sea. Undoubtedly, Africans from the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden coast, the Benadir coast of Southern Somalia, to the Swahili coasts boarded many of the sailing vessels that traveled the trade route to and from India. But it was until the expansion of Islam to northern India at the end of the 10th century that showcased the presence of Africans in India. It is to this period that the Sidis Gujarat traced their heritage to Bava Gor the progenitor of their community. Bava Gor is described as an Abyssinian who arrived Gujarat to trade in the 14th century during the period of extension of trade in beads made from locally mined agate to Africa. It is also known that a significant population of Africans served as soldiers in Indian armies during the era of Muslim domination of India, some of whom were recruited as mercenaries while others were slaves who were forced into military service (Alpers, 2003: p. 2). These African soldiers were known as Habshis. There were also enslaved women who became concubines, and eunuchs who served at courts in the Muslim India, some of whom were trained soldiers. Besides the renown of the Habshi as a military force, they were also a dominant naval force along the western Indian coast which for two centuries they were the unchallenged masters of the western coast of India until the effective control of the coast passed on to the British in 1870. Habshis were prominent in Gujarat as soldiers and sailors. During the reign of Sultan Bahadur c. 1526-1537 there were reported 5000 Habshis in Ahmadabad alone. These were likely prisoners captured during the Muslim invasion of the Christian kingdom of Abyssinia in 1527. Many Habshsi rose to occupy prominent positions of leadership under successive rulers of Gujarat until emperor Akbar of Mughal conquered Ahmadabad in July 1572 (Alpers, 2003: p. 4).

Afro-Asian communities, however, has continued for almost two millennia. Afro-Asian communities, however, remain "invisible" or as forgotten minorities, Africans in Asia and their descendants have been called by many terms and ethnonyms throughout the centuries. This tends to blur the African presence in Asia, but it also raises questions about its origin, (Yayasuriya, 2008: p. 8). Eaton (2005) referred to Africans in India from the 13th century. According to him, African slaves were imported into India during the Muslim rule as domestic workers and soldiers. These imported and Islamized Africans contributed to the development in different parts of India such as Bengal, Gujarat and Deccan, many of whom became absorbed into Hindu, Christian or tribal setups. An example was Malik Amber (1549-1626) an African slave who rose to the position of Regent in Deccan region (Eaton, 2005). These Africans were known as Siddis, whose initial arrival in 628 AD was at the Bharuch port. Later arrivals came with the first Islamic invasion of the subcontinent in 712 AD. They served with Mohammad bin Qasim's army, and were called the Zanjis (Pandya & Rawal, 2002). Because of the slave trade abolitionist campaign of the 19th century another wave of African community sprang up in India. These were slaves who were liberated from slave ships on the high seas by the British abolitionists and freed on to the Indian mainland. They were resettled in three different places; Bombay, Pune and Nasik and they were popularly known as the "Bombay Africans" and the "Nasik Boys" (Ali, 1987). They identified more with European culture, ideas and manners and differed from the local Siddis who easily assimilated into the culture and religion of the Indians. Compared with the Indian migration to Africa, African presence in India was miniscule.

4. India Diplomatic Relationships

The Indian National Congress (INC) inspired Africans to fight for liberation from colonial rule and was looked on as their role model to gain independence by the African liberation movements. At its national Calcutta session in 1920, the INC officially linked its struggle with world struggles against imperialism and colonialism. It was decided to set up an overseas department to establish contact with political formations and leaders in Africa. Under Gandhi and later Nehru, the INC fiercely kicked against the British government racist policies in Africa. Its working committee consistently passed resolutions against discriminations prevalent in South Africa and Kenya. It expressed sympathy with Abyssinians (Ethiopia) in 1934 when they were invaded by Italy. It imposed trade embargo against Zanzibar because of the inhuman treatment of Indian settlers in 1937 while in 1939 it welcomed the Wadf party delegation from Egypt to attend the congress of the working committee meeting. The Wadf party was a nationalist liberal political party formed in Egypt in 1919.

The main architect of the INC policy towards Africa was Jawaharlal Nehru. He visited Brussels in 1927 and at the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities; he met with African leaders like Leopold Senghor. He pointed out in his speech at that congress that the independence of India will affect the position of other countries under colonial rule. His thinking was that India is the kingpin of a worldwide joint liberation movement having known that the struggle for freedom was a common one against imperialism so joint deliberation was possible and joint action was desirable (Nehru, 1936, cited by Dubey, 2016). India under Nehru from 1928, linked their own freedom struggle with those of Africans against imperialism and colonialism and thought of African decolonization as a continuation of its own struggle (Dubey, 2016).

Mahatma Ghandi played key role in connecting Africa and India because his philosophy appealed to peoples across the world, especially African liberation leaders. He lived in South Africa as a lawyer in 1893 (Guha, 2013) and suffered racial discrimination so he spent the next 21 years fighting racial discrimination in South Africa. It was in South Africa that he coined his concept of Satyagraha—a non-violent protest injustice, civil disobedience and mass mobilization. It was his experience in South Africa that shaped his political philosophy. This had profound impact on the history of the African continent, his work in South Africa prepared the way for more important work in his homeland (Guha, 2013). African leaders saw that civil disobedience, non-cooperation movements, negotiation, constitutional conferences, boycott of foreign goods and peaceful agitations under Gandhi yielded effective results. His strategy and style were then adopted as a model by African nationalists, some of them even adopted "Congress" to identify their respective parties (Dubey, 2016). Caesely Hayford, the father of Ghanaian nationalism established the West African Congress comprising of Nigeria, Ghana (then Gold Coast), Sierra Leone and Gambia on the model of India (Huttenback, 1966).

> Once it gained Independence in 1947, India was one of the first countries to support the African National Congress (ANC). As Apartheid took center stage, India also severed its economic, political, and cultural-sporting relations with South African government. India also championed South Africa's independence at such forums as the UN General Assembly and the Non-Aligned Movement. The ANC was also allowed to establish its international office in New Delhi in the early 1960s. Many Indian migrants to South Africa also joined the opposition political movements… including ANC and the South African Communist Party (SAPC), (Banda, 2020: p. 2).

India grew on to be effective, stout defense, and bulwark of support for Africa during its struggle for independence from her colonizers.

5. Africa-India British Colonial Connections and Legacies

A huge chunk of African territories fell under the British colonial rule, most of them were colonized long after India had been colonized by Great Britain. Many of the African territories were conquered by the British using mostly Indian foot soldiers recruited into the British military. A substantial number of these Indian/British soldiers stationed in Africa got married to the local African women and settled in Africa and never returned to India. Similarly, during World Wars I and II Indian soldiers were brought on long term basis into African territories, most of them also married and settled in Africa. Most of them retired in African countries like Kenya, Sudan, Mauritania, etc. At the time, their number was substantial but over time they got submerged into African ethnic groups and are part of the "lost Indian diaspora" (Dubey, 2016).

Fairly often, the colonial administrators were transferred from India to the newly acquired African territories. They transferred the British administrative and legal system operating in India over to Africa. There were also constant exchanges between the Indian colonial government and African colonial governments. It is therefore no coincidence to find common legacies of administrative structure, laws, institutions, colonial architecture, Anglo-Saxon jurisprudence and government norms. These have left both regions with commonality of long-lasting legacies.

6. Post-Independence Africa-India Diplomatic Relations

India's Mahatma Ghandi was interested in globalization based on ideas and services rather than the unequal trade in raw materials for manufactured goods of European exploitation exemplified by the British colonial model which he described as keeping the world in chains. Nehru's vision was rather an industrialized India without the distributional growth model and its consequences on Indian society.

In the recent times, the Chinese have dominated African economy and has become embedded in the domestic African businesses. The country engages in big projects such as oil exploration, mining, and construction which requires huge financial capital outlays. Today, Chinese business has become major investors in African countries. The emerging China-Africa relationship has caused so much consternation as to its intent and tactics. The evolving scenario will determine if China is becoming a development partner or a hegemon whose interest is to gulp up African resources for its own needs. India is fast becoming an important economic and political player in Africa also. Its economy is about one sixth the size of China's, but it is growing fast and exerting considerable demand on the natural resources exploited in Africa. China is believed to be a global manufacturing hub with India as a service hub. But the picture is more complicated than that.

After India's independence in 1947, its leaders were confronted with a stark economic reality that: 3/4th of the Indian population was engaged in agriculture using primitive tools and techniques. Some were destitute landless laborers, highly insecure tenants-at-will, or small-plot holders eking out subsistence living from their meager plots. The literacy rate stood at 14% and the average life expectancy was thirty-two years (Adhai, 2015: p. 18). In the 1950s, the new Indian leaders embarked on a mission to rescue their country from what seemed an impossible task, their focus was to lift the living standards of a population which was 1/7th of the population of the world and whose average income was 1/5th of an average American income at the time. The government's strategy of economic development focused on rapid industrialization. Its procedure was to implement centrally prepared five-year plans that involved raising a massive number of resources and investing them in the creation large industrial state-own enterprises (SOEs). They choose industries which will produce basic and heavy industrial goods such as steel, chemicals, machines and tools, locomotives, and power. They believed that the industrial sector offers India the greatest scope of growth in production. It was not as though agriculture could not offer scope for growth; the leaders did not want to make it the mainstay of their strategy.

> Industries producing basic and heavy goods were chosen to investment over consumer goods because the government wanted to reduce the country's reliance on imports of basic and heavy industrial goods in line with their belief in the goodness of national self-reliance. "To import from abroad is to be slaves of foreign countries", the first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru said (Adhai, 2015: p. 18).

The drawback in this concept of growth showed up in 1963 when the country had a food crisis. This forced the government to change its strategy by guaranteeing higher crop prices to farmers and to promote the use of modern inputs like fertilizers and high yielding varieties of grains developed in other parts of the world. These efforts led to a huge surge in food production which was christened the "green revolution". Because of this the country became self-sufficient in food grains.

In 1991 India was threatened with foreign exchange crisis. The breakup of the Soviet Union had discredited central planning, followed by the export-led success of East Asian countries which had exposed the drawbacks of an inward-looking model of development. At the prompting of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) who provided them rescue fund during the foreign exchange crisis, India embarked on major economic reforms of liberalization, privatization and globalization. The economy responded with a surge in growth averaging 6.3% in annual growth in the 1990s and early 2000s. Rates doubled while shortages disappeared. The public telecom which had installed five million landlines in all of India, in 2004 private cellular phone companies were signing new customers at a rate of five million a month. The number of people who lived below the poverty line between 1993 and 2009 decreased from 50% to 34% and the decline has since been more rapid than any time since independence. India's share in world trade increased from 0.4% to 1.5% in 2006. Foreign exchange shortages, which were such chronic problems for policy makers in the past has now been replaced with reserves upward of US $350 billion in excess reserves (Adhai, 2015: p. 22).

India has major manufacturing companies like Tata—with about 29 enterprises, ArcelorMittal is the largest steel company in the world and requires natural resources for its growth. It also has major global service suppliers of information technology companies like Infosys, Tata consultancy services, Wipro, Tech Mahindra and HCL Technologies. India also does some agro-economy which in 2016 and 2020 it signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Kenya and Uganda to send 500 farmers to cultivate 20,000 and 8000 hectares of farming land in each of those countries respectively. Service delivery has been an important part of India-Africa relations as well as raw materials, agriculture, and manufacturing. While it is easier to examine the Chinese companies operating in Africa because they are state owned and the government's geo-economic strategy on the continent through their corporations, India's involvements in Africa appear somewhat messy or uncoordinated. India's engagement in Africa indicates details of resource and infrastructural deals, but the broader goal here is to examine the drivers and impacts of increased India's state and corporate investments on the continent.

Indian economic reform has its root in the liberalization program when it had balance of payment crisis in 1991. Until it adopted the free market policies, India's economic growth was very slow. It picked up with rapid growth as foreign investors were attracted by the highly educated and scientific workforce that had been developed by the Indian Institute of Technology and their elite universities.

Because of globalization with its outsourcing mechanism, India was able to setup back-office functions like call center operations answering English names so that Indians can render services especially in the Information Technology (I.T.) field to the western callers to shade them from knowing they were Indians doing those jobs. With a free market economy, the previously domestic-focused Indian conglomerates started to grow and expand overseas and access technology more easily. The fruit of growth of the Indian economy has been unevenly distributed domestically. Their private-sector-driven, unplanned, polarizing, and chaotic model of economic development is evident in Indian economic relations with Africa (Carmody, 2012: p. 97). However, the India government is believed to be waking up and coming to realization of devoting substantive diplomatic and economic resources to Africa (Naidu, 2010).

7. South-South Cooperation

As at the end of 1960, the indication was that the question of colonialism was becoming extinct or under control in the consciousness of Indians. In 1961 some developing countries led by India formed the Non-Alignment Movement during the cold war as nations who did not want to be aligned neither with the East or West. Later NAM began to turn its attention to economic issues of member nations. At its Lusaka conference in 1970 economic cooperation within the South-South became top priority with added emphasis on economic cooperation amongst non-aligned countries. In her speech at the Lusaka summit, the Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi in her proposal for the South-South Cooperation promised that India will provide economic and technical assistance among developing nations to counter neocolonial policies perpetuated by the industrialized advanced countries (Dubey, 2016). Shortly after its decisive victory in the war with Pakistan and detonating its first nuclear device in 1974 she turned her attention to fostering economic issues under the South-South cooperation with Africa being its major focus. From the Lusaka Summit to the New Delhi conference in 1983, the main issues have been 1) changing the concept of the Non-Aligned Movement, 2) support to national liberation struggles and 3) the increasing emphasis on South-South economic cooperation. NAM remains an important platform to promote unity amongst developing nations amidst their growing challenges inside the United Nations (UN) to advance their common positions. It continues to support member states in forums of the UN on Human Rights, Palestinian Issus, puts up common positions, right to development, health related matters, etc. (Tomossi, 2016: p. 1)

8. India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS)

In 2008, a major step at promoting Africa-India partnership was undertaken which was called India-Africa Forum Summit. Following that summit Africa-India trade have increased to $72 billion in 2014-2015 fiscal year. This was followed by another summit at Addis Ababa Ethiopia where the Indian government announced opening of 19 capacity institutions including pan-African institutions in East African, the India-Africa Institute of Education, Planning and Administration in Burundi. India also pledged to build over 100 training institutes across Africa, and to offer scholarship to African students wishing to study in Indian universities. These scholarships had their focus on scientific fellowship and agriculture. Under this forum, India launched an initiative to either establish or strengthen existing infrastructure and facilities of some key industries in sectors like food processing and textile. They held their third three-day summit in 2015 at New Delhi where about 41 African Heads of State and Government attended, in which they focused on development cooperation between India and Africa. At which summit India promised Africa $10 billion in lines of credit for five year and a grant of $600 million grant assistance (Pathak, 2018: p. 51).

9. Africa-India Economic Relations

In 2008, India's trade in Africa was about $35 billion, which was one third of China's investment in Africa. In 2006 it imported 12% of its gold, 79% of phosphates, 91% of nuts and 16% of its copper from the African continent (Naidu, 2009). Nine out of every ten piece of rough diamond in the world is cut and polished in India and this account for the country's single largest export which amounts to about $14 billion yearly. Out of the $10 billion of rough diamond imported into India yearly, 80% of which are believed to come from Africa, and of course the Indian government sources it directly instead of going through European traders. The government is disrupting the near diamond monopoly of the De Beers, and sourcing them directly from Botswana, Angola, etc. India has promised to sponsor a diamond cutting and polishing center in Angola just to retain more local added value. In the 2008 Africa-India summit, the government promised to allow duty-free import trade with thirty-four African countries it has trade agreements with and products including mineral ores, gems, and diamonds.

African-Indian trade cooperation doubled to 7.7% of its total trade from 1990/91 to 2006/7, in contrast to China's 3% (Naidu, 2010). Within this time frame, India can be said to be a much more important trading partner to Africa than China to Africa. India conducts African trade support through the Indian Export-Import (EXIM) Bank's focus on African program. Its EXIM bank has about half a billion dollars in lines of credit operative in Africa under this program. This is small in comparison with China's EXIM bank credit operations, but when all the active lines of credit are added up it came up to more than $2 b in 2009 which shows the strategic priority which India attaches to Africa. These loans are given at concessional rates which mean that for low-income countries, grants or aids elements amounts to 41% of the loan. Some of it is for developing information and communication technology infrastructure. This is relatively inexpensive to develop when you compare them to the huge sums of money China invests in loans for road and rail infrastructures.

Though India's Exim Bank operations in Africa is smaller, it is the Indian firms who came up on top the list of greenfield its Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) sites in Africa at is 48% compared to China's 32% between 2002 and 2005 (UNCTAD, 2007), which current ranking must have changed by now. The second-largest investor in Uganda and largest in Ghana is India by the number of projects.

Unlike China, India does not have a stated global policy for its corporations to motivate its companies to enter international markets. Some argue that without such stated policy, Indian investments attract less attention because of its low-profile nature as opposed to high focus of the Chinese. India like China has invested in the oil industry in the Sudan, but with China being a permanent member of the UN Security Council, it uses that position to shield the Sudanese government, and sell it substantial amounts of arms which have been controversial sometimes, Indian does not have to come to such limelight.

Because India has been proactive in its policies towards Africa the projected trade with the continent was expected to exceed $100 billion by 2018 which was only $5 billion ten years ago and $60 billion in 2012. While her trade relations vary from regions to regions on the continent, by 2011 India had emerged the fourth largest African trading partner (Zuma, 2013). In the 1970s and 1980s, India's import from Africa were mainly raw materials-cotton, cashew nuts, non-ferrous metals (copper, zinc and lead); pearls, semi-precious stones, rock phosphate; and dying, tanning and coloring materials. Since the 1990s, hydrocarbon has become the major import from Africa followed by metal and chemical products. The share of Africa's trade with India has increased from 3.5% in 2005 to 9% in 2016 and her major trading partners are Nigeria, Angola, South Africa, and Egypt.

India has had an increasing economic engagement with African countries to strengthen both their economic, technical, and political ties. According to Africa Expert Group, India recognizes the importance to strengthen the relationship with Africa. Because Africa accounts for 17% of the world's population now and is projected to 25% by the 2050. India sees this projection and itself as a rising global power and believes that partnership with African would be helpful. Following this realization India has encouraged the following companies to do business in Africa.

Some major Indian companies operating in Africa include:

1) **TATA African Services (Nigeria) Ltd.**: This is a subsidiary of the Tata Group: It is a business subsidiary of the Indian multinational conglomerate founded in 1868. Its products and services cover over 150 countries, with operations in 100 countries across six continents. It established TATA Africa in 2006 as its subsidiary in West African operations. It investment in West African exceed $10 m.

2) **Dana Group**: Has interest in manufacturing, trading, and shipping. The group has a presence in several African countries, including Nigeria, Ghana, and Kenya. Its interests include steel, automobile, plastics, and chemicals.

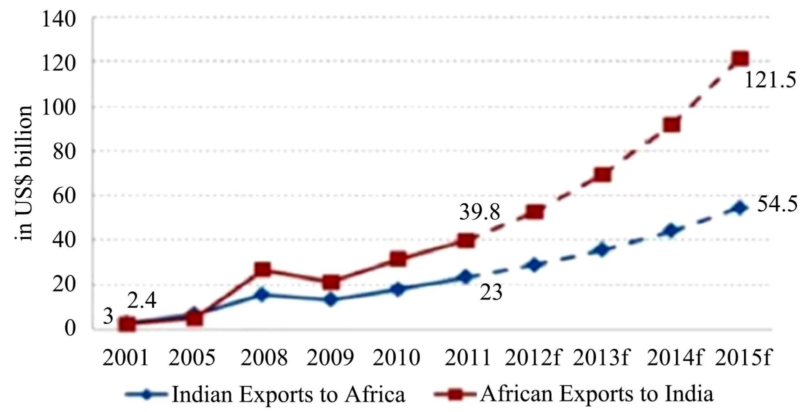

Figure 1. Indian Africa trade growth projections. Source: UN COMTRADE and WTO staff calculations.

3) Artee Group: Is a retail giant with a presence in several African countries, including Nigeria, Ghana, and Cameroon. It operates several retail chains such as Spar which is very entrenched in Nigeria as well as other large supermarkets on the continent.

4) MeCure Healthcare: MeCure is an Indian healthcare company with a presence in several African countries, including Nigeria, Ghana, and Kenya. It provides health care services such as diagnosis, treatment, and research.

5) Dufil Prima Foods: Is a food processing company in several African countries, such as Nigeria, Ghana, and Ivory Coast. It produces food products like noodles, pasta and snacks (**Figure 1**).

10. India's Access to Major Africa's Resources

India has only 0.04% of the world's oil reserve so its importation is arguably of greater strategic importance to India than it does to China. It imports 75% of its oil needs, and to maintain an 8% economic growth rate it has to increase its energy supply by at least four times its 2003/4 levels. The estimation is that India will run out of coal by 2040. It is projected that by 2030, India will be the third largest consumer of energy behind USA and China so it will import most of its energy needs. Presently, India imports 11% of its oil needs from Africa to fuel its rapidly growing automobile use and other needs. In Delhi alone, 200,000 vehicles are added to the fleet each year.

India offered West African oil producing states lines of credit worth $1 billion in exchange of oil exploration rights, and ever since new lines of credit have been added. The driver for Indian engagement in Africa is based on energy, broadly called resource security. Beside private companies, they procure this resource through state-owned companies as well (Bhatia & Singh, 2007).

Indian companies are actively making oil deals in Africa. In 2003, OVL the overseas arc of India's state-owned Energy Company, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) struck a 25% stake deal in the Greater Nile Petroleum Operation Corporation in Sudan for $250 million from the Canadian Talisman company. The US sanction against the government of Sudan had forced Talisman to relinquish its stake in its oil industry so Indian company bought it. ONGC oil investments include Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire and other oil rich African states. Then private company ArcelorMittal has shown interest in buying the Port Harcourt Refinery, also in Nigeria. In 2008, the government of late President Umaru Yar'adua revoked several contracts in the steel plants because they tilted excessively in favor of India's ArcelorMittal. China's cash-rich companies have sometimes out-bided Indian companies for concession of mineral resources in Africa. In 2006 both Asian powers agreed amongst themselves not to bid against each other for energy resources in Africa to reduce their rivalry and spiraling oil prices (Obi, 2010).

The Indian economic exploitation of Africa can be seen in Zambia. Here India's Vedanta Resources bought Zambia's most important copper mine, Konkola which accounted for 65% of mineral production in the country. On the insistence of the World Bank and to attract investment, they set the mineral royalty rate at 0.6%, this earned the Zambian government US $12 million in 2006 instead of US $2 billion of copper extracted that year by Vedanta Resources (Arnold, 2009). When tax write-offs were factored in, the effective rate of taxation on copper in Zambia that year was 0%, the shocking aspect of this statistics is that copper is the country's dominant export. New investments and associated jobs may have been created out of this, but they had come at an environmental cost to Zambia. One of the rivers in the Copper belt province was polluted from the Konkola copper mine. The environmental impact assessment impact had it that the contamination from the plant is very severe with Ph as low as 2.2 as experienced at Uchi stream which flows into their Kafue River. In 2015, the claimants' residents living in nearby villages of Shimulala, Hippo, Hellen, etc to the copper mines, the largest mining company in the world alleged that the pollution severely impacted their lives and their primary sources of income of fishing and farming. That the toxic effluent from the mines damaged their land and waterways, used for irrigation, drinking, washing, bathing and severely affected residents' health. The claimants sought damages, remediation and cessation to this alleged continual pollution which impacted their lives. The soil, water, blood tests for heavy metals found that copper, iron, cobalt and dissolved sulfates were present beyond legal limits and overwhelming in the samples (Day, 2021: p. 2). Vedanta Resources in a statement in 2021 stated that "Without admission of liability, Vedanta Resources Limited and Konkola Copper Mines, Plc confirm that they agreed, for the benefit of local communities, the settlement of all claims brought against them by the Zambian claimants" (The Water Diplomat, 2021).

ArcelorMittal of India signed a major iron ore deal in Liberia, the government of Ellen Sirleaf Johnson had to renegotiate the unfavorable deal to her country on coming to power (Alden, 2007). This ArcelorMittal deal in Liberia was heavily criticized by Global Witness for the extractive nature of the deal in post conflict Liberia. The Company basically set up "a state within a state", arrogating sovereign power unto itself, controlling company and capital structure, taxation, royalties, transfer pricing, rights to minerals and confidentiality to itself in Liberia. This quasi-sovereignty is not peculiar to Indian companies in Africa, Chinese-built Special Economic Zones (SEZs) as well as American oil companies practice the same all over the continent. If the 2008 resource boom gave a greater bargaining stake to African countries which they have asserted in the cases above, it may not have been long lived. It is arguable that renegotiation was easier with ArcelorMittal because it was not a state-owned company which could not damage relations with the Indian government, than if it was a Chinese state-owned company. Besides, Indian aid and loans to Africa are on a much smaller scale than those of China, this also makes the renegotiation easier. Still, Indian conglomerate does maintain continual structural powers, such as ArcelorMittal which is South Africa's largest steel producer.

In the sphere of Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) in Africa India has significantly invested in the manufacturing sector. Their investment was boosted by mineral processing activities, wholesome manufacturing, and other sectors. The Indian conglomerate Tata Group had declared Zambia as their area of major investment expansion programs in Africa. They hope to focus on agriculture and hydro-power sectors. Under an agreement between former President Kenneth Kaunda and Prime Minister Indira Ghandi, the Indo-Zambia bank was set up. Provisions in the agreement provided for partnership for manufacturing instead what emanated from the investment was the production of juices, which was only competing with local company Manzi producing juice. Tata also opened a new bus and truck assembly plant at Ndola in Zambia which would not have been possible without government incentives, it is the same government that will be the major buyer of the five hundred buses and trucks that would be assembled in that plant each year. Indian companies are also active in African tourism sector. Tata invested $8 million in renovating the Taj Pamodji Hotel in Lusaka, Zambia (Tables 1-3).

Table 1. Indian investment flows to select African countries.

	1996 to 2002	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2006-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	Total Stock
Mauritius	618	133	176	149	333	1163	1506	2087	6165
Sudan	-	750	162	52	63	118	8	38	1191
Egypt	9	0	-	3	0	0	790	19	821
Nigeria	7	4	2	8	4	12	27	237	301
Liberia	0	-	-	-	155	-	18	16	189
Kenya	13	1	2	0	0	0	133	0	149
Libya	30	-	-	-	25	75	0	13	143
South Africa	22	0	1	3	10	23	46	12	118

Source: Ministry of Finance, Government of India. Published in India-Africa South-South Trade and Investment for development by CII/WTO 2013.

Table 2. Select Indian investments to Africa in recent years.

Indian Company	Target Company	Host Country	Sector	Value (US $ million)	Deal Type	Year
Crain India	PetroSA	South Africa	Energy	60% in Oil and Gas Block	Acquisition	2012
Tata Chemicals	Greenfield	Gabon	Chemicals/Fertilizer	290	Acquisition	2011
Micro Technologies	Subsidiaries	South Africa, Ethiopia	IT-enables services	NA	-	2011
Bhanti Airtel	Zain Africa BV	Africa-wide	Telecom	10,700	Acquisition	2010
Essar Africa Holdings	Zimbabwe Iron and Steel Company	Zimbabwe	Metals and Ores	750	Acquisition	2010
Bharat Heavy Chemicals Ltd	Greenfield	Multi-Country	Energy	2000	Acquisition	2010
Essar Group	Econet Wireless Holdings	Kenya	Telecom	450	Acquisition	2009
Vedarca	Konkola Copper Mines	Zambia	Metals & Ores	700	Acquisition	2004-ongoing

Published in India-Africa South-South Trade and Investment for development by CII/WTO 2013.

Table 3. African investment in India, total FDI stocked from 2000 to 2012.

Country	FDI Stock (in US $ million)
Mauritius	64169.0
Morocco	136.8
South Africa	111.7
Kenya	20.0
Seychelles	17.9
Liberia	14.6
Nigeria	9.9
Tunisia	4.3
Ghana	3.1
Tanzania	1.4
Other Africa	3.5
Total Africa	**64493.3**

Published in India-Africa South-South trade and investment for development by CII/WTO 2013.

11. Africa's Investments in India

With reference to the tables above, investment was bi-directional because Mauritius whose population is largely of Asian descent was the largest foreign investors in India in 2007. Their investments amounted to $1.9 b and from 2000 to 2009 Mauritanian companies invested more than $40 b in India and were the single largest foreign investors there at the time under review. Africa's investments in India are thought to help develop India's infrastructure. In March 2010 the India infrastructure development Fund of Mauritius received Indian cabinet approval for funds expected to be about $163.8 million for infrastructural investment in India. South Africa invests substantially in Indian tourism and manufacturing sectors for many years.

India, East Africa, Mauritania, South Africa and West African countries are digitally linked with submarine cable and fiber optic cables. These digital linkages make easy joint venture between Indian companies with these African sub regions, which shows the nature of globalization and capture the market shares in either market.

India is not only trying to extract natural resources in Africa but also its capital resources investments as well. Besides increasingly paying attention to resource-rich African states, there is also an extensive Indian diaspora in Mauritius, South Africa, Kenya and other East African countries which give it a potential strategic coupling of those economies based on information technology that can be of exceptional benefit to both sides.

There is a substantially scattered population of Indians in Africa. Some of whom came to Africa during the colonial period to work as indentured laborers and free traders, their descendants keep close connection with their home of origin. The Indian original migrants to Africa served Europeans on their large-scale commercial agricultural, banking, manufacturing and mining firms, while indigenous Africans supplied the manual labor for the most part. At the end of their service period as indentured servants to the Europeans, many Indians stayed on and started trading which provided India an automatic right of entry into Africa.

The India's strategic engagement in oil-rich West Africa has almost overshadowed India's involvement with India's diaspora regions of East and South Africa. The view is the same with Central Africa with its rich mineral resources. The 2009 India-Central African Trade Forum was held in Congo-Brazzaville as an example. Kenya and other East African countries have substantial Indian diaspora. Their engagement is private sector driven and market-seeking, their investment in non-resource rich African countries has been in mobile telecommunications often with the Mumbai-based Essar group.

In 2009, Essar acquired 50% stake in Kenya Petroleum Refineries which is the sole petroleum refiner in East Africa. In 2004/5 Indian trade with Kenya approached half a billion dollars more than 55% increase in two years and slightly below that of China. It mainly exported to Kenya engineering products, cotton and pharmaceuticals, its only imports from Kenya were gemstones and inorganic chemicals (Vines & Oruitemeka, 2008).

12. Indian Humanitarian Assistance to Africa

Until recently, the poorest people in the world were concentrated in India. It had the more malnourished children than in Africa, while average incomes across the continent was about $200 per head than in India (Naidu, 2009), yet India gave aid to Africa. Obviously, what motivates India to give aid to Africa is purely political and economic and not humanitarian.

In 2003/4 India donated food to Namibia, Chad and Lesotho and thousands of mosquito nets to the Republic of Congo (Naidu, 2009). They were also involved in UN peacekeeping missions in Africa (Bhatia & Singh, 2007). This use of soft power for humanitarian needs is purposeful to play down on the perception that India has joined the new scramble for Africa instead it ties to project that it is a new development partner on the continent. In this vein, its minister of state for commerce is quoted as saying that "the first principle of India's involvement in Africa is unlike that of China. China says go out and exploit the natural resources, our strategy is going out there and add value" (Dawes 2008, cited in Naidu, 2009: p. 134). This attempt to separate India from the exploiters of Africa would depend on how it engages African governments and how it does business on the continent to show whether she is a partner. While it is not possible to judge both India and China by the same standards, none of them are here purely to develop Africa for Africans, what appears mutual to both is their self-interest.

Being an aid donor country helps to promote India's self-image. While it ranks seven places below South Africa on the UN Human Development Index in 2003, India's government said it would suspend receiving bilateral development assistance from 22 donor countries according to McCormick (2008). This statement symbolically asserts that India is systematically working its way to being a great power. The government followed this by establishing its own overseas aids agency, the India International Development Cooperation Agency.

India's oversea aid is focused on technical training and assistance in Africa rather than on substantial grants-in-aid and is done through the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) which was set up in 1964 to examine ways of improving cooperation with Africa (Naidu, 2010). India does have an African e-Network project to connect African countries through satellite and fiber optics to make telemedicine and tele-education programs. They are trying to facilitate African universities and hospitals to have links with each other and with institutions in India. May be this could help communication between African heads of government and Indian politicians.

While economic interest is the major driver of Indian engagement in Africa, it also hopes to garner the African votes at the United Nations to help place it as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. India is mindful it does not have the huge financial strength of the Chinese, or the military might of the United States of America, its hope is to rely on cooperation in information technology, agriculture, and engineering where it has a niche.

India initiated in 2004 the "Techno-Economic Approach to Africa-India Movement" (TEAM-9) to partner with eight resource-rich West African countries to improve healthcare, food security, transport, and telecommunication with a focus on technology (Mawdsley & McCann, 2010). The Indian government has also cancelled bilateral debt of some poor African countries like Mozambique and Tanzania.

India trails far behind China's economic might and does not have as much access to foreign exchange reserves nor granting access to its domestic market. Based on these weaknesses, India opted for the direct approach in its dealings with African governments. It lunched the Pan-African e-Network in 2007 at Addis Ababa, headquarters of the African Union, while the network makes telemedicine and education programs facilities communicate, importantly, it allows videoconferencing for all fifty-three African heads of government possible. Such overt support for African heads of government in a top-down approach challenges China's methodology as India does not have the economic resources to match it in this new scramble for Africa.

13. Geopolitics and India's Economic Engagement in Africa

The Indian government's support for a private sector investment in Africa is small in comparison to the enormous resources China draws on to invest in the continent, but in the long-term analysis, India has the comparative advantage over China in Africa. This is based on India's diaspora in Africa, its strong educational system, its proximity to the continent and its democratic tradition (Carmody, 2012: p. 106). Besides, India is very smart by using a variety of strategies of cooperation and competition with China amongst which has been balancing through alliances with middle powers.

To checkmate the Chinese influence, India was a founding member of IBSA (India, Brazil, and South Africa) group in 2003 in the South-South differentiated integration. They have signed several agreements amongst themselves on health and wind resources, with a desire to move towards a free trade area however, tariff reduction has been a sticking point. China, sponsored by South Africa requested to be part of IBSA forum on commercial issues, but was blocked by India for fear of loss of influence on the pretense that China is not a democracy (Zuckerman, 2023).

India has signed military pack with Mauritius and Seychelles for the Indian navy to patrol the Mauritius Exclusive Economic Zone since 2003. It has also signed defense agreements with East African countries of Mozambique, Madagascar, and Kenya, it also has joint training exercises with other African navies (Vines, 2010). Such joint training exercises can be attributed to fears of Chinese expansionism. It is only prudent for India to protect its shipping routes, and with improved military capabilities India wants to be seen as a great power (Vines & Oruitemeka, 2008). India does 90% of its trade by volume and three quarters by value on the sea. It is also a member of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation which has been prominent recently because of these high economic engagements.

14. The Impact of Globalization on Africa-India Relations

The influence of globalization on Africa societies cannot be limited to Africa-India relations. It is a global phenomenon that largely has affected Africa negatively, unfortunately the continent has not found a positive solution to it. Before colonialism, Africans had skirmishes and fought local wars over farmlands, sources of water, fishing grounds, etc. these wars were limited in scope but with globalization the scope has been expanded and with so much sophistication of the weaponry used that violent conflicts now beset the continent. There are conflicts created to enable international entities to mine natural resources of Africa and expropriate those resources to their home countries. Because of globalization there are violent conflicts where solid minerals are extracted, there are the Nigerian Taliban and a plethora of militant groups in northern Nigeria which is rich in minerals resources, militancy in the oil rich Niger Delta, the Somali pirates, political conflicts, and wars across Africa especially in resource rich regions, etc. These conflicts are amplified by international multimedia networks (Ani, 2013: p. 44) to create the impression that Africa is a conflict prone region and divert attention from the real cause of the conflicts in the continent.

15. Conclusion

India's Minister of State for Defense was quoted as saying that "if India and Africa are able to synergize energies and initiatives and adapt to a changing world, the 21st century could surely belong to them" (Naidu, 2009: p. 116). This follows the Chinese mantra of "win-win" relationship they claim to be building with Africa. In 2008 prime Minister Manmohan Singh announced a "Direct Free Tariff Preference Scheme" that would allow preferential market access to India for exports from fifty of the world's least developed countries, thirty-four of which are in Africa. He also announced half a billion dollars of new aid for Africa and an increase in lines of credit to the tune of $5.5 b by 2013 to the continent (Mawdsley & McCann, 2010).

Following the huge financial resources at the disposal of China which it spends on costly projects in Africa, it maintains a very prominent and powerful presence on the continent. India is indeed an emerging and important actor on the continent, their relationship however is characterized by competition and cooperation because their interests are not mutually exclusive, and it is about the economic well-being of their respective countries. Both countries subscribe to the concept of good governance and non-interference in the sovereign affairs of nations. This has pacified African political elites and made sure of unrestrained access to the continents' resources (Tomossi, 2016).

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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