

Chinese Aid: Powering Africa and Mitigating Electricity-related Demonstrations

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Abstract

Chinese aid to Africa has dipped. At the same time, there has been a surge in anti-government protests and riots as witnessed in Kenya 2024, sparking curiosity about possible effects of foreign aid (or scarcity thereof) on public demonstrations. Existing studies on the security implications of foreign aid to Africa focus on risks of armed conflict, with no systematic attention to public manifestations which can spiral to deadly violence and repression. This paper explores the relationship between Chinese aid and anti-government demonstrations in recipient African states, with specific attention to aid and manifestations over electricity supply which is prioritised in national development strategies of many African states. Applied multiple regression analysis reveals a negative and statically significant relationship between Chinese electricity assistance and rates of anti-government manifestations over intermittent electricity access. Thus, while Chinese aid has been criticised, especially in Western media and policy circles, for perpetrating debt-traps and undermining state sovereignty, this paper adds to alternative evidence about the state legitimising and welfare-enhancing benefits of Chinese aid.

Keywords: *Aid, Finance, China, Energy, Electricity, Protests*

1. Introduction

China has emerged in the twenty-first century as a leading bilateral source of foreign assistance to many African states (Alden, 2007; Brautigam, 2009), yet little is known about the security implications of Chinese aid, defined herein as official financial assistance from China and its banks to African governments, with or without grant elements (Brautigam, 2011). Much of the existing literature

on security implications of Chinese official assistance to Africa focuses on risks of armed conflicts and state repression in relation to state capture and leadership consolidation (Strange et al., 2017; Kishi & Raleigh, 2015 & 2017). However, studies linking political survival goals and repressive use of Chinese aid overlook the potential of unconditional Chinese official finance to sponsor state-sustaining and human welfare-improving development projects, including expensive energy infrastructure ones. Some critics of Chinese assistance associate it with unsustainable debt burdens which undermine state sovereignty and state survival through risks of foreign take-over of national assets and natural resources (Corcoran, 2015). This article counter-argues that China's non-interference approach to foreign aid enhances recipient state capacity to provide public goods and redress public needs, thereby boosting state legitimacy while mitigating anti-government grievances and risks of anti-government social mobilisation, ultimately contributing to state consolidation. While reduced risks of public demonstrations potentially curb opportunities for repression, the possible negative effects of Chinese aid on anti-government manifestations have not been assessed quantitatively. Given the oft-overlooked utility of unconditional Chinese official finance for helping African governments in providing public goods and political constraints associated with conditional Western aid, this paper statistically explores whether Chinese official finance is associated with lower risks of anti-government demonstrations.

A mapping of anti-government protests and Chinese official finance in two African countries (Cameroon and Uganda) show that periods of decline in Chinese aid also experienced surges in protests (Che, 2021a). However, no study has assessed the impact of Chinese aid on public demonstrations. Extant literature in foreign aid and peace studies focus on examining foreign aid's effects on civil wars (Grossman, 1992; de Ree & Nillesen, 2009) and repressive use of state force (Carter, 2016; Kishi & Raleigh, 2015 & 2017). As elaborated in the ensuing literature review, while there appears to be growing consensus that foreign aid bolsters states' military capacities, thereby disincentivising armed rebellions, the aid-repression linkage remains shrouded in controversy. One line of thought holds that even traditional Western aid weakens the social contract, allowing rulers to be ruthless, with minimal accountability constraints (Ahmed, 2016 & 2019). An opposing line of thought depicts conditionalities accompanying Western aid as major constraints against ruthless use of state

force (Carter, 2016; Kishi & Raleigh, 2015 & 2017). A recent study (Che, 2021b) does not find foreign official finance to be a statistically significant predictor of repression in Africa.

While contributing towards clarifying the current controversy clouding the aid-repression nexus, this article assesses the possible more immediate effect of foreign official finance on public demonstrations. As foreign aid potentially boosts recipient states' capacities to provide public goods, meet public needs, and avert public grievances, it can be expected that foreign official finance flows would reduce risks of public demonstrations against the state, and by extension, limit incentives and opportunities for repressive exertion of state power. Understanding the more immediate effects of foreign aid on protests and riots can help towards clarifying conditions under which foreign aid might increase or decrease propensity to repression. In its own right as the dependent variable in this study, public demonstrations deserve scholarly attention as they pose disruptive challenges to state stability given their potential to metamorphose to political violence and armed rebellion if underlying grievances are not expediently redressed.

This paper uses standard multiple regression analysis to assess the effects of Chinese aid flows on anti-government public demonstrations in Africa. The paper focuses specifically on Chinese aid to the electricity sector and anti-government demonstrations relating to power supply instability and outages. Upon controlling for a number of confounding factors, this study finds a negative and statistically significant association between Chinese aid and anti-government manifestations. Hence, while many analysts criticise Chinese engagements in Africa as being harmful to African states, this study adds to contrasting evidence, revealing Chinese assistance as helpful in enhancing state capacity to meet public needs, mitigate public grievances and demonstrations, and enhance state stability.

The rest of this paper is structured as follows: First, the author reviewed related literature and derive testable hypotheses from suitable theoretical perspectives about possible effects of Chinese aid on protests and riots. Second, the author specified data on the study's dependent, independent, and control variables. Next, the study's statistical outputs are reported and discussed. Finally, implications of the study's findings for debates on China-Africa relations are outlined and directions for future research are signposted.

2. Literature Review

While there is an abundance of research on the motivations, distributive patterns, and developmental consequences of foreign aid (e.g. Cohen, 1995; Brautigam, 2009; Wright, 2010; Mwase & Yang, 2012), the present review is restricted to quantitative studies linking aid and conflict/peace in Africa for the purpose of clarifying this article's remit. Quantitative studies of foreign aid and peace tend to focus on traditional Western aid. This is largely due to the abundance of data on official finance flows from the United States of America (U.S.), the World Bank, and other Western aid providers that participate in various aid transparency schemes. Several studies have conducted large-n studies on Western aid and civil wars, with varying findings which can be classified under two broad categories. A few studies link Western aid with increased risks of civil war outbreak (e.g. Grossman, 1992; Nunn & Qian, 2014), arguing that aid swells the potential payoff or prize of capturing the state, motivating armed rebellion. Conversely, a majority of scholars find that traditional foreign aid reduces risks of civil wars (e.g. Collier & Hoeffler, 2002 & 2007; de Ree & Nillesen, 2009), asserting that, aid increases state capacity to spend more on strengthening its military forces, thereby raising opportunity costs of armed rebellion.

Compared to Western aid, there is a dearth of research relating to Chinese assistance and security in recipient countries. This is unsurprising. China emerged relatively more recently as a leading supplier of foreign assistance to African countries (Alden, 2007). China does not participate in traditional international aid reporting systems and there is a scarcity of reliable data on Chinese official finance to Africa. Upon tracking underreported Chinese official financial flows and generating one of the most used datasets on China-Africa aid, Strange et al. (2017) re-examined the aid – conflict nexus and found a negative correlation. While arguing that Chinese aid expands recipient states' capacities to strengthen their armies and fend-off armed rebellions, Strange et al.'s (2017) finding converges with the predominant view that foreign aid reduces, rather than increases, risks of civil wars.

Turning attention towards side-effects of foreign aid on repression, Carter (2016) undertook a statistical analysis and found evidence that traditional Western aid conditionalities dissuade state repressive violence owing to fears of sanctions, including aid withdrawals. However, in a narrower more

specialised quantitative analysis of U.S. aid, Ahmed (2016 & 2019) found a positive and statistically significant link between assistance from the largest Western bilateral donor and state repression. According to Ahmed's analysis, aid weakens the social contract between state leaders and their citizens, mitigating domestic accountability constraints that are otherwise strengthened by taxation, a conventional source of state revenue which induces citizenry pressure for representation and participation in state decision-making, including with respect to use of state force.

Undertaking quantitative comparative assessments of conflict and state repression effects of conditional Western aid and unconditional Chinese official finance, Kishi and Raleigh (2015 & 2017) report no differences in terms of the conflict effect of the two types of foreign aid. However, with regards to repression, Kishi and Raleigh (2015 & 2017, 3) found that states receiving larger amounts of Chinese financial assistance are disproportionately more ruthless than states receiving mainly Western aid. This finding has received extensive publicity in major international media outlets, including Mail and Guardian (2015) and The Irish Times (Corcoran, 2015) but is undermined by theoretical and methodological biases (Che, 2021b).

In the 21st century, the world has witnessed a decline in armed conflicts and a surge in non-militia or unarmed challenges to states (Raleigh et al., 2010). Although public manifestations are often accompanied by risks of violent escalation and disruption to state security, no quantitative comparative analysis has been conducted to gauge foreign aid's impact on anti-government public demonstrations. This is remarkable as foreign aid, especially official development assistance, is typically intended to support states in meeting the welfare needs (energy, transportation, education, and health, and so on) of their citizens. Welfare gains constitute a major determinant of state legitimacy (Gilley, 2006) and if a state is failing to provide for its citizens' welfare, grievances and public demonstrations can be expected as long argued in deprivation theories of social movements (Opp, 1988; McAdam, McCarthy, & Zald, 1988). Given the potential significance of foreign aid in leveraging the provision of public goods which enhance state leaders' legitimacy claims and minimise incentives for manifestations, this study focuses on assessing the effects of foreign aid in relation to public demonstrations.

Grievances and demonstrations (or the absence thereof) are more immediately connected to foreign aid than are armed conflicts and repression as the latter phenomena tend to arise only after grievances have formed and

collective mobilisation initiated. Therefore, understanding the effect of foreign aid on public demonstrations is relevant for clarifying conditions linking foreign aid and repression in peace studies. Moreover, through its analysis, this study contributes towards appraising the effectiveness of Chinese aid in meeting welfare needs and mitigating anti-government grievances.

Literature on political protests and social movements emphasise incentives and opportunities as pivotal explanations for public demonstrations. Theories of deprivation (Opp, 1988; McAdam, McCarthy, & Zald, 1988) and framing (Benford & Snow, 2000) explain public demonstrations as products of real and constructed grievances which induce incentives to initiate and join mobilisation for collective action. However, as articulated in political process theory, public demonstrations require opportunities to take-off and thrive (McAdam, McCarthy, & Zald, 1996; Meyer, 2004). Social and political scientists have explored, among others, the following as independent opportunity variables for collective action mobilisation: openness of political institutions (Kriesi, 2004); history of mobilisations (Whittier 2004); international alliances (Meyer, 2003); state wealth and capacity (Amenta, Dunleavy, & Bernstein, 1994); corruption (Johnston, 1986); state repression record (Ondetti, 2006; Heger & Salehyan, 2007); and more recently, social media access and use (Larson et al., 2019; Enikolopov, Makarin, & Petrova, 2020). Interdependence in incentive and opportunity explanations of public demonstrations has been emphasised (Opp & Kittel, 2010) and a multidisciplinary approach to studying political protests and social movements is encouraged (Opp, 2009).

Although some scholars such as Meyer (2003) have recognised the influence of international factors on public demonstrations, the specific effects of foreign aid on public manifestations remain unexplored in quantitative international relations. Restricting themselves to single and comparative case analysis, some studies have revealed instances of community displacement, environmental, and labour grievances and protests against some Western and Chinese-funded development projects (Chen & Landry, 2018; Schapper, Unrau, & Killoh, 2019; Che, 2021a). However, in the absence of cross country large-n analysis, it remains unclear if (and how) Chinese foreign official finance correlates with grievances and public demonstrations.

3. Hypotheses

Two logical but opposing hypotheses are derivable from two theoretical perspectives, namely rentier state theory and political survival theory, which are instructive for understanding anti-government social movements. On one hand, the author drew on rentier state theory to assert vulnerability of foreign aid to risks of misuse in ways similar to non-taxation-based revenue. While tax-sourced state revenue generates accountability pressure and reinforces the social contract between leaders and citizens, externally sourced revenue is more fungible, especially for states with dictatorial systems (Karl, 1997; Ross, 2001). Because rentier states are less accountable and less democratic relative to taxation-dependent states (Ross, 2001, 325), it can be expected that the former category incorporating many African states would be inclined to spend foreign aid via corrupt and private channels which perpetuate public grievances and related risks of anti-government protests. Hence, a possible hypothesis flowing from the rentier state perspective is that: African states with larger inflows of Chinese official finance are more prone to anti-government protests and riots.

On the other hand, since every state leader strives for legitimacy and preservation of their leadership including through delivery of public goods, political survival theory (de Mesquita et al., 2003; Gilley, 2006) is relevant for anchoring an alternative hypothesis linking Chinese aid and reduced risks of public manifestations in African countries. In the political survival perspective, foreign official finance potentially expands the capacity of recipient states to enhance their legitimacy through spending on public welfare, thereby warding-off welfare related public grievances while mitigating incentives for public demonstrations. Because Chinese aid potentially expands the resource capacity of recipient governments to deliver expensive public goods such as power plants, roads, railways, and ports while enhancing domestic approval ratings for the recipient governments (Dreher et al., 2019), it can be hypothesised that: African states with larger inflows of Chinese official finance are less prone to anti-government protests and riots.

4. Methodology

4.1. Regression analysis

To determine which of the above hypotheses is empirically substantiated, the author carried out a quantitative evaluation involving standard multiple regression analysis in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The quantitative evaluation examines public protest and riot effects of Chinese aid while controlling for various possible mediating variables. To check against over-aggregation in the statistical analysis, the author did not merge all Chinese official finance flows. Instead, the author used a disaggregated approach targeting only Chinese assistance to electricity generation, transmission, and distribution on the one hand (independent variable) and anti-government demonstrations over electric power instability (dependent variable).

Focus on electric power is justified by its centrality in many national development strategies across Africa and Chinese support towards realisation of those strategies as is the case with Kenya's Vision 2030 (Opali, 2021), Cameroon's Vision 2035 (PRC, n.d.), and Uganda's Vision 2040 (Kiva, 2023). Electricity is indispensable for the wellbeing of citizens and development of states as it helps to power homes, offices, schools, hospitals, and industries (Stern & Kander, 2012). Given the low substitutability of electric power, soaring prices, deficits, and disruptions thereof can induce public grievances and demonstrations against local and national governments as exemplified by recent mass protests in South Africa (Gillili, 2023), Nigeria (Ezediuno, 2022), and Ghana (Kombat, 2022). As Chinese aid supports African states in upscaling electricity infrastructure (particularly hydro, solar, and wind-based electricity power plants), increased access to electricity can logically be expected alongside reduced risks of anti-government protests over electricity supply.

The time span covered in the analysis is 2001-2018 for which data on most of the variables of interest are available. Assumptions of multiple regression analysis, including normality, linearity, and multicollinearity, were checked by inspecting related coefficients such as Pearson Correlation, Mahalanobis distance, and Variance Inflation Factor. All sovereign African countries are included in the analysis, excluding Burkina Faso, São Tomé and Príncipe, Eswatini, and The Gambia) which, for most of the period studied

(2001-2018), rejected the 'One China' principle by recognising Taiwan and did not receive Chinese official finance. South Sudan became an independent African state in 2011 and so has only seven country-year observations captured in this study. Essentially, panel data covering 50 African countries, each observed from extant indices yearly over the 2001-2018, is analysed in this study. The dataset is composed of 889 African country-year units.

Since the data used is panel data that draws on various sources for measuring different variables, similarities and variability between observations over time and space are implicitly captured, allowing for mixed (fixed and random) effects of the data to be accommodated in analysis. Critically, however, there are some cases of missing data. For instance, no data is available for governance-related variables for 2001 for all cases and there are some missing values for country-years where measurements are not provided in source indices. The 'exclude cases pairwise' function is used to remove missing data entries from the analysis in SPSS.

4.2. Data sources

The dependent variable relating to anti-government public demonstrations over power cuts is gauged from Raleigh, Kishi, and Linke (2023) Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED) which captures violent and non-violent events, including protests and riots by date and location. Using event tracking experts and various media sources, ACLED has compiled daily counts and descriptions of public demonstrations for African countries since 1997. The database captures sources of, and notes from, reports detailing nature and motivations of protest and riot events. The author identified and counted only public demonstrations reportedly expressing grievances against local and/or national government authorities over intermittent electricity supply.

To facilitate a curated download of electricity-related demonstrations, the author entered 'electricity' in the keyword function of the ACLED data export tool. Prior to frequency counts, the author checked the 'notes' column in downloaded data to verify that only manifestations over electricity-related demands are captured. The author used both summative and disaggregated measures of electricity-related public demonstration events. The summative measure is obtained by summing counts of protest and riot events for each country-year (2001-2018). At the disaggregated levels, measures constitute counts of protests and riots separately.

Data on the independent variable (Chinese aid towards electricity infrastructure development) is derived from AidData's Global Chinese Development Finance Dataset, version 2.0 (Custer et al., 2021; Dreher et al., 2022) which incorporates official development assistance (ODA-like flows with a minimum of 25 per cent grant element) and other official finance (OOF-like flows with less than 25 per cent grant element) to African countries. AidData contains purpose descriptions and sector categorisation of each Chinese official finance flow. The author identified and extracted only flows with purposes specifically relating to construction of electricity generation plants and to electricity transmission, and distribution (energy sector). For each country-year, the author captured the total amount (US Dollars) of Chinese energy finance committed to electricity enhancement purposes.

To control for direction of effect on public manifestations, observations of Chinese official finance are lagged, with the country-years observed for finance commitments ranging from 2000 to 2017. Also, since countries vary in population size and rate of dependency on foreign aid, the author gauged Chinese electricity aid only as a proportion or percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), with data on the latter sourced from the World Bank (nd).

Control variables, including governance-related ones, are added to the regression analysis. First, the author controlled for the effect of liberal democracy incorporating various freedoms (e.g. freedom of speech, movement, and assembly) which potentially facilitate mobilisation for collective action, raising risks of protests and riots. Democracy is measured from Polity IV (Marshall, Gurr, & Jaggers, 2018), with higher scores representing more civil liberties and leadership accountability. Also, the author controlled for the potential of state repression to affect risks of violent public demonstrations (Opp 1994). Use of repression to reaffirm state authority and contain political opposition can induce protests as instruments for expressing frustration (Ondetti, 2006; Heger & Salehyan, 2007). However, there is also an alternative logical view that repression instigates fear and dissuades mobilisation for public manifestations against the government (Escribà-Folch, 2013).

Additionally, political corruption is included in the analysis as a control variable. There is no scholarly consensus on the consequences of political corruption, especially with regards to anti-government demonstrations. Some studies aver a negative correlation between political corruption and anti-

government manifestations as corrupt political authorities pay off bribes to 'win-over' opposition leaders and contain anti-government grievances (Leys, 1965); others assert a positive correlation especially in circumstances where corrupt state authorities disregard or repress the opposition (Johnston, 1986; see also Kishi, Maggio, & Raleigh, 2017, 8). Political corruption is measured in this study using the Political Corruption Index (version 8) from the Varieties of Democracy Project (Coppedge et al., 2018).

Because dependence on domestic taxation relative to other sources of national revenue (e.g. natural resource rents) renders a state more productive, responsive and accountable to its citizens (Moore, 2007), it can be expected that states with higher rates of tax revenue would be more responsive to public demands, and would witness lower rates of anti-government demonstrations. Thus, this study includes tax revenue as an additional control variable in its regression models. Tax revenue is measured as a proportion of GDP as captured from the World Bank's (2019) World Development Indicators' database.

Given the relevance of governance quality to managing aid effectively for public welfare (Santiso, 2001), governance attributes can be expected to impact incentives and opportunities for anti-government public manifestations. Thus, governance-related variables, specifically government effectiveness and regulatory quality, are included in the regression analysis. Government effectiveness relates to how well public administrative institutions meet demand for public services and facilities across different sectors, including public health, education, energy, and transportation. Regulatory quality focuses more on the extent to which rules and policies facilitate private sector development. Risks of protests and riots are likely to be reduced where the public service is effective, and the private sector is well regulated. Measurements for government effectiveness and regulatory quality are drawn from the World Bank's World Governance Indicators database (Kaufmann, Kraay, & Mastruzzi, 2010).

5. Findings and Discussions

Statistical outputs are summarised in Table 1 capturing Beta coefficients of all predictor variables described earlier. Model 1 reports regression results for aggregate public demonstrations (that is, protests and riots combined). Model 2 focuses on protests while Model 3 focuses on riots. R Square values for all the

regression models attained statistical significance (Sig. = .000), with each model explaining between 41 and 48 per cent of variance in the dependent variable.

Table 1: Effects Chinese Aid on Electricity-related Demonstrations, 2001-2018

| | MODEL 1 | MODEL 2 | MODEL 3 |
|-----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Chinese Aid | -.205*** | -.253*** | -.264*** |
| Liberal Democracy | .057** | .172** | .130* |
| Repression | .302*** | .365*** | .378*** |
| Political Corruption | -.103* | -.146** | -.166** |
| Tax Revenue | -.038 | -.044 | .041 |
| Government Effectiveness | -.141** | -.122* | -.177** |
| Regulatory Quality | -.010 | .012 | .018 |
| ***p<0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1 | | | |

The table reported the standardised coefficients of variables in standard multiple regression analysis predicting effects of Chinese electricity aid on anti-government protests and riots over electricity demands.

Discounting their negative signs, Beta coefficient values of Chinese aid (-.205, -.253, -.264) are larger than those of other predictor variables, barring repression. This signals a generally substantial unique impact of Chinese aid on anti-government protests and riots when other predictor variables are controlled for. The effect of Chinese aid is statistically significant ($p < .01$), with the negative sign next to its Beta values revealing a negative relationship with electricity-related protests and riots.

The regression results bear support for the hypothesis derived from political survival theory, relative to the one derived from rentier state theory. Ostensibly due to its demand-driven and unconditional structure, Chinese aid

particularly seems politically valuable to African leaders under pressure to deliver much desired but expensive electricity infrastructure projects, including hydroelectricity dams. Conversely, Western aid agencies are seldom willing to sponsor such expensive infrastructure and usually impose democracy and free market-promoting conditionalities on African states, constraining African leaders' discretion and proclivity to use aid in ways that optimise their popularity and voter shares while warding-off risks of anti-government protests and riots. Unfortunately, due to paucity of energy assistance from Western bilateral sources comparable to China, only Chinese electricity aid projects are examined in the regression analysis.

The negative and statistically significant relationship between Chinese electricity aid and public demonstrations is consistent with extant suggestions of the relevance of Chinese aid in redressing infrastructure needs across various sectors, including education, health, housing, and transport (Brautigam, 2009; Nordtveit, 2011; Tang & Shen, 2020), helping to curb protests in pre-election years in some African countries (Che 2021a) while facilitating pro-incumbent votes (Dreher et al., 2019; Che & Njie, 2024).

6. Conclusion

Chinese official finance has been criticised in some Western scholarly, policy, and media outlets for perpetrating debt-traps, corruption, and repression in recipient countries (e.g. Kishi and Raleigh, 2015 & 2017; Corcoran, 2015; Mail and Guardian, 2015). Against a backdrop of Western calls for China to reform its aid policy of non-interference, Beijing has demonstrated willingness to become more active in monitoring and supervising Chinese-funded projects in recipient countries. For instance, in 2013, China's Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of Environmental Protection jointly issued reform 'measures' mandating stringent project appraisals and evaluations as safeguards for appropriate and sustainable use of Chinese development assistance (Dreher et al., 2019). While clarifying China's "Measures for the Administration of Foreign Aid" in a press conference in December 2014, a high-ranking official in the Ministry of Commerce suggested that there should be sanctions or punishment for non-compliance with Chinese-funded development project implementation terms (MOFCOM, 2014; Che, 2021b, 249-250).

However, criticisms of China's no-strings-attached approach to foreign aid overlooks its potential for cushioning budget deficits in African countries

and for supporting African governments in providing public goods and improving living conditions in society. This study's finding of a negative and statistically significant relationship between Chinese electricity aid and anti-government public demonstrations over electricity demands provides an empirical basis for cautioning against radically reforming or jettisoning Beijing's non-interference foreign aid policy for Western-like conditionalities. Tying political strings to Chinese official finance could precariously increase risks of anti-government demonstrations and social instability owing to constraints in infrastructure financing in many African states. Given a surge in anti-neocolonial sentiments, prominently exuded through unconstitutional military takeovers and mass protests in some Francophone African states (e.g. Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger) it will be prudent for Beijing to avoid overhauling its foreign aid policy of non-interference if China-Africa relations are to be sustained on friendly and mutually respectful terms.

Caution is urged against reforms that could make Chinese aid condition-based and undermine its utility for provision of public goods that improve public welfare and minimise incentives for protests and riots. While this cautionary note is based on a regression analysis of Chinese energy aid on electricity-related public demonstrations, it remains unclear whether several types of aid projects in the electricity development chain (from generation to distribution and wiring) affect risks of electricity-related social movements differently. Hence, future research could undertake disaggregated quantitative explorations and qualitative studies involving field research in African countries for differentiated analysis of causal mechanisms linking Chinese aid and civil society activism.

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Notes

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