

Effects of Aid Attributes on Public Support: Evidence from Chinese Aid Projects in Kenya*

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Abstract

Little is known about how different aspects of aid projects cause changes to citizen approval. This study explores the heterogeneous effects of Chinese foreign aid on public support. While we expect public opinion on Chinese aid to be positive, we hypothesize that support will strengthen if the project is infrastructure-based and weaken if the project is tied to Chinese vendors or smacks of clientelism—specifically, allocating the aid to the district of the president’s birth. Results from a survey experiment in Kenya indicate that, contrary to expectations, Chinese aid is less popular than World Bank projects but statistically indistinguishable from U.S. aid. Allocation of any aid—Chinese, World Bank, or U.S.—to the president’s birth district caused a substantively and statistically significant decrease in public support. Infrastructure aid drew statistically similar support as other types, and tying aid to foreign contractors did not significantly decrease support. Interaction effects were imprecisely estimated. In all, perceived clientelism appeared to have the strongest negative effects on support for foreign aid regardless of donor origin.

Keywords: foreign aid, China, public opinion, Kenya, infrastructure, favoritism, clientelism

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Introduction

The rising influence of China as a source of development finance is a continuing topic of debate especially given that systematic attention to Chinese aid by project has awaited comprehensive data collection (Dreher et al., 2022). One source of concern is related to the lack of transparency of Chinese aid projects, deviating from monitoring and reporting standards proposed by the original OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) (Bräutigam 2011). At the same time, Chinese aid is characterized by an extraordinary expansion of development finance programs over the last two decades (Dreher et al., 2022). The yearly commitments of Chinese development finance reached approximately 85 billion USD, surpassing the United States and other strong powers by double or even more (Malik et al. 2021). With the initiation of Beijing’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), China is expanding its prominence, especially in African countries, as the lender of first and last resort. Between 2013 and 2018, 45 percent of its finance was directed to African countries, strengthening political and economic relations between China and Africa. Additionally, Chinese finance more often comes in the form of semi-concessional or non-concessional compared to concessional traditional aid (Dreher et al., 2022). This has aroused concerns and criticisms about a potential “debt trap” in the lending countries, with China possibly exploiting its loans to secure strategic advantages in the region (Green 2019) or propagating its political ideologies across the continent.

Contrary to such concerns, public opinion in African countries on China has remained positive. Afrobarometer surveys across 34 African countries show that general public sentiment towards China’s assistance and influence in the region is positive among Africans.¹ After the United States, China is perceived to be the most preferred choice of development models. At the same time, a mixed response is observed among the African public as a

¹Afrobarometer Data, available at <http://www.afrobarometer.org>

majority of respondents who are aware of Chinese loans and development assistance are concerned with the possibility of being heavily indebted to China. We extend this inquiry by investigating the effects of different aspects of Chinese—and U.S. and World Bank—aid cause changes to African public support for the aid.

In this project, we focus on the case of Chinese financial activities in Kenya in particular. Kenya is one of the largest recipients of Chinese loans and aid, having received more than 3.14 billion USD in 2021 alone, ranking 11th in the world. The construction of a standard-gauge railway connecting Mombasa and Nairobi is the flagship example of a major Chinese investment in not only Kenya but in East Africa. During the implementation of the project, the largest such initiative since the independence of Kenya, imports of Chinese cement in Kenya increased by ten fold in 2016. However, such an influx of Chinese influence has also confronted challenges, as Kenya experienced a significant drop in its cement exports to the East African region by 40 percent in 2017, largely due to the excess supply of Chinese cement, with the World Bank cautioning that Kenya’s economic competitiveness was shrinking due to Chinese influence. Kenyan manufacturers attribute the economic decline in the Kenyan industrial sector to the Chinese companies importing raw materials from China and hiring largely Chinese labor (Nantulya 2019). In 2019, a Chinese-backed project in Kenya to construct the country’s first coal-powered plant was met with backlash and was revoked in a tribunal ruling, after local environmental activists raised concerns about pollution at the nearby UNESCO World Heritage site (McVeigh 2019).

Nevertheless, public perception of Chinese aid in general remains warm. Survey results from Afrobarometer find that 72 percent of the Kenyan respondents feel that Chinese economic activities are positively influencing the Kenyan economy, and 65 percent perceive China positively, ranking 6th among the countries surveyed. In this study, we investigate what attributes of Chinese aid influence public support in Kenya. We hypothesize that the Kenyan public will perceive Chinese aid positively in general, but the degree of support will

vary based on specific attributes of the Chinese aid projects. Specifically, we hypothesize that public support will strengthen when the aid project is infrastructure-based. Conversely, we anticipate weakened support if the project is linked to Chinese vendors or shows tell-tales of clientelism, operationalized as aid directed toward the birthplace of the leader of the recipient country (Dreher et al., 2022, 2019).

To test these hypotheses, we conduct a survey experiment in Kenya. To increase ecological validity, the survey deploys actual “pipeline” aid projects forthcoming to Kenya and financed by the World Bank and its member countries, including China and the U.S. It also bases described aid on actual Chinese aid projects. The infrastructure projects are a high-altitude highway and construction of a geothermal power plant. As comparison conditions, we randomly assign projects focused on water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) and vocational training. Additional treatments include descriptions of whether the project will be implemented in the district where the Kenyan president was born (*clientelism*) and whether the project will be procured by companies that are owned by China (*favoritism*).

We find that contrary to expectation, Kenyan respondents perceive Chinese aid negatively compared to World Bank projects, which served as the placebo, but not significantly differently from U.S. aid projects. Of the aid attributes randomly assigned as treatments, we find that aid directed to the Kenyan president’s birthplace faces the most backlash. It is the only attribute of the three aid characteristics—president’s birthplace, infrastructure, and favorable contracting—that had a statistically significant effect on public support. Other conditions are found to have a null effect on public opinion in our baseline model. The interaction effects between donor identity (China, the U.S., and the World Bank) and the aid attributes were also statistically insignificant, likely due to the imprecise estimation induced by small subsets.

We further disaggregate the results in our subgroup analysis and find heterogeneous effects of respondent identity. While the negative effect of clientelist treatment remains

largely robust, respondents' employment status and political ideology seem to mediate the interaction effect of donor identity and aid characteristics. The unemployed but job-seeking group is found to form a statistically significant and negative perception of aid projects when the aid comes from China and is directed to the President's birthplace but a more intensely negative view when the same aid comes from the U.S. Also, respondents who are primarily conservative seem to find the clientelistic aid project coming from China to be robustly negative.

Literature Review

Most of the emerging literature on public perception in recipient countries focuses on how receiving aid assistance affects the legitimacy of state leaders, and they find a nuanced relationship. The arguments are largely based on the fiscal contract theory where governments providing public services are more likely to be perceived as legitimate. Whether the inflow of foreign aid is viewed as a lack of competence of the state to provide basic services or an opportunity for politicians to claim credit will condition public support. Foreign aid can disincentivize citizens' willingness to contribute to public spending (Montinola 2010), and bypass aid via non-governmental organizations can also cripple state legitimacy (Baldwin and Winters 2020, 2023). Exposure to aid can help improve state legitimacy and confidence in local authorities (Blair and Roessler 2021; Cruz and Schneider 2017; Dietrich, Mahmud and Winters 2018). A similar effect is found in the announcement of Chinese FDI projects (Wang, Pearson and McCauley 2022). Dietrich and Winters (2015) report a null finding on the relationship between aid delivery and state legitimacy.

Less work examines the effect of aid projects on support for the aid projects themselves. Perceptions of clientelism and politicization attached to aid decrease public support for the aid projects (Clark, Dolan and Zeitz 2023; Findley et al. 2017; Milner and Tingley

2013). The studies all focus on different aspects of aid projects. Milner and Tingley (2013) employs a randomized survey experiment method in Uganda to conclude that donor identity matters. Aid programs from foreign actors receive greater support from the public compared to government programs, and they are also more positively received when they come from multilateral and bilateral donors. Findley et al. (2017) reports a similar finding in the Ugandan context and suggests that such effects are most noticeable for the citizens and elites who think the government to be corrupt. Clark, Dolan and Zeitz (2023) is most aligned with our research in that they analyze the public support for aid conditionality in the context of Kenya using a vignette survey design. They focus on the respondents' prior perception of the donor country as their explanatory variable and find that the more the public approves of the donor, the more likely they are to support conditionality attached to the donor's aid projects. Since their dependent variable only looks at how many numbers of conditionalities the public is willing to accept, we further develop from this work by specifying the types of conditionalities that the respondents are treated with.

Overall, less is known about how citizens in developing countries perceive aid projects. Moreover, most of the literature that discusses the public opinion of Chinese aid analyzes data from the Afrobarometer, which cannot fully account for problems of non-random selection and in general the problems of endogeneity. In particular, no literature examines, to the best of the authors' knowledge, specific attributes of aid and their effects on public opinion, especially from the context of the Chinese aid regime. Understanding public support for aid projects is central to evaluating and enhancing the effectiveness of aid policies, via the feedback loop connecting aid agencies to citizens and back to elected leaders (Milner and Tingley 2013).

Theoretical Argument

Why do different foreign aid projects receive different levels of public support, if the identity of donor countries plays a marginal role? We conjecture that it is another attribute of foreign aid that shapes public opinions on such projects, conditionality. To implement foreign aid projects effectively, donor countries usually attach certain conditions when making choices among recipients. Yet extant research on conditionality has drawn different conclusions in terms of whether its impact will be positive or negative (Wright and Winters 2010). Mosley, Hudson and Verschoor (2004) argues that aid can positively affect economic growth and human development if it can manage to account for the spending priorities of recipient governments. However, Montinola (2010) finds out that aid conditionality only works in more democratic countries. In other cases, policy conditionality such as fiscal austerity measures might reduce the already low living standards of the poor, thus weakening the public support for foreign aid. Specifically, contrary to Milner and Tingley (2013)'s finding, clientelist and favoristic conditions attached to foreign aid projects could make the public perceive them as less reliable and more corrupt projects, and expect less potential benefits or become more concerned about their national autonomy in receiving foreign aid.

In this research, we aim to explore public opinion on foreign aid from recipient countries, answering the following question: how do different attributes of aid projects affect public support for Chinese aid projects? To provide an overview of the research, we examine which of the three main attributes of Chinese assistance projects – large-scale infrastructure project (*infrastructure*), project that is captured by local leaders (*clientelism*), and project that is tied to procurement from Chinese suppliers (*favoritism*) – affects the public opinion of African citizens on Chinese aid projects. Through survey experiments assigning different donor countries and other attributes of foreign aid projects, we aim to identify the impacts of heterogeneous characteristics of foreign aid on determining public support, as well as their

interaction and underlying causal mechanisms.

Recently, China has emerged as an alternative source of aid deviating from Western norms and practices (Hernandez 2017; Li 2017). The increasing presence of China in the international development assistance regime has sparked considerable scholarly and policy attention. There is substantial criticism directed towards Chinese donors, asserting that foreign aid from China is both “generous” and “toxic” (Naim 2009). A bad reputation of Chinese aid as more corrupt and unreliable has led to public opposition and protests in recent years despite its popularity among recipient country governments (Iacoella et al. 2021). However, at the same time, studies examining patterns of Chinese aid present a different perspective (Dreher and Fuchs 2015; Dreher et al. 2018, 2022; Strange et al. 2017; Woods 2008). Woods (2008) dismisses this criticism as “hysteria,” arguing that there is insufficient evidence to suggest that China is leading low-income recipient countries into debt or endangering universal values.

Also, public perception of Chinese assistance in recipient countries is nuanced but generally positive. While some studies find that exposure to Chinese aid deteriorates affinity with China (Blair, Marty and Roessler 2022), or has a null effect (Blair and Roessler 2018), other research indicates that the presence of Chinese projects is also received positively (Sanny and Selormey 2021; Sautman and Hairong 2009; Wellner et al. 2022; Xu and Zhang 2020). Survey results from African countries, in which China is the dominant provider of financial support for infrastructure projects, show that Chinese influence in their economy is viewed to be substantially positive. Afrobarometer survey in 34 countries finds that Africans hold a generally favorable perception of China’s economic assistance in their countries. Approximately 63% of Africans perceive China’s economic and political influence in their country to be “somewhat” or “very” positive, with only 14% of them holding a negative view. This is similar to views on US influence, a geopolitical rival in the region, with 60% having a positive outlook and 13% expressing a negative one (Sanny and Selormey 2021). Wellner et

al. (2022) empirically test that completing aid projects enhances public support for China in the recipient countries, both in the short and long run.

Literature on the effectiveness of Chinese aid also hints that experience under Chinese aid could boost public support for such projects. Chinese aid, especially its infrastructure projects, helps reduce the investment gap while facilitating aid absorption in developing countries (Kilama 2016). Chinese aid also improves local economic development (Dreher, Fuchs, Parks, Strange and Tierney 2021; Dreher, Fuchs, Hodler, Parks, Raschky and Tierney 2021; Xu and Zhang 2022) and alleviates poverty (Zhang et al. 2023). Such financial incentives can strengthen public support for China as a donor country and its aid projects (Dreher, Fuchs, Hodler, Parks, Raschky and Tierney 2021). Politically, some studies find that receiving Chinese investment projects also improves the recipient countries' leader legitimacy (Bai, Li and Wang 2022; Dreher, Fuchs, Hodler, Parks, Raschky and Tierney 2021; Wang, Pearson and McCauley 2022). This could create a feedback loop where increased support for local authorities and their legitimacy enhance ratings on foreign assistance the authorities are held accountable for. Based on the prior research, in the first hypothesis, we examine the overall effects of China as a donor on public support for foreign aid projects.

Hypothesis 1: Aid projects sponsored by Chinese donors are positively received among the public in the recipient country.

However, there is limited understanding of what aspects of Chinese economic assistance are attributable to such support for Chinese aid. We argue that to answer this, aid attributes should be taken into consideration. As aid models are diversified, encompassing various modes of aid, donor types, and conditionality, a growing body of research investigates the impacts of these heterogeneous forms of aid. Extant research examined how the public in the donor country views aid policies and what conditions their willingness to give assistance to developing countries (Baker 2015; Bodenstein and Faust 2017; Goldsmith, Horiuchi and

Wood 2014; Heinrich, Kobayashi and Bryant 2016; Paxton and Knack 2012; Wang and Cooper 2023; Wood, Hoy and Pryke 2020).

In this project, we conjecture that different characteristics of Chinese aid influence public opinion on the aid projects by China. In particular, we focus on the three main attributes of Chinese aid: aid project type, favoritism, and clientelism. These traits are considered major differences between aid projects implemented by Chinese donors and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries from Blair and Roessler (2021). The first difference between China and Western aid is the project type. Foreign aid from China is largely characterized as larger infrastructure projects (Blair and Roessler 2021). Second, China's overseas development projects often award investment or construction contracts to its domestic companies, usually state-owned enterprises (Brautigam 2011). Third, compared to the World Bank, more Chinese development projects are allocated to the birth regions of incumbent political leaders (Dreher et al., 2022, 2019).

To begin with, Chinese assistance is characterized by fewer but larger-scale projects, primarily concentrated on infrastructure development, including transportation, communication, energy, etc., whereas Western donors generally focus on small-scale projects spanning numerous sectors (Blair, Marty and Roessler 2022). This is linked to China's endeavors for its Belt and Road Initiative. Studies on the political benefits of public infrastructure projects demonstrate that increasing government spending on public infrastructure boosts electoral support (Burgess et al. 2015). States can use the construction site as a showcase for state efficacy and leadership during economic decline to boost public support (Akbulut-Yuksel, Okoye and Turan 2020; Voigtländer and Voth 2014). Economic benefits can also spur public support. Construction of railway, for example, boosts growth by reducing transportation costs when connected to other sources of growth such as ports and mines (Fourie and Herranz-Loncan 2015; Storeygard 2016). Large-scale projects can also boost employment (Watermeyer 2000).

In particular, Chinese infrastructure projects are found to facilitate growth in developing countries (Bai, Li and Wang 2022; Kilama 2016; Xu and Zhang 2020, 2022; Zhang et al. 2023). In particular, Xu and Zhang (2020) finds that economic infrastructure and social infrastructure projects are most effective in not only boosting public support for Chinese aid but also empowering the soft power of China in general. Mechanisms of how these infrastructure projects contribute to economic development are through enhancing local industrialization and employment stability (Zhang et al. 2023) and through reducing rebel activities and thereby stabilizing the region (Xu and Zhang 2022). Based on this, we expect that the focus on infrastructure projects will be positively perceived among citizens of recipient countries. Accordingly, we put forward the hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2_a: Implementation of large-scale infrastructure projects has a positive effect on public support for Chinese aid projects.

Informing the recipient population that aid projects are tied to be used as a source of patronage can taint the credibility attached to the aid projects therefore reducing their support for the projects. While clientelism may serve the interests of those targeted clients who enjoy benefits from their patron, it can receive backlash from the general public (Hicken 2011). Clientelism retards the development of democracy through crippling political institutions and systems of accountability and representation that are central pillars of democracy (Graziano 1973; Lyne 2007; Stokes 2005). Such damage to democratic norms and values causes the public to perceive higher levels of corruption in their society (Carlin and Moseley 2022; Keefer 2007; Singer 2009). Singer (2009) provides three causal mechanisms of this effect of clientelism in the perception of corruption: clientelism may be illegal, makes it difficult to hold government officials accountable, and may encourage clientelistic politicians to raise funds illegally.

Specifically with regards to Chinese aid, Dreher et al. (2019) demonstrate that the

presidents' birth regions receive substantially higher financial inflows in the years they hold the office compared to other periods. They also found that, aside from the fact that China does not impose institutional safeguard policies regarding the allocation of aid, there is a higher probability of rejection for World Bank projects whose site is decided according to the political incentives of political leaders. Without any restrictions in place, politically marginalized regions are at a disadvantage in aid allocation. Some findings that Chinese aid is followed by a heightened perception of corruption (Brazys, Elkink and Kelly 2017; Cha 2023) and more instances of local corruption (Isaksson and Kotsadam 2018) could magnify our treatment effect.

Lack of control over aid facilitates aid capture. Findley et al. (2017) argue that substantive foreign donor control over aid decreases elite capture, increasing the probability of mass benefits. Additionally, foreign control over aid increases public support for aid in situations where there are high levels of perceived corruption and clientelism. Nevertheless, benefiting from the clientelistic allocation of aid and infrastructure projects can also improve the perceptions of the government (Wang and Wissenbach 2019), which may increase the perceptions of foreign aid in the eyes of recipients of clientelistic investments funded by foreign aid.

Hypothesis 2_b: Clientelistic attributes have negative effects on public support for Chinese aid projects.

Chinese-sponsored projects are also well known for being commissioned to Chinese contractors (Zhang 2021), which has been interpreted as the donor's favoritism. Favoristic conditions will lead to negative public views on foreign aid because of the perceived reduced benefits the recipient expects from aid projects and concerns over reduced national autonomy. Recipient governments expect that foreign aid projects will benefit the national economy by contracting with local suppliers (McLean 2017) and hiring local employees (Page

and Söderbom 2015). Governments have not only the economic but also political incentives to allocate more procurement contracts domestically (Branco 1994; McLean 2017; Rickard and Kono 2013). Removing such incentives from local governments and citizens can backfire and incite negative perceptions of foreign aid projects.

In addition, there have been some criticisms over China’s overseas projects, arguing that they are economic and political tools for the Chinese state to transfer the surplus of labor and production capacity (Yang 2022; Nugent and Lu 2021). Unfamiliar with the local conditions and lack of risk mitigation experience, Chinese companies are also blamed for their lower standards when evaluating the social and environmental impacts of their projects, which leads to public discontent and even civil protests (Iacoella et al. 2021). Such narratives might also influence people’s perception of Chinese aid and thus shape public support for Chinese projects.

Hypothesis 2_c: Contractor favoritism has a negative effect on public support for Chinese aid projects.

Experiment Design

We conducted an individual-level survey experiment to study citizens’ responses to foreign aid projects under different scenarios of donor countries and conditionality. Examining our key theoretical conjectures through a survey experiment helped address problems of endogeneity and manipulate variables that would otherwise be hard to disentangle from the effects of other factors, such as different types of foreign aid projects, and the amount and timespan of aid. We conducted an initial test of the argument with a vignette experiment describing four foreign aid projects to one respondent. This empirical approach allows us to control for respondents’ information and thus make sure that different levels of public support for foreign aid projects are a function of experimental manipulation. We expect the stimulus of

the experiment to be given in a manner similar to what respondents might encounter in a newspaper article, commentary piece, or political speech, to probe how respondents evaluate the potential impacts of infrastructure projects as they often are described in public debates. Thus we offered information on four foreign aid projects with different and randomly assigned treatment groups, including highway and geothermal plant projects for infrastructure-related projects, and WASH and vocational training as a non-infrastructure placebo text.

We fielded our survey experiment in Kenya for four reasons. First, despite its economic development in recent years, Kenya has been a major recipient of foreign aid to the global South. According to World Bank data, Kenya received more than 3.14 billion USD of foreign aid and official development assistance in 2021 alone, ranking 11th worldwide.² Not only does it provide a more ideal context to study public opinions on foreign aid in Kenya, but also it underscores the importance of the topic in this country. Second, most Kenyan citizens are aware of and perceive a positive influence of China in their country³, which can provide a stronger test for whether clientelism and favoritism have negative effects on public support for Chinese aid projects. Third, Kenya has a higher level of Internet availability, which makes our survey more accessible to respondents from different demographic and political backgrounds, and makes it easier to obtain a balanced sample. Fourth, English is one of the official languages in Kenya. It not only increases the accessibility of the survey to a larger scope of citizens but also helps avoid some misunderstandings of the survey text and questions due to imperfect translation. Thanks to the wide coverage of mobile networks and regular access to the internet, [Pham, Rampazzo and Rosenzweig \(2019\)](#) also confirms that Facebook can be used to recruit a representative sample of respondents from various regions of Kenya at low costs.

We conducted our survey online for Kenyan internet users from November 28 to December

²World Bank Data: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/DT.ODA.ALLD.CD?locations=KE>

³United States Institute of Piece Report: <https://www.usip.org/publications/2021/06/countering-china-continent-look-african-views>

12, 2024. We used Facebook’s online advertising platform to recruit respondents to conduct survey on Qualtrics. Qualtrics’ own IP tracking system ensures that there is a single entry from a device. We advertised the opportunity to participate in a 10-minute survey and win a random drawing of USD 50 in compensation for the completion of the survey. During this period, we recruited a total of 903 survey respondents from Kenya, of which 840 respondents completed the survey without attrition.⁴ We preregistered our hypothesis and research design on the Open Science Framework (OSF) before fielding the survey.

Data

In the pre-treatment section of the survey, we collected data on control variables to reduce measurement errors of average treatment effects. Respondents were required to report their demographic characteristics such as age, gender, income, ethnicity, and political orientation so that we could get a balanced sample as possible. Preconceived notions can result in either upward or downward estimation bias because of respondents’ prior perception of foreign aid, which provides rationales for controlling pre-treatment bias to minimize their interference. In the pre-treatment section of the survey experiment, respondents were asked their opinion on China and international affairs ("Which country will be the leading global economic and political power in 2050"). Answers to these questions are coded as control variables or used in a balance test.

Explanatory variables, including donor countries and different attributes of foreign aid projects, are designed as conjoint treatments in the survey experiment. We adopted an in-subject and between-subject design, randomly assigned four projects with a combination of treatments to each respondent: 1) whether the donor country of the project is China, the

⁴We used the ‘pwr’ package in R to conduct a power analysis (Cohen 2013). The goal of collecting outcome variables for 2400 projects was to obtain 0.95 power to detect a medium effect size of 0.2 at the standard 0.05 alpha error probability.

United States, or the World Bank; 2) whether the project is infrastructure-related, including “a Summit Highway” or a “geothermal plant construction” project, or non-infrastructure, including a project “to improve water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services” or “vocational training” project; 3) whether the sponsored foreign aid project “will be implemented in Kamagut, the village in which President Ruto was born” or “will be implemented in multiple cities across different regions in Kenya”; and 4) whether the donated foreign aid project will be commissioned to an affiliated contractor to the donor or “will be commissioned to companies to the most competitive companies through open bidding.”

We included a preamble before the treatment: “Foreign aid is a useful resource for funding important projects that affect economic development in Kenya, including infrastructure and social welfare. Please read the description of the following four projects carefully, and indicate the degree to which you support them. There are no right or wrong answers.” To align with the principle of naturalistic observation, we integrated our treatment with pipeline projects that the World Bank sponsors in Kenya, and used the description of the four projects: a Summit Highway Program⁵ and a Water and Sanitation and Hygiene Program⁶. Descriptions drawn from actual Chinese aid projects in Kenya, including geothermal plant construction⁷ and vocational training project⁸ were also included.

Here’s an example of what a respondent might see in this part: “Kenya recently received foreign aid worth of 27 billion Kenyan Shillings from the World Bank. The objective of this foreign aid project is to build a Summit Highway. The project will upgrade the inter-urban highway system from a two-carriage to a four-carriage road. It aims to improve the

⁵World Bank document: [The Nairobi-Nakuru-Mau Summit Highway PPP Cover Letter](#)

⁶World Bank document: [Water and Sanitation and Hygiene Program Environmental and Social Systems assessment \(ESSA\)](#)

⁷Global Times: [China-Africa vocational education offers more opportunities for locals, drives economic development in Africa](#). Available at <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202309/1297408.shtml>

⁸YiCai Global: [China’s Kaishan to Pay USD11.3 Million for Orpower for First African Geothermal Plant](#). Available at <https://www.yicaiglobal.com/news/chinas-kaishan-to-pay-usd113-million-for-orpower-for-first-african-geothermal-plant>

movement of goods and people along the Summit road and to enhance connectivity between the region and other parts of Kenya and the larger East and Central Africa. The road in its current condition is insufficient to serve the traffic of travelers and freight transporters using it. The project will be implemented in Kamagut, the village in which President Ruto was born.”

In the post-treatment section, we gathered data on outcome variables. The overall outcome variable pertains to public opinions on foreign aid projects. After the treatment of each project, we asked the respondents “How strongly do you support this aid project?” on a scale of five ranging from "Strongly opposed", "Moderately opposed", "Neutral", "Moderately supportive", and "Strongly supportive".

Given that the research was conducted online, the subjects are high-income and better educated. The study recruited participants and was conducted in English, so the participants’ dominant language spoken was English. Each respondent received all 4 types of projects, but the order they received different projects was randomized. Also, respondents randomly received manipulation test questions about the project type in the assigned vignette. Finally, to prevent priming respondents’ answers in the questions of demographics and politics (outside the treatment parts) or making respondents biased before the treatment, we randomized the order of treatment and screening questions. In other words, some respondents received the treatment before answering questions on demographics and politics, and others received them in the reverse order.

Identification Strategy

Based on the survey results, we estimate the average marginal component effect (AMCE) of each attribute level and use them individually to test our hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1 can be validated by simply evaluating the AMCE of informing China as

a donor country. If the AMCE is statistically significant, then China-sponsored foreign aid projects are indeed more positively perceived than projects sponsored by the United States or the World Bank. In this study, we are also interested in the relationship between Chinese aid and different aid attributes. As such, rather than simply measuring the AMCE, we also constructed OLS regression models with the variation of donor countries and aid attributes.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Public Support} = & \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Donor Countries} + \beta_2 \text{Aid Attributes} \\ & + \beta_3 \text{Donor Countries} * \text{Aid Attributes} + \epsilon_i \end{aligned} \tag{1}$$

For example, the estimated equation for the subgroup of respondents who are informed of a **Summit Highway project sponsored by China’s foreign aid** will be:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Public Support} = & \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{China} + \beta_2 \text{Summit Highway Project} \\ & + \beta_3 \text{China} * \text{Summit Highway Project} + \epsilon_i \end{aligned} \tag{2}$$

Based on Hypothesis 2_a, we expect that β_3 will be positive, which indicates that large-scale infrastructure projects enhance the positive effect of China as a donor country on public support for foreign aid. Similarly, for Hypotheses 2_b and 2_c, we expect that β_3 will be negative, meaning that clientelistic and favoristic conditions undermine the positive effect of China as a donor country on public support for foreign aid.

Empirical Findings

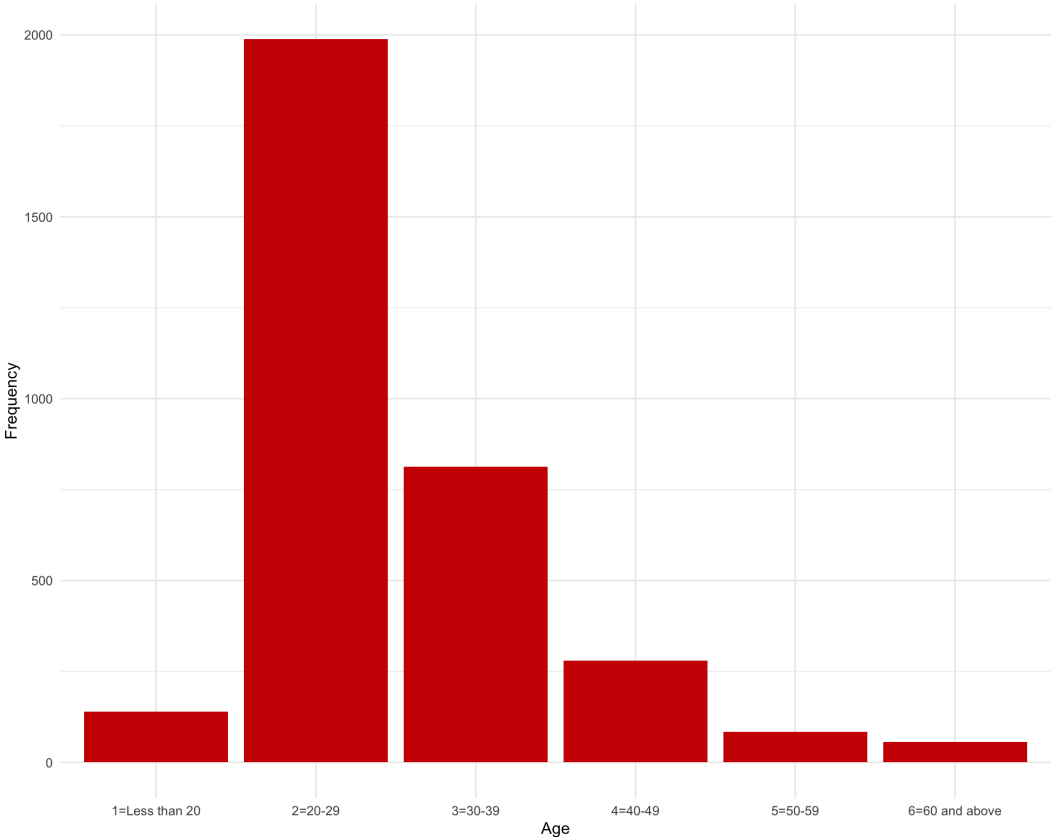
Main Analysis

In the first round of the survey experiment, we managed to recruit 903 respondents, 840 of whom did finished the survey. We asked respondents about their age, education levels, income, gender, the region where they live, ethnicity, and employment status. Along with socio-economic and demographic characteristics, we inquired about their opinion about the

effect of foreign aid on Kenya, opinions about China, which country they see as the leading country in 2050, whether they know the General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, and whether they see themselves as liberal or conservative.

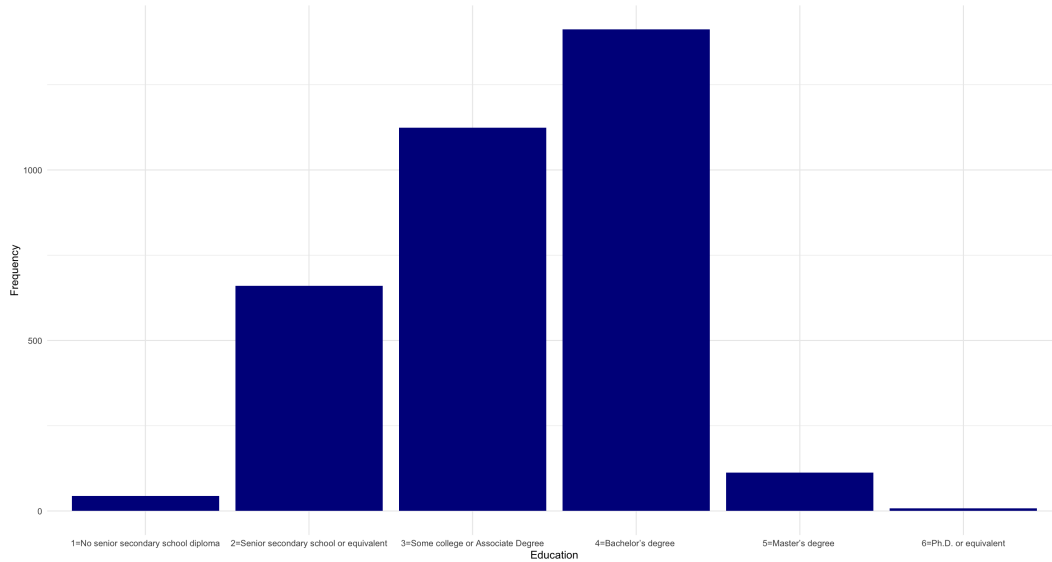
Similar to many other sub-Saharan countries, Kenya has a predominantly young population. Around half of the population is under 20. In our sample, the percentage of people aged between 20 and 29 is around 60%, which is relatively higher than the real-world percentage of around 40%. We believe that this might be the result of higher internet usage among younger generations. Nevertheless, our sample converges to real-world distribution (See Figure 1).

Figure 1: Distribution of Respondents' Age



Nevertheless, the distribution of respondents' education level is far from its real-world distribution. Although only 20% of Kenyan adults have some tertiary degree, around 80%

Figure 2: Distribution of Respondents' Education Levels

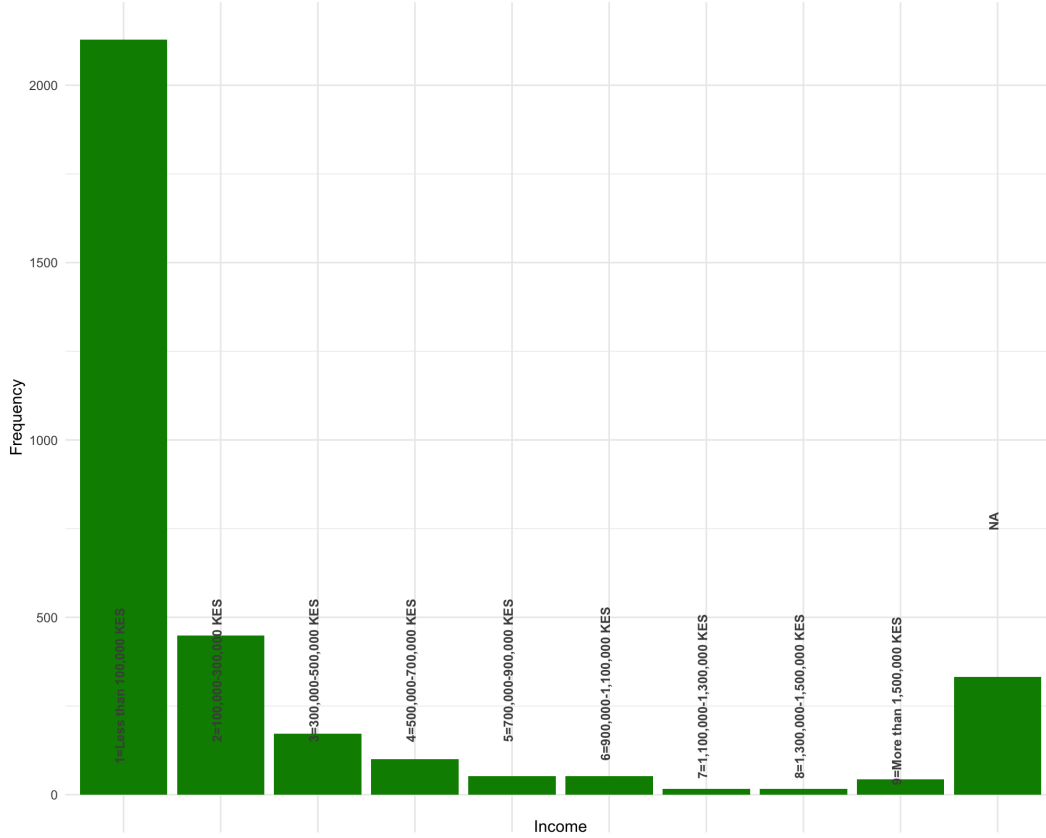


of our sample has a degree equal to or higher than an associate degree, as shown in Figure 2. This might be a result of the mean internet user profile in Kenya, deviating from real-world distribution.

Another important socio-economic measure is income level. The majority of respondents have an annual income of less than 100,000 Kenyan Shillings, slightly higher than 650 United States Dollars, as illustrated in Figure ???. However, a greater majority of respondents have an annual income of less than 100,000 Shillings, making the distribution of income levels highly skewed to the right.

We calculated average marginal component effects (AMCEs) of different treatments based on [Hainmueller, Hopkins and Yamamoto 2014](#), and the results are shown in Figure 4. In this graph, 90% confidence intervals are shown around OLS regression coefficients. At this stage, the major finding is that clientelistic behaviors such as implementing the projects at the president's birthplace and favoritistic behavior such as commissioning the aid project to a contractor from donor countries have a significantly negative effect on public support for foreign aid projects. Negative attitudes towards clientelistic practices can be observed

Figure 3: Distribution of Respondents' Income Levels



among respondents across various demographic and socio-economic subgroups, including income, education, and age levels, as well as within political and opinion subgroups. In contrast, unfavorable sentiments towards favoritism is relatively less significant across these diverse subgroups. One of the potential explanations for the substantive effects of clientelism and favoritism on public opinion about foreign aid is that they directly affect how people in different regions benefit from the aid. Competitive contracts are more likely to benefit local and national firms and bring a higher level of productivity and merit than contractors designated by donors. Moreover, clientelistic practices directly affect how and where projects are done, and thus alter public opinion on foreign aid immediately. Therefore, the effect of clientelism on public opinion on foreign aid is greater than that of favoritism, yet both effects are significant. If we limit the scope to respondents who successfully passed the manipulation

and attention check, the negative effects of clientelism and favoritism are significantly greater (See Figure 11 in Appendices).

In addition to clientelism and favoritism, informing respondents that the project is donated by China has a significant negative effect on public support for the foreign aid project compared to the baseline (a World Bank-sponsored project), which is against our expectations in Hypothesis 1. Previous studies have shown that public opinion on China is getting increasingly better, but this is not reflected in our analysis. Moreover, we could not find statistically and substantively significant results for the effects of project type and all the interaction terms, which implies the lack of a causal relationship between these treatments and outcome variables. Therefore, no evidence supports Hypothesis $2_a - 2_c$.

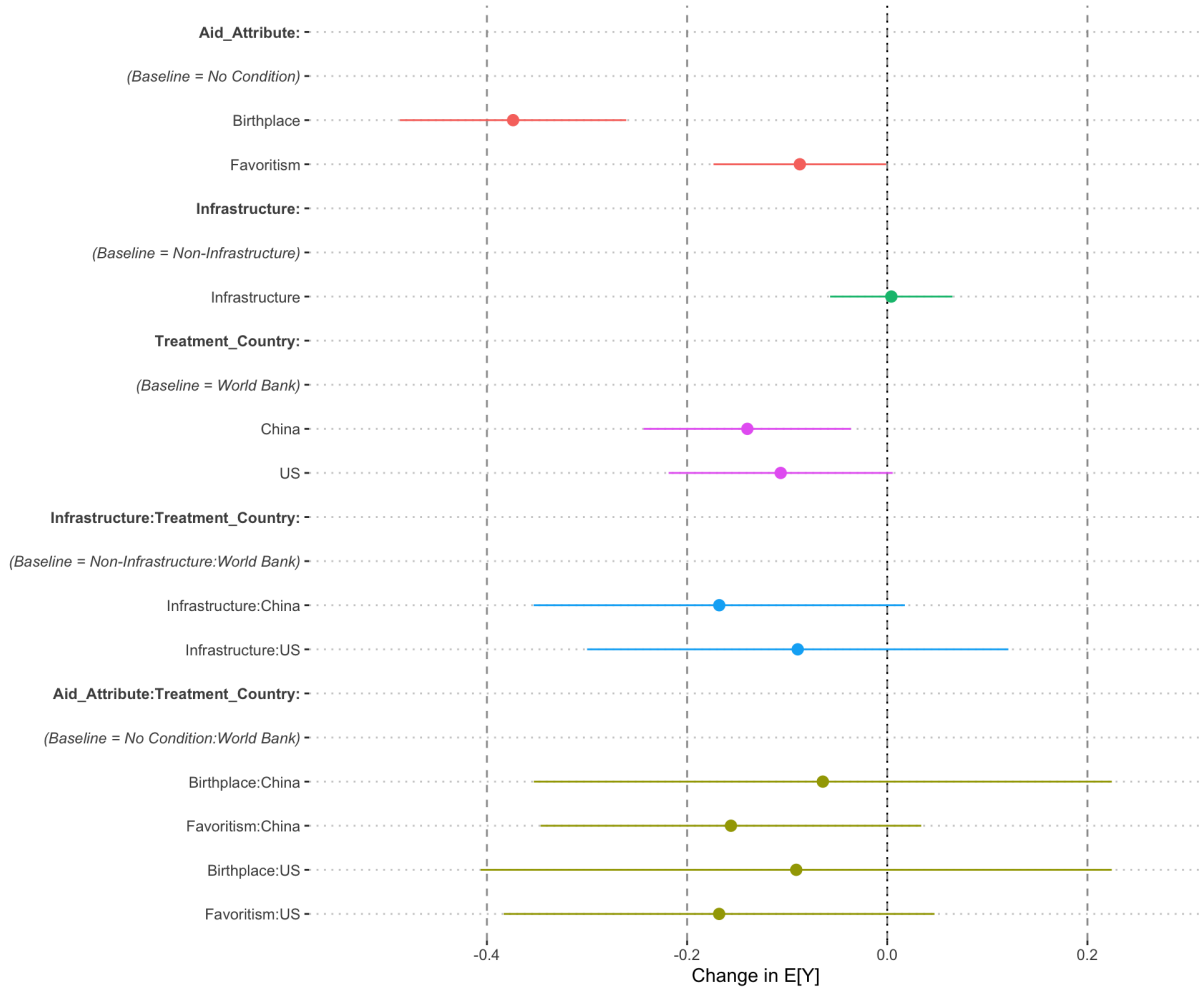
Nevertheless, since there are a multitude of treatments in our survey design, we believe that we would achieve better results in terms of statistical and substantive significance with a greater number of survey samples. The negative coefficients of interactive terms that are relevant to our hypotheses indicate the possibility that we might be able to confirm them in the presence of higher statistical power, which can be provided by a higher number of collected responses.

Subgroup Analyses

We also calculated the conditional average marginal component effects of project attributes across different subgroups of 1) income, 2) employment, 3) education, 4) region, 5) ethnicity, 6) political stance, 7) prior perception of foreign aid, 8) ability to recognize the CCP secretary, 9) prior opinion on China, and 10) prediction on the world leader in 2050. Results of the noteworthy subgroups are presented in this section, others are included in the Appendices.

Different subgroups of socio-economic conditions show heterogeneous patterns, although most results are not significant. As mentioned before, the distribution of income groups is not reflective of Kenyan society due to the characteristics of respondents, although we designed

Figure 4: Average Marginal Component Effects of Project Attributes

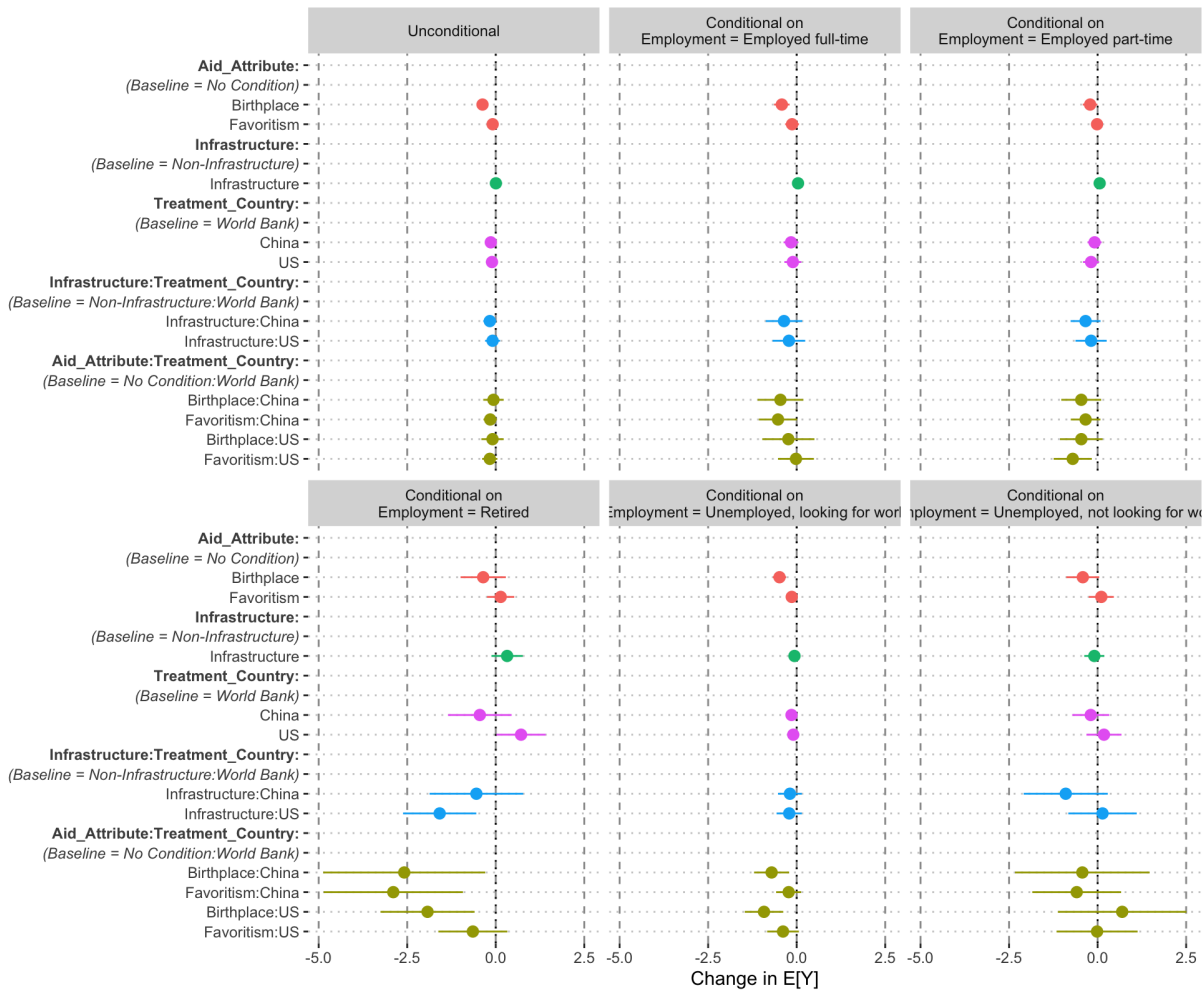


this question based on the statistics of annual income collected by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics. The interaction terms of China and aid attributes are statistically significant in high-income subgroups (more than 1,500,000 KES), but the sample of this subgroup is too small and the patterns are not consistent with other high-income subgroups, which makes it hard to interpret income as a moderating condition (See Figure 13).

Consistent with the main results, the negative effect of clientelism is more systematically significant than favoritism across most subgroups of different educational levels, especially low-skilled labor groups (education level below college). Whereas in the bachelor group, the interaction terms of China and both aid attributes are significant and the effect of favoritism is only significant among respondents with a Master’s degree (See Figure 12). The negative effect of clientelism is explicitly more significant in most subgroups except the retired and the unemployed but not seeking jobs, and so are the negative effects of informing donor identity. Retired respondents have a positive perception of the US as a donor, but their attitude towards China isn’t significantly negative (See Figure 5). It confirms our conjecture that negative opinions on aid attributes are due to the jeopardized economic interests of residents, particularly those actively engaged in the workforce.

The location and identity of respondents also seem to influence respondents’ opinions on foreign aid. Clientelism has significantly negative effects in most groups except Luo and multi-ethnicity, while the negative effects of favoritism are rarely substantive. Kikuyu, Kalenjin, and multi-ethnicity show significantly negative attitudes towards both donors (China and the US). The interaction terms of China and infrastructure, as well as donor identity and clientelism, are distinguishable from zero and negative among the multi-ethnicity group, implying the weakening effect between the variables (See Figure 6). In some regions, such as the Rift Valley (and the North Eastern region, although its sample size is too limited), the endorsement of foreign aid by citizens is adversely influenced when the donor is identified as either China or the US. The coefficients of interaction terms of both donors and

Figure 5: Conditional average marginal component effects of project attributes across respondent's employment status



aid attributes are also negative and distinguishable from zero among respondents from the Central region, Nairobi, and Rift Valley (See Figure 7).

Figure 6: Conditional average marginal component effects of project attributes across respondent's ethnicity

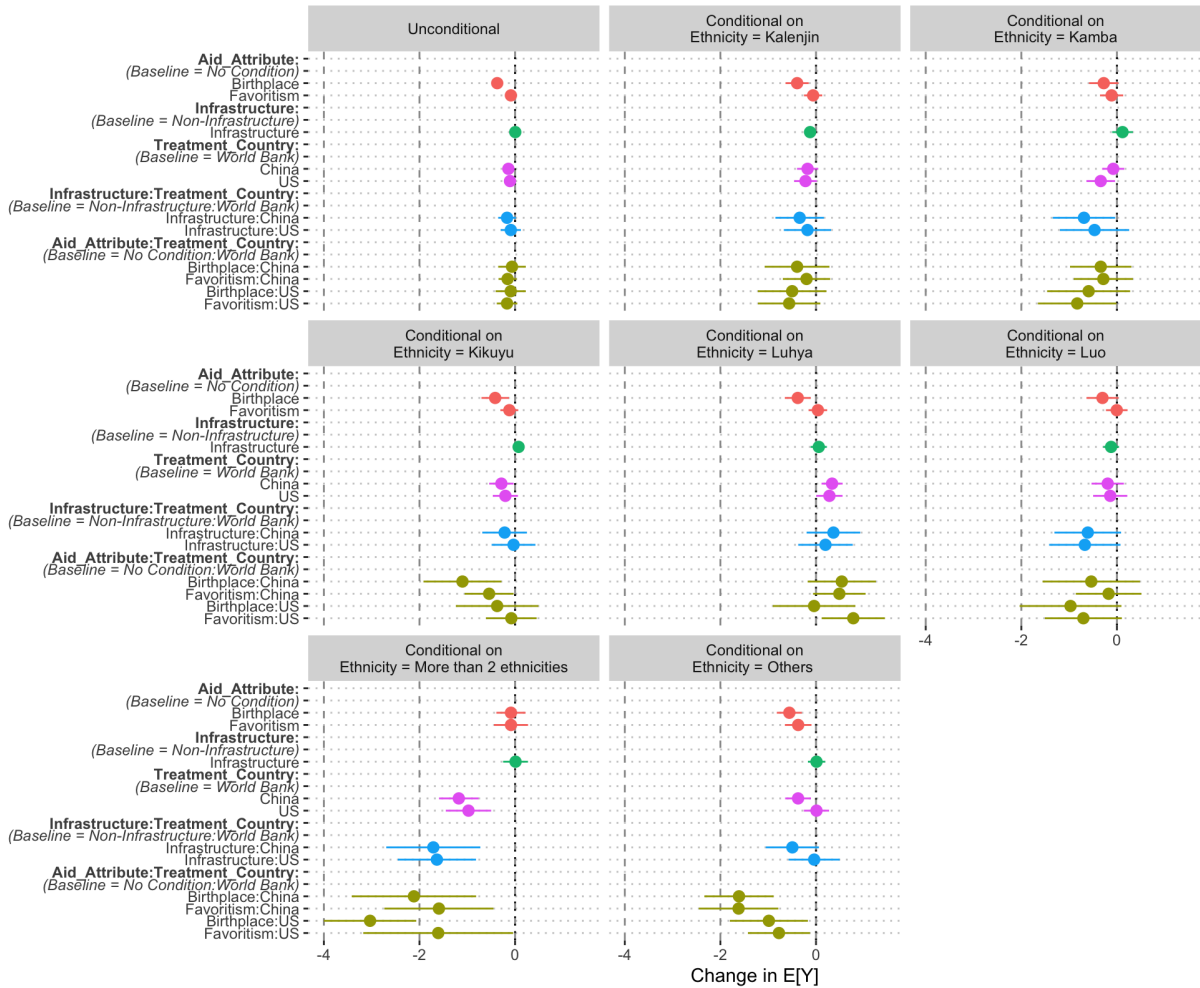
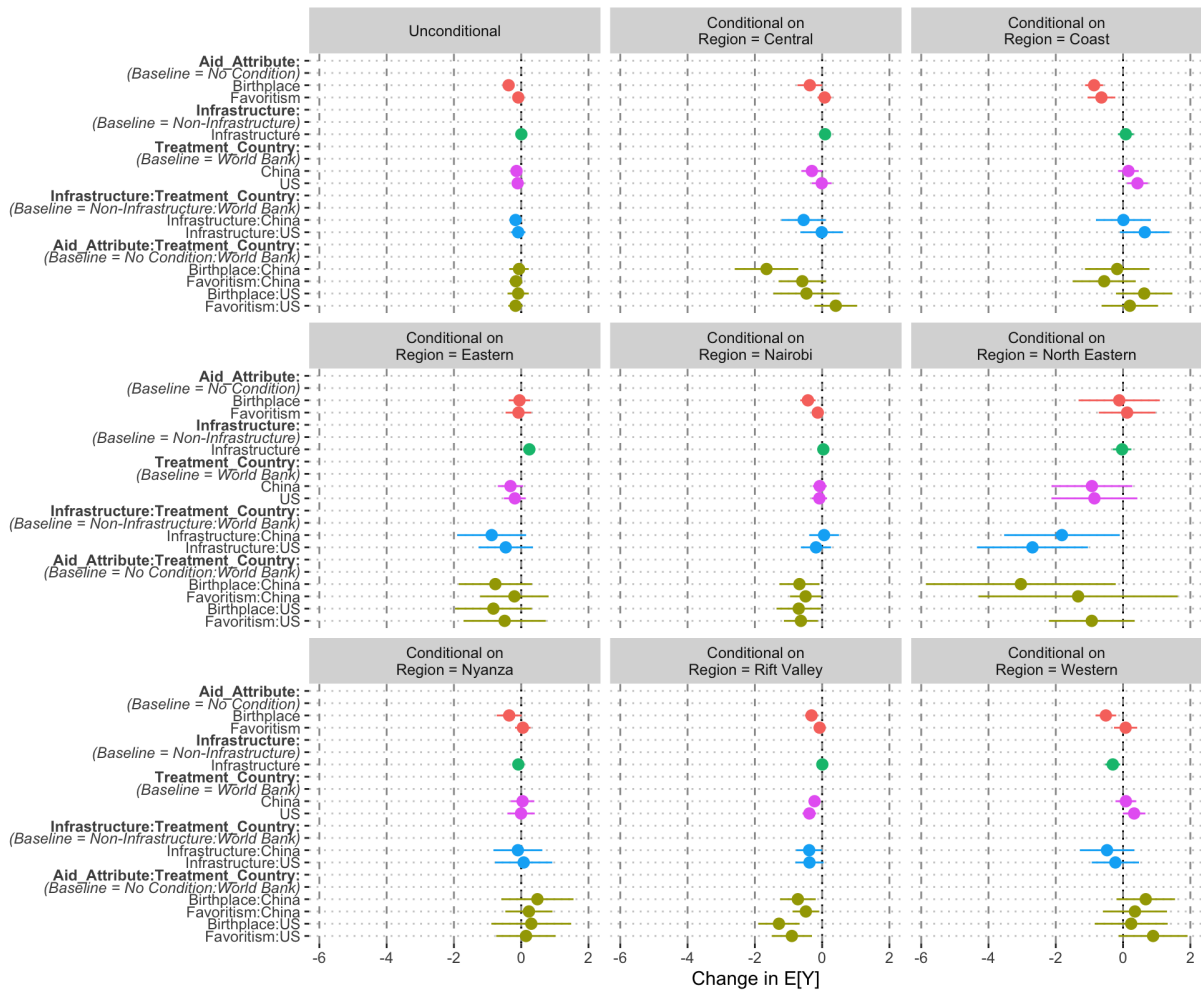


Figure 7: Conditional average marginal component effects of project attributes across respondents' home regions



Respondents with different political stances and prior opinions on foreign aid also account for the heterogeneous effects of aid attributes. The interaction terms of China and aid attributes are statistically significant among conservatives and other political groups, and so are the effects of China as a donor (See Figure 8). If focusing on the effects of aid attributes themselves, favoritism becomes insignificant yet only among conservatives. In the groups with moderately or strongly positive opinions on foreign aid previously, interaction terms are more likely to be statistically significant (See Figure 14).

Figure 8: Conditional average marginal component effects of project attributes across respondents' political stance

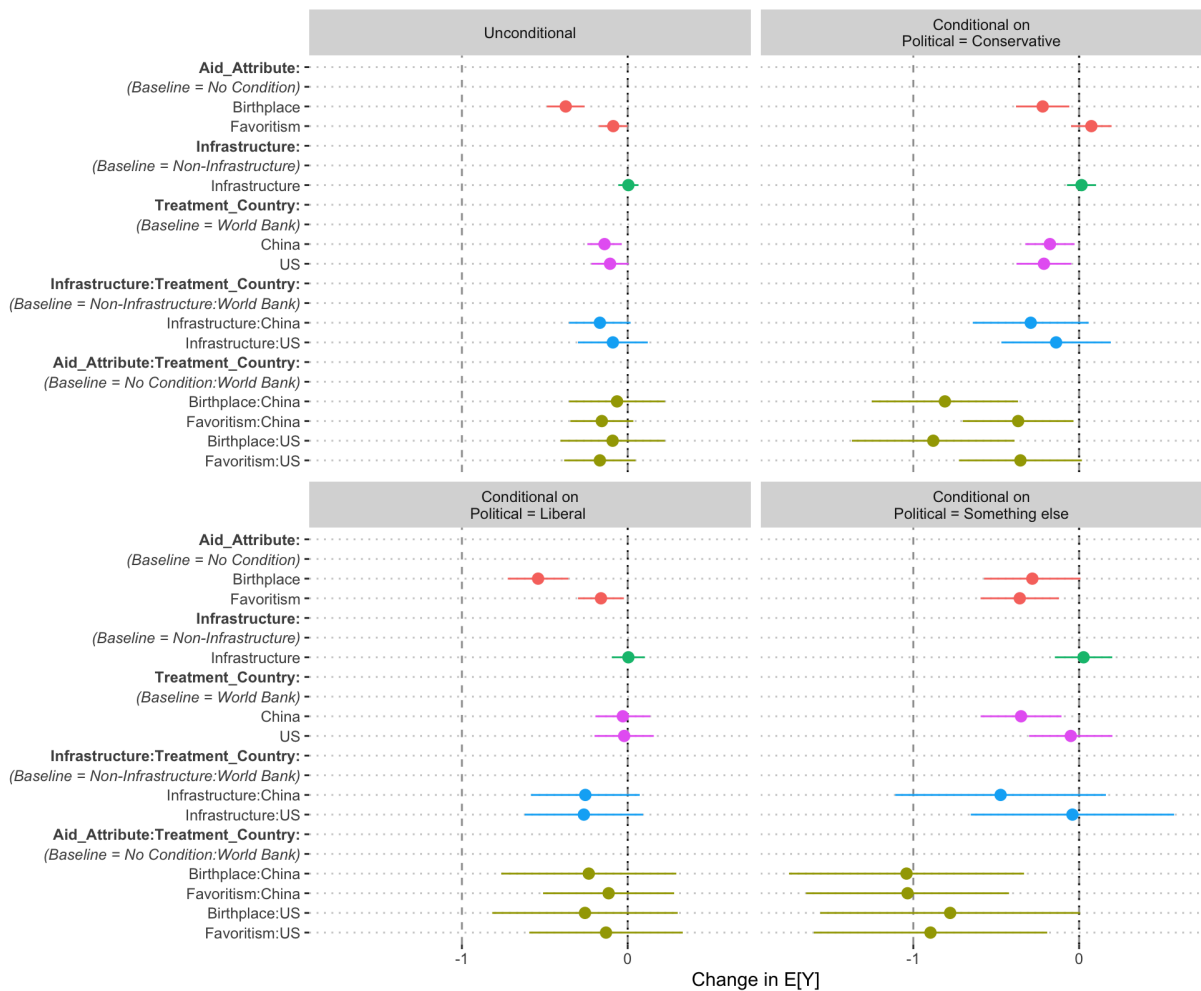
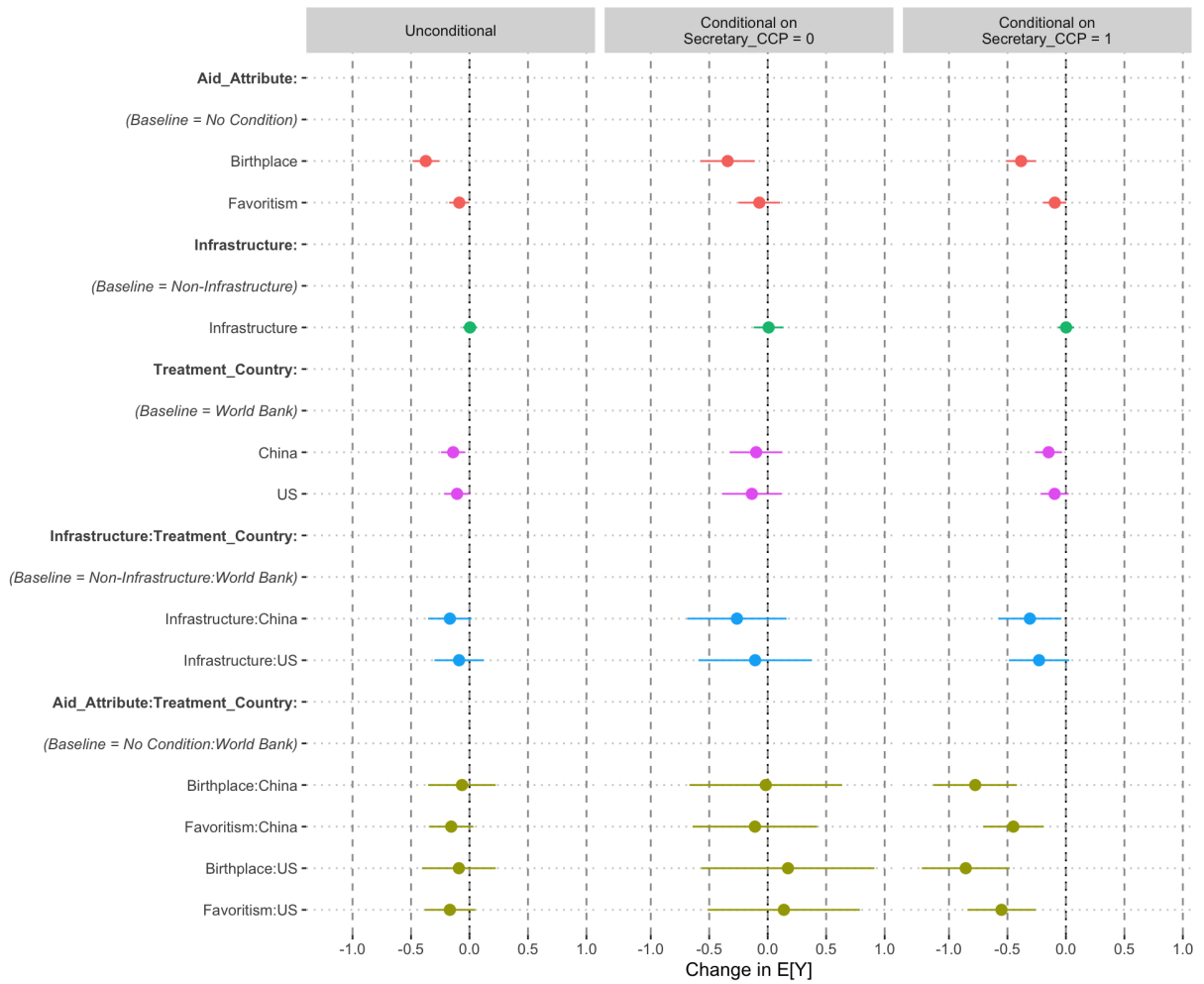
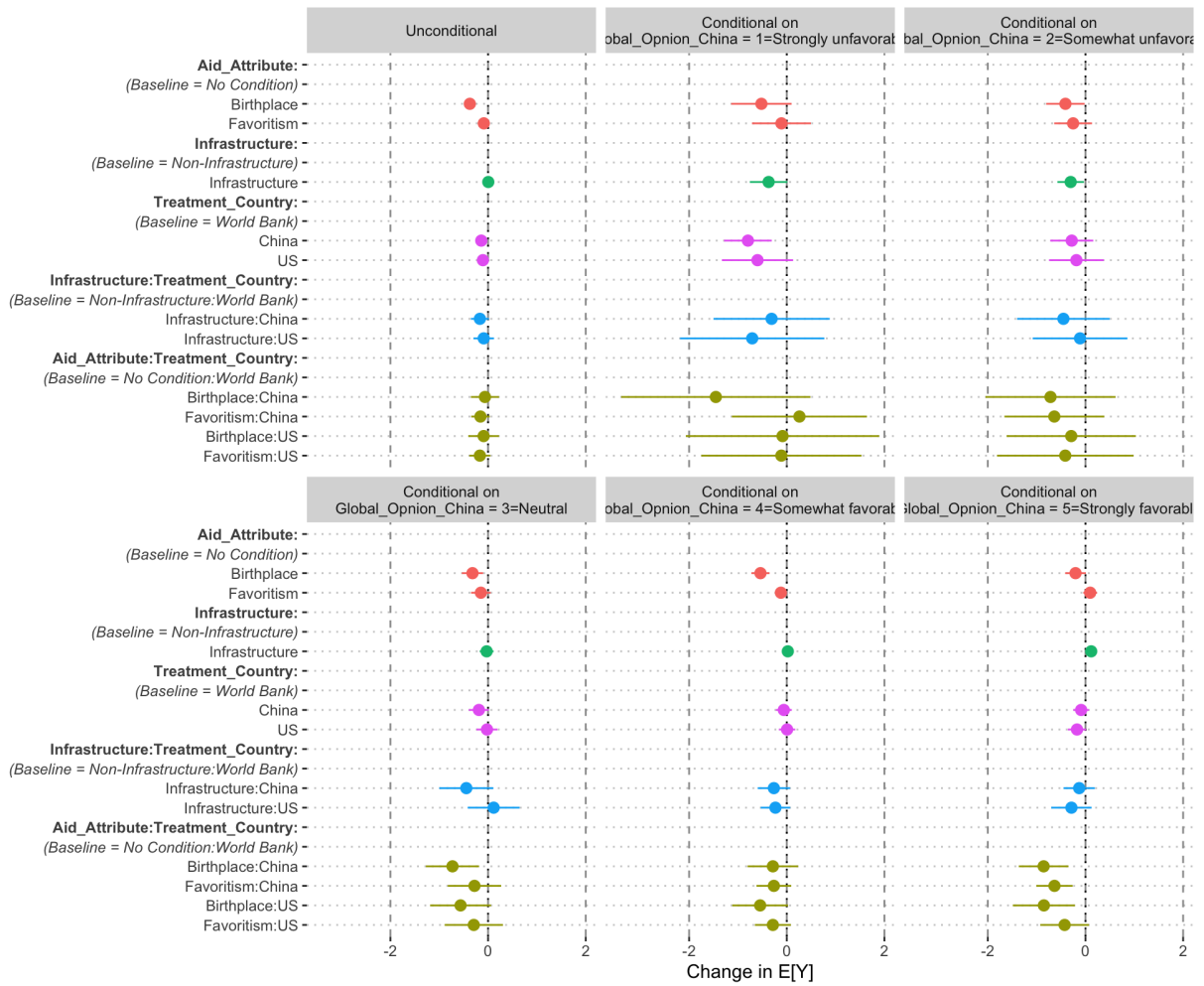


Figure 9: Conditional average marginal component effects of project attributes across respondent's ability to answer the question about the CCP secretary



In the group with prior knowledge about Chinese politics (who are able to identify the Chinese leader), respondents show negative opinions on both aid attributes and China's role as a donor. Interaction terms of both donors' identity and clientelism, favoritism, and infrastructure projects are also significant (See Figure 9). The results of groups with a somewhat or strongly favorable view of China are also noteworthy. Despite their prior preference towards China, informing China as the donor doesn't significantly increase (nor decrease) their support for the aid project though it does have a negative impact on the opinions of groups with strongly unfavorable or neutral prior attitudes to China. Yet the interaction terms of China and both aid attributes are significantly negative for the strongly favorable group, suggesting that China as a donor weakens their opposition to projects with clientelist or favoritistic behaviors (See Figure 10). Respondents in the subgroups who predict China to be the world leader in 2015 don't show significantly more positive or negative attitudes towards Chinese aid either (See Figure 15). Clientelist behaviors have statistically significant and negative effects on their support for foreign aid, and both interaction terms of aid attributes and China's donation are significantly negative. Thus the moderating effects between China and clientelism do exist among respondents optimistic about China's development.

Figure 10: Conditional average marginal component effects of project attributes across respondent's prior preference towards China



Conclusion

In this paper, we build on the extant findings of Chinese overseas economic activities as well as public support for foreign aid, to better understand what aspects of Chinese projects can account for the public perception of them in the host countries. Evidence from the survey experiment shows that overall, Kenyan respondents perceive Chinese aid projects negatively, compared to either the World Bank or the US. In addition, clientelistic and favoritistic behaviors have a negative effect on public support for foreign aid. However, there is not sufficient evidence that some characteristics of Chinese aid projects, including infrastructure, clientelism, and favoritism can account for the level of public support for Chinese aid projects. The null findings in this research lead to the conclusion that citizens in the global south perceive aid projects primarily based on donor identity or aid attributes, and their opinions on the projects are not easily shifted if another piece of information on donor identity or aid contents is provided.

If we think further into why respondents' perception of the Chinese aid project is not conditional upon aid attributes, this conclusion could provide potential directions for future research. First, the reason might be that China's donor identity is so predominant when public support for foreign aid is shaped that it overwhelms all other attributes. It is therefore important to study the mechanisms of this predominant deciding effect. For example, Western news outlets and local media have been paying close attention to Chinese projects in the global south and extensively reported them. Public opinions on Chinese aid may be primarily formed under the media influence rather than based on the direct perception of aid projects.

Second, there exists a thought-provoking subgroup analysis finding that for citizens with prior knowledge about China and prior preferences towards China, their support for Chinese aid projects is more conditional upon aid attributes including clientelism and favoritism,

whereas we can not see the variation significant among people with less or less positive perception about China. This observation hints at the potential that the level of endorsement or opposition of these "Chinese fans" might be more contingent upon the specific attributes of each aid project. Yet it also requires more investigation into how public perception of China's domestic issues in the global south affects their perception of China's overseas activities.

Yet still, our research contributes to the bulk of studies on public opinion on aid and especially aid conditionality. The research informs the literature on what kind of conditionalities the public of the recipient countries are willing to approve or disapprove of. Our results on how informing different contents of the aid conditionalities provoked either negative perceptions or null perceptions show there are different limits to what the public is willing to accept.

This research's limitation is also obvious. Given that this research is conducting a survey experiment in a limited context of Kenya, the study intrinsically suffers from problems of external validity. The results of this study are within the context of Kenyan respondents and may not be widely generalizable to other countries with varying levels of relations with China, level of economic growth, or amount of aid received. Future research may consider the cross-national comparison of the relationship between donor identity and aid attributes and see if the conclusion is different from this paper.

Further analysis

At this stage, we have not gathered a sufficiently balanced sample to ensure robust causal inference. Therefore, we plan to extend the survey's duration to accumulate additional responses. For the next step, we will stratify the respondents by demographic characteristics including age, gender, race, education, and income, and recruit more respondents in the underrepresented groups, to make sure the treatment and control groups are balanced.

In this draft, we computed the Complier Average Treatment Effect (CATE) for both the

main and subgroup analyses, based on the attention and manipulation test results from the survey. However, the outcomes did not distinctly alter our findings. For further robustness checks, we will carry out a two-stage estimate. We will first use treatment assignment to the treatment conditions compared to placebo to estimate intention-to-treat (ITT) effects employing randomization inference (RI) (Gerber and Green 2012). Using RI, we will then derive p-values that assess the probability that the treatment effects observed could be drawn from 10,000 alternative random assignments. As additional robustness checks, we will employ probit regression estimation controlling for covariates obtained through screening questions apart from the treatment section.

Moreover, since the calculation of AMCEs relies on the uniform distribution of other variables and averaging over them, both the actual distribution of profiles in the real world and the distribution of theoretical interest can be drastically different than uniform. Therefore, to account for the peculiarities in the distribution of variables, we will estimate the population average marginal component effect (pAMCE), proposed by De la Cuesta, Egami and Imai (2022). Additionally, relying on Zhirkov (2022) proposed method of estimating Individual Marginal Component Effects (IMCEs), we will compute individual marginal effects for every attribute level to examine individual-level preferences. Nevertheless, this will not be the main focus of our analysis since it requires minimizing the number of randomized values for each attribute and maximizing the total number of project evaluations by respondents, which is four per respondent and lower than what Zhirkov (2022) proposes.

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Appendices

Survey Design

In this research, we designed four sets of vignettes that were assigned to respondents in a random order as a treatment to survey participants. The vignettes read:

<Project 1: Summit Highway project>

<Project 1-1: Clientelism treatment>

Kenya recently received foreign aid worth 27 billion Kenyan Shillings from [China / the United States / the World Bank]. The objective of this foreign aid project is to build a Summit Highway. The project will upgrade the inter-urban highway system from a two-carriage to a four-carriage road. It aims to improve the movement of goods and people along the Summit road, and to enhance connectivity between the region and other parts of Kenya and the larger East and Central Africa. The road in its current condition is insufficient to serve the traffic of travelers and freight transporters using it. [The project will be implemented in Kamagut, the village in which President Ruto was born. / The project will be implemented in multiple cities across different regions in Kenya.]

<Project 1-2: Favoritism treatment>

Kenya recently received foreign aid worth 27 billion Kenyan Shillings from [China / the United States / the World Bank]. The objective of this foreign aid project is to build a Summit Highway. The project will upgrade the inter-urban highway system from a two-carriage to a four-carriage road. It aims to improve the movement of goods and people along the Summit road, and to enhance connectivity between the region and other parts of Kenya and the larger East and Central Africa. The road in its current condition is insufficient to serve

the traffic of travelers and freight transporters using it. [Contracts to implement the project will be commissioned to companies owned by businesses in [China / the United States]. / Contracts to implement the project will be commissioned to companies that previously worked with the World Bank. / Contracts to implement the project will be commissioned to companies to the most competitive companies through open bidding.]

<Project 2: Geothermal power plant project>

<Project 2-1: Clientelism treatment>

Kenya recently received foreign aid worth 20 billion Kenyan Shillings from [China / the United States / the World Bank]. The project aims to build a geothermal power plant in Kenya. This project will use Kenya's abundant geothermal resources to boost power generation. Recently, Kenya's demand for electricity has significantly increased and the need for greener energy grew too. The project seeks to address the power shortage, lower the price of electricity in Kenya, and provide alternative sources of power. [The project will be implemented in Kamagut, the village in which President Ruto was born. / The project will be implemented in multiple cities across different regions in Kenya.]

<Project 2-2: Favoritism treatment>

Kenya recently received foreign aid worth 20 billion Kenyan Shillings from [China / the United States / the World Bank]. The project aims to build a geothermal power plant in Kenya. This project will use Kenya's abundant geothermal resources to boost power generation. Recently, Kenya's demand for electricity has significantly increased and the need for greener energy grew too. The project seeks to address the power shortage, lower the price of electricity in Kenya, and provide alternative sources of power. [Contracts to implement the project will be commissioned to companies owned by businesses in [China / the United States]. / Contracts to implement the project will be commissioned to companies

that previously worked with the World Bank. / Contracts to implement the project will be commissioned to companies to the most competitive companies through open bidding.]

<**Project 3: WASH project**>

<*Project 3-1: Clientelism treatment*>

Kenya recently received foreign aid worth 9 billion Kenyan Shillings from [China / the United States / the World Bank]. The objective of this foreign aid project is to improve its water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services. Currently, chronic inefficiencies in the operation of Water Service Providers, coupled with gaps in the governance of rural water service provision necessitate substantial subsidies for operation and maintenance, at the expense of service expansion. The project will increase sustainable access to improved sanitation services and eliminate open defecation in public schools and health facilities. [The project will be implemented in Kamagut, the village in which President Ruto was born. / The project will be implemented in multiple cities across different regions in Kenya.]

<*Project 3-2: Favoritism treatment*>

Kenya recently received foreign aid worth 9 billion Kenyan Shillings from [China / the United States / the World Bank]. The objective of this foreign aid project is to improve its water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services. Currently, chronic inefficiencies in the operation of Water Service Providers, coupled with gaps in the governance of rural water service provision necessitate substantial subsidies for operation and maintenance, at the expense of service expansion. The project will increase sustainable access to improved sanitation services and eliminate open defecation in public schools and health facilities. [Contracts to implement the project will be commissioned to companies owned by businesses in [China / the United States]. / Contracts to implement the project will be commissioned to companies that previously worked with the World Bank. / Contracts to implement the project will be

commissioned to companies to the most competitive companies through open bidding.]

<Project 4: Vocational training project

<Project 4-1: Clientelism treatment>

Kenya recently received foreign aid worth 6 billion Kenyan Shillings from [China / the United States / the World Bank]. The project provides vocational training programs as a part of cooperation with Kenya on talent development. The project aims to train 500 principals and teachers at vocational colleges every year, and produce well-trained 10,000 technical personnel. In comparison to standard education, skill education is expected to be more applicable for getting jobs for local Kenyans. These training courses will help fill the gaps as the demand for professional skills increases. [The project will be implemented in Kamagut, the village in which President Ruto was born. / The project will be implemented in multiple cities across different regions in Kenya.]

<Project 4-2: Favoritism treatment>

Kenya recently received foreign aid worth 6 billion Kenyan Shillings from [China / the United States / the World Bank]. The project provides vocational training programs as a part of cooperation with Kenya on talent development. The project aims to train 500 principals and teachers at vocational colleges every year, and produce well-trained 10,000 technical personnel. In comparison to standard education, skill education is expected to be more applicable for getting jobs for local Kenyans. These training courses will help fill the gaps as the demand for professional skills increases. [Contracts to implement the project will be commissioned to companies owned by businesses in [China / the United States]. / Contracts to implement the project will be commissioned to companies that previously worked with the World Bank. / Contracts to implement the project will be commissioned to companies to the most competitive companies through open bidding.]

Descriptive Statistics

Respondent attributes and their political answers (age, gender, region, ethnicity, education, employment, hard work, income, political, foreign aid opinion, CCP secretary, opinion on China, leader in 2050) are multiplied by four since every respondent evaluates four different projects. Divide these numbers accordingly.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Variables in AMCE Estimations

Category	Subcategory	N
Treatment Country	China	1664 (49.5%)
	US	986 (29.3%)
	World Bank	710 (21.1%)
Infrastructure	Infrastructure	1680 (50.0%)
	Non-Infrastructure	1680 (50.0%)
Aid Attribute	Birthplace	852 (25.4%)
	Favoritism	835 (24.9%)
	No Condition	1673 (49.8%)
Age	1=Less than 20	140 (4.2%)
	2=20-29	1988 (59.2%)
	3=30-39	812 (24.2%)
	4=40-49	280 (8.3%)
	5=50-59	84 (2.5%)
	6=60 and above	56 (1.7%)
Gender	Male	2080 (61.9%)

	Female	1176 (35.0%)
	LGBTQ+	88 (2.6%)
	Prefer not to say	16 (0.5%)
<hr/>		
Region	Central	380 (11.3%)
	Coast	256 (7.6%)
	Eastern	216 (6.4%)
	Nairobi	1020 (30.4%)
	North Eastern	48 (1.4%)
	Nyanza	324 (9.6%)
	Rift Valley	832 (24.8%)
	Western	284 (8.5%)
<hr/>		
Ethnicity	Kalenjin	680 (20.2%)
	Kamba	336 (10.0%)
	Kikuyu	700 (20.8%)
	Luhya	596 (17.7%)
	Luo	456 (13.6%)
	More than 2 ethnicities	136 (4.0%)
	Others	456 (13.6%)
<hr/>		
Education	1=No senior secondary school diploma	44 (1.3%)
	2=Senior secondary school or equivalent	660 (19.6%)
	3=Some college or Associate Degree	1124 (33.5%)
	4=Bachelor's degree	1412 (42.0%)
	5=Master's degree	112 (3.3%)
	6=Ph.D. or equivalent	8 (0.2%)
<hr/>		
Employment	Employed full-time	752 (22.4%)
	Employed part-time	968 (28.8%)

Employment

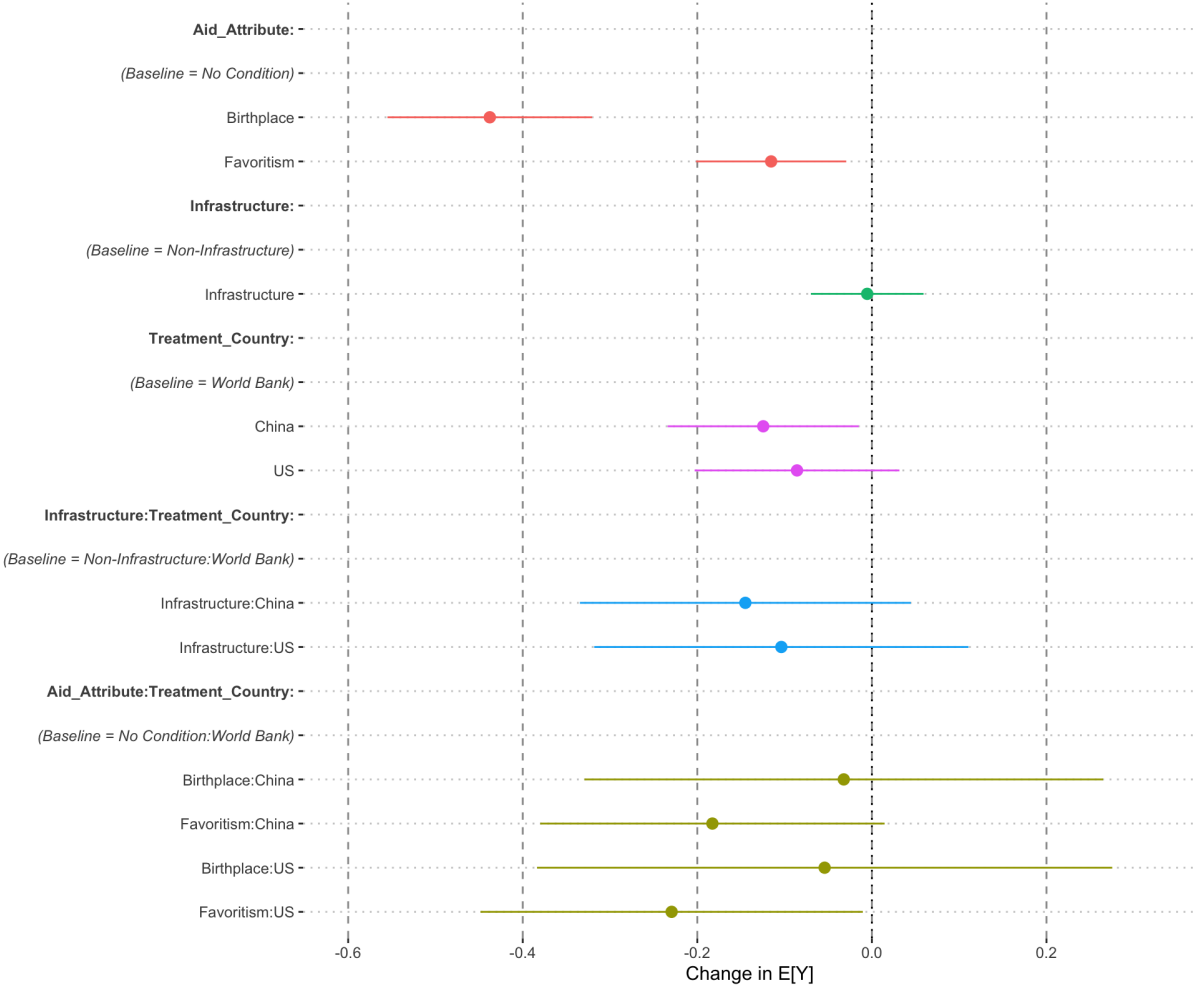
	Retired	52 (1.5%)
	Unemployed, looking for work	1424 (42.4%)
	Unemployed, not looking for work	164 (4.9%)
Hard Work	I didn't work very hard	116 (3.5%)
	I don't recall how hard I worked	1240 (36.9%)
	I worked incredibly hard	1332 (39.6%)
	I worked moderately hard	672 (20.0%)
Income	1=Less than 100,000 KES	2128 (63.3%)
	2=100,000-300,000 KES	448 (13.3%)
	3=300,000-500,000 KES	172 (5.1%)
	4=500,000-700,000 KES	100 (3.0%)
	5=700,000-900,000 KES	52 (1.5%)
	6=900,000-1,100,000 KES	52 (1.5%)
	7=1,100,000-1,300,000 KES	16 (0.5%)
	8=1,300,000-1,500,000 KES	16 (0.5%)
	9=More than 1,500,000 KES	44 (1.3%)
Political	Conservative	1492 (44.4%)
	Liberal	1388 (41.3%)
	Something else	480 (14.3%)
Foreign Aid Opinion	1=Strongly negative effect	188 (5.6%)
	2=Moderately negative effect	188 (5.6%)
	3=Neutral	452 (13.5%)
	4=Moderately positive effect	1240 (36.9%)
	5=Strongly positive effect	1292 (38.5%)
Secretary CCP	0	888 (26.4%)

	1	2472 (73.6%)
	1=Strongly unfavorable	128 (3.8%)
	2=Somewhat unfavorable	244 (7.3%)
Opinion on China	3=Neutral	724 (21.5%)
	4=Somewhat favorable	1336 (39.8%)
	5=Strongly favorable	928 (27.6%)
	China	1636 (48.7%)
	India	72 (2.1%)
	Kenya	212 (6.3%)
Leader in 2050	No leading power	36 (1.1%)
	Other	84 (2.5%)
	Russia	220 (6.5%)
	The United States	1100 (32.7%)

Robustness of Main Results

To assess the robustness of the main analysis results, we limit the sample to respondents who successfully passed the attention checks. The Average Marginal Component Effects (AMCEs) are presented below.

Figure 11: Average Marginal Component Effects of Project Attributes (N=310)



Subgroup Results

Figure 12: Conditional average marginal component effects of project attributes across respondent's education level

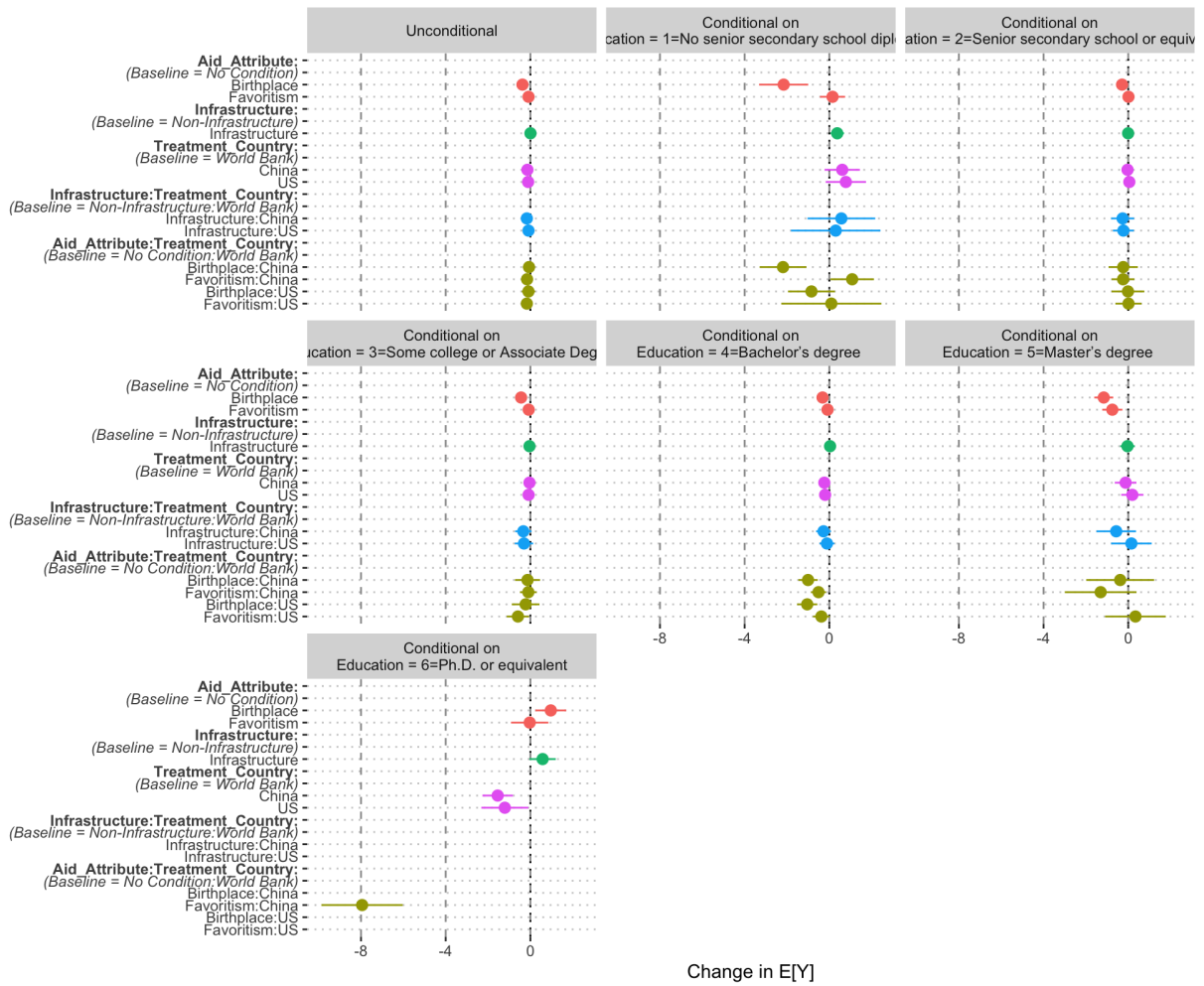


Figure 13: Conditional average marginal component effects of project attributes across respondent income

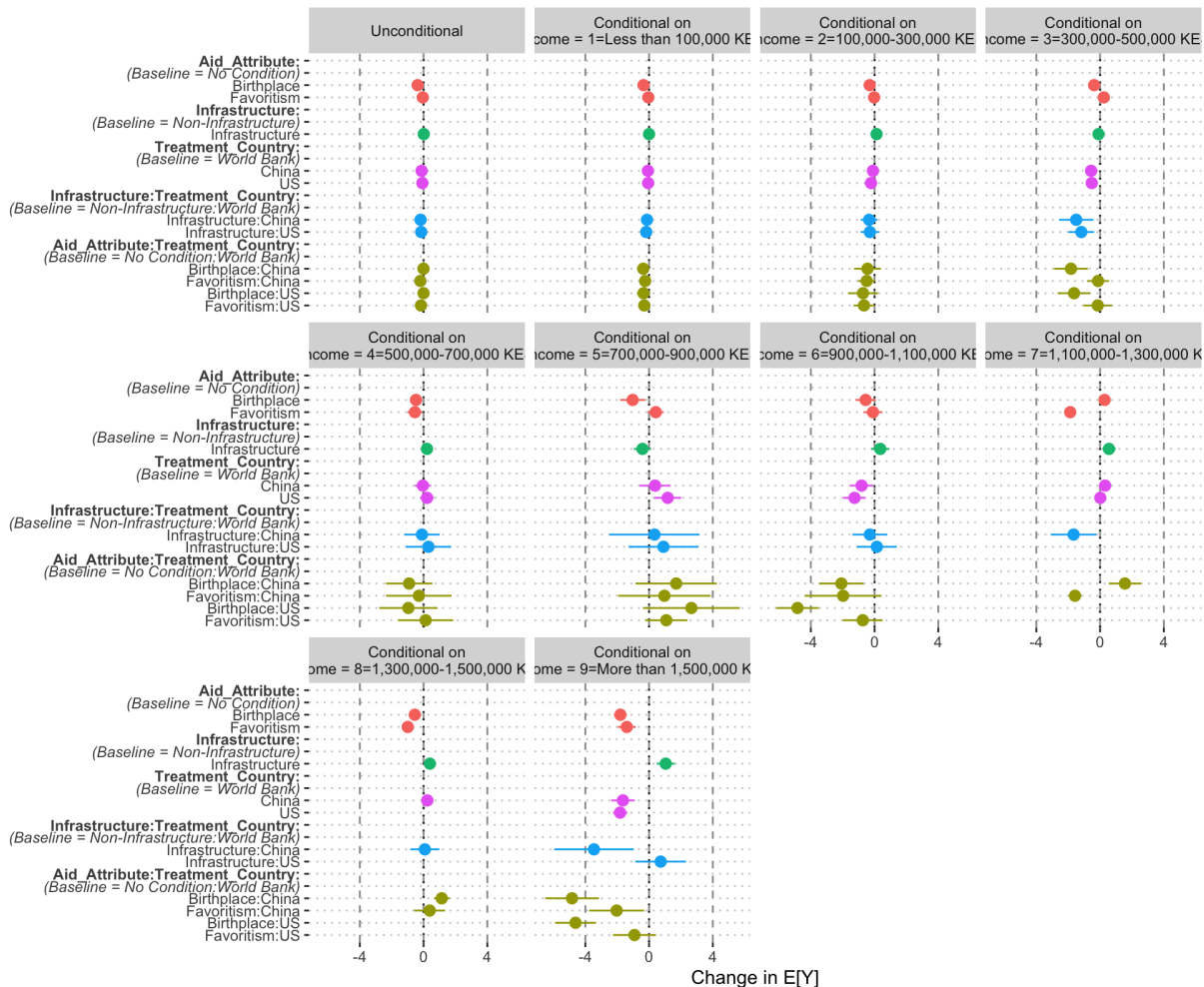


Figure 14: Conditional average marginal component effects of project attributes across respondent's prior perception of foreign aid

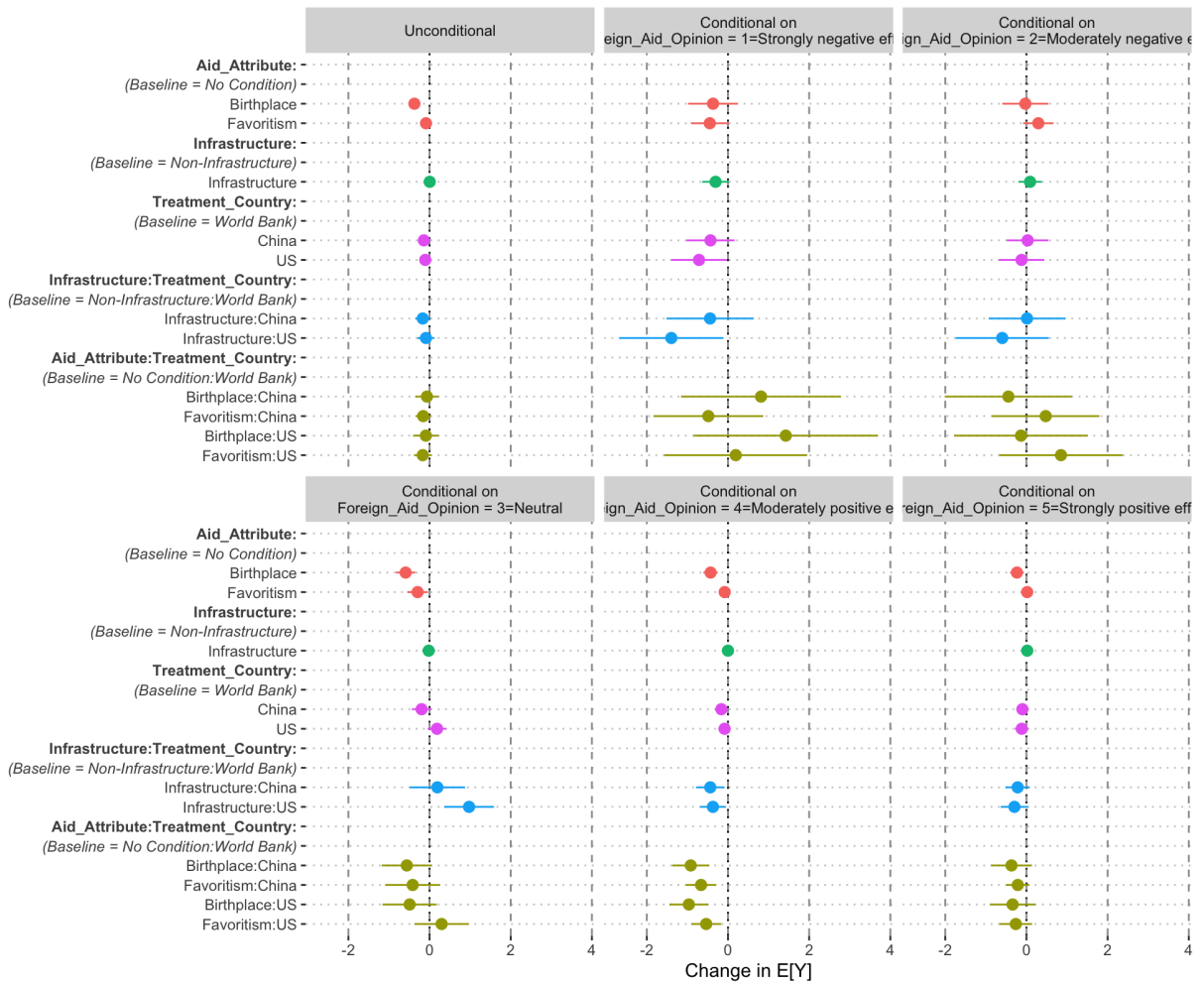


Figure 15: Conditional average marginal component effects of project attributes across respondent's prediction on the world leader in 2050

