

**Year: 2013**  
**Volume: 58**  
**Issue: 2**

# STUDIA

Universitatis Babe-Bolyai

# OECONOMICA

## **FOREIGN TRADE COMPETITIVENESS OF SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN COUNTRIES - THE EFFECTS OF CHINA'S TRADE EXPANSION**

**Helga FEHÉR**  
University of Pannonia, Hungary

**Judit POÓR\***  
University of Pannonia, Hungary

**Abstract.** This paper examines the influence of Chinese powerful economic growth on the competitiveness of Sub-Saharan Africa over the past decade. According to our hypothesis on the one hand the general expansion of China, on the other hand the change of the Chinese specialization patterns generated increasing needs for resources which affected the foreign trade and in this way the trade specialization patterns of the Sub-Saharan African countries. Accordingly the export specialization of Sub-Saharan African countries adapted to China's export specialization trend and maybe there is a connection between the revealed comparative advantage indexes of China and the Sub-Saharan African countries reflecting their specialization. In accordance to the aim the paper established that the trade specialization patterns of Sub-Saharan African countries and China showed an increasingly different picture, it is proved that they completed each other during the studied period. The complementary feature ensures that Chinese economic growth offers increasing foreign trade possibilities to Sub-Saharan African countries, and parallel with this Chinese export possibilities may increase in the Sub-Saharan African regions. The most distinct effect was demonstrable in terms of mineral products, fuels i.e. the products of the primary sector. It also means that China's powerful economic growth ensures continuously expanding export possibilities to Sub-Saharan African countries especially the producing sector of the Southern African region. The complementary feature of the trade specialization patterns is apparent in terms of the Chinese products of the textile industry, the machinery and divers appliances. The increase of competitiveness of these Chinese products results in the increasing export possibility expansion at the Sub-Saharan African market.

**JEL Classification:** F14, F43, F59

**Keywords:** competitiveness, foreign trade, China, Sub-Saharan African countries

---

\* Corresponding author. Address: Deák str, no.16, 8360, Keszthely, Hungary, Tel: +36 83 545 357, E-mail: [pj@georgikon.hu](mailto:pj@georgikon.hu)