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Political and Economic Obstacles to African Unity

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ABSTRACT

Africa is a continent that is characterized by its rich natural resources together with its vibrant and diverse cultures which mark it as one of the famous tourist destinations. Yet, the continent is continuously tortured by various challenges such as economic instability, poverty, unemployment, inequality, political unrest as well as ethnic conflicts. These factors together with a plethora of other factors cripple the continents unity envisioned to fast track the continents economic development as well as make right the wrongs caused by colonialism and bring to life the dream of Pan-Africanism. Various strategies to strengthen African unity have been developed and put in place yet to date minimum positive outcome can be identified. With a combination of two theoretical frameworks which are realism and constructivism, this thesis then uses a qualitative desk-based study to identify and critically discuss various challenges to African unity, paying specific attention to challenges of economic instability, Africa's colonial history as an obstacle to African unity, and the political obstacles whilst comparing all the obstacles to existing strategies which Africa has employed in its quest for unity.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AFRC	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
AU	African Union
APRM -	African Peer Review Mechanism
AIDS	Acquired immune deficiency syndrome or acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
DDP	Democracy Development Programme
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EAC	Eastern African Community
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African states
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECPF	Ecowas Conflict Prevention Framework
ECOMOG	Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group
ECOSOCC	Economic Social and Cultural Council of the Africa Union
EPA's	Economic Partnership Agreements
ESA	Eastern and South Africa
EU	European Union
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
KANU	Kenya African National Union
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
Mica	Mission internationale de soutien à la Centrafrique sous conduite africaine
NEPAD	New Partnership for African Development
OAU	Organization of African Union
PAP	Pan African Parliament
UNCEP	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
SADC	Southern African Development Community
UN	United Nations
US	united States
USA	Union of African States
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Background and outline of the research problem

African unity is very important for the continent to be able to fully reap from its abundant resources, reach its goal of socio-economic and political transformation and strengthen its position within the global society (Adogamhe, 2008:1-3). In a quest to reap the advantages of African unity, many ideologies and strategies have been devised. These ideologies and strategies aim to put the African continent at a strategic position within the global society through pan-Africanism. Pan-Africanism is an ideology that claims that the African people are a historically oppressed group that share more than cultural relations. Thus, this ideology claims that, through unity, African people can resolve their share similar problems and achieve their aspirations (Chacha, 2003:13-8).

Kwame Nkrumah and Julius Nyerere are two of the most well-known ideologists for African unity who shared a desire and ideal that African strength would come from a United States of Africa. Nyerere believed that Africans already possessed a sense of unity merely by identifying with each other in terms of their history and their present challenges. There was already a spirit of “African-ness” or an “African personality” within African people. Nyerere and Nkrumah find common ground in that they both believe in that political and economic solidarity of the African continent is essential for a more profitable United State of Africa than any amount of emotional unity (Nyerere, 2014: 1-6).

While Nyerere and Nkrumah shared the same ideal of African unity, they had differences. Nyerere believed that African unity cannot be achieved through the African countries surrendering their political and economic powers to one supernatural entity. His idea of a United States of Africa is one that will be achieved through being understood as a long term goal of the continent. The most important thing for Nyerere is that African people unite and approach their challenges as a united nation. The road to and type of government for the United States of Africa will be shaped and carved as the nation progress towards it. (Nyerere, 2014: 1-6).

On the other hand, Nkrumah believed that African strength could only be achieved through an immediate United States of Africa which involved the surrendering of state sovereignty. (Chacha, 2003:13-8). Nkrumah’s proposal suggested that African states merge into one government through surrendering either partial or complete economic and political power, from national governments to a supranational body or entities. In this way Africa would,

through the combined resources be strong enough to overcome all its challenges. This single supernational entity meant that among other things, the African continent would share a common flag, a common anthem, common motto, union citizenship, a common defence and economic policy, a union bank, and coordinated language teaching and cultural activities (Kah, 2012: 29). The differences between Nyerere and Nkrumah underlie the emergence of two blocks on African unity. The Casablanca group who believed that an immediate continental union was necessary and the Monrovia group which believed that functional cooperation would work better at that point (Wapmuk, 2009: 646).

Although there were differences on the path to take to unify the continent, due to a shared desire of unity, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) was established in 1963. It was established as a strategy and platform which would enable African states to collectively address their common challenges of political liberation, economic development and security while reaching a compromise between the Casablanca group and the Monrovia group (Wapmuk, 2009: 646). The African Union (AU) was created as a successor to the Organization of African Unity (OAU); the latter organization was in need of revitalization. At the end of 2014, a total of 53 independent states in Africa had assumed membership of the AU. To date, many other initiatives aimed at fostering African unity have been suggested. These include the signing of the charter of the Organisation of the African Unity, the formation of The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the establishment of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) (OAU, 1963).

Having highlighted the differences in Nyerere and Nkrumah's approaches, it can be said that the OAU and the AU lean more towards Nyerere's approach to the creation of a United States of Africa. Both organisations protect state sovereignty and both adopt new strategies as and when the need arises. Such strategies have been developed under the AU and include NEPAD, and APRM, among others. With the numerous approaches and strategies for African unity, the existence of various obstacles, their effects, as well as their increasing complexity due to changing conditions, outweigh the positive outcomes from the many efforts towards African unity. It is, therefore, important to consistently study the various challenges to African unity in order to compare them against the strategies currently in place. The study of these challenges will allow for appropriate changes and adjustments to be made in order to achieve maximum outcome (International Relations & Cooperation, 2004).

Preliminary Literature Review

There has been a long history of attempts at regional cooperation and integration in Africa, especially sub-Saharan Africa. As early as the 1960s, African leaders have placed great emphasis on the importance of regional cooperation and unity. In fact, Africa has a track record of having entered into more regional integration and cooperation agreements than any other continent (Radelet, 1996:1). Regional integration and regional cooperation are terms which are often used interchangeably and sometimes confused as meaning the same thing when they actually have different meanings. Regional integration can be understood as a formal, long-term arrangement between states which involves some political and economic compromising as well as commitments, concessions, processes and political will to redefine participatory relations in the international economy. Regional cooperation on the other hand, refers to short term agreements or arrangements between states to address loose forms of interstate activity designed to meet some commonly experienced needs (Adetula, 2008:7). This research examines economic and political obstacles to Africa's attempts at regional integration.

The philosophy of Pan-Africanism has since its inception generated a spirit of solidarity within the African continent. This philosophy has also given birth to the idea of a united government within the continent. Since then, the attempt to create a united Africa has been met with various challenges which continuously grow and change with time. This has created the need for continual investigations into the challenges of African unity in order to modify and strengthen programmes that address African unity (Adejumobi, 2009:404).

According to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (2011: xiii), African leaders have realised that political, economic and cultural unity is needed in order for the African continent to prosper. This report also emphasizes that unity is needed in all these spheres. The lack of unity in one sphere paralyses the progress of unity in others.

Olu-Adeyemi & Ayodele (2007:213-215) suggest that the umbrella challenge to African unity is the continent's inability to gain the necessary economic stability and strength for effective consolidation due to multiple setbacks such as the continual political unrest and many diseases such as the infamous HIV/AIDS pandemic that continue to terrorise Africa. This then opens up the continent to an even greater plethora of what are the real sub-challenges to African unity. For example, because of a strained economy, African countries are concerned about sharing already limited resources among each other. Showing a lack of African unity, this competition for scarce resources has been the leading reason for xenophobic attacks. There is a lot of scholarly work on challenges of African consolidation

and in almost, if not all, the many integration challenges that exist can be traced back to Africa's weak economy. This view strongly draws from a realist perspective since it concentrates on ensuring continued existence through ensuring that limited resources of one country are secured from other people who are viewed as foreigners or outsiders (Pearson highered.com, 2009: 35-60).

Fanon (1961) gives a social perspective to challenges of African unity as he emphasises the impact of colonisation as the main source for the slow progress of solidarity since it created a psychology of selfishness, laziness, and loss of values etc. He blames "the educated" class who are not well equipped with skills nor mature enough to transform the continent into the ideal economically rich and united Africa. For Fanon, the "educated" class is not involved in growth-enhancing economic activities that serve to alleviate the lower class from poverty. The selfishness of this class leads to even greater division since those with fewer resources become envious of the well off. These inequalities cause conflict among nations, cultures and religions. Unlike realism which argues that human beings are selfish by nature, for Fanon, this trait has a history. Fanon's perspective is constructivist as he argues that African histories play an important role in nurturing obstacles to African unity.

While most African countries share a history of colonialism, Renou (2000:1-24) points out that each country faces different economic, political and social problems. These differences lead to different priorities and thus result in countries not being fully committed to the project of African unity. He further points out that due to the continent's need for development, this vulnerability opens up opportunity for foreign interference as African countries have to borrow money from the West on stringent terms. This vulnerability can also allow the continent to be used as a battlefield by foreign powers, such as France and America, in pursuit of African riches. This externally motivated tension can lead to unwanted complications such as poverty and famines, racial hatred and violence, and even genocides. Renou's analysis draws from a Realistic perspective since it talks about material needs which lead to having to allow foreign assistance in order to better the situation by gaining economic strength. It does not address countries' specific histories or ways of living but rather to the necessities of survival (Nugroho, 2008:88-89).

Kah (2012:31-33) raises interesting points. Firstly, Kah points out that the insincerity of some of the African leaders is also contributing to the unsatisfactory results of African consolidation. Ihonvbere (1994) suggests that African leaders portray an image of a continent filled with short-sighted, selfish hooligans who have no intentions of peace. Kah

(2012:31-33) explains that some African leaders do not believe that the African continent has the resources and intellectual ability to address the continent's problems without foreign assistance (2012:31-33). This, therefore, suggests that African leaders and policy makers lack the required attitude of independence for an aggressive approach towards African unity. This observation seems to draw mostly from the constructivist approach since it looks more to people's lack of sincerity or positive belief in the continent's potential to become economically, politically and socially stable and united. This observation lacks the elements of realism since it does not concentrate on ensuring existence by accumulating military or economic power (Pearson highered.com, 2009:38-39). Secondly, Kah states that unity of the continent will be very difficult to achieve, since many countries speak about unity whilst their actions are conflicted against unity and they are unwilling to sacrifice their sovereignty (Kah, 2012:32-34). Kah's discussion on the slow progress with regards to Africa's attempt at unity emphasizes mostly how countries find it important to maintain control over their territory. The above writer can be characterised as a realist as he has not mentioned anything which suggests norms or histories as influencers of Africa's slow progress in its attempt for unity (Mearscheimer, 2003:25-26).

Although Africa has made plausible strides in enabling a united environment through the establishment of various organisations such as the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), its successor, the African Union (AU), NEPAD, and the proposed United States of Africa, Okhonmina (2009:86-88) argues that these organizations have their own internal challenges. The AU faces various problems such as unsatisfactory administration, and the continuing conflict in countries such as Darfur and Somalia, which demand immediate attention. These challenges shift the focus of the AU from fulfilling its primary objectives (Okhonmina, 2009:88).

Hypothesis

Africa's history of colonisation, its economic instability and its lack of political unity are major challenges to African unity.

Importance of the study

Constant research on the challenges of African unity is very important since it allows for updated knowledge of the factors that influence the slow progress in the project of African unity. This, therefore, allows for the necessary upgrade of strategies and policies designed to strengthen African unity.

Research problems and objectives: Key questions to be asked

Research Problems

1. What are the main obstacles to African Unity?
2. Are these challenges motivated by internal factors?
3. Are these challenges motivated by external factors?

Research Objectives

1. To explore obstacles to African unity
2. To determine whether these obstacles are internal, external or both.

Research methodology

This research will critically analyse the impact of Africa's history of colonialism, economic instability and lack of political unity as obstacles to African unity. Empirical research can be divided into two methods: quantitative research which analyses data in a numerical format, and the qualitative research method, which enables a researcher to fully give a detailed description of the research topic. Qualitative research helps to explain the social universe (Degu & Yigzaw, 2006:1-4). Therefore, due to the historical and social nature of the topic, this research study has then taken a qualitative form.

This research relied on secondary data sources. These sources include books and journals from the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal's main library in Pietermaritzburg. Literature was also collected from electronic sources in the form of electronic journals from Ebscohost academic search, government websites and other search engines. The information collected was then analysed and put together to form a meaningful research finding on how African leaders have attempted to unify the African continent.

Since qualitative research methodology is best in studying the social environment, the information gathered sheds light on how Africa's history of colonialism, economic instability and lack of political unity pose challenges to the goal of African unity. It also highlights how these obstacles are increasingly complex, the reasons for their increasing complexities, and the integral role of cooperation within the African continent in making unity work to the advantage of the continent.

Theoretical framework:

Understanding the obstacles to African unity can be quite a complex matter. In order to best discuss the challenges to African unity, this research will focus on two theoretical approaches, which are the Realist approach and the Constructivist approach. This dissertation will argue that the two theoretical approaches are not mutually exclusive but can complement each other.

Realism is a very broad approach as it has matured over time from the earlier classical realism, to what is now termed Structural realism or Neo-realism. It also further branches of into either offensive or defensive realism (Slaughter, 2011). Nevertheless, in a nutshell, the Realist approach is based on four assumptions. The first assumption of realism is that we live in an uncertain world. The most important thing for a state, in this insecure world, is to ensure its survival. The second assumption asserts that states will act or react in the most rational manner in order to make sure that they continue to exist. Thirdly, realism assumes that all states have some military capacity and that nobody can be quite certain as to what intentions other states have with this military capacity (Mearscheimer, 2003:25-26). The fourth assumption of realism is that power, in terms of economic and military strength, is of the utmost importance since its possessions become decisive in most matters (Pearson highered.com, 2009:38-39).

Furthermore, realism holds that the international system is anarchic; meaning that it has no central authority that exercises control in the regulation of interactions and relations among states (Donnelley, 2000:7). This can then be seen as the main obstacle to the goal of African unity. Institutions such as the African Union, NEPAD etc., have been established as a platform for discussions and decisive measures to be adopted in terms of the African unity. The problem then becomes that the African continent has no central leader who ensures that all states work towards the same goal of creating unity. All states act in their sovereign power, looking out for their own country's survival and ensuring their own economic growth. These actions show lack of unity as states are pulling in different directions as to the agreed programme of building an economically strong and politically stable united Africa (Amin, *et al*, 2011). It will be difficult to consolidate a continent in which all states within it create their policies based on their own state interests (Powell, 1991:1303).

The second theory which will be used in collaboration with the Realist theory is constructivism. Constructivists' prefer to concentrate on social factors as the major influence on the behaviour of the international community. Unlike the Realists who emphasize the importance of material gain, Constructivists believe that a state's actions are largely

influenced by factors such as specific histories, beliefs, norms etc. (Nugroho, 2008:88-89). The Realist approach suggests that colonialism damaged the relations of African people. Although they still identify themselves as Africans and have a shared sense of responsibility for each other, the lack of commitment and slow progress of the strategies towards African unity are evidence that there is disconnectedness within Africa. (Kah, 2012:31-34). Adejumobi (2009:407-413) suggests that some African states might not be completely committed and sincere to the project of African unity but are rather participating because they believe it is the right thing to do since African countries share a history of oppression

Both realism and Constructivist theories are ideal when studying human behaviour. In this research, it is important that they are applied interchangeably in order to complement each other. Realists believe that the most important factor to influence the behaviour of the international community is a struggle for power in an effort by each to preserve or, preferably improve military security and economic warfare in competition with other countries (Rourke, 2003:20). While realism and its emphasis on competitive self-interest argue that it is certain powerful groups that play a primary role in the process of social construction, Constructivists maintain their ontological beliefs of people's behaviour being influenced by their socio-cultural background. In a constructivist perspective, histories, ideas, and norms play an important role. Instead of simply assuming that the behaviour of the international community is greatly influenced by political, economic, and military power, constructivists rather emphasize that a process of learning is involved. Thus, in contrast to realism which assume that the thirst for survival and material gain are unchanging, for constructivism these human propensities are shaped by socio-cultural background (Conteh-Morgan, 2005:74-75). It is, therefore, important that these two theories are used interchangeably in order to adequately address both self-interest human nature and socio-cultural influences on the behaviour of the international community.

Chapter outline

The first chapter of this research is an introduction to this dissertation. It provides background information of the research topic, literature review, research questions and objectives, theoretical framework that guides the research and finally, the research methodology that is used.

The second chapter of this research looks at Africa's historical background as one of the challenges to African unity. Using the theory of constructivism, the chapter explains how the history of colonialism is an obstacle to African unity.

The third chapter focuses on Africa's economic instability as a challenge to African unity. This chapter discusses how Africa's inability to gain economic stability contributes to many challenges such as epidemic diseases, poor infrastructure, high levels of poverty, poor quality of education, political unrest and ethnic conflicts across African countries which puts a huge strain on an already fragile state of unity of the continent.

Chapter four of this research focuses on Africa's lack of political unity as an obstacle to African unity. The chapter discusses various factors that point to Africa's lack of political unity. Firstly, it discusses the under-performance and dissatisfying results of numerous institutions such as the OAU, AU, and regional economic communities which were created as a common ground for strengthening African unity. Secondly, this chapter highlights that lack of political unity is also due to countries trying to protect their sovereignty. Thirdly, the chapter also points out the shortfalls of institutions such as the AU and AOU and how this encourages non-compliance and political disunity. Fourthly, the chapter discusses how political disunity of the African continent is not only among the countries. Disunity within countries is partly a result of the selfish characters of politicians who manipulate the system of governance for their own personal advantage. Using the realist and constructivist approach, the chapter uses these discussions to give a critical explanation on how this lack of political unity of the African continent is a major obstacle to African unity.

The fifth chapter of this research summarises and draws a conclusion based on the discussions in chapter two, three and four. This chapter gives recommendations on how the African continent can work together to minimize, if not eliminate, the challenges affecting the goal of African unity. Among other things, the chapter suggests that the African continent can achieve this by strengthening its already existing strategies and institutions, adopting continent-wide unity, and thus eliminating the problem of sovereignty and re instilling a sense inter relatedness and caring nature of Ubuntu within the African people.

Chapter 2: Africa's colonial history as an obstacle to African unity

The effect of Africa's colonial history is one of the most important factors to consider when attempting understanding the current economic and political conditions of the continent and its unsatisfactory progress in terms of African unity. Africa's colonial history still contributes enormously to what happens in the post-colonial era (Pearson, 2012:99). This chapter will argue that Africa's colonial history is one of the main obstacles to African unity. Based on the theory of constructivism which emphasises that "history matters" (Wendt, 1995: 78), this chapter will carefully examine the disruptions caused by colonialism and the lasting negative impact these disruptions have on Africa's goal of unity (Nunn, 2013:2-3). While the chapter will generalize, it must be noted that there were variations within and among regions. Before delving into slavery and colonialism, this chapter defines colonization. The chapter will then discuss various colonial mechanisms that were used by different administrations. These mechanisms include institutionalization, education and ethnic divisions.

Definition of colonialism

Although pre-colonial Africa had its fair share of troubles, the era of colonization brought about more complications. Before we begin, it is important therefore, to develop a basic understanding of the meaning of colonization which will serve the purpose of this paper. There are many definitions of colonisation. Most definitions of colonialism agree that colonization involves some kind of domination by one group on another. Butt (2013:1-9) defines colonization as the imposed dominion of a group of people within a certain territory by another, therefore, forcing them to adopt their ways of living such as rules, cultures and customs. Horvath (1972:46) further gives the same definition and differs slightly in that he also mentions colonisers as exploiters and power seekers. The above mentioned definitions are just examples of standard definitions used to understand colonization. For the purpose of this study, we will adopt Alemazung's definition of Africa's colonization as a process whereby "the Europeans implemented various political, economic, and social policies that enabled them to maintain or extend their authority and control over different territories in Africa" (Alemazung, 2010:63).

The scramble for Africa

The beginning of colonisation is marked by one of the most influential events of African history which Michalopoulos & Papaioannou (2011:1) refer to as "The scramble for Africa". This term refers to the division of Africa into regions recognised as spheres of influence,

protectorates, colonies and free trade areas by the Europeans. According to Muething, (2008:1-4), the division of Africa was a strategy to ensure European unlimited access to Africa and to outmanoeuvre any other powers by legalizing their ownership of the colonies. This division commenced with the Berlin conference which proceeded from 1884 till 1885.

What was most influential about this period was the manner in which the division took place. The new map which now highlighted the new European colonies was imposed upon the indigenous people of the African continent (Rosenburg, 1997:340). The manner of the division caused great disruption within Africa. This is because when the division took place, the Europeans had very limited knowledge about Africa, its people, cultures and geographies. The lack of proper knowledge about the continent led to improper border designs which to date are believed to be the biggest contributor to both disputes among Africans and the political unrest in Africa (Michalopoulos & Papaioannou, 2011:1-3). Africa was divided into fifty irregular countries (Rosenburg, 1997:340). These artificial borders have since emphasised cultural differences and created different colonial identities which came with the different colonial styles of education and administrative systems. The OAU together with its successor the African Union (AU) has opted to not re-allocate the African borders. Its decision is based on its concern that this would lead to even greater conflict as there might be contestations of where the new borders should be (Institute for security studies, 2012:1).

With the legalized colonies, the Europeans were now able to take control over Africa. Their reign brought with it even deeper disruptions within the African societies. There were deep disruptions through the imposition of new principles, rules and values established by the colonial powers to regulate relations between individuals, groups and between Africans and the new colonial authorities. All these disruptions have since caused divisions within the African society (Bujra, 2004:8). To strengthen their take over, the West European powers promoted the idea of individualism which primarily focuses on an individual self and encouraged the abandonment of the principle of "Ubuntu" which is about humanism and centres on the human race as interrelated" (April & Peters, 2001:6). This principle of "individualism" has become so instilled in the cultures of African people that well into independence; they are still unable to resist it (April & Peters, 2001:6).

Whilst pre-colonial Africa was, guided by the "ubuntu" centred way of life, the West came into Africa, unwilling to learn the indigenous ways of life already set in place. They were eager to enforce colonial teachings designed to subject and exploit African people (Inyang, 2008:122). According to Grovogui, (2002:315-338) at first, European law, known as Euro-centrism, which referred to the law of nations, was essentially based on equal rights and

opportunities for all communities and nations. A majority of Europeans respected the dictates of natural law in their interactions with non-Europeans. Unfortunately, by the nineteenth century, the West was determined to do away with natural law. All non-Europeans were excluded from the confines of civilization and natural law shrank to regional European dimensions. At this point, the law was manipulated to grant privileges for a minority of states and racial groups. The legal and administrative system now aided the completion of imperialist exploitation.

With this environment, African people began to focus more on living for their own survival, every person for themselves and their family. African people became openly greedy and selfish and became comfortable with the idea that self-enrichment at the expense and suffering of others was permissible (Nkondo, 2007:88 -100). "Ubuntu" taught that one ought not to be envious of another's success but to rejoice since it means the success of a greater body of humanity. The western oppression destroyed that view since it taught Africans to feel threatened by others, and that self-interest was more important. Due to the trust embedded in "Ubuntu", people were accepting of the foreign westerners at arrival, but the unveiling of their intentions about Africa and its people broke the trust within African people both for outsiders and among themselves. Replenishing that trust is still difficult even today in the post-colonial regime (Chaplin, 1996:1-2).

Colonialism and its institutional structures

Colonization also brought with it the creation of institutional structures which further ensured a lasting division. The colonialists created disunity even between and within the regions of Africa (Seidler, 2011:2-15). Cracks between the different regions were created from unequal development and different colonization policies among the regions. These differences created different sets of institutions. Two extremes examples of European-created institutions can be pointed. The first one was where the Europeans set up "extractives taxes," exemplified by the Belgian colonization of the Congo. Extractive institutions focused mainly on transferring as much of the resources of the colony to the colonizer as possible. Among other factors such as high population density, settlers did not settle in areas where there was a high mortality rate or in areas where they were most likely to contract diseases. Diseases that caused the majority of European deaths, at the time, were malaria and yellow fever (Acemoglu, Johnson, & Robinson, 2001:1370). For example, settlers would not settle in West Africa due to the high risk of contracting malaria but rather manipulated local labour and resources from afar (Rothenberg, 2004:2). Such institutions were not designed to

promote much protection for private property and ensured that there were no checks and balances against government expropriation.

The second extreme example was one in which Europeans migrated and settled in their numbers in certain colonies in which they created “Neo-Europes”. In these areas Europeans set up institutions which tried to replicate European institutions with strong emphasis on private property and checks against government power (Acemoglu, Johnson, & Robinson, 2001:1370) The Europeans settled in areas which had less disease and high development potential. Regions which had higher developmental potential were given more attention and development within them was higher in terms of the quality of its infrastructure as well as the educational quality given to the people of that region. Although it was lower than the one offered to the westerns, it was still better than in other regions (Huillery, 2006:5-7). This resulted in an unequal distribution of development and opportunity which negatively affected the relations between the indigenous people. Those in highly developed areas were made to believe to be more superior and also enjoyed better fruits of the invaders’ development whilst others suffered from the wrath of colonial exploitation. (Rothenberg, 2004:1-3).

Furthermore, unlike areas of colonial settlement in which private investment and economic competition were possible, regions in which colonialists would not settle but in which extractive institutions were placed, such arrangements created environments which enabled elite political monopolies to hog all the wealth for their self-enrichment. This then resulted in a negative effect towards production and industrialisation due to non-existent property rights and other citizen securities since this eliminated a fair opportunity for citizens to compete for capital (Rothenberg, 2004:1-3).

Colonial education and colonial languages

Furthermore, the colonizer also caused confusion and disunity through their strategic education programmes. The colonizers introduced their own education which was Euro-centric and served the needs of the colonialist. (Mart, 2011:191). This education taught people to read and write and do calculations in the European language. Furthermore, this education neglected and erased the histories, cultures and developments of Africa. The education system which came with the coloniser was one sided as it taught of colonial wars and colonial historical developments. This educational process instilled new identities and rationale which saw African ways of life and values as nonsensical, time-wasting and a dead end. Given that colonialism embedded new identities and emphasized European histories, African people lost their identities as Africans and adopted the identities of their colonisers (Nwanosike & Onyije, 2011: 627 -629).

In addition, realising that economic gain was also still an important goal, the colonialists allowed for the African people to be given a certain level of technical learning (Nwanosike & Onyije, 2011:624-625). Technical skills that were taught to African people were minimised just to enable the Europeans to get cheap labour from Africans without allowing them to compete with them (Mart, 2011:191). This educational system was specifically designed to gain mental control of the African people by breaking their confidence and pride in being members of the African community. This type of education surely was designed not only to mess with African identity but also to limit their sense of their past and connection to the ideologies of their African continent (Nwanosike & Onyije, 2011:627 -629).

In addition, colonial education came with the enforced dominance of colonial languages. To date, most of these foreign languages still compete with indigenous African languages (Lodhi, 1993:79 -83). English is one of the dominant colonial languages and is still given great importance in French West Africa, Lusophone Africa as well as English Africa (Negash, 2011:6-15). A minority of Africans who lived within and closer to the colonial populated areas were more exposed to the colonial languages and European formal education. The group that benefited from colonial education was later to govern post-colonial African countries. The rest of the indigenous African people were left illiterate and are thus limited in their ability to be active participants in economic and national life. As a result, a majority of African people are left feeling side-lined, disgruntled and with no confidence in their leadership (Bamgbose, 2011:1-5). The African elites, who were exposed to colonial education, have adopted the attitudes of the colonial rulers as they have realised that the colonial language was their key to maintaining economic dominance. These elites fight against any proposal to empower the rest of the African people through officialising indigenous African languages (Bamgbose, 2011:0-5). It is very difficult to unite a continent where the means of unity doesn't create a common identity for those involved. It is even more difficult when the mechanisms for unity are not entirely accessible to the community. According to article 25 of the Constitution of the African Union, the working languages of the Union and all its institutions are primarily African languages, Arabic, English, French and Portuguese. This is not really the case though in reality as most if not all its documentation and meetings are in English and therefore limiting public participation. For instance, AU parliamentary meetings are often predominantly conducted in English and translators are used to accommodate other international working languages such as Arabic, French or Portuguese (Negash, 2011:6). Therefore, creating a common identity among the post-colonial African people is surely difficult in a continent which uses a language seen as the language of division (Ndhlovu, 2008:142-145).

It is important to note that different colonial regimes maintained different administration and educational systems suited to their specific colonial agenda. The British were preoccupied with difference in skin colour and physical traits and were very strict in keeping racial separation whilst they offered programmes of British education as a means of empowerment to the native Africans. They believed that a somewhat educated African with good British mannerism was more beneficial than one who possessed none of the above (Pearson, 2012:107-108). In their quest to educate and convert Africans to Christianity, the Europeans taught Africans ways of living which conflicted and destroyed the African indigenous ways of living. As a result, African people lost their African pre-colonial identities and adopted British identities (The British Museum, 2011:3- 4).

The French were somewhat similar to the British in that they were racist, viewed Africans as barbaric, and looked down on the African people, their cultures and their values. The goal of French colonialism was to put an end to African culture within their colonies (Alemazung, 2010:63-64). The difference between the French and the British colonialists is that with the French, educational opportunities were very scarce. Another difference between the French and British colonialist system was that the French can be said to have practiced 'colour blind racism.' If an African had received a French education, they were recognised as part of the French community and enjoyed full rights of French citizens of which the British would never allow. This was very rare though since education was so limited (The British Museum, 2011:3- 4). A French education taught African people that their culture was inferior and instilled a French identity within Africans. Therefore, African people began to view themselves as French men and women. This then meant fully abandoning their African culture (Alemazung, 2010:63-64). A good example of an African who adopted a French identity is Léopold Sédar Senghor of Senegal. According to Pearson (2012:109 -111), Senghor was born into a wealthy African family and had graduated in philosophy and literature. He was politically active and served under the French government for many years holding very high positions. Due to his education, Senghor identified himself and was viewed by the French as a Frenchman. This was further supported by his marriage to a white lady which was approved and seen as normal. (Pearson, 2012:110).

The Portuguese colonialist system on the other hand can be seen as a combination of the British and the French, in order to become part of their community, African people had to not only adopt their culture but also gain ancestral association of the Portuguese. The Portuguese promoted intercultural marriages. Once African women married into the Portuguese community they were recognised as full blooded Portuguese and so were their

children. The promotion of intercultural marriages only favoured the marriage of African women into the Portuguese community through the Portuguese men and frowned upon the marriage of Portuguese women to African men (Pearson, 2012:108-109).

Education systems of different colonial regimes emphasized the specific agenda of each of these regimes. African people were taught and adopted new colonialist identities different to those of other colonies. These different identities created division within the colonies. There were some African people such as Senghor of Senegal, who became French and Seretse Khama, son of the king Sekgoma II of the Bamangwato people who was also highly respected by the British because of his education. These individuals fully adopted the rule and culture of the colony and became part of the colonial community and enjoyed all the rights afforded to them for their transition. There were also those who were part of the colonialist community since one of their parents was part of that community like in the case of the Portuguese. These people were in the middle and enjoyed some of the benefits. The rest were those within different regions, who refused to succumb to colonialist rule and stuck with their African culture. This group was side-lined and enjoyed no benefits (Pearson, 2012:106-111). Not only did these different colonialist identities result in division within the colonized regions but also among Africans within the African continent. This division still exists today and is a disadvantage to African unity. This is because African people from different regions recognise themselves in the teaching of their colonizer and each works towards their own agenda thus resulting in a delay with regards to the project of African unity. (Huillery, 2006:2-5).

The impact of colonial emphasis on ethnic division

Another widely discussed strategy for strengthening the reign of the colonialism which left a lasting negative effect in Africa was ethnic division. This was done by emphasizing the differences between the cultural groups. In some cases, such as that of the Tutsi and Hutus, differences were manufactured thus creating cultural rivalries and thus making sure that these African cultural groups would not unite against the colonizers. At first, many of the people in Rwanda did not know whether they belonged to the Hutu or Tutsi ethnic group, so the Belgians decided that distinctions would be based on the number of cattle the individual or household owned. Those with more than ten cows were distinguished as Tutsi, superior and qualified for certain benefits such as good education (Africa South of the Sahara: geography and history, no date:305).

Division, therefore, became stronger as those groups who had less political and economic power began to feel marginalized and developed feelings of revenge and hatred towards

those who enjoy socio-economic well-being from the resources of their states because of their affiliation to the ruler based on client-list politicking. One of the most terrible ethnic founded conflicts was that of the 1994 Rwandan Genocide, which claimed the lives of an estimated 937,000 (Alemazung, 2010:65-66).

Africa's colonial inherited culture of Western dependency

The colonisers further ensured that through their administration they instilled among African people a culture of Western dependency in political processes, economic development and sustainability which still haunts post-colonial Africa. Due to this dependence, African people are unable to decide the fate of their continent (Alemazung, 2010:66 -69). Evidence points to Africa still being controlled by Europeans through their powerful institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund through which European dominance is ensured. This form of indirect control is termed neo-colonialism (Nkrumah, 1965:1).

Franz Fanon gives a very interesting expression of the colonial-imprisoned mind of the African people in a free African regime. This he portrays through his expression that individualism will not leave the mind of the colonized. It is very important to note that he still refers to the African people as the colonized as this emphasizes that the western mannerisms are still embedded within the African people (Philcox, 2004:10-15). Those who are comfortable in the teachings of the oppressor create a strain on African unity initiatives since they make it harder to create an environment allowing for social, economic and political reconciliation.

Conclusion

The theory of constructivism places great emphasis on the influence of social factors such as specific histories, beliefs and norms on the behaviour and rationalization of human beings and even communities and states. Wendt (1995:73) argues that state interests are largely influenced by social structure. Based on constructivism, social structures consist of three elements. These are shared knowledge, material resources and practices. It is therefore, this social structure which constitutes actors mind-set towards a situation and the nature of their relationships, whether cooperative or conflicting. Two examples of social structures are the security dilemma and the security community. The security dilemma social structure is based on inter-subjective understandings. This is when actors do not trust each other, and their assumptions of each other's intentions are always negative. In such cases, the actors will always define their interest in self-help terms. The second, which is the security community, is the opposite of the security dilemma social structure. The security community is where

states share a good understanding of trust. The states trust each other's intentions and trust that they can resolve disputes without having to resort to war. Constructivism, therefore, gives a better understanding of the effect of Africa's colonial history and its negative contributions to Africa's present.

Firstly, the division of Africa into regions recognised as spheres of influence, protectorates, colonies and free trade areas by the Europeans has caused great division among the African people. The new borders which protected and benefited the colonialists brought disruption to the lives of the indigenous people. Africans are still in conflict because the scramble for Africa caused division of groups who lived well together and ethnic mismatch through forcing those who did not get along to live together. The effect of Africa's scramble affects the project of African unity and a remedy has not yet been realised, since Africa has opted to not re-allocate its African borders. This decision is based on concerns that this would lead to even greater conflict as there might be contestations of where the new borders should be (Institute for security studies, 2011:1). The constructivist approach provides a good explanation for how the historic tragedy of the scramble for Africa is an obstacle to African unity. It not only focuses on the historic perspective, but also enables an understanding that includes in it the history, and how norms, beliefs and identities of individualism, ethnic mismatch and conflict were created by colonialists benefiting from divisions of Africa (Bozdaliolu, 2007:131 -135). Such histories are therefore, crucial to study and understand when dealing with issues of African unity.

Secondly, disruption and disunity among Africans was caused by the creation of different institutional structures. Cracks between the different regions were created through the unequal development among regions. This caused animosity among the different regions (Huillery, 2006:5-7). With the African people already disunited through the social statuses hyperbolized by the colonisers, the unequal distribution of material goods caused even more disunity and emphasized offensive attitudes (Wendt, 1995).

Thirdly, the education systems used by the different colonial regimes emphasized different agendas which were specific to the agenda of each of these regimes. With this, African people were taught and adopted new colonialist identities different to those of other colonies. Furthermore, the different administrative policies of the coloniser also caused division within the African continent. The different colonial education systems, languages and the administrative policies also created a state of western dependence among the African people. Looking at this from a constructivist perspective, domestic processes and structures act as a great influencer of a state's identity, and therefore, the domestic issues of a state or

community are a great determinant of the beliefs, norms and the collective identity that will characterize that specific state or community (Nugroho, 2008:94-95).

Fourthly, the colonialists ensured disunity among Africans through emphasizing the differences between the cultural groups, even differences which did not exist. An example of this is the case of the Tutsi and Hutus where they created cultural rivalries. To date, such divisions still exist and have caused some of the greatest challenges within African countries.

The chapter argues that the history of a state greatly influences its present situation. Through constructivist reasoning, this chapter gives a credible explanation of the effect that Africa's colonial history still has and how this contributes negatively to African unity. The chapter does this through its emphasis on the importance of social factors such as specific histories, beliefs and norms on the behaviour and rationalization of human beings including communities and states. Wendt (1995:73) argues that states and communities operate as a social structure which has a collective shared understanding, expectations or knowledge which creates the identities of the actors and whether they are co-operative with each other or not. Therefore, the impact of Africa's history of colonialism can be seen as one of the biggest obstacles to African unity. Colonial history affects many different aspects of African wellbeing. Through our colonial history, African people are uncertain of the future which affects the commitment to African unity. Their history has created what constructivism refers to as a security dilemma social structure. This security dilemma social structure is also a contributor to Africa's present economic instability. Economic instability is a further obstacle to African unity which will be discussed in the next chapter.

The persistence of this new culture is better explained by Wendt when he states that if the past association among different participants was characterized by animosity, then "the system will tend toward a Hobbesian world in which power and self-interest rule" (1995:77).

Chapter 3: Economic Challenges to African Unity

Economic factors are great influencers in the functioning and progress of a state or continent and are a determining factor in the success or failure of efforts of change, its policies or programmes. Economic instability opens up a plethora of internal and external challenges which result in a shift of priorities from activities aimed at achieving certain goals, such as African unity, to emergency strategies aimed at addressing side problems. Africa's economic challenges, therefore, contribute significantly to the slow progress in uniting the African continent. Using the theories of constructivism and realism, this chapter will argue that poverty, divisions between rural and urban areas within each country and greed and corruption lead to insecurities. This chapter will further argue that insecure individuals and groups tend to barricade themselves and exclude others. The latter outcome, it will be argued, is not conducive to Africa unity.

A stable economy is among other things, characterised by improved social development, increased quality in higher education, higher life expectancy, lowered transaction costs when connecting and integrating economic activities, efficient and profitable allocation of resources, technological improvement, and enhanced human capital and productivity (Economic Commission for Africa, 2013:xii-xiv). Sustainable unity of the African continent is very unlikely in the absence of sustainable and high economic stability since economic development boosts social development (Economic report on Africa, 2011:xii-xiv). Realising the importance of a healthy economy, and that unity matures with economic stability; African leaders have the support of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). They have pledged to treat economic growth and development of the African continent as one of their highest priorities. One of the main goals of the New Partnership for Africa's Development is to increase development in Africa through already available resources which include capital, technology and human skills (NEPAD, 2001:1-57).

Africa's Economic stability initiatives

The goals of NEPAD correlate with the objectives of the charter of the African Union (AU) with regards to accelerating political and socio-economic integration of the continent; establishing the necessary conditions which enable the African continent to play its rightful role in the global economy and in international negotiations; and promoting sustainable development at the economic, social and cultural levels, as well as the integration of African economies. (Department: International Relations and Cooperation, 2004). These objectives are geared towards the economic, political and social stability and unity of the African

continent (Organisation of African Unity, 2000:5-6). These objectives are carefully created to promote and drive all other regional mechanisms under African unity to work collectively towards and contribute positively towards the goal of African unity (Organisation of African Unity, 2000:2-3).

Africa already plays a very important role in the global community and is highly appreciated as being an indispensable resource base that has contributed to sustaining of all humanity since time immemorial. With this global position and availability of resources, Africa still lags behind other continents with a poor economy (The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD, 2001:1-57).

Numerous mechanisms are in place and are aimed at supporting a healthy and speedy economic growth. Such mechanisms include the Kilimanjaro Programme of Action which was designed with the aim of accelerating self-reliant, social and economic development for the well-being of African people; the Amsterdam Declaration on Better Life for Future Generations, and the Rio Declaration of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). Although all these mechanisms are aimed at enhancing Africa's economic growth and stability, Africa's economic progress is still of great concern (United Nations Economic and Social Council, 1997:1-2).

According to Easterly (2008:26), Africa is the only continent which is finding difficulty in staying on track in terms of meeting any of the 2015 millennium development goals (MDG's) which were initially designed as a motivational device to increase development efforts in and on behalf of poor countries. The millennium declaration was signed as a commitment by the international community in working towards a common vision of poverty reduction which emphasized placing human development at the core centre of social and economic progress (Afeikhena, 2011:4). A closer scrutiny of Africa's millennium development goals (MDG) indicates that most of the goals are either supported by or dependent on economic stability. For example, halving poverty by 2050 is dependent on economic growth while developing a global partnership for development, combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases and the achievement of a universal primary education are all dependent on economic growth and sustainability (Sachs, 2004:147). With the numerous efforts, Africa's economic growth is still unsatisfactory and continues to obstruct the goal of African unity.

Africa's economic situation

Africa's position as the poorest continent in the world is troubling and one of the main contributors to delayed African unity. Between the period of 1980–2000, Africa was the only developing continent which showed negative growth in income per capita. Africa is ranked as the lowest income group in the world (Sachs, 2004:117). Ethiopia, Somalia, the Sudan, Angola, Mozambique and Liberia are African countries which face the most dreadful of all poverty situations (Francis, 2001:3-4). For African people who are in poverty, every day is a struggle for survival. Even though Africa has been characterised by high population density, many people are unable to actively participate in productivity and growth of the African economy since the majority of them are experiencing famine, disease, environmental catastrophes and violent wars (Francis, 2001:1-4). The strained economy greatly affects the citizens of Africa since they have to live in poverty. It further affects relationships among people as the struggle for survival and limited access to resources has caused many African conflicts.

The Democratic Republic of Congo is one African country that is characterised as rich in mining, forestry and oil. Unfortunately, this country is also known for many conflicts which extensive studies have linked to competition, mismanagement and exploitation of natural resources such as diamonds, gold, oil, timber, drug crops and medicinal plants. For example, control over mining areas in the eastern provinces continues to shift between different independent armed groups and units of the Military of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The struggle over control of these resources has fuelled conflict and, as a result, making it more difficult to manage the resources in a manner most benefiting to the public. Rebel groups who are in control of these resources are able to finance conflicts. Furthermore, like other countries, in the absence of alternative income earning opportunities in the formal economy or in commerce, people in the Democratic Republic of Congo rely on access to land as an alternative to make a living. The competition over land issues has historically fuelled conflicts over grazing land and land ownership between Hema and Lendu peoples in Ituri resulting in the death of 10,000 and the displacement of 50,000 people (Burnley, 2011:7-8).

The impact of inadequate infrastructure

According to Ondiege, et al, (2013:69-75), one of Africa's biggest economic challenges is an under developed infrastructure. The result of an underdeveloped infrastructure is that African people lack even the most basic services. The conditions are even worse in the rural areas where the majority of Africa's population resides (Africa development, 2008:1). This situation

alone causes disunity between the citizens and the government. Those who live in rural areas will feel excluded from development by their government. Citizens who are dissatisfied with their government will not respond positively to other projects or policies brought by the government until issues of basic services are met. Underdevelopment is, therefore, a challenge to African unity because funds that could be used to finance projects or programmes of African unity such as the African Union (AU), which struggles financially, are being used to develop the continent's infrastructure. This cannot be done any other way since improved infrastructure is central to efforts of supporting economic growth and fighting poverty which is causing great problems in Africa at present (Afeikhen, 2011:2).

A continent which is economically strained is unable to provide for its people (Ugokwe, 1999:4), this condition, therefore, results in disastrous relations among the people of the continent). Relations among Africans will be sabotaged because each family, clan or country will act in a manner rational enough to ensure survival and that it has sufficient resources and power over other countries, families or clans. For example, the colonialist teachings that negatively emphasised differences among African people still greatly influenced the politics of Kenya. This disunity then results in politicised ethnic differences which form the fault lines for exclusionary politics and conflict. Successive Kenyan governments used ethnicity as grounds for mobilising supporters and resource distribution, as evidenced by the ethnic make-up of political parties and public appointments of previous governments. This nexus between political power and economic control in Kenya was made possible by the former constitution, which enshrined centralised and executive powers and which enabled successive regimes to utilise politics to access national resources to benefit a select few. The ethnic group represented in power has often had an advantage over other groups in terms of accessing education and wealth. This has resulted in a class structure that is heavily skewed along ethnic lines (Institute for security studies, 2012:3). This ethnic-based administrative system has fuelled numerous conflicts in Kenya. In 1992 and 1997, 'land' or 'ethnic' clashes spread furiously within multi-ethnic regions of the Western, Rift Valley and Coast provinces, resulting in the deaths of an unknown number of people and displacement of thousands of others (Global IDP, 2004:9).

When grievances of the citizens are not addressed, disgruntled citizens begin to riot, question the leadership as well and even join rebel groups. Socio-economic deprivation and intense competition over scarce resources intensify political rivalry and deepen racial and ethnic antagonism (Ikejiaku, 2012:29). There is a reciprocal relation between infrastructure and economic development. When a continent experiences economic difficulties, many other problems emerge such as poor education, the inability of the government to provide basic

health care services, poor quality infrastructure and low employment opportunities etc. As a result the continent is faced with high levels of poverty, lower life expectancy and child mortality, wide spread of diseases such as the notorious HIV/AIDS, and widespread existence of harmful practices such as child marriages and female genital mutilation and different kinds of violence, etc. Pushed far enough, a big portion of the population become refugees thus causing over-population in other countries within Africa, and draining economic resources of host countries (Statement to the Hague Forum, 1999:2-3). Trans-national migration, in the context of competition for economic resources, may result in many violent conflicts such as xenophobic attacks that have occurred in some countries such as South Africa. These attacks cause a strain in the relations of African people and thus strain African unity.

Poverty, corruption, and low educational levels

A society that is unable to redress poverty cannot achieve sustainable unity, as poverty is accompanied by many other societal ills and challenges. Poor individuals or groups are more prone to end up with low educational levels, and therefore, will mean that these individuals or groups are unable to acquire knowledge, skills and expertise such as entrepreneurial skill that will assist them to better their lives through creating their own means of survival. The African continent is experiencing high levels of illiteracy and low quality of education. Africa's secondary and tertiary education still needs lots of attention and investment in order to produce the skills and techniques necessary to increase productivity and competitiveness of the continent through a larger pool of good quality labour (Economic Commission for Africa, 2013:39-40). African countries such as Niger, Somalia, Mali, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Guinea, Ethiopia, Benin, and Liberia are reported to fall below 40% when measuring adult literacy according to the universal standards (Francis, 2001:6). This not only contributes to poverty increase but pose a challenge to Africa's economic growth in general.

Unemployment will contribute to dissatisfaction and insecurity about the future since the individual or group is excluded from the job market (United Nations Development Programme, 2006:12-13). This will lead the group or individual to feeling economically excluded or side-lined. The thirst for security and survival then fuels the development of aggressive behaviour and identity issues from this group or individual (Mearscheimer, 2003:25). For example, South Africa has experienced devastating outbreaks of xenophobic attacks. According to Jager & Hopstock (2011), since 1994, the hostile treatment of foreigners has become a pressing problem for South African society. In May 2008, South Africa experienced the worst case of attacks that the police required assistance from armed forces to quell the violence. Among the most causes of the attacks is a history of exclusion,

poor service delivery by local governments, slow development and an increase in poverty and inequality (de Jager & Hopstock, 2011). According to Charman & Piper, (2012:83), when compared to other countries worldwide, South Africans have been labelled as the least open to outsiders, with as high as 50% of South Africans in strong support of the deportation of non-South Africans including those living legally. An additional 74% suggests a policy of deporting all non-South Africans who are not contributing to the economy (Charman & Piper, 2012:83).

According to Lesetedi & Modie-Moroka (2007:5), several other African countries such as Botswana and Namibia have also experienced xenophobic attacks. This hostile treatment of refugees and immigrants paints a bad picture of African countries and African people as xenophobic and thus contributes to disunity among Africans. This is because those who have been directly affected by these attacks will develop negative attitudes towards the host country and its citizens (Lesetedi & Modie-Moroka, 2007:19). Furthermore, poverty can be the most devastating situation in a human life which results in the dismantlement of a hope for a better future. Inequality in wealth distribution is one of the causes of poverty. One of the causes of this inequality is the selfish and greedy nature of the social, economic and political elite who misappropriate national resources. As a result of this distribution, the poor are excluded from the economy. Their loss of faith in their government makes it difficult for the government to implement any policy or programme

Another contributor to Africa's high poverty levels and poor economic growth, are the high levels of corruption. Corruption is one of Africa's biggest problems which limit the positive impact of the numerous poverty reduction and economic development strategies which Africa has implemented (Lawal, 2007:1). The problem with corruption is that it is like a virus that spreads into all organs and parts of the body. Corruption is widely practiced and it is not limited only to government structures. It exists in different spheres including the public and private sector, civil society and nongovernmental organization. Every citizen is equally exposed and has the potential to be corrupt. Corruption negatively impacts on the normal use of connections, networks and reciprocity and leads to increased personalization of power. As a result, people see it as an easier and quicker way to get things done, and therefore, adopt it as a lifestyle which replaces formal political, social and economic rules (Lawal, 2007:1-3).

More so, corruption also tends to have negative economic growth which results in a negative effect on income distribution therefore further perpetuating inequality and poverty. In this, the poor and most needing of government support and protection will be stripped of their rights

to proper service delivery. For example, in the case where funds which are allocated for proper infrastructure are stolen, the citizens, and mostly the poor will suffer because this will result in poor infrastructure and poor service delivery, increased disease, deaths and dissatisfied citizens (Lawel, 2007:1- 4). Dissatisfied citizens will also resort to illegal means of living in order to ensure that they too have access to resources, employment and other survival opportunities, thus increasing already existing continental problems of economic weakness (Lawel, 2007:1- 4). Corruption further contributes negatively to the goal of African unity by exacerbating ethnic and religious divisions. In a quest for survival, people will group themselves into ethnic, religious, cultural, political or racial groups in order to mobilize more power and resources to beat the system, and maximise their chances of survival. This leads to an increased, uneven distribution of resources, increased poverty, competition for resources, and potential conflicts of identity.

The impact of different Economic progress of African countries

Also, the different economic progress of African countries poses a challenge to African unity. Factors such as poverty, low productivity, poor infrastructure, and high disease and illness rates, among other factors, affect countries differently. This means that although the African continent as a whole is experiencing economic instability, countries within it are at different levels of economic development. For example, countries like Egypt which thrives in its energy market based on coal, oil, natural gas, and hydro power (US Energy Information Administration, 2013:1), South Africa, which thrives as a tourist attraction destination (World economic forum, 2013), Nigeria, which majors in exports and is currently leading in exporting goods to the United States of America (Oduoza, 2012:4) and Botswana which has its strengths in financial services tourist attraction and subsistence farming. All African countries experience different economic growth. If these countries were to pool their resources, create strong trade relations and support each other in their challenges, this would ensure that each country is able to maximise their market. Also, this would strengthen the goal of African unity.

Different economic standings of African countries mean that each of the African countries will have differing priorities which will override any other, including African unity. For example, countries such as Somalia which are experiencing extreme levels of poverty and disease may see it more important to prioritise on dealing with these issues first before attending to matters of African unity. This therefore causes disgruntlement of Somalian people who are most affected by these socio economic problems. African countries will therefore work in disunity which will hinder the project of African unity. Realising the

challenge that these economic differences can cause, African leaders agreed that regional integration was important. The integration is in order to combine and share economic resources thus creating economic self-reliance and self-sustained development in Africa, address challenges as continental challenges rather than country specific challenges, promote economic, social and cultural development and the integration of African economies. As a result the integration would foster an environment which promotes coordinated and harmonic policies among existing and future economic communities in Africa and solidify African relations (African Union, 2009:11).

Challenges met by Africa's economic integration schemes

The challenges met by these regional integration schemes are evidence that regionalism contributes to the slow progress of African unity. To name just a few of the challenges, the first challenge met by these schemes is that member states lack commitment and political will and do not properly implement the agreements reached by the committee nor respect target dates agreed to (Franke, 2006:3-4). For example, there is a huge gap in commitment and political will of the Economic community of West African countries (ECOWAS) member states to the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF). The programme is meant to serve as a strategic framework which aims to improve conflict prevention and human security. Its aim is to foster a stable West Africa as prerequisite for social, political and economic development. Member states have signed an agreement of the ECPF yet implementation as per their signature is not evident. In addition, there is a disappointingly low level of awareness regarding the document in the sub-region among policy makers and the general population. This is evidence of lack of national ownership of the document (Atuobi, 2010:1, 3). This according to the realist perspective shows that member states are preoccupied with their own national interests and ensuring that they gain their own economic power and security.

Secondly, African countries do not respect these institutions and use some of them as means to pursue their own agendas. For example, Nigeria's intervention in Sierra Leone in 1997 is questionable. Critics suggest that Nigeria pursued this intervention for their selfish desires rather than African interest. In a quest to support the democratically elected but questionably weak Kabbah government, without prior consultation, Nigeria availed defence by sending in 900 troops attached to the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) against the rebels of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). In doing this, Nigeria went against the formal ECOWAS security framework and presented the organisation with a *fait accompli*. Although Nigeria claimed to have merely spearheaded a multinational intervention, formal ECOWAS authorisation was only granted

three months after Nigeria had actually entered Sierra Leone and many smaller ECOWAS member states feared that Nigeria had set a deleterious precedent by hijacking ECOMOG and making the force an instrument of Nigerian domination (Franke, 2006:3-4) Thirdly these economic integration communities lack financial capacity (Sako, 2006:6). Many of the above mentioned regional institutions lack financial stability and financial self-reliance. This then challenges their ability to produce the required results.

The AU, which is the mother institute of the above mentioned institutions also lacks financial stability and thus function on a limited budget. The AU depends on three main sources of revenue. Firstly, it depends on contributions by member states according to a scale of assessment approved by the Executive Council. This consists of five of Africa's wealthiest Member States which are Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Nigeria and South Africa, each contributing 15 per cent of the assessed contributions and the remaining 25 per cent comes from other Member States. These membership contributions become limited since some countries that face financial difficulty, such as those emerging from conflict, have successfully sought exemption from paying their subscriptions, or a reduction in the amount. Secondly, funds may come as a form of additional voluntary contributions by Member States to the solidarity fund. Thirdly, the AU also receives funding made available by external partners (Strengthening popular participation in the African Union, 2009:35). Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, chairperson of the African Union (AU) Commission also shared her concern that the AU was too reliant on foreign funding, which in turn compromises Africa's independence (Institute for Security Studies, 2013).

According to City Press (2014), Africa has proposed various initiatives in the quest for AU self-reliance. Firstly, these include a suggestion contained in a report compiled by African foreign minister that countries on the continent pay 0.5% of their annual budgets to the body. Secondly, it was proposed that a \$5 (R55) tax on each air ticket into Africa be charged on tourists to help fund the AU or a \$2 hospitality levy for hospital stays on the continent, or a small levy on SMSes, which would hit millions of low income earners on the continent. The second suggestion was met with many concerns by African countries who felt that this would mean that African countries with high tourist numbers would contribute a disproportionate amount. Furthermore, during the year 2013 South Africa contributed R162 million to the AU from its international relations budget, and a further R22 million in October to help Dlamini-Zuma run her office. Also, South African President Jacob Zuma also announced the country's pledge for an extra R11 million to the Mission internationale de soutien à la Centrafrique sous conduite africaine (Misca), the African-led intervention force in the Central

African Republic. These are just some of the initiatives that Africa has taken to free the African Union from financial reliance on donors but which are still not enough.

Also, the progress of Southern African Development Community (SADC) is strained by their financial constraints and is unable to fully realise regional economic integration as per its establishment. SADC receives a huge bulk of its financial resources from the European Union (EU) and should the EU decide to pull their financial support, SADC would not be able to function as the institution would not be able to pay the salaries of its entire secretariat. In addition SADC's dependency on external funding compromises its position in cases of Economic Partnership agreements (EPA's) with the EU. Its financial support puts the EU in a position where it can persuade SADC into signing EPA's that are fruitless to the regional economic agenda. For example, SADC is signing the EPA's as a divided pack of SADC-EPA and Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA-EPA). With careful assessment, these EPA's do not talk to the Regional Indicative Strategic Plan and the whole integration agenda and further turns a blind eye to the history of SADC and its future (Saurombe, 2009:104).

This again shows a lack of commitment from member states. Even though African countries are in economic strain, if commitment was strong then they would all pool together what they have and ensure that these communities are able to function to the best of their abilities in order to produce maximum results. Funds could be raised at a national level to support state-level implementation (Atuobi, 2010:3). Fourth, poor design and sequencing of arrangements (Sako, 2006:6) is also a sign that there is not enough planning put into such important structures. SADC-EPA is yet to develop production structures which are in line with the dictates of industrialisation, export diversification and market competitiveness. The existing ones have been characterised as very weak, narrow and highly oriented towards primary and unprocessed commodities. Such designs challenge efforts towards building national and regional industrial capacities and further limit market competitiveness and export diversification efforts (Kamidza, 2007:15-16). The main aim of regionalism was to empower Africa economically, thus decreasing its vulnerability, dependency for support, and strengthen its bargaining power within the global economy. Africa's inability to diversify its economies has led to continued dependence on the West and the global economy. Evidence of this dependence is that Africa's regional intra-trade is devastatingly lower than its international trade. For example, during the year 2002, Africa's intra-regional trade was at 8.1% whereas its trade with Western Europe was at 50.9% and also Africa traded at 17.0% with Northern America (Akokpari, et al, 2008:96-97). According to Tafirenyika, (2014:5), to date, Africa's intra-regional trade only ranges between 10% and 12% of Africa's total trade compared to that with North America which falls at 40% and roughly 60% in

Western Europe. An estimated 80% of Africa's exports are shipped overseas, mainly to the European Union (EU), China and the US. This then becomes a barrier to African unity since Africa is not taking the opportunities of building and strengthening its own continent through increased intra-regional trading. As a result, African regions continue to work in disunity with each region looking out for its own profits. These actions can be best explained by the realist perspective which says that, in an uncertain world actors seek to maximise their own material gain and increase their chances of survival (Mearscheimer, 2003).

The impact of Africa's financial dependence

Dependence on financial assistance has become one of Africa's biggest problems and one of the major challenges to the project of African unity. In this research, financial assistance means that a proportion of government spending comes in the form of aid and is sourced from external donors (Actionaid, 2011:8). According to Actionaid (2011:8) many African countries fall within the top twenty groups of aid dependent countries. Rwanda, Zambia, Mozambique, Uganda, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Mali, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Burundi, among other, are some of the African countries appearing on the list of the most aid-dependent countries in the world. Africa receives its aid mostly from developed countries and international institutions which include the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Recently Africa has also started receiving aid from countries such as China and India (Ilorah, no date:2).

Receiving foreign aid is not entirely a negative thing as it assists in repairing the conditions of injustice and inequality, and also helps in reaching the United Nations (UN) Millennium Development Goals (MDG's). Its effectiveness is questionable though, since although Africa is the region receiving the most aid, the UN and World Bank have voiced their lack of confidence in Africa meeting its development benchmarks by 2015 (Kwame, 2008:1074). Foreign aid has helped Africa in many ways while its consequences also challenge the project of African unity. Firstly, aid can be seen as a disguised way for the colonizer to maintain its ties with its colonial countries through different techniques. This is commonly referred to as neo-colonialism. Neo-colonialism can be defined as the hidden way in which the Western capitalists maintain their control of resources and the manpower of their colonies through various indirect mechanisms which ensure the reinforcement of capitalism, maximise profit and maintain the economic, political, ideological and military influence of colonial times during independence (Haag, 2011:9). For example, one technique is to attach high interest rates to their loans. In this way, African Countries are always indebted to the colonizers (Nkrumah, 1965:3, 4).

Another technique used by borrowers is to attach disadvantageous terms and conditions to their loans. These conditions may include forcing the African countries that have received loans to supplying information about their economies submit their policy and plans to review by the World Bank and accepting agency supervision of their use of loans. This means that borrowers are unable to use the loans freely. In this way, the African continent has limited control and privacy over their economic development (Nkrumah, 1965:4-12). This also increases disunity in Africa since each country which receives aid also receives instructions and conditions to the use of the loan. These instructions and conditions may not be in sync with the policies of African unity project and therefore results in African countries working towards different goals and pulling away from the goal of African unity.

Conclusion

According to Wendt (1994:387-389) states define their interests in egoistic terms. Constructivist's claim that these are always in process, sustained by practice, but to the extent that the practice is stable, the rationalist assumption that interests is given may be useful. In such cases, when there is conflict, states are likely to "fear each other and defend egoistic identities..."

The stability of an economy is a very important factor to the unity of a continent (Okhonmina, 2009:86). Factors such as poverty, poor infrastructure, greed, corruption, and the existence of hegemonies are among the major contributors to Africa's unstable economy, and foster disunity within the African continent and thus contributing negatively to the goal of African unity. Poverty is one of the most pressing factors contributing to the unstable economy of Africa. Countries such as Ethiopia, Somalia, the Sudan, Angola, Mozambique and Liberia are the most impoverished and conflict-stricken countries within the African continent (Francis, 2001:3-4).

The consequences of poverty, which leads to lack of education, lack of skill and expertise, crime, low life expectancy, poor living conditions and increased risk of contracting diseases such as HIV/AIDS and others effect mostly on the citizens of the country (Francis, 2001:1-4). Such an environment affects the relationship among the; according to realism, the struggle for survival and access to, and competition over scarce resources has been the cause of many African conflicts and disunity among the African people. Xenophobic attaches have also been associated with poverty and the fight over limited resources. According to the realism theory such conflicts are caused by actors trying to maximise their chances of survival through acquiring as much material wealth as possible (Mearscheimer, 2003:25).

Poverty is worsened by human made worsened conditions due to the egoistic nature of those in middle class which allows them to oppress the poor by taking from what is due to them in order to sustain and grow their own wealth and security (Francis, 2001:2-3). This then threatens African unity in that although African people share an identity, since there is conflict between the middle class and the poor, everybody according to Wendt, is fighting to defend their egoistical identities (Wendt, 1994:387-389).

Realism emphasizes the importance of attaining power and ensuring survival and thus explains how poverty results in conflict as citizen's fight for their own survival in an environment with limited resources (Slaughter, 2011). This then imposes a negative effect on African unity as it is difficult to unite a continent whose citizens are in conflict with each other (Amin et al, 2011:5). Also, Africa is made up of countries which have different economic standings with a rich pool of natural resources. Africa has not seized the opportunity to maximize the potential of its economy through intra-African trade. Instead African countries focus more on trading internationally. This also shows that Africa as a continent is not united in their economic ventures, and this is a challenge to African unity. Realism explains how different economic standings and challenges which are unique to every country pose as a challenge to African unity since countries seek to ensure the maximization of their power and survival (African Union, 2009:11).

Furthermore, Africa has put in place various strategic economic integration schemes which are mechanisms aimed at forming a common ground for the economic decisions and action under a united front of African leaders. The challenges met by these schemes can be seen as evidence of lack of sacrifice and commitment of economic power as well as the political power from African countries.

The African continent has adopted a character of financial dependence. Countries such as Rwanda, Zambia, Mozambique, Uganda, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Mali, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Burundi, among others, are some of the African countries appearing on the list of the most aid-dependent countries in the world. Receiving foreign aid is not necessarily a negative thing but does have consequences. Foreign aid can be viewed as neo-colonialism (Haag, 2011:9). This then means that Africa is not really able to completely free itself from the influence of colonialism. This not only impacts the continents decision-making, but also its financial ties to its borrowers since they have to pay back the loans with interest. Although this setback has been realised, many African countries are unwilling to reject foreign aid. This then means that African countries are unable to work towards a common continental goal of freeing themselves from foreign financial ties and influence thus creating a united

Africa. From the realist perspective, this is a challenge to African unity. Since Africa's economy is unstable, African countries will find it difficult not to utilise the loans afforded to them since they all are facing different challenges of which most need finance to manage. For realists, the main aim of the actors is to look out for its own interests and ensure survival (Slaughter, 2011).

With the above discussion in mind, it can then be assumed that the slow progress of African unity can be associated with the politics of the continent. African unity cannot be separated from the politics of the continent. Chapter four is, therefore, a discussion of the lack of political unity within the African continent as an obstacle to African unity.

Chapter 4: Political obstacles to African unity

Aristotle characterized humankind as a distinctively “political animal” (Wuketits & Antweiler, 2004:2). His assumption suggests the importance and extent to which politics impacts on the functioning of a country or continent, and further determines the success or failure of its policies and projects. In the case of Africa, political unity which strengthens political stability is a vital element for the success of African unity project. Guided by a combination of realist and constructivist theoretical frameworks, this chapter will give an in-depth discussion of how the lack of political unity contributes as a political obstacle to African unity. This will be done through highlighting lack of political commitment from African leaders as a cause of underperformance of the numerous institutions created for consolidating African unity. The discussion will further highlight the manipulation of the democratic system by African leaders for their selfish purposes. It will then highlight the high level of conflict in Africa and also the unwillingness of African leaders to sign on to becoming a United States of Africa.

Definition of politics

It is important that I firstly lay a foundation by giving a basic definition of politics. According to Maitah, (2013) politics refers to the activity in which a group of people or society makes preserves and amends the general rules under which they live. Sagael (2008) refers to politics as “all the things relating to the affairs of the state, especially its government”. He also mentions decision-making, effectuation of policy and power as characteristics of politics. The third definition, refers to politics as a process in which a group of people or society which constitutes of different interests, opinions and priorities reach general decisions which are then generally binding to the group; enforce a common policy and which are aimed at achieving collectively desired ends (Rajan, 2006:2). In a nutshell, all three of these descriptions suggest that politics is a socially related process where the voice of the majority rules majority rule. It also involves the adoption of the decisions taken through voting as a rule of law or policy. Politics involves power struggles as people, although living in the same society, might have differing opinions, interests and priorities thus a combined decision must be reached in order to maintain harmonious co-existence.

Africa’s transition from undemocratic government to a democratic government

The year 1958 marked a year in which Africa took its first step towards political unity. This was when Ghana and the Republic of Guinea united to form a nucleus for a Union of African States. This was followed by the creation and the adoption of the charter of the first unity organization in 1961, which was named “The Union of African States (U.A.S.)”, by the

presidents of Liberia, Guinea and Ghana (Nkrumah, 1963:136). These events were the first step towards a bigger dream of African political, economic and social consolidation. Since then, the African continent has made considerable progress with regards to political stability since it gained its independence. The immediate period after political independence was marked by military coups and civil wars. The external cause of this instability was primarily the cold war, while the lack of democracy was the main internal cause of instability (Nkrumah, 1963:136).

The late 1980's and the early 1990's marked the period of the transition of the majority of African countries from single party political systems to multi-party systems (Chabal, 1998:290). The years between 1990 and 1994 marked high success rates with regards to transition into democratic systems of governance. Countries such as Benin, Zambia, Angola, Cameroon, Ghana, and South Africa to name a few, were among the countries which became democratic during this period. By 1998, seventy legislative and sixty presidential elections were held in 42 countries within the African continent (Democracy Development Programme, 2008:1). To date, a large majority of African countries have adopted an electoral democratic system of governance guided by the African charter on democracy, elections and governance (African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, 2007). Public participation has increased as more African people are becoming less passive and more active and audible in the governing of their countries. African people are slowly moving away from their perceived inferiority scars left behind by colonization (Martin, 2012:2). In theory this type of government is inspiring, revolutionary and emancipatory but again the reality of it has the potential of becoming cynical and manipulative. Instead of bringing political equality and popular empowerment, democracy, can become a game dominated by the power of the elite and dominant classes (Democracy: How it Works, 2009).

Disadvantages of Africa's system of governance

Democracy is a system of governance which involves a process which allows for a more open, more participatory, less authoritarian society. It embodies, in a variety of institutions and mechanisms, the ideal of politics based on the will of the people. Democracy is an ambiguous concept consisting of a wide range of perspectives with regards to its meaning and content as well as to the conditions of its realization. The meaning of democracy is largely influenced by philosophical, ideological, political, cultural, social, and economic perspectives (Bassiouni et al, 1998:2). The democratic system of governance although highly praised also has its dangers which vary by different situations in different countries. For most parts of the developing world, especially Africa, the challenge is as a result of the

pervasive poverty, inequalities and injustices. It is difficult to attain political freedom and African unity through fully reaping the fruits of a complete democracy without economic and social justice (Bassiouni et al, 1998:31)

Africa's democratic system of governance has its disadvantages which have a negative effect on the politics of the African countries, as well as the African continent as a whole. Firstly, the experience of most African countries makes it evident that democracy has not yet evolved to its fullness and is stuck at its formal state. The ability for the nature of democracy to bring Africa into the ideal democratic continent is betrayed by practices which are the opposite of what is required by democratic values. African Democracy is characterised by a neo-patrimonial concept of power which reflects the formation of far-sighted political elites motivated by self-enrichment, and the existence of political parties reflecting horizontal divisions (Bassiouni et al, 1998:37-39).

Secondly, multi-party elections are very expensive and allow for the involvement of the international community through funding. The 2011 elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) cost over US\$700m, of which 37% was donor-funded (African Research institute, 2012:1). Also, according to Halakhe (2013:16) the 2013 elections in Kenya cost over \$293 million to conduct and international donors contributed over \$100million. This becomes a problem in that, in most cases, funders also want to have some sort of influence in projects that they fund. Often funders' agendas may not be completely transparent; thus these projects may produce unintended consequences and hinder African unity (African Research Institute, 2012:1).

Thirdly, multi-party elections may be abused by leaders who may use ethnicity, religion and culture, among others, to mobilize supporters for their political parties. Fourthly, due to the colonially adopted mind-set characterized by individualism and an oppressive character, those elites who are entrusted by the African citizens, whom Franz Fanon describes as the selfish elite who enrich themselves through stealing from struggling nations (Philcox, 2004), become greedy for power and do not want to hand over power to other parties or candidates. For example, in Nigeria, former military ruler Major General Muhammadu Buhari ran for the presidency in 2003, 2007 and 2011. Also, the Kenya African National Union (KANU) ruled unopposed for 39 years after independence. The thirst to remain in power has resulted in the increase of conflicts in Africa, in the form of electoral violence which is orchestrated by electoral elites to intimidate voters. Zimbabwe is a good example where the victory of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in the 2008 parliamentary election triggered immediate violence. This violence came as a means of retaliation from President

Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) which resulted in MDC's leader, Morgan Tsvangirai, withdrawing from the presidential run-off vote. This results in loss of faith in the electoral system. The violent attacks then cause tension and animosity among political groups and among citizens, thus negatively affecting African unity. The behaviour of greed and selfishness of the elite, learned from colonialism is better explained by the constructivist approach as this theory suggests that behaviour is learned through influential social factors such as specific histories, beliefs and rationalization of human beings and even communities and states (Wendt, 1995: 73).

As a result of the manipulated democratic system together with other factors, many African countries are in a political crisis, faced with civil wars and ethnic violence, therefore, leaving millions of African people disgruntled, as refugees or displaced from their homes (Ugokwe, 1999). Countries such as Somalia, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, are experiencing great violence and political unrest (Kah, 2012:27)

Unsatisfactory results from the OAU and AU

On a continental level, the inability of both the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the African Union (AU) to produce the maximum positive results and discharge its functions effectively as anticipated in its establishment and charter is one of the signs of lack of political unity within Africa (Wachira, 2007:12). The creation of the Organization of African Union (OAU) is historically one of the biggest steps to African unity which African leaders have taken. It was to exist as a common institution which would act as a driving force for the consolidation of Africa (Wachira, 2007:3). The establishment of both the OAU and the AU represents a theoretical commitment and dedication of African leaders to the project of uniting the African continent (Adogamhe, 2008:2). By being member states of the African Union, African countries agreed to grant powers to the common institutions, which in essence entail transferring some of their sovereign powers to the AU in order for them to be able to achieve the objectives set out in article 3 of the constitutive framework of this organization. This includes surrendering some legislative powers to the Pan-African Parliament (PAP), judicial powers to the African Court of Justice and Human Rights, and powers over enforcement and implementation of decisions domestically (Wachira, 2007:3). The main aim of the OAU and AU was for a greater effect by a collective of African states fighting against challenges of political liberation, economic development and security (Wapmuk, 2009:646). The formation of the OAU was from an understanding inspired by Pan-Africanism that although Africa is a continent characterized by diversity in culture and

language among other things, it needed political unity first in order to address other continental challenges (Okhonmina, 2009:85).

By becoming a member of the AU, member states agree to a full understanding and complete agreement with the vision, mission, and objectives of the AU which replaced the OAU in full conformity with the ultimate objectives of the OAU charter. The AU Constitutive Act replaced the OAU charter. The charters of the OAU and AU Constitutive Act are not completely distinct as they are both very specific in their contribution to political unity. Article II, (1), (2) emphasizes that member states are to ensure their contribution in the promotion of unity and solidarity of the African States; defend their sovereignty, their territorial integrity and independence, as well as ensuring political and diplomatic cooperation among other things (OAU Charter, 1963:3). The AU constitutive act also emphasises its concentration on achieving greater unity and solidarity between African countries and the peoples of as well as defending the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of its Member States, among others (International Relations and Cooperation, 2004).

It would be unfair to dismiss the success of these organizations completely. The success of the OAU is most highlighted by its contribution to anti-colonial liberation struggles, especially in that of South Africa's struggle against the oppressive apartheid government. The OAU was also very effective as a stabilizing factor in the search of African unity. It settled a number of territorial and other political conflicts that took place between African states (Wapmuk, 2009:652-653). For example, it assisted in resolving border disputes involving Algeria and Morocco in 1963, and Somalia and Ethiopia in the 1970s (Rodt, 2011:2). The OAU also played a significant peace-making role in border disputes involving Somalia and Kenya, and Equatorial Guinea and Gabon. However, the OAU did fail in other aspects of its function as a union mechanism. It did not bring about satisfactory results in areas such as continental development, poverty eradication, ending numerous internal conflicts and human rights abuses. A good example of this would be the case of the Rwandan genocide of 1994. The failure of the OAU led to the 2002 establishment of its successor the African Union (Wapmuk, 2009:652-653).

The AU has undertaken a holistic approach to peace building. It seeks to create a link that connects peace, development, and accentuate the important role of national ownership of post-conflict reconstruction efforts. Furthermore, the AU has mandated to harmonize the efforts of Africa's eight major regional Economic communities. These consist of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS); the Southern African

Development Community (SADC); the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD); the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS); the East African Community (EAC); the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (Paterson 2012: 1) Within a decade, the AU has shown some degree of success. In recognizing the importance of public participation and accountability, the AU is responsible for the establishment of the Pan African Parliament, which represents all elected African national legislatures. The AU has also ensured that the African continent recognizes and respects the importance of the electoral democratic process. This has led to the creation and adoption of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (Mbeki, no date: 5-6). In its achievement in establishing the Peace and Security Council, the AU has asked for more commitment in action by the Continent in its interventions to ensure peace and stability in Africa. The above are just a few of the success stories of the AU.

Unfortunately, with its success the AU has also experienced its share of struggles and failures which cannot be ignored. Firstly, the AU has been unable to ensure that after policies have been developed and adopted at a continental level, member states integrate them at the domestic level. (Mbeki, no date: 6). This gives a negative impression that member states do not respect and value decisions taken by the union. This then causes a problem in that, according to the theory of realism; states view the world as having no central authority and are unpredictable (Slaughter, 2011). If the AU, which is supposed to moderate relations among the African countries, is unable to exercise control and ensure cooperation, then the institution loses its relevance and all policies adopted at its meetings lose importance. States will continue to act independently and not trust each other since there is no security that they are all pulling towards one selfless goal of African unity. Also, this then discredits the argument put forward by the gradualist countries which emphasized the importance of harmonization of policies and regional integration before a central power was established (Wapmuk, 2009:661). Seemingly, taking the approach of regional integration has not been given the adequate commitment necessary for the unification needed by Africa and one promised by the creation of a unity institution. Lack of cooperation from member states indicates lack of political unity and further undermines the very institutions that are expected to nurture and instill a sense of political unity of the African continent (Ong'ayo, 2008:2).

The second obstacle of the AU which could be the cause of this lack of commitment from African leaders is its financial dependence on the West. Over 90% of the AU's peace and security efforts receive financial assistance from external actors. This means that the AU is unable to exert influence over external interventions led by the UN Security Council and its five permanent members which are the United States (US), China, Russia, France, and Britain (Paterson, 2012:1). For example, the AU receives the bulk of its budget for the

Peace and Security Council from the West. This means that the AU is unable to make decisions independent of the Western powers that undoubtedly have their own interests and agenda in Africa (Mbeki, no date:6). This has further led to the lack of confidence of the African continent in the authenticity of African interests in any of the decisions taken by the AU. This has also led to lack of respect by the entire international community for Africa's ability to handle its own problems and come up with its own decisions (Mbeki, no date: 7).

The third shortfall of the AU is that becoming a member of the AU is too simple. According to Article 29 of the Constitution of the African union, "Any African State may, at any time after the entry into force of this Act, notify the Chairman of the Commission of its intention to accede to this Act and to be admitted as a member of the Union" (Organization of the African Union, 2010:17). This then becomes a problem since the character of many African countries shows to be too bureaucratic for them to commit fully to any meaningful policy reform and change (Kah, 2012:32). The simplicity in the acquiring of membership of the AU allows membership for countries which might not subscribe to the AU's beliefs and vision. Some African countries might join the AU just for status purposes. This will then result in a lack of passion and commitment needed from member states, in order for the AU to function to the best of its ability, and therefore, producing the maximum results (Nkrumah, 1963:136). In addition, the only clear advantage highlighted in the AU constitution, is the ability of member states to influence the decision making of the AU through votes. The AU constitution does not clearly highlight advantages of being a member state of the African Union. This means that the AU constitution fails to show incentives to attract and motivate African countries to become members (Organization of African Union, 2000:17).

The fourth shortfall of the AU is that its public participation only exists in theory. According to AfriMap & Oxfam (2009:41-44), the AU has created channels for enabling public participation through allowing civil society to be members of the Economic, Social and Cultural Council of the African Union (ECOSOCC), attend AU activities, organize autonomous activities related to AU issues and processes , organize joint activities with AU organs and participate as observers of the AU. The connection between the AU and the public is broken when the AU fails to avail documents and information timeously to the public and civil society for their input. The AU is unable to make available, up-to-date and useful information (AfriMap & Oxfam, 2009:44). Although the AU has a website where the public is supposed to access all its documents, many of the documents are only posted there after they have been finalized and by then it too late for ordinary citizens and civil society organizations to make their input. This then becomes a challenge to African unity because it

is important to involve the African people in the decision making that will affect them otherwise people will not participate.

Furthermore, the AU was designed as a bridge to a full political and economic integrated Africa that will ultimately lead to a United States of Africa. Failure of the AU to meet this mandate will result in even greater political division within the African continent as there are already different camps with one group favouring Nkrumah's model of the federal government which is the immediate establishment of a United States of Africa and the gradualists who are rooting for the gradual unification which will eventually result in the united states of Africa. For example, Libya under Muammar Gaddafi declared its dissatisfaction with the commitment of African leaders to the African unity project. The late Libyan president even threatened that if Africa fails to achieve unity, Libya would abandon its financial commitment to Africa and invest it elsewhere (Wapmuk, 2009:661-164). The theory of realism emphasizes states as being the key actors within the political world and also the nature of states as sovereign political entities. This, therefore, means that it is rather difficult if even possible for states to not prioritize the protection of their sovereignty and consider their interests and security (Mearsheimer, 2003:25). To achieve the goals set by OAU and AU, states will have to compromise their sovereignty in order to maximize political unity (Wapmuk, 2009:661). Sovereignty originates from a common understanding of the protection of territorial rights which originally meant the unlimited and absolute power within a jurisdiction (Wachira, 2007:2). This meant that other states had no say in the internal affairs of another state. Realizing the importance of protecting basic human rights, the definition of sovereignty has changed to include the states responsibility in the protection of the basic human rights of its citizens (Farmer, 2012:94). This new definition means that intervention in a state's internal affairs is legal in exceptional cases such as where there exist serious violation of human rights and threats to international peace and security. This new definition pulls states to realize that certain problems affect them collectively and consequently their effective resolution can only be attained through global efforts (Wachira, 2007:2).

Furthermore, the level of development in countries within the African continent differs, and therefore, those countries that are doing well economically and politically are sceptical about the effect that the unity will bring for them and are not too keen on an immediate union but rather a gradual build up into unity. These states are protecting themselves from joining forces with other states as this will mean sharing wealth and problems too. This shows that African states are willing to unite but not at the expense of their security. According to the realism theory states are always in a quest to secure power and dominance even though

they do not do this openly and aggressively (Elman, 2004:564) Joining forces with others will not only mean that a state will inherit the economic wealth of the other but also the challenges of the other states thus losing all that it had worked for. It is, therefore, unlikely that African countries will surrender neither their economies nor their sovereignty for the sake of creating a United States of Africa. Others countries who are in a bit of a struggle then see this as an opportunity to increase their security, since the union will allow them to benefit from a united relations association with economically and or politically stronger countries (Wapmuk, 2009:658-665).

The negative impact of African conflicts on political unity

The African continent lacks political unity due to the level of conflict within Africa. There are different types of conflicts that threaten Africa's already strained political unity and stability. Many of these conflicts originate from colonization (Zezeza, no date: 1). Take, for example, the conflicts in Southern Sudan, which has been officially split into Northern and Southern Sudan by its colonizer. The North constituted what French colonial authorities called the "useful country," where whatever resources were available and whatever development took place were concentrated. South Sudan, on the other hand, was left unattended and without development and had no resources. It survived through the interventions of missionaries. Even after independence in 1956 when the barriers were removed, in addition to other internal problems, animosity existed between the two groups as South Sudan became resentful of North Sudan (Ottaway & El Sadany, 2012:4-5). Stretching all the way through northern Uganda to Rwanda, Burundi, and Congo which is experiencing high levels of wars and genocide, these conflicts can all be traced back to the colonial regime which increased violence in the form of slave trading, slave labour, plantation labour, plantation terror and a violent gun culture. It is rather difficult to be specific about the causes of African conflict as they are complex. At best, one can only say that they are however influenced by political economies, social identities, and cultural ecologies. It is also important to note that all the above are also specific to local, national and regional historical experiences and their inability to adapt into a continuously changing environment (Zezeza, 2009:2).

These conflicts though cause a further division of African people and African countries and thus any division is bad for the project of African unity. Some of the conflicts are driven by perceptions of economic and social injustice regarding the distribution of economic, social and political resources within the state (Jinadu, 2007). Countries which have high levels of unequal distribution in wealth and or income are more prone to various forms of political violence, especially civil war (Fjelde & Østby, 2012:2, 3). The conflict crisis in Darfur, for

example, which began in 2003 (Dagne, 2011) was characterized by both ethnic divisions, social, political and economic marginalization. The conflict was caused by a struggle between the Sudan central government and its peripherals over the control of national wealth (Flint, 2010:5). These conflicts then create disunity which is not only social, but political as well, among the citizens of that country as the issue of identity and loyalty then emerges. Citizens begin to associate with certain ethnic and political groups.

Furthermore, identity markers such as ethnicity, kinship, religion, and others are the major contributors to African conflict. Ethnic associations are by far the most influential factor in African conflicts (Eifert et al 2010:494, 507). Ethnic diversity may lead to increased civil strife. The African continent has been rated as being the most ethnically diverse continent (Osinubi & Osinubi, 2006:101) Ethnic division causes great conflict as it plays an important role in a power struggle, in that this attachment will determine a person's loyalties and even influence a person's vote at election time. Politicians have realized the power of ethnic association and are quick to pull out the ethnic card when mobilizing support for their political group to gain political power and votes (Eifert et al 2010:494, 507). It is difficult to separate political group association to ethnicity because people either belong to a political group because their parents or relatives are members of that certain political group or because of historical and or cultural attachments they associate with the political group. In places where access to economic and political benefits are determined by ethnicity, political parties are created based on ethnic identity and this is a more common occurrence within sub-Saharan Africa (Fearon, 2004:3, 6).

Other examples of African countries which have suffered great ethnic tensions which have resulted in war and loss of many lives are Kenya and Rwanda. Kenya has suffered intense ethnic tensions which brewed from multiparty elections with an estimate of 1,500 deaths reported in the period between late 1991 and late 1993. Rwanda also experienced dramatic violence as the Hutus attempted to wipe out the Tutsi group. This ethnic cleansing resulted in an estimated 300,000 deaths in the first half of 1994 and an additional 20,000 in refugee camps of neighbouring countries where 1.7million Tutsis had relocated in order to hide from the violence.

The impact of regional hegemony

With Africa's uneven distribution of economic wealth, competition for influence has risen among African countries in terms of becoming the most economically powerful and consequently the hegemony. The reality of an uneven distribution of power then results in an arena of international relations which is a power of politics, where all actors are concerned

with maximizing power, thus strengthening the ability to accomplish their national interest in an uncertain world (Amin, et al, 2011). The struggles for power then result in half-hearted commitments to African unity since countries are all competing to dominate.

According to Okhonmina (2009:89), regional hegemony or regional power can be understood as a “state which is part of a geographical region, able to stand up against any coalition in the region, highly influential in regional matters and have the potential of being a great power. Regional hegemonies influence the affairs of other states as well, even if it is indirectly. These states make their decisions and policies based on their relation with the regional hegemony (Prys, 2008:8-13). A good example of competition between African hegemonies is the tense relationship between Nigeria and South Africa. The unhealthy relationship between the two African countries has become one of major concern since both of these countries play a very vital role in African development as well as in African unity. Cooperation of these very strong states would result in efficiency and effectiveness in Africa’s Union. The tense relations, therefore, pose a challenge to African unity (Landsberg, 2012:2). Both countries see themselves as Africa’s super powers. Nigeria has long seen itself as a leader in Africa due to having played a championing role in the anti-apartheid struggle, while on the other hand, South Africa also sees itself an exemplar of both democracy and the conduct of international relations. Events which deteriorated the relationship between these two countries include the disagreement over how to respond to Zimbabwe in 2003-2004, as well as the contest for permanent African seats on the U.N. Security Council. Nigeria is also in disagreement with South Africa being the only African member in the BRICS formation and the G-20, with the de facto status of African spokesperson that both confer. The situation has worsened to a point where after former South African president Mbeki and former Nigerian president Obsanjo left office, the two states cancelled celebrations of South Africa-Nigeria Binational Commission, signalling that the two Africans had become rivals (Landsberg, 2012:2-3).

The anarchic system then poses a threat to efforts of African unity as it highlights the insecurity characteristic of the world. Although, institutions such as the African Union, NEPAD etc., have been created in order for collective discussions and decisive measures to be adopted in terms of African unity, the African continent has no central leader who ensures that all states work towards the same goal of creating unity. Rather all countries act in their sovereign power, looking out for their own survival, ensuring their own economic growth, and therefore, in most instances pulling in different directions as to the agreed programme of building an economically strong and politically stable united Africa (Amin, et al, 2011). Although the African continent may face common challenges such as poverty, inadequate

service delivery or high death rates due to high diseases, different African countries have different experiences of these challenges. This means that countries within the African continent will have different priorities and thus it will be difficult to consolidate a continent in which all countries within it create their policies based on their own state interest and experienced challenges (Powell, 1991:1303).

Conclusion

In conclusion, political stability is very important for the project of African unity to be successful. As Aristotle states that humans are distinctively “political animal” (Wuketits & Antweiler, 2004:2), this tells us that humans cannot operate independent of politics. Good political relations are thus important for African unity. Africa faces various challenges that disrupt its political relations. Africa uses a system of governance which is supposed to create accountability, service delivery and foster peaceful relations among the countries and among the people of Africa. Although this system has its advantages, its disadvantages have been detrimental to African unity. Democracy is governance of the people by the people, yet it is the same system which democratically elected leaders are manipulating to their own selfish advantage and causing political and social disruption in the relations of Africa (Ugokwe, 1999). According to the theory of realism, actors seek to maximize their security in an uncertain universe through the attainment of power and material wealth (Mearscheimer, 2003:25).

With this in mind, democracy theoretically provides some sort of security through it being a participatory system of governance. Failure of this system to provide African people with the ability to give input into the decisions that affect their lives and their security, while providing it for those in the politically opposing groups, therefore, causes uncertainty and tension among the citizens of a country, fuelling division and disunity since fighting for survival will be the most important thing, above unity.

The multiparty elections are mostly used by these leaders as an opportunity to manoeuvre the electoral outcome in order to stay in power. Due to thirst for power, elections are turned into violent battles between the political parties and results in violence spilling on to innocent civilians and causing death and rivalry among citizens. The tension developed from the violent elections creates ethnic and religious divisions, thus causing further division and political unrest within the African country (African Research Institute, 2012:1). According to the realist perspective, leaders want to stay in power because they want to ensure security on their material wealth as well as their survival since they live in an uncertain world. As a

result of this behaviour, other citizens will also fight to get their share of maximized security and survival.

According to Bassiouni et al (1998:2,37), “power is what democracy is essentially about, irrespective of whether it is the use, sharing, control or transfer of power or the accountability of those who wield it and those who seek it”. Due to the common problems of poverty and inequality experienced within Africa, democracy has merely become a continuing struggle between power-holders and power-seekers or between power-systems and individuality, all looking to secure their existence, material gain and power. This then becomes a challenge to African unity since the continent is operating in division and swaying away from the hard core democracy, necessary for African unity.

Secondly, political unrest is one of the most influential factors in a country’s division of ethnic groups. Africa is most affected by ethnic division and ethnic conflict. These ethnic groups, therefore, fight each other for economic and political power. These conflicts can be best explained by the realism theory, and its emphasis of anarchy and the actors need to ensure security and survival. Under colonialism, administration was over-centralized. With political decolonization, central authority was dismantled. Thus, a situation of anarchy existed. Different and antagonistic groups were all vying for the same resources. Cooperation to end this competition is difficult because actors will be concerned that the other may cheat, and pursue to strengthen its own security, therefore, leaving the other in a weaker position (Posen, 1993:27-29). Due to this, citizens within African countries remain disunited socially and politically, therefore, contributing to an even greater disunity of a continent.

Thirdly, the Unsatisfactory results of the institutions such as the OAU, AU, and regional Economic communities which were created as a common ground for working towards and strengthening African political and economic unity shows that Africa lacks commitment to the goal of African unity. It also shows a lack of political unity within the African continent (Wachira, 2007:3). These institutions not only experience financial constraints but also that African leaders do not display the value of decisions made by the AU through implementation within their respective countries (Mbeki, 2012:6). This lack of commitment is associated with lack of trust of giving complete access and control of their countries to other countries. From a realist perspective, at first glance, the creation of the above named institutions was doomed to failure regardless of its strategic charter because for them to be effective, countries needed to put the interest of Africa as a continent before their own. This meant that they also had to surrender some of their sovereignty which meant putting their security at risk of which from a realist perspective, is unlikely to happen (Slaughter, 2011).

Although states may acknowledge the positive impact of joint efforts in problem solving and the power of unity, states will not cease to ensure the protection of their sovereignty. Therefore, even though African countries are willing to form a united front, they still want to make sure that they protect their state sovereignty. The success of these mechanisms is largely based on the full commitment of member states, which would mean compromising their sovereignty. Lack of full commitment to these mechanisms led to their unsatisfactory results, and, therefore, highlights the lack of political unity within the continent. The political stability of Africa and the political unity of members of the continent is a critical step towards the envisioned African unity.

Also, the existence of hegemonies also poses as a challenge to African unity. According to the theory of realism, due to their perception of an uncertain world and the importance of material gain, states act in an offensive manner which will eventually lead to a defensive reaction, and therefore, a defensive world (Tang, 2010:36). Furthermore, with offensive realism, the more resources a region has, the more security they have among their neighbouring regions or even their international community (Tang, 2010: 36). It is important to note though that Mearsheimer (2003) explains that states do not just seek power and dominance aggressively and openly but rather plans their moves carefully, rising and folding at the right moment (Elman, 2004: 564)

Since states subconsciously perceive that the world is an uncertain place where one region cannot be certain of the capabilities of another, (Mearsheimer, 2003), states therefore, are constantly on the lookout for which regions pose a threat or seem to have the greater power in terms of politics, economics and military strength. With the regional hegemony having been allocated, states will, therefore, execute their plans accordingly. In other words; the perception of regional hegemonies greatly influences state decisions and ideas of identities, interests, external relationships, and their place within the African continent. This battle over domination is done indirectly within the African state as none of the regions would openly admit to their secret desires of becoming the regional hegemony (Prys, 2008:8-13). Prys (2008:8) suggests that in order for a country to become a hegemon, the country would have to firstly possess the willingness to become a superpower, although, at times the countries desire to become hegemony might be influenced by external factors such as the international community.

The reality of hegemony then becomes a challenge to African unity. This is because countries which are in competition for dominion are difficult to unite. African unity requires sacrifice of national interest for continental interest and countries which are competing to

dominate each other may be unable to keep to such commitment. According to realism and its emphasis on the attainment of power for survival and security purposes, African countries compete for hegemony even though it will not be visible. As a result, countries which are in competition for dominion are difficult to unite. African unity requires sacrifice of national interest for continental interest and countries which are competing to dominate each other may find it difficult to keep to such commitment (Landsberg, 2012:2).

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

The need for Africa to create a united front cannot be disputed. Through research, this dissertation has shown that Africa's colonial history, its unstable economy, as well as the lack of political stability among African countries are the main challenges to the project of African unity. These obstacles only hamper the attempt to unite Africa, but also threaten the already fragile unity of Africa. These three factors affect and are affected by each other and are very important factors in the extent to which the goal of African unity can succeed.

Firstly, the effect of Africa's colonial history, which is an external factor, is one of the most important factors to consider when attempting understanding the continent's lack of unity and its current economic and political conditions. The effects of Africa's colonial past contribute enormously to the functioning of post-colonial Africa (Pearson, 2012:99).

As a consequence of colonialism, Africa is divided into different identity groups which are as a result of teachings, education and administration styles of their former colonizers. According to constructivism, states and communities decide what they want based on their perception of who they are. States' interests and their relations with each other are influenced by their identities (Wendt, 1995:71-75). Since colonisation divided Africans into different identity groups with different agendas, these different and conflicting identity groups are a threat to African unity (Huillery, 2006).

Secondly, Africa's unstable economy is another major internal challenge to African unity that negatively influences the politics of the continent as well. The vulnerability of Africa towards other numerous internal and external challenges is intensified by an internal factor which is the continuously unstable economic conditions of the African continent (Okhonmina, 2009:86). Factors such as poverty, poor infrastructure, greed, corruption, and hegemonic practices are, among others, major contributors to Africa's unstable economy and foster disunity within the African continent.

Poverty is one of the most pressing factors contributing to the unstable economy of Africa. The social effect of poverty is that it fosters an environment which affects the relations among African people as the struggle for survival, access to and competition over scarce resources have been reported as major causes of many African conflicts. This results in economic disparities among African countries and thus leads to different African countries having different challenges and hence priorities which might not necessarily be the unity of

Africa. The realist approach explains that this then becomes a challenge to African unity because states interests are influenced by the importance to ensure survival and attaining power (Landsberg, 2012: 2).

In order for African unity to be possible, African countries need to put their individual needs aside and work towards a common goal of unity. According to a realist perspective, this will be very difficult since poverty threatens the survival and power of a state (Slaughter, 2011). This is evident with the existence of hegemonies which further challenge African unity. Realists hold that due to the importance placed on states' survival and attainment of power, all states compete for dominance which will maximise their security. It will, therefore, be very difficult to unite a continent where there are countries or communities competing for power (Landsberg, 2012:2). The issue of hegemony causes tension and unhealthy relations within African countries or communities as all countries play a very vital role in African development as well as in African unity.

Thirdly, an internal factor, political instability within the African continent is one of the major contributors to the slow progress of African unity. If humans are "political animals" and cannot operate independent of politics, as Aristotle suggests, good political relations are therefore, a crucial element to the success of the goal of African unity (Wuketits & Antweiler, 2004:2).

Africa uses a system of governance which is supposed to foster good governance and create peaceful relations among the countries and among the people of Africa. Although this system has its advantages, its disadvantages negatively affect the project of African unity. Under the present conditions, the practice of liberal democracy opens up room for manipulation. The system can be manipulated for the selfish empowerment which results in social and political disruptions (Ugokwe, 1999).

Realists suggest that in an uncertain world, leaders want to stay in power because they want to ensure both the security of their material wealth, as well as their own survival. As a result of this behaviour, other citizens will also fight to get their share of maximized security and survival. This further perpetuates political instability as tension within Africa intensifies thus causing even greater disunity among the Africans.

Furthermore, the unsatisfactory results of the African unity institutions such as the OAU , the AU, and the regional economic communities is an alarming factor. It shows lack of commitment and political unity within the African continent (Wachira, 2007:3). The success

of these African unity mechanisms is largely based on the full commitment of member states which would mean compromising their sovereignty. This according to a realist perspective is unlikely to happen since surrendering countries sovereignty puts a compromise on its security. Therefore, the political stability of Africa and the political unity of members of the continent is a critical step towards the envisioned African unity.

Consequently, chapter 2, 3 and 4 of this research paper as discussed above have answered the first question of this research which seeks to find out the main challenges to African unity. These chapters have discussed at length three main challenges to African unity which are Africa's history of colonialism, economic challenges and political challenges. The research has further answered the questions of whether Africa's slow progress to African unity is motivated by challenges which are internal or external. The political and economic challenges are internal, whereas Africa's history of colonialism is an external challenge.

Africa needs to re-evaluate itself and realise that every African shares an identity which is bigger and stronger than that created by the colonialism and the economic or political situation they are currently facing. This will help bring the realisation of their strength and capacity for a united African people. The continent already has strategies in place to unify the continent. These strategies are good ones and might only need to be slightly improved in order to help produce the required results. The next section then goes into detail on recommendations for African unity.

Recommendations

The Organisation of African Unity, the African Union and all other integrative organisations which fall under and are part of Africa's attempt to consolidate the African continent are practical example of unification, yet there is still no common African flag in Africa. In order to achieve visible and sustainable results from the above-mentioned union institutions, many changes need to be made both in individual African countries and in institutions that are set up to promote African unity.

Firstly, the AU needs to be more inclusive of African citizens by making provision for ordinary African citizens to have a direct influence on AU and regional institutions' decisions. Public participation will increase awareness of the activity of the AU as well as the efforts made towards African unity through the continent allowing its citizens to scrutinise the institutions and its plans. This could be done by means of introducing referenda whereby ordinary citizens, electorates and civil groups are allowed to vote on crucial policies of continental and regional institutions. So far, continental and regional institutions are glorified clubs of

leadership chums, mostly dictators for that matter (Gumede, no date). The importance of a continent or country recognising its people is emphasized by Nyerere's Ujamaa. This is that an ideal society which will succeed must possess three essentials which are freedom, equality and unity. These three essentials afford all citizens of a country or continent to have a voice in the matters of their country or continent (Ibhawoh & Dibua, 2003: 61-62). It is important to also note that due to financial implications that would result from this proposal, countries would have to develop a strategy which would accommodate their financial constraints.

Also, membership of the AU should be selective, and countries that are not member states should be sanctioned. For example, such African countries should be excluded and not benefit from certain intra-African trade benefits and taxes or financial support, etc. There should be set criteria of minimum requirements that each country needs to satisfy before being accepted into being a member state of the AU. For example, the criteria should include that a country meets a set minimum democratic and economic governance requirements. Such entry requirements should encourage African countries to follow a set of good economic and social policies. Countries who do not qualify as member states of the AU due to not meeting the minimum good governance requirements, will then have a clear set of standards against which even its citizens can measure their governments' performance, and therefore, pressure their government to deliver. As a result, this will energise many African nations, both members and non-members of AU, to practice good governance measured against credible new continent-wide good governance norms (Gumede, no date). The criteria used for the African Peer Review Mechanism can be adopted and fine tuned into being standard criteria for being a member of the African Union and any of its associated strategies. This way a review of the member states will be carried before it is awarded membership of the AU (The New Partnership for Africa's Development, 2003).

According to the realist perception, African countries who do not meet the minimum AU membership requirements will then push to perform so they are able to qualify as members of AU and be associated with the highest performing African countries. Realism emphasizes the importance of power attainment and maximising a state's share in the world (Mearscheimer, 2003:25). Therefore, according to a realist perspective, a country will want to enter into relations that are most beneficial to its survival and material gain while maintaining some degree of sovereignty. African countries will ensure that they are members of the AU in order to benefit in things like receiving financial assistance from other African countries which are economically stronger or cash in on favourable trade agreements established among AU member states.

Secondly, as Kah (2012) suggests, Africa needs to unite fully; that is, there is a need to create a United States of Africa. Africa needs to become a continent characterised by a common flag, a common anthem, common motto, union citizenship, a common defence and economic policy, a union bank, and coordinated language teaching and cultural activities as specified by Nkrumah (Kah, 2012:28, 29). Although there are African countries which are sceptical about signing for membership of the United States of Africa, Africa should start by signing up countries that are willing and leave allowance for those who might join later, but the process of full African unity has to have starting point (Gadio, no date:15). The above mentioned obstacles can become a hindrance to this type of unity happening because a United States of Africa will mean that member states inherit each other's wealth and problems and at the same time surrender a large portion of their sovereignty. This could be a very difficult step for African countries, and could yet again lead to a break-down in terms of reaching the goal of African unity. It is only in total unity that Africa can gain the necessary strength to engage all its challenges and move towards political and economic stability. A united Africa should be viewed as a sacrifice which will cause a small inconvenience for a better future. From a realist view, this may be seen as a small sacrifice which has a long term goal of ensuring Africa's survival and maximizing power and material gain.

Full unity would ensure economic unity among the African countries. As a result, Africa would have economic viability. Africa cannot achieve economic viability if any parts of the continent continue to attempt to develop independently (Kah, 2012:29). Full economic integration will ensure Africa's ability to pool together its vast natural resources and use them to explore its already existing capacity for development (Gadio, no date: 14). Development will, among other things, result in economic stability which will combat the devastating challenge of poverty within the African continent. Economic stability means further development of the continent and its people and also stronger and healthier relations.

Furthermore, a united Africa would eliminate what Shivji, (2006:209) calls "territorial nationalisms." It would create an environment which allows for the removal of boundaries between 'here and there' or 'them and us' (Etherington, 2003:41- 42). This would mean the breaking of colonial borders and the removal of divisions which were fostered by different colonial administrations. According to realist theory, actors ensure the survival of their own group, country or states, and states also act in a manner which is beneficial to its own material gain and survival (Slaughter, 2011). Therefore, should the boundaries which create territorial nationalism be cut, African unity would be strengthened since African leaders

would act in the best interest of their continent as a whole and they would also act in ways that will advance the African continent rather than just their country.

To foster sustainable unity, Africa needs to use a more bottom-up approach where extensive research is done on each African country and the vast pool of updated information is constantly available and considered carefully when crafting African unity strategies. These strategies need to be country-specific but should have a continent-wide vision that will allow for the achievement the continental goal of African liberation and unity. This is explained in Nyerere's vision of African unity that Africa needs to understand and accept that different areas may advance on the road to unity at different speeds, and that the method of advancing will vary according to the conditions now existing. For example, it is possible that in some parts of Africa, a common market and joint action on certain economic questions may be attainable while political association of any type is rejected by the people. In the same sense, in other countries, a political association without any real economic integration may be welcomed while in other countries, the formation of some sort of federation might be possible. It should be anticipated and understood that it is possible that different countries will take different roads to a common destination. Every accomplishment towards unity no matter how small it is, through increasing Africa's consciousness of interdependence, increasing knowledge and understanding among the African people, all lead in some part to the final inter-African pattern of thought. It should be kept in mind that African unity will be a process of growth and maturity. Nevertheless, continent-wide discussions on certain matters, even without commitment to the decisions, would be fruitful (Nyerere, 1963:1-6).

To ensure that Africans adopt a spirit of caring for one another despite cultural, racial and religious differences etc., Africa needs to use the philosophy of "Ubuntu" as a remedy for any differences creating disunity. At its core "Ubuntu" reflects the deep spiritual truth that "We Are All One". "Ubuntu" embodies the understanding that we are all of one spiritual essence, one planetary life system, one human race, and one inter-dependent human community despite the fact that centuries of painful history and divisive ideologies have emphasised and magnified our differences, rather than our commonalities. An example of such a mechanism is South Africa's "Ubuntu" Foundation. This foundation was established for the purpose of breaking the shackles of the apartheid legacy of separatism and advantage. It aims to bridge the highly visible, inhumane, counterproductive, and unnecessary barriers that now divide the people of South African, its society and societies all around the world. Such a mechanism can be modified into a continent-wide unifying strategy (Chaplin, 1996:4-5).

Thirdly, Africa should develop a mechanism that will make it economically and culturally self-reliant. The mechanism should emphasize Africa's self-reliance through accepting less international funding and trusting that the continent has both the financial and intellectual capabilities to craft solutions for African problems. This can be done by a commitment from AU member states to take a special responsibility to help in solving problems anywhere on the continent simply as a function of being on the African continent. Member states will adopt an African country based on their strengths. For example, countries which are most politically stable will mentor those which are least stable by helping them craft policies which are country-specific and which promotes political stability as per the standards of the AU.

Fourth and finally, African unity needs to prioritise the rights of citizens, rather than focusing on state security. African solidarity must not be based on leaders, but on values such as democracy, social justice, clean government, ethnic inclusiveness and peace. It needs to protect all citizens of the African continent, against disease, violence and hunger, and prudently manage economies for the benefit of the continent's people. In order for this to be made possible, African countries will need to surrender some of their sovereignty, not only in theory, but also in practice. Although the African Court of Human and People's Rights addresses this issue, African countries need to find more aggressive strategies of protecting African people. Some African people are suffering at the hands of their selfish leadership. Such change will demand some change in the AU's Charter in order for it to move from protecting the sovereignty of individual countries to protecting the security of Africans themselves. At this point, the African principle of non-interference in the affairs of neighbours still partially informs the AU which has been very reluctant to intervene forcefully in misgoverned nations. Putting the wellbeing of African people ahead of state sovereignty will allow for issues arising in one country to be addressed by the continent as a whole, therefore, allowing for more innovative and sustainable solutions (Gumede, no date). In this way, Africa will adopt a shared history of having being colonised and a common vision of moving beyond the effects of colonization.

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