The Role of a Regional Power in Regional Integration: The case of Nigeria in the Economic Community of West African States.

Name: Tsungai Melissa Vushemasimba

Student number: VSHTSU001

Course code: POL5010W (Minor Dissertation)

A Minor Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a Master of Arts degree in International Relations (Course-work), in the Political Science Department, in the Faculty of Humanities, at the University of Cape Town.

COMPULSORY DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this is my original work. This work has not been previously submitted in whole to this, or any other institution.

Signature: Tsungai Vushemasimba Date: 14/02/22

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- First and foremost, I would like to give thanks to the Lord Almighty God, my Ever Present Help and Provider who continues to make provision for me and strengthen me all the days of my life.
- I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor John Akokpari for being so patient and not giving up on me.
- I cannot express enough gratitude to my parents, Mr Tirivacho and Mrs Emelda Vushemasimba for their constant support throughout the course of my studies. Not forgetting my grandmother, Ellen Zindoga, who has pushed us to do the best, and be the best we can ever be.
- Lastly, I would like to thank all well-wishers, especially Artherton Mutombwera and Tafara Dakwa for encouraging me to keep going.

This achievement would not have been possible without them, and for that, Thank you!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADB	African Development Bank
AFD	African French Development Agency
ANC	African National Congress
BBC	British Broadcasting Communication
ECOMOG	ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EEC	European Economic Community
ETLS	ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
LPA	Lagos Plan of Action
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
PKOs	Peacekeeping Operations
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SADCC	Southern African Development Coordination Conference
WIDER	World Institute for Development and Economic Research
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front

ABSTRACT

Theoretically, it has been determined that the presence of a powerful state within a particular region is a significant ingredient for regional stability and integration. Practically, however, evidence has surfaced that regional powers can equally undermine regional integration. Regional powers bear the greatest financial and operational burdens relating to regional projects and provide relevant leadership. Nigeria has been no exception in ECOWAS; it has made tremendous contributions to regional development – from the establishment of the ECOWAS to the running of its peacekeeping operations (PKOs). Nigeria's efforts in ECOWAS have demonstrated the potency and benefaction of a regional power to the development and stability of a region. This dissertation contributes to a deeper understanding of how leadership can be a method of overcoming Africa's stability challenges through regional integration. The study used Nigeria's role in ECOWAS as the central focus, concentrating on Abuja's contribution to peacekeeping operations in the region, and the impact of this contribution to regional stability. However, an acknowledgement that ECOWAS has not fully realised economic integration largely because of a lack of peace, security, and a stable political environment, is noted. Discussions on 'economic contributions' relates to Nigeria's provision of financial and logistical support in the region. Finally, the dissertation notes the extent to which a regional power undermines regional integration.

Keywords: Regional Power, Hegemonic Stability Theory, Peacekeeping, ECOWAS, Nigeria

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.0 Introduction

An essential feature of higher economic integration is free trade among members, which is expected to increase trade, leading to rapid economic growth (Iyoha, 2005:23). These benefits are a result of the industrious effects of integration which are cumulative and lead to growth. These effects of integration are perceived as the long-term outcomes of member states' economic growth rates due to “increased market size and exploitation of economies of scale, increased competition, learning by doing, and increased investment” (Iyoha, 2005:3). This heightened investment is propelled by economic integration and encourages multinational corporations to invest and produce within the integrated economies, avoiding trade restrictions imposed on non-member states (Salvatore, 2004).

This dissertation contributes to understanding the role of leadership as a method of overcoming Africa's marginalisation through regional integration. A case study of Nigeria's role in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) will be the central focus. Particular attention is paid to Nigeria's peacekeeping role, acknowledging that economic cooperation and integration can never be consummated until the region has peace and stability. Analysing Nigeria’s role in economic integration presently is not ideal, given that the preconditions for economic integration, namely regional peace and security, have not been actualized. Therefore, the dissertation only discusses Nigeria’s financial contribution toward peacekeeping missions. Despite all their efforts, the West African region gives an impression of a "bad neighbourhood" due to conflict, corruption, and the mismanagement of state resources, among others. This research investigates the role of Nigeria’s leadership or sometimes lack thereof, on the road to regional integration in ECOWAS. A look at how Nigeria has promoted or undermined regional integration, for instance, Nigeria closing its borders recently and restricting imports in the region will be discussed in detail.

1.1 Background of the study

Historically, regional economic integration in Africa traces back to 1910 with the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) formation in Southern Africa (Osundu, 2015: 96). More recent regional organisations have emerged, namely the East African Community (EAC),

Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS,) Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), etc. Although they aim to unify Africa, these organisations have experienced minimal success because of factors such as political instability and internal civil wars.

It has been theoretically determined that a powerful state within a particular region is a significant ingredient for regional stability (Ogunnubi and Okeke-Uzodike, 2016: 110). Practically, evidence suggests that regional powers can also undermine regional integration. "With great power comes great responsibility", is a quote that applies to all in positions of power and proves true for regional leaders as well. Regional authorities bear the financial and operational brunt of regional projects. Nigeria has been no exception in the ECOWAS. It has made tremendous contributions to regional development, from establishing the ECOWAS to the running of its peacebuilding projects (Ibrahim and Ahmad, 2020: 87). Nigeria's efforts in the West African region have demonstrated the potency and benefaction of a regional power to the development and stability of the block.

The roles and activities of Nigeria in ECOWAS can be understood within the context of its foreign policy initiative. As observed by Alli (2010), the key interests of states in the international arena are outlined in the foreign policy dossier and include the achievement of security, socio-economic welfare, and power. However, of all policies, the preservation of national interests is the common denominator (Rouke, 2005). Indeed, states need to be conscious of the principal objectives of their foreign policy and those of other countries, which are greatly determined by the promotion and protection of national interest.

Nigeria's national interest includes; the defence of the state's sovereignty and territorial integrity, the restoration of human dignity for black man, especially the eradication of colonialism and white minority rule from the face of Africa, and the promotion of world peace (Dauda, Ahmad, and Keling, 2019: 114). Apart from engaging in global peace and security, Nigeria has remained relatively consistent in its policy towards Africa, particularly the West African region. Regional policy issues constitute a significant element of Nigeria's foreign policy objectives. Despite the continual changing in governance, being an underdeveloped economy, and the fractures in her internal political structure, Nigeria strives to maintain her foreign policy objectives (Ojekwe, 2010). Thus, Nigeria has established itself as the leader of Africa in line with her Africa-centred foreign policy.

According to Osondu (2015: 98), Nigeria is playing a leadership role within the ECOWAS by providing resources in the form of men, material, and diplomatic muscle through peacekeeping, mediation, and training of military personnel. Nigeria has remained committed to ECOWAS and, by extension, its monitoring group Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG). Nigeria's leadership role in ECOMOG operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone cannot be underestimated (Bach, 2007: 42). This role will be discussed in detail to illuminate Nigeria's contribution to peace and security in the region.

Several scholars have referred to Nigeria as a regional hegemony, but this study analysed Nigeria as a regional power. The terms hegemon and regional power are often used interchangeably, describing a state's control over others. Destradi (2010: 905) emphasises that a hegemon highlights two features:

1. "It is predominantly self-interested and aims primarily at the realisation of hegemon's goals, which, however, are presented to subordinate states as collective goals.

2. Hegemons operate by employing a combination of material incentives (power-over-resources) and ideational power (power-over-ideas) instruments (the changing or reshaping of norms and values in subordinate states) to gain consensus in the subordinate states."

A hegemon can shift the normative orientation and practices of subordinate states without the use of sanctions and manipulation, instead of using the engagement of the "process of ideological socialisation persuasion in which legitimacy emerges through the osmosis of norms and values from dominant to subordinate states" (Destradi, 2010: 884). By this description of hegemony, Nigeria does not qualify for the title of regional hegemon. Although many of the attributes of hegemony are eminent in Nigeria's journey to hegemonic status, it has not won the region over, as many states do not accept Nigeria as their leader. The state has not mastered the art of ideological persuasion that Destradi (2010: 904) describes. Although it is hegemon deficient, Nigeria possesses the characteristics of regional power. Regional powers, according to Lemke (2000: 49), are "hierarchical subsystems, dominant states of a local hierarchy" Therefore, hegemons differ from regional powers in their reach, where regional powers exert their influence regionally, hegemons exert their impact globally. Nigeria's transformation from an agriculturally based economy to a manufacturing economy has not been actualised and a poor economy simply cannot exert influence on fully-fledged technologically advanced economies; hence Nigeria cannot be referred to as a hegemon.

Regional powers possess three qualities; leadership (within their region), control over resources, and the cost of regional security and order. In addition to this, Destradi (2010:906) emphasises uncontested assumptions or national attributes determining whether a state qualifies to be a regional power. An example of these assumptions is a state's possession of abundant material and organisational sources to project other regional countries better. Often, regional powers introduce regional governance structures, which gives them leverage over other states, seeing as only an influential state can effectively administer these structures and respect other states as they adhere to the rules within the system (Nolte, 2010: 889).

A state's willingness and readiness to play a leadership role in achieving regional developments is also a crucial feature of regional power (Dauda, Ahmand and Keling, 2019: 143). A region needs a leader for regional integration to be fully operational; this leader will bear much cost as its resources will be injected into regional projects. It will only take a willing and well-prepared state to assume significant responsibilities for the region. Essentially, the leadership responsibilities that other states expect of their regional power typically include making and keeping peace in the region, promoting acceptable conduct, exercising moral authority in domestic and regional affairs and promoting regional interests at a global level (Destradi, 2010: 905).

Ogunnubi and Okeke-Uzodike (2016: 111) emphasise that the presence of a powerful state is an ingredient for stability within a specific region. A regional power can promote order and stability on the continent. West Africa needs a leader who can bear the cost of integration and spearhead initiatives for economic growth, political stability, peace, and security.

1.2 Statement of the problem

States such as Togo and Benin are relatively small, and it is argued that their survival in this competitive international system is dependent on regional integration. Asante (1997: 20) argues that regional integration acknowledges Africa's vulnerability and attempts to mitigate its dependency and feeble bargaining power in the global economy. Essentially, the objective of regional integration is collective self-reliance. Akokpari (2008: 96) submits that in Africa, regional integration is perceived as a response to the devastating impact of globalisation attributed to marginalization. The responsibility of reversing the effects of globalization on the continent is on African states, with regional integration as the effective framework to do so.

However, economically strong states, such as Nigeria and South Africa, have often dominated their sub-regions and overpowered the smaller states in many instances on the continent. They have taken advantage of the vulnerability of the smaller states and, as a result, exploited their regional counterparts. Thus, against this background, this research will seek to understand the role of regional power in regional integration, the case of Nigeria in ECOWAS.

1.3 Research Objectives

1. To understand what a regional power is and its contributions toward regional integration
2. To understand the role of Nigeria in regional integration
3. To discuss Nigeria's regional power status and how it can undermine regional integration

1.4 Statement of the research questions

1. What is a regional power?
2. What is the role of a leading power in regional integration?
3. More specifically, what has been the role of Nigeria in regional integration in West Africa, especially in regional peace and stability?

1.5 Research Methodology

Essentially, this thesis analyses regional power and integration information with a narrowed-down focus on Nigeria as an integrated unit of analysis in the West African region. The data used in this thesis is qualitative and based on secondary data. Literature on theoretical frameworks is recorded in books, and journal articles utilised in this research are also case study based.

1.6 Significance of the Study

1.6.1 Academic Significance

The research contributes to academic knowledge on regional integration and regional power. From a theoretical perspective, academia will understand why it is crucial to study regional integration and its contribution to international relations.

1.6.2 Contribution to Policy Formulation

The research is also essential to the policymakers as it provides information on the significance of regional integration, regional powers and how policymakers can integrate these two. The policymakers will have an understanding of how regional integration and regional management can lead to the development of a country.

1.7 Definition of terms

1.7.1 Regional Integration

Regional integration can be defined as a process in which neighbouring countries agree to cooperate through common channels, guided by institutions and rules. Although these agreements' objectives have typically taken the form of political economy initiatives, where commercial interests focus on achieving broader socio-political and security objectives, the agreements' objectives could range from economic to political to environmental.

Some scholars see regional integration as the process by which states within a specific region increase interaction relating to achieving a common goal (Sulemani, 2019). Additionally, regional integration has been defined as the process through which independent national states voluntarily amalgamate, and associate with their neighbours to forfeit their attributes of sovereignty while acquiring new aptitudes for resolving conflicts among themselves (Adekola and Agbonkese, 2014: 362). DE Lombaerde and Van Langenhove (2007: 379) define regional integration as a phenomenon of territorial systems that increase the interactions between their components and create new forms of an organisation existing with traditional forms of state-led organisation at the national level.

1.7.2 Regional Power

Regional power is a term used for a state with capabilities within a geographic region. The European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR) describes a regional power as a country belonging to a geographically outlined region, dominating this region in terms of its economic and military capacity. It is a state that can exercise influence in the region and possesses considerable impact on the world scale, is willing to make use of its resources and is accepted as the regional leader by its neighbours. States which wield unrivalled power and influence within a region have the potential to attain regional dominance.

Flemes (2009: 135) argues that a state can be defined as a regional power if it passes four benchmarks: "claim to leadership, power over resources, employment of foreign policy instruments, and acceptance of leadership". Destradi (2010: 903) asserts that among the uncontested characteristics of regional power in the literature, is the fact that the country under discussion should belong to the region it is thought to lead. She adds that such a country should indubitably have the highest power level in the region and exert its influence (Destradi 2010: 905). Prys (2010:3) observes that in many cases, regional power status has increasingly depended upon a state's capacity to "take care of conflicts, economic deprivation and political instability in their regions."

1.8 The Historical Development of ECOWAS

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was formed on the 28th of May 1975. The idea of creating this organisation was driven by Nigeria and later Togo in 1972 (Adejumobi. 2016: 215). This organisation comprises fifteen member states: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire Gambia Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ghana, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo. It was initially only economically/ market-oriented. The main objective of this organisation is to establish a trading bloc that would encourage trade cooperation and the removal of restricted trade barriers or, put simply, a free trade agreement (FTA) and the harmonisation policies (Adejumobi. 2016: 215). Motivation for forming the organisation was the apparent state of West African economies and the success of the European union's (EU) regional integration (Bala. 2017: 27). However, Francis (2009: 91) argues that Nigeria's masked inspiration for establishing the ECOWAS was to utilise it as a mechanism to

foster its "foreign and security policy in West Africa". From 1967-70, Nigeria experienced a devastating civil war, and this internal conflict saw the involvement of international parties. France and South Africa assisted the Republic of Biafra, while Britain, China, and the Soviets supported Federal Nigeria. It was during this conflict that the Nigerian government realised that it did not command the support of its neighbours. In response to this, Nigeria adopted a strategy that would tie its security to the security of the sub-region. Until today, the national security of Nigeria cannot be divorced from the security of the region. Essentially, according to Francis, ECOWAS was formulated by Nigeria as an instrument to promote its political and security policies.

Following its establishment in 1975, two protocols were added to the treaty to address some security concerns. The first protocol, labelled the "Protocol on Aggression", was adopted in 1978. It outlined that ECOWAS could intervene within the borders of its member states in the event of an internal conflict that threatens the peace and security of the region (ECOWAS). The second, titled "the Protocol Relating to Mutual Assistance in Defence" was adopted in 1981. This protocol emphasised that “any armed threat or aggression directed against any member state shall constitute a threat or aggression against the entire community. Member states resolve to give mutual aid and assistance for defence against any armed threat or aggression.” These protocols were never really implemented. However, they served as the guidance for better security institutions in ECOWAS (Yorums, 1993: 87).

As the internal conflict in Liberia escalated in 1989, there was an apparent urgency for resolution before the war could spread its influence on the region (Yorums, 1993: 86). Conscious of the fact that political instability and conflict were crippling the economic integration efforts, Babangida, the former president of Nigeria, proposed the creation of a Standing Mediation Committee to engage Liberian participants in diplomatic dialogue with the objective of conflict resolution (Yorums, 1993: 87). This committee was not ideal for the severity of the conflict and failed. Upon its failure, the ECOWAS treaty was revised in 1993 (Adejumobi, 2016: 217). The new treaty was more holistic, as it introduced frameworks that prioritised accountability, social justice, and the collaboration of people in the region. It incorporated political protocols that emphasised the foundational basis of promoting democracy and good governance, human rights, and commitment to resolving conflict in a less coercive manner (Adejumobi. 2016: 216). Yorums (1993: 86) asserts that the Revised Treaty was a way to legitimise interference in the internal affairs of member states. One of the protocols emphasised under the revised treaty was the Conflict Prevention Protocol in 1991. It

highlights the institutions and obligations for peacekeeping operations and conflict resolutions. Under this protocol, the ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) mandates were clearly outlined (Adejumobi, 2016: 218). ECOMOG was a mechanism established to aid the process of conflict prevention. It entailed the administrative, logistical, and command structures that facilitated the peacekeeping and peace-making initiatives in the region. The 2001 Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance was also established to set new standards for democracy and governance for the region. In addition, The Conflict Prevention Framework of 2008 was included in the Revised Treaty with the objective of "strengthening the human security architecture in West Africa" (Adejumobi, 2016: 219). These new protocols and frameworks of the Revised Treaty committed member states to promote political integration through improved governance, and peace and security in the region through mechanisms for conflict prevention.

1.9 Chapter Outline

Chapter one discussed the background of the study and the statement of the problem. The statement of the research question and the research objectives were also outlined. A brief section on the definition of terms and the background of the history of the ECOWAS has been included in the chapter, along with the research methodology conducted by the researcher. Chapter 2 presents the theoretical framework of this research, namely the hegemonic stability theory and regional integration. The literature review section discusses the different forms of powers, hegemony and regional power, and where Nigeria fits. The third chapter provides the research methodology of the study. Additionally, it presents a brief discussion of the study area of the thesis, which is Nigeria and its economic, political, and military contributions to ECOWAS. Chapter four focuses on the case study of Nigeria's role as a regional power in regional integration. This will include Nigeria's role in regional peacebuilding and security and some of the implications of Nigeria's power in regional integration. Chapter five will present the conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL/CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter explores the literature relating to the theories and concepts in this particular study. It examines the researcher's understanding of the concepts of power, hegemony, hegemonic stability theory, regional power, and regional integration.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Power

The power conundrum is at the centre of international politics and relations (Baldwin, 2012:1). According to Holsti (1988: 114), power is the available capacity of a state to control the behaviour of others. It is often seen as influencing others to do what they otherwise would not do to obtain an intended outcome (Nye, 2004: 11). Nye (2004: 11) highlights two variants of power used by states to attain their interests - hard power and soft power.

Hard power is understood as using material instruments such as military and economic resources. This form of political power is often referred to as coercion and forceful in the international system (Baldwin, 2012: 1). The use of hard power in international politics cannot be underestimated. The more significant the quantity of hard power a state possesses, the more influence and control the state has over others. An example to illustrate this would be one's possession of nuclear weapons. Power and superiority are almost immediately earned in the possession of atomic weapons in the international system. This was especially crucial in the 19th century, during the World Wars.

The second variant of power is soft power, and according to Nye (2004: 11), it is the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payment. Nye (2004: 14) argues that a state can get what they want, without coercion, through culture, diplomacy, political values, and foreign policies (Nye, 2004: 12). The soft power attributes are intangible yet still can persuade and influence other states to do what they otherwise would not do. The soft power attributes can easily be converted into political advantages and influences in the international

political arena. The use of political values such as free and harmonised elections and the promotion and respect of human rights of the people within a state, for instance, is essential as such values can stimulate inspiration for peripheral states. Honghua (2007: 17) further includes a state's international image and ideas that a state either advocates for or introduces in deliberations as an attribute of soft power.

Levent (2006) asserts that states can be categorised according to these power variants. He distinguishes four types of power; global hegemonic, great powers, emerging regional, and minor. A global hegemonic power refers to just one dominant state that possesses the most resources, both hard and soft power. Great powers are the states that make international decisions on behalf of other states. Currently, these states are legally recognised as the permanent five of the United Nations Security Council. Emerging and regional powers may not have the most prominent hard power to influence the world order but have sufficient capacity to gain influence in their specific regions. Minor powers, on the contrary, have some capabilities that can be considered 'powerful' by some but seen as insignificant by others, for instance, a state with a large population. Manpower is a form of power, but it is inconsequential to a state with nuclear weapons and a thriving Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

2.2 Hegemonic Power

2.2.1 What is hegemony?

The term hegemony is largely contested by scholars from various fields; however, the consensus is that hegemony is the term used to describe the leadership and dominance of one group over another. A hegemon is a dominant leader within a sphere of influence. The origin of the concept of hegemony is said to have been attributed to the works of Italian Marxist political scientist Antonio Gramsci (1891- 1937). His analysis was centered on the domestic/national affairs of the Italian state (Cox, 1983, 50). Gramsci used the concept of hegemony to highlight how a state wields power over the living population of a particular area. His analysis focused on the context of social relations. He defined the concept of hegemony as "political leadership based on the consent of the led, a consent which is secured by the diffusion and popularization of the worldview of the ruling class" (Bates, 1975:352). According to Gramsci, a hegemonic order is one where consent, instead of coercion essentially characterises the relationship between the state and the civil society (Cox. 1983: 50). His argument was that in a hegemonic setting, the ruling class exerted power through the state. Examples of civil

society, where Gramsci believed hegemony was formed and enforced, include the media, the church and in trade unions (Kendie. 2006: 93). Unlike Marx, Gramsci asserted that consensual hegemony involved intellectual, cultural and ideological dominance (the notorious third face of power), not just economic.

After Gramsci, there were attempts to stretch the concept of hegemony into international relations. To Gramsci, classes were the primary unitary actors but in international relations, states are. International relations scholars such as Cox state that hegemony is the "predominance of a state over its peers" (1983: 56). In the international system, hegemony is defined as a state's holding of major power, allowing it to single-handedly dominate the rules and arrangements through which international political and economic relations are conducted. Put simply, a hegemon is interpreted as a single state dominating the affairs of another (Cox, 1983: 50). Some scholars of International relations argue that the concept of hegemony lacks a conventional definition and as a result of this, it is interpreted in various ways. One such interpretation is that of defining hegemony as leadership. While Rapkins states that hegemony and leadership are synonymous, Dirzauskaite and Ilinea (2017: 17) express objections in this regard. In their article, Dirzauskaite and Ilinea argue that although the word hegemony (hegemonia) directly translates to mean either dominance or leadership, in international relations theory, these two descriptions are different in nature. Dirzauskaite and Ilinea (2017: 19) argue that the use of hard power within the international system is often observed in a more dominant light and the use of soft power as leadership. Essentially, hegemony, which is understood as leadership, is represented by a more intangible mode of control through the use of characteristics such as culture for instance. But what then does it mean for a state that uses both hard and soft power to exert influence in the international system? This question remains unanswered and it is for this reason that the use of the words dominant and leadership will be used interchangeably to refer to hegemony or regional power.

2.2.2 Global hegemony – American Hegemony

A major disparity witnessed across nations of the world is the immense unequal distribution of power between the great powers and the minor. Political power is far from equal distribution. Even between the great powers, there is one that holds supreme. A global hegemon is a state that has a dominant position in international organizations, has a wide cultural reach and possesses relative economic and military capabilities. Levent (2006) argues that a state with the ability to unite both hard and soft power is a smart power.

World War Two shifted the international power dynamic from a multi-polar to a bi-polar system, presenting a contest of ideological and nuclear weaponry dimensions between great powers. The expiration of the Soviet Union (USSR) gave rise to a transitionary period in international politics and paved the path for the United States of America (USA). America has assumed the position of global hegemonic power, and its hegemonic status has been eminent since the aftermath of World War Two (Nur, 2017: 23). Currently, America maintains first place as the state with the largest gross domestic product (GDP) of US$20.594 trillion as of 2020 (World Bank, 2020); the United States dollar is the world's dominant reserve and acts as a measure of value or standard for currency worldwide, even though it is not the strongest currency (The New York Times. 2019). This factor alone gives a glimpse into America's influence on the international system. Corporations like Amazon are planted and welcomed all over the world and this stem from the spread of America's economic influence.

In addition, with a military budget of close to US$766.58 billion in 2020 (Statista) and a substantial amount of armed forces deployed in many territories around the world, the United States has the most substantial military capacity in the world thus making it militarily superior (The New York Times. 2019). In second place is China with a military budget of US$252.3 billion in 2020 and a GDP of US$14.72 trillion in 2020 (World Bank, 2020). One would need to make a correlation of its capabilities to those in second place in order to understand the full extent to which the United States is the global leader. The USA has the capacity to shape and break rules and regulations that govern the international community, as well as influence the behaviour of state and non-state actors.

2.2.3 Regional Hegemon – South Africa in Southern African Development Community (SADC)

The concept of hegemony, and labelling one a hegemon, is dependent on several features from the international relations perspective. A regional hegemon, arguably South Africa in the Southern African Development Community (SADC), is a state with economic and military resources as well as influence and an acknowledgement from other countries that it is a regional hegemon. South Africa is by and large the most industrialized economy in Africa, with an established manufacturing base, sophisticated infrastructure in comparison to its neighbours, an open and transparent democracy which attracts investment, has a more stable currency in comparison to its regional counterparts, and a sizeable military expenditure/capacity of US$3.4 billion, one of the highest on the continent (SADC).

Chingono and Nakana (2008: 399) assert that nearly all of the SADC states are dependent on South Africa's functional railways, ports (sea and air), and other modes of transportation facilities for the movement of goods and people in the region. South Africa also plays a corporate domineering role towards her regional counterparts. It is the leading investor in comparison to its neighbours, producing more than a quarter of the sub-Saharan region's Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) stock, as of 2007. Over 50% of South Africa's foreign investment is directed to other African states. South Africa's economic capacity places it in an executive position in decision making processes of business and industry operations in other countries (Taylor, 2016: 162). A large portion of the food processing and textile industries in SADC countries have collapsed and South Africa's products have replaced these industries with their products. Companies such as Pick' n pay, Mr Price, and Edgars have flooded other economies and dictated the terms of operation to ensure that they reap more of the long-term benefits and other countries run a loss. This is the kind of exploitative nature that hegemons thrive on.

South Africa has been actively involved and participated in regional initiatives, namely democratic initiatives. On several occasions, South Africa has sent election observers to monitor elections within the region. Although commendable, and a proactive move for a leader in the region, South Africa, the African National Congress (ANC) specifically, has also been accused of political bias. The case of Malawi's elections is an illustration of South Africa's questionable leadership status (Daily Maverick, 2020). The former President Thabo Mbeki was the appointed chairman of the observer group in Malawi and the nullified election results compromised the integrity of South Africa's leadership in observer missions (Daily Maverick, 2020).

In addition, its leadership qualities in Southern Africa are also often questioned because it is regarded as non-assertive, for instance, the quiet diplomacy towards Zimbabwe's economic collapse, political instability, violation of human rights of Zimbabwean citizens by its leaders, and social incoherence. (Mapuva and Muyengwa-Mapuva, 2014: 28). This diplomatic approach for Zimbabwe's ongoing crises has seen South Africa taking a back seat in affairs that a leader would otherwise spearhead. Zimbabwe's turmoil was and still is an opportunity for South Africa to demonstrate its abilities to lead the region, and possibly the continent. South Africa was also one of the last states in Southern Africa to gain full independence from apartheid. It took the aid of other African countries to join arms to liberate South Africa. In actuality, the regional integration in Southern Africa was fuelled initially by a desire for

Southern African political independence. In 1980, the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) was formed with the objective of loosening South Africa from its colonial grip (Lee, 2003: 48). Consequently, South Africa is considered the nestling as it has one of the youngest democracies and still seen as a country that needed to be rescued by fellow African states. It is argued that the ANC reverences the leaders and war veterans that joined arms with them in pursuit of political liberation, namely ZANU-PF leaders, Robert Mugabe and Emmerson Mnangagwa, who provided asylum for the ANC comrades in exile. As a result of these seasoned ties, South Africa has pledged its allegiance to these leaders and turned a blind eye to the political conduct of SADC leaders. This is detrimental to their leadership status.

2.3 Regional Power

Regional powers possess 3 qualities; leadership (within its region), power over resources, and their innate obligation to bear the cost of regional security and order. These states place upon themselves, the responsibility of introducing structures of governance in the region. Regional institutions are composed of rules and arrangements, and codes of conduct for state relations. Destradi (2010: 905) emphasizes that there are uncontested assumptions or national attributes that determine whether a state qualifies to be a regional power. An example of one of these assumptions is a state's possession of abundant material and organizational resources that can better project its power onto regional counterparts. Examples of organizational resources include labour, management, expertise, equipment, and energy. These components are necessary to carry out and accomplish the aforementioned arrangements of the organizations. When a state establishes regional institutions of governance and can effectively administer the structures, it inevitably will possess more influence in decision making and commands the respect of others as they adhere to the rules within the structure (Destradi (2010:904).

Material capabilities are the most prominent attributes that identify a regional power (Nolte 2010:884). Material preponderance includes military, economic power, raw materials, and demographic power. With tangible capabilities, a regional power has various instruments at its disposal to implement and influence regional affairs (Prys, 2010: 8). A regional power should also possess the ability to initiate economic development that would make a tremendous impact on states within the region. This ability is not acquired by economic capabilities alone, but also by predominant influence in regional affairs, especially in setting economic, security, and political agendas (Dauda, Ahmad, and Keling, 2019: 143).

Another feature/ characteristic of regional power is a state's close political, economic, and cultural interconnectivity with other states in the region (Destradi, 2010: 905). It is difficult for a state to assume a regional power position when it lacks a harmonious relationship with other states within the region. Furthermore, an uncontested feature of regional power is the recognition and respect of a regional power by other states within and beyond the region. A state cannot assume a leadership position without the acknowledgement of surrounding states as its leadership position may be interpreted as a threat and have an adverse consequence on regional integration (Nolte, 2010: 886).

A state's willingness and readiness to play a leadership role in achieving the development of a region is also a crucial feature of a regional power (Destradi 2010: 906). For regional integration to be implemented, a region needs a leader; this leader will bear much cost of the integration as its resources will be injected into regional projects. It will only take a willing, and well-prepared state to assume major responsibilities for the region. Essentially, the leadership responsibilities that other states expect of their regional power typically include tasks such as making and keeping peace in the region, as well as promoting admissible conduct in the region (Dauda, Ahmad, and Keling, 2019: 143). In addition, exercising moral authority in domestic and regional affairs and promoting regional interests at a global level are also forums within which a regional power exercises its leadership.

Ogunnubi and Okeke-Uzodike (2016: 111) emphasize that the presence of a powerful state is an ingredient for stability within a specific region. A regional power has the potential to promote order and stability on the continent. West Africa needs a leader, a regional power, that can bear the cost of integration and spearhead initiatives for economic growth, political stability, peace, and security.

2.3.1 Nigeria as a regional power

Nigeria has vast resources, influences, and military capacity; however, it cannot be regarded as a hegemon for the reason that it has no established manufacturing base and has extremely poor infrastructure, including its unreliable ports. Although Nigeria has historically demonstrated its impeccable leadership qualities on the continent, it will for this study, be considered a regional power. Regional powers are also known as emerging powers in the economic arena and system challengers. Although the term regional power is used quite frequently, the particular features and characteristics of these states are debated. In his study, Lemke (2002: 49) proposes that regions are "hierarchical subsystems functioning like an international system.

Regional powers are gestated as local dominant states that are administering and overseeing relations in the region, by establishing and striving to preserve a local status-quo (Buzan and Waever, 2003: 220). Nolte (2010: 889) goes further with his description of regional power by making the assertion that the criteria of a regional power go beyond material capabilities and influences and extends to its leadership role and its prompt to other states and actors within and outside the region to accept their leadership.

To understand Nigeria's leadership role in West Africa, it is very important to review Nigeria's foreign policy toward the region. The main thrust of Nigeria's foreign policy towards the West African region is anchored on the doctrinal concepts of African centre peace perspective, anti-colonialism, anti-apartheid, and anti-racism principles, cooperation with immediate neighbours and with other ECOWAS member states, and promotion of peace (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2011). As a driving power in the region, Nigeria's policy planners had an expressed objective of enhancing its economic and security interests through ECOWAS for the transformation of prevailing regional neo-colonial structures and power relations (Bassey and Nyong, 2012).

After the country transitioned to democracy in 1999, Nigeria's foreign policy towards the regional agenda of ECOWAS was steered under its 1999 constitution, which shaped the objectives of Nigeria's foreign policy. The transition to democratic rule on May 29, 1999, after persistent decades of military rule, the endorsement of elected President Olusegun Obasanjo led to the inception of the first republic, unveiling the shade of years of autocratic rule and military dictatorship in the country. It also brought optimism and enthusiasm to Nigerians and international bodies, especially the member states of ECOWAS. Nigeria now had legal grounds and credibility to assume the role of regional leader and support the ECOWAS protocols on good governance (Omo-ogbebor, 2017). Evidently, the foreign policy of Nigeria has undergone different stages since its 1960 independence. From the very beginning, the country's foreign policy was designed to cater to the needs of the region of West Africa and the African continent, for the benefit of Nigeria's economy, as well as the economies of West Africa.

According to Osondu (2015: 99) since the establishment of the ECOWAS in 1975 Nigeria is the only leader in the region. The logic is self-evident: economic, demographic, and military power add to the weight of Nigeria's emergence as a leader in West Africa. One major area of displaying its power is Nigeria's dominant economic capacity in comparison to its regional counterparts. The leadership role that Nigeria finds itself within the ECOWAS is a product of

the country's dynamic involvement in the organization. Nigeria has sustained ECOWAS financially more than any other member of the organization.

On the contrary, Nigeria's designation as a regional power has been questioned again and again by other members of ECOWAS, states including even those that have benefitted from its generosity (Adebajo, 2008: 3), and that they only grudgingly accept its leadership (Adebajo; 2008: 3). There are also other problems with Nigeria's leadership position. Sesay (2011), in a discussion, observed that even though Nigeria portrays the image of a hegemonic power, in reality, it is a statistical regional power. Nigeria derives its influence, he argues, from the statistics in its favour relative to other members of ECOWAS than any proactive strategic engagement of security policy. Nigeria cannot provide effective regional leadership when it has not done so in the area of leadership at home. By that same token, Sanda (2011) argued that although Nigeria is a regional power because of its capabilities, it cannot be perceived as a leader in West Africa because it lacks to implement its leadership qualities at home.

2.4 Regional Integration

Regional integration and regionalism are terms that will be used interchangeably in this paper. Both terms refer to the "harmonization of policies among states" and relate to the operations geared towards expediting regional development" (Akokpari. 2008: 86). Regional integration specifically is defined by Asante (1997: 20) as:

> *"A process where two or more states in a particular area voluntarily join together to pursue common policies and objectives in matters of economic development to the mutual advantage of all the participating states".*

Akokpari (2008:88) highlights the two forms of regionalism, the old and the new. The old regionalism was established by the European Economic Community (ECC) in 1957 and was influenced by an aspiration for economic security. New regionalism, on the other hand, is a multi-dimensional model that considers factors other than economic security and encourages regions to construct institutions and regional structures that were more holistic and rational for integration.

Years after the political liberation of African states, the continent is confronted with developmental challenges and is still heavily externally dependent. Regional integration takes two forms, namely market integration and development integration. Haas (1970: 610) states that the starting point of regional integration is regional cooperation. States within the specific

geographical location, must share mutual goals and be in agreement on mutual problems and shared problem-solving.

The Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) of 1980, the Organisation of African Union (OAU) of 1963, and the ECOWAS of 1975 all adopted the market-oriented model of integration, following the European Economic Community (EEC) prototype. This type of regional integration was more state- centered. The introduction of new regionalism saw a focus on a wider scope of regional cooperation, in addition to economic security. Human security, collective self-reliance, and environmental protection also came to the forefront of regional objectives in regional organisations post- Cold War. There was also a growing involvement of non-state actors and civil society in regional integration (Soderbaum and Grant, 2003: 3-4).

In his article, Akokpari (2008: 88) highlights four variants of new regionalism"; open regionalism, regionalism from below, the World Institute for Development and Economic Research (WIDER) approach, and the external guarantor's model (EGM). Open regionalism has the market as the center of integration. This variant advocates for the removal of all trade barriers and creating more opportunities for the spread of globalization. The disadvantage of this form of new regionalism is that it promotes the continuous growth of states with established economies and the infrastructure to accommodate the demands of markets (Akokpari 2008: 88). This type of new regionalism would not be ideal in the African context because of our staggering infrastructure and marginalisation.

The second variant is the external guarantor's model. This model calls for the surveillance of regional organisations by external parties, for instance, the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Theoretically, France is considered a guarantor in the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA). The intended goal for EGM is to supervise regional governance and instil good practices. There are many disadvantages to EGM, at least in the African context. In West Africa, France has been accused of enforcing policies of their preference that benefit them more than the region.

Akokpari (2008: 92) encourages the regions on the continent to incorporate aspects of the World Institute for Development and Economic Research (WIDER) approach to regionalism as well as the 'regionalism from below' variants for regional integration in comparison to 'open regionalism' which ECOWAS initially implemented. 'Open regionalism' emphasises making trade more outward-oriented through the removal of trade barriers. This is not effective considering the ECOWAS objectives of being collectively self-reliant. The WIDER approach

considers the role of political, cultural and socio-economic factors in the integration process. WIDER also promoted the homogenization of culture and political and economic agendas, where domestic agendas tally with regional agendas (Akokpari, 2008: 90). Furthermore, the WIDER approach aims to protect states within a regional body from the effects of globalization such as the erosion of economic sovereignty of African states by unrealistic dictated policies of development of international institutions (Akokpari. 2008: 92). The WIDER approach acknowledges that states such as Togo would be crippled by globalization and regional integration is the only solution to counter such effects. 'Regionalism from below' promotes the involvement of non-state actors in regional integration. Civil society should participate in the decision making of ECOWAS. These two variants provide strategic frameworks for the mitigation of the dependency of West Africa on the west and the promotion of growth and development that is inward-oriented (Akokpari. 2016:91).

Schiff, Winters and Cooper (2003) pointed out that regional integration has become part and parcel of the present global economic order. Many factors contribute to this current growing trend of regionalism and they include, the minimisation of marginalisation, to suppress the pressures of globalization and its effects, the desire to procure more secure access to markets, and governments' desire to bind themselves to better policies, and apply these policies domestically, in order to attract foreign investors (Schiff, Winters and Cooper, 2003). Essentially, regional integration continues to occupy center stage in the economic agenda of countries.

Regional integration in Africa has a long history, but indeed, it has not been as effective and it faces some challenges including overlapping memberships due to the multiplicity of its economic communities. African countries produce similar agricultural products, thus making it difficult to trade amongst themselves. External control of regional organisations is also among the reasons responsible for the past lack of success in economic integration in the continent. The next section will discuss some of the challenges faced in the West African region specifically.

2.4.1 Challenges of regional integration in ECOWAS

2.4.1.1 Political challenges to regional integration

The first challenge of regional integration relates to the West African desire to emulate the European model of regional integration, the European Union, without considering its own

historical and social background. ECOWAS implemented 'open regionalism' (Akokpari, 2008: 90). It emphasized regionalism that is motivated by the desire for economic security. Instead of implementing a more holistic model of integration that would take into account, the current political state of affairs, the security issues and the need for peacekeeping structures for the region, ECOWAS introduced a market-oriented model of regionalism. After the independence of most states, civil unrest ravaged the region. A politically oriented model would have been most ideal for the West African region (Sulemani. 2019). In essence, West Africa focused on implementing European policies and frameworks and neglected the idea of formulating a model that was suitable for the fragility of West African politics. This has had detrimental effects on the foundation of ECOWAS. It was inevitable for states in West Africa to face challenges in regional integration by reason of the fact that they were dismissive of their historical and social context.

Another challenge to regional integration in West Africa is the eagerness of states to preserve their sovereignty (Akokpari, 2008:104). When the ECOWAS was initiated, the majority of its states were newly independent and determined to hold on to as much power as possible after decades of being deprived of it. The preservation of sovereignty remains of utmost concern for most states. Inevitably, these African states would resist any entity that advocates for compromising a portion of that sovereignty (Omo-Ogbebor, 2017: 4019). However, the ECOWAS was established as a supra-national institution. This is an institution in which the power and influence of member states are submitted to a central, sanctioning authority power, in this case, the ECOWAS, and where local governments have a secondary/subordinate function. This means that an organization is only effective when states forgo a portion of their power in decision making to the ECOWAS and realistically, African states are not ready to do this (Sulemani. 2019: 54). This poses a serious challenge for regional integration because as long as states are unwilling to adhere to the rules and conduct of the regional body practically, the effectiveness of the body cannot be realised.

The third challenge of political integration is conflict and civil war. Adejumobi (2016: 213) argues that the conflict in West Africa is a result of bad governance, political mismanagement of resources, and the monopoly of power by the ruling political parties. The conflict in Liberia and Sierra Leone bears witness to the factors stressed above (Adejumobi. 2016: 222). More importantly, the emphasis is on the political loyalties during civil conflicts between rebel groups and other states in the region. This dysfunction demonstrates the extent to which the ECOWAS states are not a united front. The Biafra civil war of 1967 – 1970 is an illustration

of this. During this war, the then Federal Nigerian government did not receive support from their neighbouring countries but favoured the secessionist Republic of Biafra instead (Adejumobi. 2016: 222). Another instance was the Liberian conflict. The ECOWAS deployed troops and a monitoring group in Liberia to settle disputes between the Liberian government and the rebel group. However, it is alleged that Burkina Faso, a member of ECOWAS, assisted the rebel group while ECOWAS intervened in support of the government (Akokpari. 2008: 100).

These illustrations present three new challenges; the first one is the bad governance of political leaders that is causing turmoil in the region. The examples of Nigeria and Liberia above point out how neighbouring states felt that the actions of these countries were unprincipled and thus chose to support their opposition. Bala (2017: 30) emphasises that integration cannot be effectively realized without peace and security, and stable political conditions. Although the events listed above may have occurred years ago, bad governance is still apparent in the region. Riddled with mass poverty and mismanagement of resources by local governments, as well as the presence of rebel insurgencies like Boko Haram, the West African region has become a turf for conflict and war and this has created a challenge for integration in the region (Hengari, 2017). Secondly, these examples demonstrate the challenge of political disunity within the region i.e. states are supporting rebel groups in place of their fellow neighbouring state, and this undermines any efforts of regional integration. It is difficult to implement a policy or structure in the ECOWAS when other states within the body are supporting the opposing parties. The third challenge highlights that most of the states in the region are battling several issues locally and therefore do not have the resources and capacity to be fully involved in regional affairs.

The disunity of states within the region takes us to our next challenge: the existence of persistent colonial ties and the effect of their distinct administrative systems. Adeniran (2014: 69) argues that the West African region comprises two blocs- one that consists of Francophone countries, the other with Anglophone countries. France's involvement in her colonies ensures the sustenance and preservation of Francophone's dependence on Europe. Francophone states implement their colonial institutions and structures meanwhile Anglophone countries duplicate British institutions and practices which may differ from time to time (Sulemani. 2019: 28). The neo-colonialism of France and Great Britain, France especially, prevails in West Africa than in other parts of the world.

From its inception, France opposed the creation of the regional body. Adeniran (2014: 72) asserts that on many occasions France would offer her former colonies inducements and/or threats to prevent them from adhering to regional agreements. The French threats in the Francophone are received as strong messages of the consequences that ensue when one opposes the French coercive iron fist. The French assumed that the presence of ECOWAS would lessen the grip that France had on her colonies. Greer (Sulemani. 2019: 49) claims that the colonizer still exercises political and economic forms of control over their colonies to the extent that they influence the decision-making process in the region through their colonies, through economic incentives and/or sanctions.

An example of this was the creation of a single monetary union, Communuate Franciere Africaine (CFA), which comprises eight out of fifteen ECOWAS member states (Mubarik. 2015:8). This union has been a major hindrance to the integration process of achieving a single monetary union for all fifteen member states. Recently France has endorsed the implementation of the "eco", a name for the single currency that the West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ) will introduce to the ECOWAS. However, France permitted it on a conditional basis. One of the conditions is that if the reserve falls below a certain level, France will be entitled to request seats in the "eco" monetary union committee (The Africa Report. 2019). The fact that France's endorsement is crucial to the introduction of the ECOWAS is problematic. This means that African countries still have to run their ideas and policies through their colonies before they are implemented (Bala. 2017:31). Not only that, France has to set the conditions for allowing economic policies that involve their former colonies. This is a major challenge for regional integration considering France's desire to still hold on to as much colonial power as possible.

2.4.1.2 Challenges to economic integration

Low level of intra-regional trade

The final challenge for economic integration in the region is the limitation on trade. In 2013 ECOWAS recorded a total of close to 11% of formal intraregional trade (Adejumobi. 2016: 225). This is extremely low and this is so because trade relations in the region are vertical, meaning that West African states prefer to trade with Western and Asian countries instead of intraregional trade. China's FDI inflows to West Africa in 2018 were US$10 billion (The Africa Report. 2019). France is also a big trader with West African states, not just the former colonies. In 2017, France's exports to West Africa totalled 11.1 billion euros (France Diplomacy. 2019). These illustrations serve as references that highlight West Africa's

deviation from the objective of less dependency. These trade dynamics highlight two challenges for regional integration in ECOWAS; the first being the dependence of West African economies on states outside the region, a breach of regionalism principles; and secondly, the general preference of states to trade with the west and China over their neighbours. However, Akokpari argues that intraregional trade inevitably fails because "the basis of trade is undermined when all sellers offer the same product" (Akokpari. 2008: 102). He argues that it is irrelevant to talk about intraregional trade when West African states have similar merchandise. Furthermore, he uses the example of the lack of diversity in the agricultural sector of West Africa. Evidently, West Africans are predominantly known for growing the cocoa crop (they produce over 70% of the world's cocoa). This poses a challenge to regional integration as states cannot import what they already have. Put simply, the homogeneity of cocoa production has limited the opportunity for intraregional trade, agriculturally, in ECOWAS.

Lack of infrastructure

The development of excellent infrastructure in a country will ensure and promote investment in the region. Infrastructure is important in regional integration because it facilitates trade and economic growth. Infrastructure comprises energy, power, road, rail and shipment facilities, telecommunication, and other links that promote the facilitation of the movement of goods, services, capital, and people (Akpan, 2019: 68). A country that constructs exceptional infrastructure, has room for better productivity and efficiency which generates more for the economy. Another positive effect of exceptional infrastructure is that it creates employment and this is because infrastructure enhances the aspect of industrial development.

The notion of infrastructure shows that even though there is labour available to work, without good infrastructure it is impossible to progress the economy and this will result in foreign investors leaving the country to invest elsewhere. It is for this reason that Lee (2003:48) argues that market integration is effective in a region with favourable infrastructure. In West Africa's case, market integration is unrealistic as mentioned above because the region's infrastructure is very poor, hardly possessing commendable roads. An example of the lack of electricity in the industrial sector in an article by This Day (2010) illustrated the importance of effective infrastructure in a country. The example highlights the importance of infrastructure for the betterment of a state's economy. The shortage of electricity and the presence of a great deal of generators in a country rich in oil is an example of the inability of Nigeria to adequately make use of their resources for power supply, essential basic infrastructure for regional production.

2.4.1.3 The Challenges of a lack of effective social cooperation

Another challenge of regional integration in ECOWAS is effective cooperation or lack thereof. Although West African states may have a relationship of a shared history of colonisation and the quest for independence, they are divided on cultural lines. In a recent lecture held at the University of Cape Town on xenophobia, Akokpari (2020) stated that integration policy should start at a national level. This is a profound point to highlight the discourse of regional integration in Africa, especially in West Africa. This is emphasized on account of the division of norms and values on a national level (Schoeman. 2013:115). Several states in the region are divided on ethnic, religious, and tribal lines for instance in Nigeria. Countrymen do not trust each other and tribes kill each other because they do not share similar ideologies. In addition, insecurity of misrepresentation in state and regional affairs arises in the region because there is no guarantee of neutrality when there are ethnic, tribal, religious, and national reservations about each other.

Countries in West Africa have a long-standing history of tribal animosity, most of which stemmed from land contestation after independence when borders and boundaries were remodified. As a result of these divisions, fellow countrymen do not trust each other and have grown hostile towards one another. If this is the case at the national level, what more on a regional level? The possibility for integration in West Africa is threatened by a lack of a sense of shared values. Boko Haram is an example of social disintegration in the region (Hengari. 2015). This terrorist organization sets out to impose its interpretation of the Sharia law on citizens in the region. Commonly translated as "Western education is forbidden", this group believes that the traditional Islamic norms and values of north eastern Nigeria have been eroded by western ideologies and ought to be reinstated (Hengari. 2015). Although Boko Haram has committed heinous crimes in the region, their initial purpose was the express their opposition to western ideology. The extent to which such groups go to oppose an ideology they do not share raises a challenge for the people within the region. Even if such groups were dismantled moving forward, there are already structures of mistrust and enmity amongst individuals in the region, with both their fellow countrymen and their neighbouring countries.

Where there is a lack of cooperation, there is an opportunity for the emergence of insurgent groups, because of economic inequalities, where groups that do not share similar values are marginalized and suffocated as a result. In a regionalism context, Francophone countries may regard themselves as states that share similar norms and beliefs and will, as a result only,

support each other in regional deliberation, regardless of whether the ideas are aligned with regional agendas or not.

2.4.1.4 Prospects for regional integration in ECOWAS

A popular proverb suggests that a problem defined is a problem half solved. This means that acknowledging the problem and its root cause is one step closer to solving it. Realising a problem and creating practical solutions is a prospect for the betterment of ECOWAS. The challenges listed above showcase the amount of work ECOWAS still has to do to attain effective regional integration. The revision of the treaty in 1993 was a huge step in the right direction. The collective promotion of peace and political stability is of utmost importance in the region, as political instability implicates economic integration. ECOWAS has set up theoretically commendable frameworks and protocols namely the 1999 Conflict Prevention Protocol that underlines the major institutions and directives involved in the prevention, management, and resolution of peace operations in West Africa (Adejumobi. 2016: 218). This protocol introduced the ECOMOG officially. However, practically, Ademujobi (2016: 225) asserts that there is a challenge of systematic operational planning and analysis for this group. This lack of a firm institutional framework is in urgent need of addressing. It is of grave importance that states invest in rectifying these problems as the fragility of West Africa to conflict hinders the economic development of the regional body. The frameworks have already been established, now the region has to invest in mechanisms that ensure the efficiency of these organizations. Adejumobi (2016: 225) further argues that the field commanders and defence ministers of countries who have provided their troops eventually control peace operations instead of the authorised regional representatives. This is a clear indication of a lack of accountability within the regional structures. Accountability is an imperative factor in regional integration and should be prioritised in the political operations of the regional body.

There is also a need to address corruption and bad governance in the region. In previous state elections in the region, ECOWAS has dispatched observers to monitor electoral proceedings and, on several accounts, they have challenged the impartiality of these elections. ECOWAS's rejection of Guinea Bissau's 2019 presidential election results (ECOWAS. 2019) and calling for a re-run is an example of the supra-nationality of the regional body, but would this re-run occur had contestation been in larger economies? Probably not because of the influence of

ECOWAS but domestic institutions. This demonstrates bad governance on the part of the regional body. In addition, the legacy of authoritarian behaviour is still heavily rooted in West African structures and there is a need for addressing these democratic deficits in the region. This has to start at a national level first before it is implemented at a regional level. Corrupt officials at the border posts have been accused of hindering the formal trade flows between neighbouring states in the region (Adejumobi. 2016: 225). There is an urgent need for monitoring and transparency from the domestic level to the regional level as it is having detrimental effects on regional integration in ECOWAS.

China's involvement in West Africa has brought about initiatives for infrastructural challenges. In 2013, China declared that they would build roads and construct bridges and electricity supply lines worth US$2.5 billion in exchange for natural resources in Liberia. In Nigeria, China also offered to invest US$12 billion in building railways lines on the coast (The Africa Report. 2019). The realist assumption in international relations encourages us to view economic actions for what they truly are; exploitative measures for power gains. So while China extracts oil and diamonds, better infrastructure in the region will create an opportunity for effective networks for trade in the region which will result in economic regional integration, the initial objective of ECOWAS (Akpan. 2014: 66). However, ECOWAS would need to be cautious of China's investment in West African economies. The level of western involvement in regional affairs in ECOWAS is already excessive, and China's involvement will only reproduce further external dependence in ECOWAS.

Moreover, cooperation on socio-political matters is a prerequisite for regionalism and yet African leaders are dismissing this issue. Evidently, the frameworks of ECOWAS display the prioritization of political and economic integration, however, no institutions and resources have been established for the implementation of social cohesion. Several reasons for conflict and civil war in West Africa are attributed to socio-cultural divides and it is for this reason that the lack of social cohesion needs to be addressed. A shared identity amongst West African states will not only act as a glue to bind together individuals in the region but will also promote unity and generate goals that rally behind a similar vision. Perhaps what needs to be reintroduced in the region, and the continent at large is the concept of Ubuntu. This moral philosophy popularly translates to "I am because we are" and "a person is a person through other people" (The Guardian. 2006). This means that in a community, one cannot be exclusively dependent on themselves but instead, people are dependent on each other. Ubuntu is also defined as African Humanism. Under African humanism, one does not feel threatened by the victory of another

because the victory of one is a victory for all, and "what's yours is mine" as the collection takes the priority over the individual. Through African humanism, tribalism and ethno-religious contestation would be minimal, and there would be respect and tolerance for each person's differences.

2.4.2 What has been the role of Nigeria in regional integration in West Africa?

Nigeria's leadership role in West Africa, in peacekeeping particularly, has never been questioned. Nigeria is a nation fortunate to have abundant human and material resources that serve as an advantage for leading West African states (Nweke, 2010: 36). Otorofani (2010) asserts that Nigeria's size and natural resources have placed on her shoulders leadership responsibility in Africa since independence, seeing as there was no other state to assume the role or compete with Nigeria's capabilities.

Nigeria is the leading investor in the ECOWAS in comparison to its regional counterparts and it produces a large portion of the West African foreign direct investment (FDI) (Akpan. 2019: 68). The regional dominance of Nigeria in the region has been problematic because its economic influence stunts the growth of the smaller economies. Akokpari (2008: 94) contends that a challenge of regional integration is the "inequitable distribution of the benefits and burdens of integration". Nigeria has often been accused by its regional counterparts of receiving a large fraction of the benefits of regionalism (Akpan, 2019: 68). Because of the oil reserves in Nigeria, it is a more attractive recipient of foreign investment. Adejumobi (2016: 226) states that the African Development Bank (ADB) recorded that eleven out of the twelve companies that made a profit of over US$1 billion in the region were Nigerian-owned. This displays how much more Nigeria is benefitting over the others and this poses a threat to the smaller economies, thus defeating the purpose of regional integration.

Studies conducted by Mapuva and Muyengwa-Mapuva (2014: 23) found that the roles played by regional powers in regional integration have been that of ensuring that regional member states are strengthened financially. Nigeria's economic advantage over its regional counterparts has enabled her to spread economic influence to other countries. Nigeria's economic participation and involvement in the regional body have placed the state in a position of tremendous decision making power (Okokpo. 2000). Accordingly, Nigeria uses this power to push its national interests. This move poses a huge threat to economic integration in the region as the voice of smaller economies are silenced by the power of the regional leader (Mapuva and Muyengwa-Mapuva, 2014: 31).

According to Ogunnubi (2016: 5), Nigeria has played an important role in conflict management in West Africa. Ogunnubi (2016: 5) further stipulates that Nigeria has always been at the forefront of conflict management and resolution in West Africa since its independence. The country has provided desired leadership in the region in conflict and crises through the instrumentality of the ECOWAS. It is, however, widely believed that Nigeria's leadership role and her interventions in conflict torn areas in West Africa are driven by its defined national interests. Nigeria's decision to intervene only in some conflicts and not others leads many to consider that Nigeria's involvement in conflict resolution was/is motivated by what Nigeria will get out of it. Its absence in conflict management in Ivory Coast in 2010, and a laissez-faire approach in Mali in 2013 demands an interrogation into why it is the case with some, and not with others.

Although it plays an important role in ensuring regional peace and security, Nigeria once called the military giant of Africa, has since been ridiculed as a "crippled giant" given its failed attempts at combatting internal security challenges. Ethno-religious conflicts and Boko Haram insurgencies have killed thousands of Nigerian civilians and left millions displaced (Ogunnubi and Okeke-Uzodike 2016: 110). Nigeria's problems have spilled over to its neighbouring countries and have created grave consequences for them. The region's security saviour has also become a regional burden and has taken a step back in its involvement in peace-keeping in the region. Reliance on an individual saviour to rescue the region can present problems if and when the said saviour becomes inconsistent and is engrossed in its internal challenges. Essentially, dependence on an unstable state for regional security is precarious.

Failure to combat security challenges showcases the government's incompetence. Corruption is a problem that most, if not all, African countries suffer drastically from, and Nigeria is no exception. Corruption has infiltrated the military and government architectures, and this is said to be one of the reasons why Nigeria has failed to end conflicts and combat terrorism. Seemingly, Nigeria would have to deal with the issue of corruption first, before it can combat terrorism at home and on its borders. However, Nigeria is turning a blind eye to this problem. An article from This Day (2015) highlights how on paper, measures of anti-corruption drives in Nigeria have been created, however, the legislature of the country, and those in other positions of power have not addressed this matter with the urgency it deserves.

Conflict, hostility and civil unrest are amongst the descriptions used to characterise the West African region. Economic integration cannot be achieved without peace, security and a stable

political environment. Although Nigeria's role in peacekeeping has had tremendous impacts on the region, a lot still needs to be done. The political, social, and economic challenges would need to be addressed urgently to build a stern regional body. Nigeria's positive role and the integrating impact has often been questioned, nevertheless, on the basis of ECOWAS's experience so far, Nigeria's role has been most critical and positive, and in light of this, the outlook for the organization is better than ever.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

2.5.1 Hegemonic Stability Theory

This section examines the theory of hegemonic stability. Hegemonic stability theory is a concept that is focused on international trade policy. Particularly, it is interested in the marriage between "the level of economic power of a predominant state in the international system and the extent to which international trade increases or decreases when one state is explicitly dominant". The hegemonic stability theory contends that a world order led by a single state will be the most stable and will have the most open economic order (Kindleberger 1981: 251). Charles Kindleberger (1973: 28), a strong advocate of hegemonic stability theory, argues that a liberal economic order requires leadership from a state that is inclined, with intent or without, under some system of rules it is internationalized to set a standard code of conduct for other states and to seek to get others to respect them. Robert Gilpin, another theorist of hegemonic stability theory holds that an open and liberal world economy demands the presence and maintenance of a dominant state (Gilpin 1975: 85). John Ikenberry (2011: 70) also holds that liberal international order is multi-layered, multifaceted, and cannot be reduced simply to a political establishment enforced by the dominant state. Instead, it is an assemblage of assorted rules and institutions.

The liberal international economic order was established and shaped by American hegemony. The USA engaged a novel formation of institutions to govern the global economy founded on the principles of open markets and trade. Gilpin (1987: 72) asserts that a hegemonic state's efforts are a prerequisite to providing a "secure status quo free trade, foreign investment, and a well-functioning international monetary system".

Brian Schmidt also agrees with Gilpin and Kindleberger that the starting point of hegemonic stability theory is the presence of a single dominating state. He argues that the theory is essentially a realist blueprint for "how to achieve international stability in an anarchic international system" (Schmidt, 2018: 6). Robert Keohane corroborates this argument as well. According to Keohane (1984: 32), the

theory of hegemonic stability defines hegemony as the "preponderance of material resources". He breaks down these material resources into "four sets;

1) control over raw material materials,
2) control over sources of capital,
3) control over markets, and
4) Competitive advantage in the production of highly valued goods" (1984: 32).

A hegemon offers public goods out of self-interest to achieve an open, liberal economic order. This definition of hegemon, though it may hold very little substance, highlights a focus on realist principles of power (1984: 33). He also agrees with Gilpin and Kindleberger that the structures of power dominated by a sole state are more instrumental to the progression and advancement of sturdy regimes whose rules are relatively respected and observed (Keohane 1986: 238).

This realist position is that it is material preponderance that positions a hegemon. Liberal theorists also acknowledge the significance of material power, however, their argument is that material preponderance alone is insufficient when evaluating the concept of hegemony (Schmidt 2018: 10). Important to note is that it is not always easy to differentiate between leadership and exploitation (Kindleberger, 1981: 248). There is a fine line between the two concepts. Gilpin (1981: 145) argues that the principal reasoning behind a hegemon stabilizing the regional political economy is to promote its own economic and security position. It is exploitative in nature, and for this reason, the realist perspective must not be ignored when analysing the hegemonic stability theory. Gilpin's assertion corroborates the 3 realist assumptions/principles, namely statism, survival, and self-help (Dunne and Schmidt 2004: 113). According to realists, states are the central actors in the international system and all other actors take less precedence. Morgenthau (1948) warns state leaders against making sacrifices that could compromise their self-interests in order to follow ethical conduct or "benefit the greater good". Their argument is that each state has a responsibility to ensure its welfare and survival. This translates to mean that no other state or institution can be relied on, one's drive must be a determination to guarantee state survival.

Keohane (1981: 249) adds that a hegemonic power generates public goods, such as security, in place of financial return. He also makes an illustration and draws a parallel between a hegemon and an entrepreneur. He argues that to be an entrepreneur, one needs to be persuaded that one will gain more from an investment than the value of the investment itself (Keohane 1981: 339). The same logic applies to a government, it expects to gain more from its leadership position than it invests in

organising and maintaining the operation of the organisation. Like Thabo Mbeki (2008) said "stability in the region and as a result, development, and democracy, will only be attained when a regional hegemony is prepared to underwrite the objectives. As long as this does not occur, South Africa's economic goals will remain compromised. The fate of democratic South African is inseparably linked with and to what happened in the rest of the region and the continent". Therefore a hegemon is unlikely to assume the position of leader for an organisation if the roles, duties, and tasks are greater and far outweigh the value of the received benefits. This illustration illuminates the more realist element of the theory.

2.5.2 A Difference in Opinion

While all the theorists of HST mentioned above, believe that a stable political economy needs a hegemon/leader, there is a difference in opinion concerning the maintenance of the political economy and its institutions. Kindleberger (1976: 19-20) strongly suggests that a liberal order not only needs a hegemon for the establishment of international regimes but the maintenance of these institutions as well. Gilpin (1975: 87) and Keohane (1981:32) disagree with this, they argue that the presence of a hegemon is essential for the establishment of institutions, however, it is not essential for the maintenance of these institutions once they have been formulated. Their argument is that cooperation can be eminent once rules have been established by the hegemon. It is not one state that assures that institutions are maintained, instead, it is the cooperation among states within the institutions and the established structures that assure the maintenance of these institutions. This difference of opinion is problematic because it creates a gap in this theory. If you are looking at a hegemon as a leader, then you would consider that subordinate states will continue to need a leader for the maintenance of rules and norms. Krasner also agrees with this and presents a point that norms and rules do not serve as the basis of cooperation in the international system, instead, it is the calculation of interests that drives it (1985: 78). Therefore leaving the maintenance of institutions to the cooperation of states through established and agrees on rules is improbable in the international community, but again, not unheard of, depending on the theoretical perspective/lens you prefer to utilize for analysis. For instance, the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). From the realist perspective, states in the UNSC have made tremendous contributions to the world political order to ensure that their interests are preserved. They are all aware that taking a step back on the maintenance of these institutions would directly result in a compromise of the interests, thus their permanency in their positions.

2.5.3 The Different Theoretical Perspectives of Hegemonic Stability Theory

This section will delve a little deeper into the theoretical analysis of the theoretical framework of hegemonic stability. The realist perspective asserts that hegemony is ultimately the preponderance of material power. Before American hegemony, there was British hegemony, and it was measured by military power/colonial power. This defined hegemony in the 19th century. The realist theory of hegemony assumes that dominance is the primary pattern of behaviour and with dominance comes exploitation of the weaker states. Much like the colonial era, realist hegemony is coercive, instead of consensual. According to Schmidt, realists perceive hegemony as "hierarchically organized political orders based on command, where superordinate and subordinate relations are established between the leading state and the weaker/secondary political entities" (2018: 7). If this is the case, then a hegemony cannot only establish international regimes but will have to sustain them to ensure that their position is preserved. Yazid (2015:68) argues that from and during the first and second World Wars, there was no hegemony and political instability and the wars were the results of this.

The liberal perspective presents a sharp contrast to the realist. Evidently, a majority of hegemony stability theorists are liberals, and they emphasize that they do not discount that material preponderance is an essential feature of a hegemon, but they argue that hegemonic stability theory is just as much about leadership, as it is about material preponderance (Keohane 1981:32). Theorists such as Schmidt take it further and state that in its nature, hegemonic stability theory is a realist inspired theory, but the crux of the theory focuses on the leadership component of hegemony (2018: 21). Material preponderance alone would be insufficient when you want to understand the theory. Keohane (1984: 35) suggests that hegemony is characterized as a position in which "a single state is powerful enough to establish the fundamental rules administering interstate relations and willing to do so." By this explanation, hegemony is determined less by domination and more by consent and mutuality. Liberal hegemonic order is established and sustained through the exercise of power by the principal state, but power is utilized to formulate a system of rules that auxiliary states agree to. Ikenberry (2011: 70) agrees with this as well by stating that liberal hegemonic order stems from governing authority through the flows of a legal –constitutional foundation, instead of power capabilities. He presents 3 institutional features of liberal hegemony 1) the principal state supports and functions within a system of negotiated rules and institutions 2) the principal state provides a range of public goods and services 3) hegemonic order offers avenues of correlative communication and influence (2011: 55-56). Essentially, Ikenberry (2002: 215) is highlighting that hegemonic

stability theory relies on the shared interest of states and the rule of law. The emphasis of liberal theorists is on the collective benefit of states within established regimes. Gilpin (1987: 73) asserts that the formation of regimes, the principles, norms, and decision-making processes that state actors agree on arise from a hegemon that is willing to step up for the benefit of all parties involved. Willingness, leadership, and consent are key features of the liberal perspective of hegemonic stability theory.

A look at Critical theory also introduces a refreshing perspective to the theory of hegemonic stability. The dependency theory is very sceptical of the intentions of a single dominant state in regimes. Like liberal economists, dependency theorists, like Wallerstine (1980: 38), agree that free trade will be sustained with the presence of a leading state, however, for them, the primary concern is on the disproportionate exchange between the developed and less developed states. South Africa and Lesotho can be an illustration of this unequal exchange. South Africa is more industrialised and her economy has a strong manufacturing base, thus her ability to produce goods efficiently and effectively. Lesotho, on the other hand, is not as technologically advanced and has a relatively inadequate manufacturing base. Under the SADC FTA, both countries are expected to implement reduced tariffs for all members. Accordingly, when both Lesotho and South Africa trade with Zimbabwe, for instance, zero tariffs should apply. However, important to note is that since South Africa has a strong manufacturing base, it offers a wider range of products in large quantities and likely in greater quality. Zimbabwe is likely to work with South Africa more than Lesotho in this regard, thus South Africa's competitive advantage. Moreover, because of their manufacturing base, the cost of producing similar products is less significant for South Africa and their benefits are more. Sachse (1989:41) argues that it is for this reason that the maintenance of free trade is of primary importance for most developed states' interests because they reap more profits in such systems.

Stephen Krasner (1985:75), an institutional theorist, affirms this point strongly by suggesting that indeed all parties benefit from the presence of a hegemon in a system, however, the benefits are asymmetrical as developed states benefit at the cost of others. He clarifies that the international institutions that have been sponsored by the United States deviate from the concerns of most less developed states. This has been the argument for decades with organisations such as the World Trade Organization and World Bank, that these organisations that the United States fosters have only left states, especially in the global south, dependent on the global north, ready to surrender minerals for pennies.

The World system theorists also agree that the economic order is most stable when there is a hegemony (Krasner, 1985: 5). In addition to this, they argue that the structure of the modern system is designed in such a way that the core states benefit at the cost of the peripheral states, but they take it a step further and argue that this structure is true whether or not the economic order is dominated by a single state (Sachse, 1989:40). In conclusion, all theorists agree that the presence of a single state is important, the difference is on the subject of who benefits, and to what extent. For Schmidt (2018: 25), he concludes that the hegemonic stability theory is a realist theory characterised by the leadership component and rests on consensus instead of coercion, and a hegemon's willingness to lead. This dissertation will look at hegemonic stability theory from this perspective, agreeing that the theory has realist connotations, but at the centre is leadership, mutual benefit, and consent as the key features for the prosperity of international institutions.

CHAPTER THREE

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research methodology of the study. The research design, research methodology, and types of data will be outlined. The chapter will also explain the data analysis plan adopted by the research study. The chapter will also focus on Nigeria as the case study, describing Nigeria's economic, political, and military contribution as a regional power in the ECOWAS.

3.1 Research Design

The research employed a case study approach. A case study research acts as an empirical enquiry that analyses a concept within a real-life context (Kaarbo and Beasley, 1999: 369). This study has attained information regarding regional power and integration concepts and will focus mainly on Nigeria in the ECOWAS regional body.

According to Baxter and Jack (2008: 29), a case study is a technique that targets to analyse the phenomenon or problem under study by collecting data outlining the existing reactions or conditions in situations. There are many advantages demonstrated through the use of a case study approach. They include assistance to researchers, increased understanding and concept testing (Creswell 2013: 5). Increased knowledge refers to the researcher's position to better understand why and how the situations occur.

3.2 Research Methodology

Essentially, this thesis analysed the regional power and integration information with a narrowed-down focus on Nigeria as an integration analysis in the West African region. Qualitative databases on secondary data were applied in a case study design. Literature on theoretical or conceptual frameworks from books and journal articles was utilised.

3.3 Types of data

This research study relied on secondary data originating from primary concepts under investigation, including regional power, regional integration, Nigeria, and the ECOWAS. Secondary data sources included studies ranging from journals, published books, policy documents, reports from ministries

of foreign affairs and official government websites. These sources aided the research in obtaining a better understanding of the concepts analysed in this study.

3.4 Data analysis

This study employed a deductive research approach, which allowed the researcher to examine the underpinning theory and explore its validity in a specific circumstance. In this case, the theory discussed is the hegemonic stability theory, and it was tested on Nigeria in the ECOWAS.

3.5 Case study: Nigeria

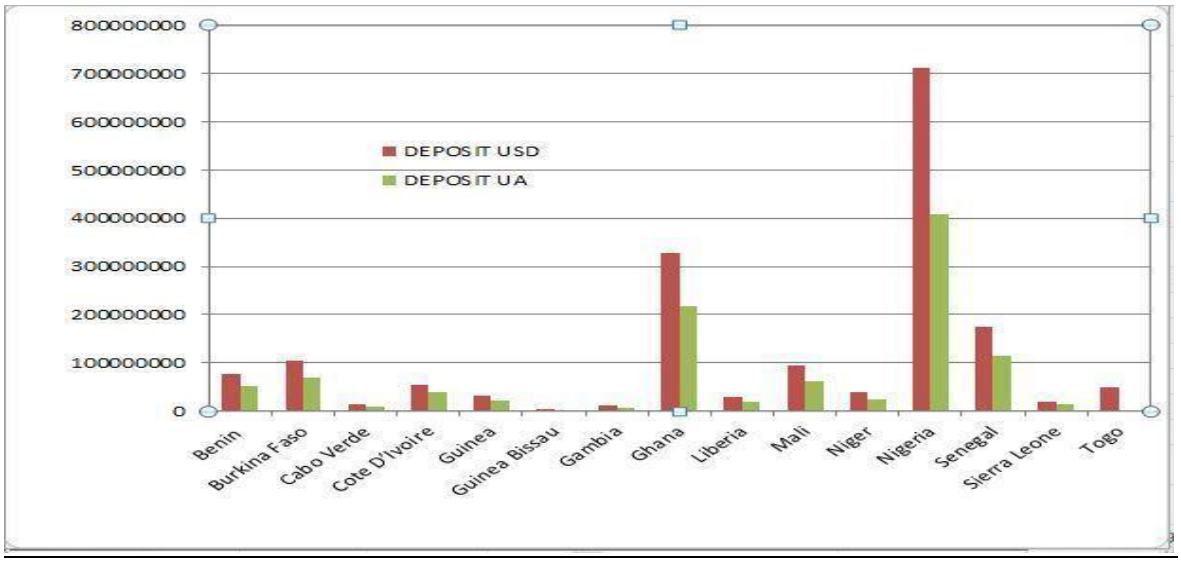
3.5.1 Economic contribution

According to Boom (1996: 170), Nigeria is the most economically advanced member state in the ECOWAS and, on average, contributes over a third of the cost of supporting and maintaining the community. Nigeria's financial contribution can be classified into

- Statutory/compulsory financial contributions,
- Voluntary contributions,
- Voluntary assistance.

Danjuma (2006) noted that Nigeria has also been one of the three member states that have paid ECOWAS subscriptions religiously and have no record of accumulated arrears despite its financial hardships at home, such as the elevated youth unemployment rate, and the unequal wealth distribution in the country, with over 40% of the population living below the poverty line as of 2019 (World Bank). The government also voluntarily helped other member states to demonstrate that Nigeria could be her brother's keeper and confirmed her leadership position in the region. For instance, between 1977 and 1987, Nigeria donated two buses to the Benin Republic to ensure that the ECOWAS games ran smoothly (Osundu, 2015: 105). In addition, Nigeria sent aid to Benin and Niger to finance their road construction projects and used their financial resources to train the Benin military voluntarily (Osundu, 2015: 105). The figure below demonstrates Nigeria's contributions to ECOWAS compared to its fellow member states.

Figure 1: Financial Contributions of Member States for the sustainability of the ECOWAS (2018)



Source (Ibrahim and Ahmad, 2020)

According to Benson (Business insider, 2021), Nigeria is the largest economy in Africa, with a GDP of US$514.05 billion, which exceeds all the countries in the ECOWAS region combined. Nigeria's economy is projected to grow to US$4.2 trillion over the next two decades (Trading Economics). Projections such as these probe talks of Nigeria as the "giant of Africa", being a potential candidate for the global power status in the future. A recent Institute of Security Studies (ISS) (2019) report suggests that "to a large extent, the increase in Africa's role globally will therefore be driven by the future weight of Nigeria".

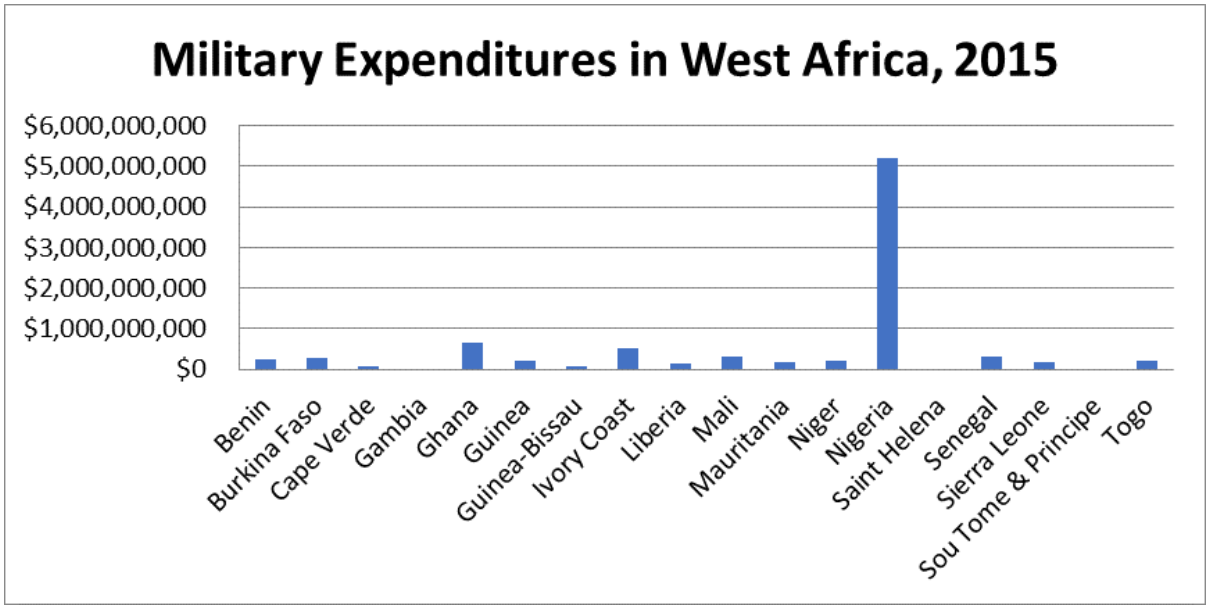
In 1990, the ECOWAS established the ECOMOG which was responsible for imposing a ceasefire, creating an atmosphere conducive for mediation and dialogue between hostile parties, and assisting in formulating interim governments (Omo-ogbebor, 2017: 20). Nigeria has consistently financed the organisation for peace and security to be established. Nigeria was the largest financier of missions in Liberia, and the ECOMOG not only resolved the conflict in Liberia but also restored peace in Sierra Leonne. Nigeria led the intervention in Liberia, and they spent over US$12 billion, and almost 1000 Nigerian soldiers lost their lives (Ibrahim and Ahmad, 2020: 88). By 2009, Nigeria was said to have contributed over 80% of the ECOMOG funding for peacekeeping missions. The deployment of Nigerian troops for operations in Mali in 2013 also swallowed over US$34 million in expenditure (Osundu, 2015: 104). The financial

contributions that Nigeria has injected into the region have promoted the efficacy of the regional organisation's initiatives.

3.5.2 Military contribution

According to Omo-ogbebor (2017: 4018), Nigeria has made a substantial contribution to the peace and security of the region, primarily through the ECOMOG. In 1990, the ECOWAS Anglophone member states established the ECOMOG as a cease-fire monitoring group and a mechanism for conflict management in the civil war in Liberia. It was initially formulated to end the civil war in Liberia as the conflict had detrimental effects on the region. The intervention in Liberia was named "Operation Liberty". The initial troops mobilised for the operation was 3000, and Nigeria alone provided 1375 officers and men, over 30% of the forces deployed. (Dauda, Ahmad and Keling, 2017: 61) Nigeria provided field commanders for the operation. Out of eleven ECOMOG commanders, ten were Nigerian. An estimated 90% of the ECOMOG staff working in the headquarters were Nigerian (Dauda, Ahmad, and Keling, 2017: 55). The government availed the largest number of military vehicles and equipment, human resources, and petroleum oil for the operation. The United Nations later created the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) to assist the ECOMOG. UNMIL deployed 15,000 troops, and although their contribution was immeasurable, it is imperative to highlight that Nigeria's sacrifice was significant in the West African region (Dauda, Ahmad, and Keling, 2019: 147-148). Their military capabilities were competently demonstrated during the intervention in the Liberian civil war, Omo-ogbebor (2017: 4018). The figure below, (fig 2) clearly shows that Nigeria makes the highest contribution to the sustenance of ECOWAS missions.

Figure 2: The Military Expenditures in West African States in 2015



(Source: Dauda, Ahmad, and Keling, 2019)

However, Nigeria's military capabilities have yet to translate into successes locally. The language of enduring crisis and state fragility classifies the narrative about Nigeria in and outside its borders. The lack of control of the Nigerian government domestically inevitably has scholars question the practicality of Nigeria's military capacity (Warner, 2017: 638). Violent eruptions by terrorist insurgencies over oil production in the Niger Delta and ethnic killing sprees are some examples of conflict problem areas that the Nigerian government in its capacity has failed to bring about security. The terror of Boko Haram has spread to Nigeria's neighbouring countries and compromised many efforts of peace and security in the region (Ogunnubi, 2016: 11).

3.5.3 Political contribution

The 1993 revised ECOWAS treaty emphasised that all members were committed to the promotion and consolidation of a democratic system of governance. Adejumobi (2016: 213) states that ECOWAS peace-building projects constitute operational and structural interventions. The operational facet refers to the military efforts for peace-keeping during conflicts. The structural aspect entails political methods such as diplomacy through meditation and pacification, as well as creating conducive environments for the implementation and manifestation of democracy in the region. Electoral support and monitoring comprise a prominent portion of which ECOWAS promotes democracy.

Where Nigeria has deployed diplomatic officials, whether in its capacity or in the capacity of the ECOWAS, results have been commendable. Nigerian leaders such as former president Olusegun Obasanjo are popular and mentioned often in discussions pertaining to mediation and conflict resolution. In 2005, Liberia was the centre of peace negotiations and had successful elections. The former president of Nigeria, General Abubakar Balewa was appointed the chief mediator for the negotiations, and Nigeria provided over 90% of troops and logistical support during Liberia's election (Adejumobi, 2016: 223). Nigeria's operational and structural contribution restored democracy in the state and the region. Former President Obasanjo has also played a significant role in mediation and was an election observer in most of the elections in ECOWAS states. Essentially, through economic, political, and military contributions, Nigeria has demonstrated its willingness to lead the region. The government stated that they consider their involvement in the region, and continent at large, a moral duty to promote peace and fight for equal rights (Lamido, 2012).

3.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter has described the research methodology of the study. The chapter has described the research design, research methodology, and types of data and focused on the case study. In addition, an introduction of the economic, political, and military contributions of Nigeria as a regional power is included.

CHAPTER FOUR

4 AN ASSESSMENT OF NIGERIA'S ROLE IN ECOWAS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents an assessment of Nigeria's role in the integration of the ECOWAS organisation. It addresses the second and third objectives of the dissertation; to understand the role of Nigeria in regional integration and to discuss Nigeria's regional power status and how it promotes or undermines regional integration in ECOWAS.

4.1 Nigeria's Economic and Political contribution to ECOWAS

As a regional power, Nigeria has played a significant role in the economic and political contribution to the regional integration of West Africa, and the stability of ECOWAS. Nigeria has all features of a regional leader, however, despite being a regional power, Nigeria is continually faced with an assortment of internal challenges that threaten the fabric of regional integration in West Africa.

4.1.1 Nigeria's Role in Economic Integration

The notion of economic integration is based on a combination of elements. First is the promotion of a free trade area. In a free trade agreement (FTA), member states remove import duties on goods to and from other participant states (Adekola and Agbonkhese, 2014: 362). ECOWAS member states are committed to the ECOWAS liberalization trade scheme (ELTS). This is the primary feature of the organisation's trade policy. Its objective is to gradually introduce a customs union for member states (ECOWAS, 2016). A customs union is a more unified and higher degree of economic integration. In a customs union, member states impose the same tariff rates on non-member states (Adekola and Agbonkhese, 2014: 362). Other elements of economic integration include, but are not limited to, the harmonisation of economic policies and the promotion of the movement of goods and persons. Economic integration is crucial to the development of the region. However, these elements mentioned above cannot be realised without regional peace and security. ECOWAS has not attained these economic integration elements as yet.

Billions have been set aside for conflict management and resolution projects in the region, and rightfully so. Nigeria and its neighbours need to allocate financial resources to peace and security initiatives. Unfortunately, these are the resources that could be poured into developing regional infrastructure that could potentially boost investment and establish manufacturing bases across West Africa, but this vicious cycle dictates that regional peace be established first. Essentially, economic integration in the region has not and cannot be consummated as long as conflict and civil wars define the region (Adejumobi, 2016: 213). Customs union ambitions will remain that until peace is restored. Therefore, it is difficult to discuss Nigeria's role in economic integration in a region grappling with civil wars and has not actualized economic integration structures. For this reason, this dissertation primarily emphasizes Nigeria's financial contribution toward peacekeeping missions in efforts to eventually end conflict and security concerns, and move towards economic integration. This initiative by Nigeria has played a significant role and must not be underrated.

In the West African block, Nigeria is the most economically advanced country and, on average, contributes over a third of the cost of supporting and maintaining the regional community. According to Ajayi (2007), Nigeria has been one of the three member states consistently paying ECOWAS subscriptions. The country has no record of accumulated arrears compared to other member states in the region. Nigeria's economic power has enabled it to pay more to ECOWAS than any other member state, thus financially strengthening ECOWAS.

Nigeria's economic advantage over its regional counterparts has enabled her to spread economic influence on other countries. Nigeria's economic participation and involvement in the regional body has placed the state in a position of immense power and decision-making (Okokpo, 2000). Consequently, this power is used to push Nigeria's self-interests, which poses a significant threat to economic integration in the region as the voice of smaller economies are muffled and marginalised. Nigeria has consistently financed the organisation for peace and security to be established. By 2009, Nigeria contributed over 80% of the ECOMOG funding for peacekeeping missions (Osundu, 2015: 105). Nigeria was the largest financier of missions in Liberia, and the ECOMOG did not only resolve the conflict in Liberia but also returned peace to Sierra Leonne. Nigeria led the intervention in Liberia, and they spent over US$12 billion, and almost 1000 Nigerian soldiers lost their lives (Dauda, Ahmad, and Keling, 2017: 61).

While Nigeria has assumed a significant role in the ECOWAS and has made tremendous provision for ECOWAS, and especially ECOMOG projects, it has failed in many instances to promote regional integration and has put its national interests first. Most recently, President Buhari's administration made an abrupt decision to close its borders and restrict the movement of goods into the country without enough notice to its neighbours (Kwarkye and Matongada, 2021). Buhari justified this decision by stating that Nigeria wanted to monitor its borders closely and minimise the smuggling of goods into the country. Buhari's objectives were motivated by the desire to increase production in Nigeria instead of promoting the selling of 'foreign' goods on Nigerian soil (Kassa and Albert, 2020). This decision was met with contestation, and the reason for this is that Nigeria's neighbours rely on Nigeria for informal trading. This is especially true for the Benin Republic. The informal sector makes up nearly 70% of its GDP, and nearly 80% of that informal trade is with/in Nigeria. Benin is no exception, as over 50% of the GDP in West Africa stems from the informal sector, and nearly 80% of employment in the region is informal (Golub, Mbaye, and Golubski, 2019). Benin and Ghana leaders lamented that their traders had incurred significant losses due to the detainment of products at Nigerian border posts without warning.

Nigeria's decision to close its borders has many questioning its devotion to a free trade area in ECOWAS. Essentially, the border closure goes against the Protocol Relating to the free movement of persons and goods of 1979. The claimed reason for border closure was particularly the illegal rice import in Nigeria. Buhari was trying to promote and preserve Nigeria's local agricultural sector by ensuring that local farmers do not battle with competition from black market rice coming in from Benin. Nigeria's customs chief, Ali, addressed members of the parliament a few months after the border closure and highlighted that tax revenue had increased tremendously since the borders had closed (BBC, 2019). Nigeria decided to place its national interests first, at the expense of crippling the smaller economies dependent on informal trade with Nigeria for economic growth. This point highlights how the role of a regional power can also undermine regional integration, especially when it makes the executive decision to place its interests above the interests of others in the region.

Nigeria's economic advantage over its regional counterparts has enabled her to spread economic influence to other countries. Historically, stronger economies naturally dictate the terms of relations and operation of the economically weaker states. This is the case for ECOWAS, where Nigeria exercises its power over member states such as Togo and Benin.

This highlights how Nigeria has used its role in ECOWAS to benefit its economy, sometimes at the expense of its neighbours.

A consequence of Nigeria's leading role in ECOWAS is her "corporate colonialism" in the region. This refers to Nigeria's domineering role as well as its exploitative nature towards its regional counterparts (Taylor, 2016: 162). Nigeria is the leading investor in the regional body and it produces a large portion of the West African region's foreign direct investment (FDI) (Akpan, 2019: 68). The regional dominance of Nigeria has been problematic because its economic influence stunts the growth of the smaller economies. Gramsci argues that inevitably, there is exploitation that takes place for a hegemon to assume its role, and this is what Nigeria has done to its regional counterparts (Kendie, 2006: 86). Akokpari (2008: 103) contends that a challenge of regional integration is the "inequitable distribution of the benefits and burdens of integration". Nigeria has often been accused by its regional counterparts of receiving a large fraction of the benefits of regionalism. Because of the oil reserves in Nigeria, it is a more attractive recipient of foreign investment. Lawal (2019) asserts that ECOWAS has promoted the expansion of Nigeria's multinational companies into other markets in the region. Because of the liberalisation of service markets by the organisation, Nigeria has taken advantage of the lowered entry barriers for her as a member state. Nigeria has penetrated the financial and telecommunication service industries in the region and has ensured that all revenue returns to Nigeria. This example highlights how Nigeria has used its role in ECOWAS to benefit its economy, sometimes at the expense of its neighbours.

Moreover, it is difficult to analyse the role of Nigeria in ECOWAS when Nigeria and the organisation are still heavily dependent on the West for financial injection into regional projects. It is not disputed that Nigeria has, and continues to play a significant role in financial undertakings in the region. However, subscriptions and Nigeria's financial contributions to peacekeeping operations are insufficient for the upkeep of other regional projects to keep the organisation afloat. The EU has been one of ECOWAS' primary donors, endowing millions into regional development. More recently, the ECOWAS Commission and African French Development (AFD) Agency received eight million Euros and are set to receive an additional 48 million in grants to assist the phases of the ECOWAS Food Security Storage System (Vanguard, 2021). This is a strategy established to ensure that citizens of ECOWAS member states have a food security reserve in the event of a food crisis in the future. Although this sounds commendable and prudent on ECOWAS' part, there are detrimental effects that come with this 'donation'. There is a popular idiom that states that one should not bite the hand that

feeds them and it in this context means that if one is providing for you, you cannot criticize or oppose them, lest they turn around and take away that provision. This idiom applies to the ECOWAS context as members have no choice but to comply with Western policies if they desire the provision. Unfortunately, finances have the ability to dictate which policy to implement and which to dismiss. Nwoke (2004: 138) argues that the collective self-reliance that regional integration aims to attain will be ridiculed if the regional leader is suffering from external dependence. This inevitably debilitates Nigeria's power, as it cannot oppose any decisions imposed by the EU.

4.1.2 Nigeria's role in Political integration

Nigeria has been able to provide logistical support and funding at critical periods in the organisation for peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions. Lt. General Martin Agwai (2009) perceived that the Nigerian Army's considerable contribution to the peacekeeping missions has helped to propel Nigeria's image as an emerging power in Africa. General Malu (2009) also agreed and stated that it is doubtful that peace in Liberia could have been achieved without Nigeria's involvement and leadership. Thus, one can argue that Nigeria, as a regional leader, has assumed significant responsibilities to support and maintain peace and security. This is the responsibility of a regional power, to bear the costs of regional integration and be willing to lead in all aspects.

However, it is difficult to talk about the role of Nigeria in political integration when the political problems from before the formation of ECOWAS persist. It reigns true that Nigeria's leadership in peacekeeping projects is commendable and most of the success of ECOWAS would not have been realised without the willingness of Nigeria's government to lead. However, Nigeria has only managed to place a bandage on a bullet wound and has failed to address the impact of the bullet itself. Instead of flocking out millions on peacekeeping missions, Nigeria must invest more in solving the problems that cause the conflicts in the region. Examples of some of the causes are; marginalisation and a cry for representation of all persons through democratization, the high poverty and unemployment rates, demand for empowerment and corruption. Adejumobi (2016: 222) stresses that these are the reasons for civil war in Liberia and Sierra Leonne, and continue to be the issues in civil conflicts today. Recently, the #ENDSARS, social movement on social media shed light and showcased a glimpse of the gross violations of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) towards Nigerian citizens. Amnesty International (2020) records hundreds of cases of Nigerians who had been

tortured by the unit and noted that once reported for their behaviours, SARS officers were not held accountable (Amnesty International, 2020). The government's failure to address and disband this unit after reports of its recklessness demonstrated disregard for human rights and freedom for its people. More recently, President Buhari suspended Twitter for all Nigerians after his tweet was deleted. Suspension of the social media platform signified a violation of citizens' right to express their opinions and access information on public platforms (Aljazeera, 2021). The action by the president was viewed as undemocratic and unconstitutional. The regional power has demonstrated its inability to uphold democratic fundamentals at home and certainly does not set an example for the smaller states to follow.

Good governance is not a description one would bestow on a state in West Africa, especially Nigeria. As mentioned in chapter three, Nigeria has been involved in mediation attempts in the region and has provided financial and administrative support to member states for election observation and monitoring. Although Nigeria has made a commendable effort to promote democracy in the region, Nigeria has failed to conduct herself in the same democratic manner at home. For instance, former president Obasanjo facilitated several mediation dialogues in the region to promote democratic principles in the region but would get back home and abuse his power and attempt to prolong his term as president unlawfully. This kind of behaviour is typical for Nigeria and contradicts the efforts of integration in West Africa. Nigeria's political role as a regional power is to present a democratic prototype of good governance for other ECOWAS states. However, Nigeria has failed to do this. It is especially true with corruption. According to the statistics, Nigeria assumes first place as the country with the most corruption in the region (Ogunubi, 2014, 113). As a regional power, one would expect to have Nigeria, by all means, to tackle this issue. However, like many others, Nigeria turns a blind eye to this problem. An article from This Day (2015) highlights how anti-corruption drives in Nigeria have been set up. However, the country's legislature does not take it seriously and instead prioritises their public image and how they prefer the world to view the country. This does not display good governance, and the failure to address this challenge in the region will undoubtedly hinder regional integration efforts. Essentially, in this regard, the role of Nigeria in regional integration is crippling the structures of political stability because of its ignorance of this pressing matter.

Nigeria's political leadership has also been questioned because of its conspicuous absence in some conflicts in the region. In 1998, Nigeria made a decision not to volunteer troops for the ECOMOG mission in Guinea Bissau after an attempted military coup d'etat against Vieira's government (Nwoke, 2014: 137). It was, however, not surprising that the operation collapsed

without Nigeria's participation**.** This ECOMOG failure was a testament to the role of a regional power player in solving regional matters. More recently, Nigeria was not involved in the ECOWAS intervention in Cote d'Ivoire following Gbagbo's refusal to concede power in 2010 after his election defeat (Adejumobi, 2016: 224). Why would Nigeria pick certain countries to intervene and assist and others to abandon? Many believe that Nigeria only intervened in member states that they were certain would make a profitable return for their assistance (Warner, 2017: 638). This does not showcase good leadership and is an example of how a state in power can use and abuse its prowess to benefit only itself. This scatterbrained tendency of Nigeria in the region does not help solve regional conflict and security concerns, and to an extent is an extension of political corruption on a larger scale.

4.2 The Role of Nigeria in regional peace and stability in ECOWAS

The name ECOWAS depicts the organisation as a predominantly economic institution. However, looking closer at the protocols and frameworks of the Revised Treaty of 1993 paints a clearer picture of the respective issues that the organisation aims to address. The 1999 Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention especially outlined its objectives for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict through the ECOMOG. Member states now had the awareness that economic integration would never be a reality if conflict and political instability riddled the region. To Nigeria, peace and security on the African continent has always been central to its foreign policy objectives. Nigeria's peacekeeping involvement across the continent since its independence demands appraisal. This is especially the case in its region. Most notably, Nigeria played a significant role in PKOs in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Nigeria's commitment and involvement in these conflict areas has added a permanent mark of leadership to Nigeria's reputation.

Starting with the Liberian conflict, the Nigeria-led ECOMOG intervened in 1990 to the aid of then President Doe. Nigeria contributed substantially to the peacekeeping mission as highlighted in previous sections. The full amount has never truly been disclosed because Nigerian leaders acknowledged the backlash that they would receive from their citizens living below the poverty line and believe that Nigeria's funds belong to Nigerians. Nigeria's contributions were a true reflection of its commitment to peace in the region, whether it was for personal gains or the greater good of the community. Nweke (2010: 38) states that Nigeria provided the ECOMOG with gadgets and equipment to aid commanders and soldiers in their

communication on the field. In addition, out of its pockets, Nigeria made provision for setting up two hospitals for wounded soldiers at the ECOMOG headquarters (Nweke, 2010: 38-39). Nigeria foot the bill for both the operation and administration of these hospitals, after all a substantial portion of the soldiers were Nigerian.

These examples above highlight Nigeria's full commitment to peace in the region. Bearing the cost of the region was well executed in Liberia, and it emphasised the benefits of a willing and resourceful regional power in integration. President Obasanjo recorded that approximately 1000 soldiers' lives were lost in Liberia, and Lt Agwai recalls soldiers having to dig mass graves for fallen soldiers during the conflict (Dauda, Ahmad, and Keling, 2017: 61), Dauda, Ahmad and Keling, 2019: 147). Again, these death statistics were undisclosed for a long time because if their citizens were made aware of the tragedy in Liberia, there would have been more uproar (Olawale, 2003: 21). Huge sacrifices were made by the Nigerian government for regional peace and this must be acknowledged. This war could have been much worse, but it was nipped in the bud by Nigeria's soldiers. But even after the loss of lives of her troops, Nigeria persisted. It is for this reason that many began to question whether there were supplementary motives to Nigeria's intervention.

Following the execution of President Doe, Taylor gradually gained more control of the cities in Liberia, and by 1997, after years of tensions and instability, Taylor won the presidential election. From the time that Nigeria intervened in Liberia in 1990, Nigeria's stance was that of antagonism towards Charles Taylor and the NPFL rebels. Accordingly, Taylor had persistently accused Nigeria's involvement of being illegitimate, illegal, and a breach of sovereignty (Oshewolo, 2019: 261). However, once Taylor won the elections fairly in 1997, Nigeria placed its reservations aside and was committed to remaining neutral and impartial during the creation of mechanisms that would foster democracy in the country (Oshewolo, 2019:261). Putting aside their differences for the greater good showcased, once more, a level of commitment by Nigeria that would encourage states to move in the direction of regional peace and in turn economic integration.

Sierra Leone is similar to Liberia concerning Nigeria's commitment to restoring peace in the region. Nigeria contributed the most resources towards the restoration of peace in Sierra Leone. Some of these resources include vehicles, fuel for the vehicles, staff to maintain vehicles, supplies, etc. (Nweke, 2010: 38). What is interesting about Sierra Leone's intervention is that, before the ECOMOG operation had been approved by member states, Nigeria had already

deployed a team to assess the volatility of the crisis on the ground (Dauda, Ahmad, and Keling, 2017: 54). This was done upon request by the Sierra Leone President after Nigeria and Sierra Leone had just signed a bilateral agreement (Dauda, Ahmad, and Keling, 2017: 54). This agreement could be analysed in two ways. Firstly, one could look at Nigeria's active involvement in the conflict as political zeal and taking initiative. Dialogue with Sierra Leone's President Momoh to find out if Nigeria could assist while ECOMOG strategized intervention approaches would be considered proactive and demonstrates commendable qualities of a leader, getting ahead of the opposition to mitigate whatever influence it has while prematurely.

The second perspective for Nigeria's bilateral agreement with Sierra Leone before the ECOMOG was involved, would be that Nigeria saw an opportunity to capitalize on Sierra Leone. Nigeria had the resources to take care of Momoh's issue and took advantage of a vulnerable Sierra Leone by jumping at the opportunity of handling Momoh's conundrum for a price. There is no evidence of this assertion, however, this would not be a first in the anarchic international system. If the latter is the case, then it would be an example of how regional powers take advantage of their power and exploit vulnerable states for personal gain.

If Nigeria has the capabilities to restore peace in other ECOWAS member states, how come it has failed to combat conflict and insurgent groups at home? This unanswered question is detrimental to Nigeria's role in the region. "Crippled giant" and "barking dog with no teeth" are some of the labels coined to describe Nigeria. This is because the Nigerian government has failed to deal with situations at home. Ogunnubi (2016: 12) asserts that in this instance, Nigeria demonstrates "illusory" leadership, where on paper, Nigeria possesses tremendous power, however in reality, Nigeria's power is simply a mirage. Now, because Nigeria's security is directly tied to the security of the region, Nigeria's failure to dismantle terrorist groups affects the entire region. West Africa has not managed to generate income from the tourism industry for decades because of the security concerns of individuals across the globe. Nigeria's failure to address its domestic issues has had a detrimental effect on integration in the region. While her active involvement in the peacekeeping operations of other ECOWAS members is truly appreciated, Nigeria should address domestic affairs first before it can be able to help the next state in trouble. After all, which member state would welcome Nigeria's advice and criticism on peace and security when they cannot follow their advice?

4.3 Chapter Summary

The chapter has presented the major findings of the research. The research was aimed at understanding the role of a regional power in regional integration: the case of Nigeria in ECOWAS. Nigeria has played an important role in regional integration in Africa and has contributed more financially to the ECOWAS regional body than any other member state. It has also contributed more troops to the regional security of West Africa. It has also been acknowledged that without Nigeria's active participation in regional projects, ECOWAS would not have acquired the successes they celebrate. However, this chapter also highlights some of Nigeria's shortcomings in the region. In many instances, Nigeria has implemented a laissez-faire approach in matters that need proactive engagement and resolutions and this has undermined its role in regional integration immensely. The next chapter will provide the study's major recommendations, conclusions and summary.

CHAPTER FIVE

5 CONCLUSIONS, SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions and study recommendations.

5.1 Summary

The study's primary aim was to understand the role of regional power in regional integration with a focus on Nigeria as a case study. The research question was guided by the assumption that Nigeria is a regional power in West Africa, and this has enabled her to become a prominent player in the regional integration of West Africa. The researcher used three objectives which included;

- To understand what a regional power is and its contribution toward regional integration
- To understand the role of Nigeria in regional integration and
- To discuss Nigeria's regional power status and undermine regional integration.

The dissertation adopted the hegemonic stability theory as its theoretical framework. The researcher used a qualitative research methodology, and findings were gathered through a rigorous literature review.

There is no doubt that Nigeria plays a critical role in the regional integration of West Africa. Any time Nigeria does not participate in or support regional integration initiatives, they are bound to fail. This is due to the considerable leverage Nigeria brings to the table in terms of military capabilities, strategic clarity and focus, material resources, and enormous political influence.

Nigeria's role in regional integration cannot be understated. Without her economic, military and political contribution, ECOWAS would be weaker, and the process of regional integration would have proved more difficult. Especially demonstrated is Nigeria's military strength and assistance to peacekeeping and conflict resolution in West Africa. Economic integration cannot be actualised without peace and security in the region. So, by addressing and combatting

conflict in the region, Nigeria establishes an environment for political and economic integration.

5.2 Conclusion

The literature review explained and defined concepts of hegemony and regional power. It was important to differentiate the two in this context as they are often used interchangeably. Both terms are used to describe dominant states, however, hegemony refers to more industrialised economies. Regional powers, though dominant in their respective regions, still have hurdles to tackle such as dependence and weak bargaining power in the global economy. Analysing the first objective, the researcher found that regional powers are essential in regional integration. A regional power is significant because it provides security and financial injection that will, in turn, contribute to the realisation of regional integration initiatives.

Hegemonic stability theory was the theoretical framework analysed in this dissertation and it emphasised that an international system will most likely have order and stability when a single state is dominating. In this instance, the international system is the West African region, the ECOWAS particularly. The study established that Nigeria has and continues to play an essential role in ECOWAS since its formation. Nigeria's economic and political contributions have been a major drive in the political stability of the regional body. The dissertation acknowledges that regional integration in West Africa thus far has not possible without Nigeria's economic participation. Nigeria's participation in Liberia and Sierra Leone was a tremendous contribution toward regional integration. Analysing Nigeria’s role in economic integration presently is not ideal, given that the preconditions for economic integration, namely regional peace and security, have not yet been actualized. Therefore, the dissertation only discussed Nigeria’s financial contribution toward peacekeeping missions and not the harmonisation of trade policies in the region.

On the other end of this discussion was an analysis of Nigeria’s shortcomings and how they have hindered or undermined the efforts of regional integration in ECOWAS. Adejumobi (2016: 213) argues that economic integration can never be actualised without peace and a stable political climate. Conflict continues to be a significant component of the West African landscape and exacerbates security concerns for the region. Although Nigeria may have flocked millions toward the PKOs, they have constantly failed to address the causes of these conflicts namely, marginalisation and a cry for representation of all persons through democratization, the high poverty and unemployment rates, demand for empowerment and corruption to mention

a few. These issues are prominent in Nigeria and very few efforts have been made to curb them. Can one be a leader of a region yet fail to combat these issues domestically? Nigeria has been critiqued for their paradoxical tendencies of demonstrating democracy through mediation and diplomacy in conflict-ridden areas and yet they forsake democratic fundamentals at home. The #ENDSARS campaign illuminated the apparent violation of human rights that government officials turn a blind eye to. It is difficult to discuss the role of Nigeria in ECOWAS when the problems the region faced before the formation of the organisation presently persist. Both Nigeria and the regional organisation are still largely dependent on the West for funding. This in turn leads us back to the vulnerabilities accompanied by Western reliance, exploitation and marginalisation in the global economy.

5.3 Recommendations

Akokpari stated that Africa's resuscitation should be seen as the responsibility of Africa, with regional organisations at the forefront of this initiative. For Nigeria to successfully lead the region, it needs to work on resolving its issues domestically as they impact the entire region. The example of Buhari's border closure shows the impact that Nigeria has on regional trade and how Nigeria's actions affect citizens in the region. The issues that Nigeria faces domestically are similar to those faced in the region i.e. corruption, weak institutions, debt and Western dependence. For this reason, it is imperative for Nigeria to constructively engage these issues and effectively find solutions for the betterment of the region. Nigeria would also benefit from openly reflecting on where and why its dominance has harmed the regional block in recent years, although this is unlikely to be articulated by Nigeria's leaders. Nigeria's top politicians should be transparent about the opportunities and challenges of Nigeria's power within ECOWAS. Asante also affirms this and contends that regionalism will be driven by African governments and poor governmental commitment is a threat to integration. Essentially, the political will and commitment of Nigeria are prerequisites for effective integration

As African regions experiment with regionalism, member states must prioritise the mutual establishment of goals and objectives to ensure, political stability, and economic well-being in all their member states. The leaders must put aside their differences and unite to have the political will to implement indigenously concerted programs without the outsiders' interference. Nigeria's efforts should be stressed to build a concerted and robust relationship

between ECOWAS member countries and motivate the concept of monetary integration that seem achievable in the region.

To ensure effective integration of the West African region, other countries need to participate in the regional integration process by equally financially contributing to the region. Other member states also need to contribute to the region's political stability, i.e., when there is a need to send in troops for peacekeeping purposes, other countries also need to help Nigeria reduce its burden on the ECOWAS.

All the ECOWAS member countries must be treated and seen equal and should be granted equity in voting rights and all matters of the organisation for peace, stability, and regional development. The ECOWAS government should enact new policies that will boost intra-regional investment, employment, communication, and trade to alleviate transport and communication barriers in the region. Despite Nigeria being a regional power and a significant contributor to the peacekeeping missions in West Africa, other countries need to contribute toward sustaining ECOWAS. This will also ensure a balance of power in the region.

References

Adamu, M. (1992). 'An Analysis of Nigeria's Commitment to Integration in the Economic Community of West African States.' Unpublished M.Sc. Thesis, Bayero University, Kano.

Adebajo, A. (2008). 'Hegemony on a Shoestring: Nigeria's Post-Cold War Foreign policy'. In A. Adebajo, & A. R. Mustapha (eds.) *Gulliver's Troubles: Nigeria's Foreign Policy after the Cold War*, South Africa: University of KwaZulu Natal Press. Pp 1-37

Adejumobi, S. (2016). 'Region Building in West Africa' *Region building in Africa: Political and Economic Challenges.* New York: Palgrave MacMillan, pp 213- 230

Akokpari, J. (2008) "The Dilemmas of Regional Integration in Africa" in John Akokpari, Tim Murithi and Angela Ndinga-Mvumba (eds.), *The African Union and its Institutions (eds.)* Johannesburg: Jacana Press, pp. 85-110.

Akokpari, J. (2013). 'The Crisis of Social Cohesion in Africa: Is Regionalism the answer?' in Candice Moore (eds) *Regional Integration and Social Cohesion: Perspectives from the Developing World.,* Brussels: P.I.E Peter Lang, pp: 131-154.

Alden, C. and Soko, M. (2005). 'South Africa's economic relations with Africa: Hegemony and its discontents.' *Journal of Modern African Studies* 43(3): 367-392.

Amuwo, K. (2014). Nigeria's Continental Diplomatic Thrusts: The Limits of Africa's Nominally Biggest Economy. South Africa Institute of International Affairs Policy Briefing III.

Anyu, N., J. (2007). 'The International Court of Justice and Border-Conflict Resolution in Africa: The Bakassi Peninsula Conflict.' *Mediterranean Quarterly* 18 (3). Last accessed December 2015. Doi: 10.1215/10474552

Antoniades, A. (2008). 'From Theories of Hegemony-to-Hegemony Analysis in International Relations' [Paper Presentation], 49TH ISA Annual Convention on *Hegemony, Security and Defence in International Relations*. Available at https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/2709786.pdf [Accessed: 21 June 2020]

Asante, S. 1997. Regionalism and Africa's Development: Expectations, Reality and Challenges, Basingstoke, Macmillan Press

Bala, M. 2017. "The Challenges and Prospects of Regional and Economic Integration in West Africa", Asian Social Science, 13(5), pp. 24-33, DOI: 10.55.39/ass.v13n5p24

Baldwin, R. (2012). "Global supply chains: Why they emerged, why they matter, and where they are going," CEPR Discussion Papers 9103, C.E.P.R. Discussion Papers.

Bassey, C. and Nyong, M. (2012). “Nigeria and ECOWAS in the 21st Century: Challenges and Prospects of Meaningful Sub-Regional Integration”, in T.A. Imobighe and W.O. Alli (Eds.), Perspectives on Nigeria’s National and External Relations: Essays in Honour of Professor A. Bolaji Akinyemi. Ibadan: University Press

Boom, D. van den. (1996). Regionale Kooperation in Westafrika. Politik und Probleme der ECOWAS (p. 170). p. 170. Germany: Hamburg: Institut für Afrikakunde.

Bods, M. (2001). Regions and Regionalism: A Heretic View’. Discussion Paper II: Regionalism and Regional Integration in Africa

Bieler, A. and Morton, A. D. (2004). ‘A Critical Theory Route to Hegemony, World Order and Historical Change: Neo-Gramscian Perspective in International Relations,’ *Capital and Class*, 28 (82), pp 85-113. Available at http://cnc.sagepub.com/content/28/1/85 [Accessed 21 June 2020]

Beach, D. (2013) ‘The Fiscal Compact, euro-reforms and the challenge for the euro outs’, in N. Hvidt and H. Mouritzen (eds), Danish Foreign Policy Yearbook 2013, Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS), pp. 113–33.

Collier, E., Nicholson, L. I., Brock, B. W., Maussion, F., Essery, R., and Bush, A. B. G. (2014). Representing Moisture Fluxes and Phase Changes in Glacier Debris Cover Using a Reservoir Approach. The Cryosphere 8 (4), 1429–1444. doi:10.5194/tc-8-1429-2014

Collier, E., Nicholson, L. I., Brock, B. W., Maussion, F., Essery, R., and Bush, A. B. G. (2014). Representing Moisture Fluxes and Phase Changes in Glacier Debris Cover Using a Reservoir Approach. The Cryosphere 8 (4), 1429–1444. doi:10.5194/tc-8-1429-2014

Creswell, J. W. (2012). Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.

Danjuma, I., Jbrin, S. M., & Success, E. B. (2012). An assessment of the effectiveness of monetary policy in combating inflation pressure on the Nigerian economy. Erudite Journal of Business Administration and Management, 1(1), 7–16

Destradi, S. 2010. Regional Powers and Their Strategies: Empire, Hegemony, and Leadership. Review of International Studies 36 (4): 903–930.

Dirzauskaite, G., and Ilinca, N., C. (2017)/ "Understanding "Hegemony" in International Relations Theories".

Eze, C., Lemchi, J.I., et al (2010). "Agricultural Financing Policies and Rural Development In Nigeria", Agricultural Economics Society, 84th Annual Conference, March 29-31, 2010, Edinburgh, Scotland

Grunberg, I. (1990) "Exploring the 'Myth' of Hegemonic Stability." International Organization, vol. 44, no. 4, [MIT Press, University of Wisconsin Press, Cambridge University Press, International Organization Foundation], 1990, pp. 431–77, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2706850.

Hulse, M. (2016). Regional powers and leadership in regional institutions: Nigeria in ECOWAS and South Africa in SADC. (KFG Working Paper Series, 76). Berlin: Freie Universität Berlin, FB Politik- und Sozialwissenschaften, Otto-Suhr-Institut für Politikwissenschaft Kolleg-Forschergruppe "The Transformative Power of Europe"

Hengari, A, T. 2015. Nigeria: Pitfalls and Prospects: Nigeria and South Africa in Africa.

http://www.saiia.org.za/opinion-analysis/pitfalls-and-prospects-nigeria-and-south-africa-in-africa [Accessed 20 June 2020]

Hoekman, Bernard, Matoo Aaditya and English Philip. Development, Trade and the WTO, The World Bank, 2002

Holsti, K., J. (1963). "The Concept of Power in the Study of International Relations" *International Studies Association,* 7 (4), pp 179- 194.

Iyoha, A. M. (2005), "Enhancing Africa's Trade: From Marginalization to an Export-Led Approach to Development, African Development Bank," Economic Research Working Paper Series 77

Ivor L. Miller (2012) Bongó Itá: leopard society music and language in West Africa, Western Cuba, and New York City, African and Black Diaspora: An International Journal, 5:1, 85-103, DOI: 10.1080/17528631.2012.629437

Kendie, D. (2006). 'How Useful is Gramsci's Theory of Hegemony and Domination to the Study of African States?' *African Social Science Review*, 3 (3), pp 89-104. Available at https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/assr/vol3/iss3/5 [Accessed 20 June 2020]

Keohane, R., O. (1984). "*After Hegemony: Cooperation and discord in the world political economy*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Keohane, R., O. (1980). "The Theory of Hegemonic Stability and Changes in International Economic Regimes, 1967- 1977", in O.R. Holsti et al (Eds.), Change in the International System. Boulder: Westview Press

Kindleberger, C., P. (1981) "Dominance and Leadership in the International Economy: Exploitation, Public Goods, and Free Rides." International Studies Quarterly, vol. 25, no. 2, [International Studies Association, Wiley], 1981, pp. 242–54, https://doi.org/10.2307/2600355.

Lee, M. (2008). "From Coordination Conference to Development Community" in *the Political Economy of Regionalism in Southern Africa*. pp 44-70.

Mapuva, J. and Muyengwa-Mapuva, L. (2014)." The SADC Regional Bloc: What challenges and prospects for Regional Integration?: Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ldd.v18i1.2 [Accessed 05 April 2020]

Nolte, D. (2010). "How to compare regional powers: analytical concepts and research topics" *Review of International Studies,* 36 (1) pp 881-901

Nye, J., S. 2004. 'Wielding Power.' Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics

Nweke, R., C. (2010). "The Role of Nigeria in Restoring Peace in West Africa". African Social Review, 2 (8), pp1-75

Nwoke C.N., (2005), Nigeria and ECOWAS, in Ogwu U.Joy, ed., New Horizons for Nigeria in World Affairs, Lagos, NIIA,

Ogunnubi, O. and Akinola, A. (2017). South African and the Question of Hegemony in Africa' *Journal of Developing Societies*, 33 (4), pp 1-20. Available at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/321057992

Okpokpo, Ebenezer. (2000). "The challenges facing Nigeria's Foreign Policy in the Next Millennium", *African Studies Quarterly*, 3(3). Available at http://sites.clas.ufl.edu/afrcia-asq/files/Okpokpo-Vol-3-Isuues-3.pdf.

Ogbonna, S. & Osondu, Charles. (2015). Determinants of Supply of Funds to Agricultural Sector from Formal Sources in Nigeria from 1992 to 2012. Greener Journal of Agricultural Sciences. 5. 081-092. 10.15580/GJAS.2015.3.051815074.

Okeke Uzodike, Nwabufo (Ufo). (2016). South Africa and BRICS: Path to a new African hegemony?

Omo-ogbebor, D. O. (2017). Nigerian foreign policy approach towards ECOWAS. Journal of Human Sciences,14(4), 4015. https://doi.org/10.14687/jhs.v14i4.4656

Østergaard, Tom (1993): Classical Models of Regional Integration – what Relevance for Southern Africa? In Odén (ed.) Southern Africa after Apartheid – Regional Integration and External Resources. The Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, Uddevalla.

Osondu, M.O. (2015). "Membership in the Multilateral Economic Organizations: An Evaluation of Nigeria's Participation in ECOWAS (1985-2014)", International Journal of Development and Management Review, Vol. 10.

Pangestu, Mari and Scollay (2001) Robert. Regional Trading Arrangements: Stocktake and Next Steps, Trade Policy Forum, Bangkok, Thailand,

Schoeman, M. 2013. "Regional Integration, Regionalism, and Regionalization in Africa: An imagined reality?" *Regional Integration and Social Cohesion: Perspectives from the Developing World*. pp: 107-130.

Spiezio, K. Edward. "British Hegemony and Major Power War, 1815-1939: An Empirical Test of Gilpin's Model of Hegemonic Governance." International Studies Quarterly, vol. 34, no. 2, [International Studies Association, Wiley], 1990, pp. 165–81, https://doi.org/10.2307/2600707.

Taylor, S. (2016) "Region building in Southern Africa" *Region Building in Africa: Political and Economic Challenges* in Levine and Nagar (eds.) New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp 157-172

The Africa Report. (2019). "China's Growing Reach in Africa: Are We Seeing a Fair Trade?"

Available at https://www.theafricareport.com/17380/chinas-growing-reach-in-africa-are-we-seeing-a-fair-trade/ [Accessed 23 June 2020]

The Africa Report. (2019). "The French Colonial Tax: A Misleading heuristic for understanding Francaique"

Available at: https://www.theafricareport.com/20326/the-french-colonial-tax-a-misleading-heuristic-for-understanding-francafrique/ [Accessed 24 June 2019]

This Day. (2010). Foreign Policy: The New Nigeria in 2011-2020

http://www/thisdaylive.com/articles/foreign-policy-the-new-nigeria-in-2011-2020/75429

Todaro, M.P and Smith, S. Steven. Economic Development, 9th Ed, Pearson Education: Upper Saddle River, New Jersey, United States, 2006.

Yang, Yongzheng and Gupta, Sanjeev. Regional Trade Arrangements in Africa: Past Performance and the Way Forward, IMF Working Paper WP/05/36, 2005.

Yusuf, A. S., Ahmad, A. A., & Wali, M. N. (2018). ECOWAS Single Currency and the Political Constraints. International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences, 8(9), 537–546.

Young, O.R. (1991) 'Political leadership and regime formation: on the development of institutions in international society,' International Organization 45(3): 281–308.

Zabadi, I. S. and Onuoha, F. C. (2009). State of West Africa: A Survey of Security landscape. The Nigerian Army Quarterly Journal, 5(3): 304 – 324.

The Africa Report. (2019). "China's Growing Reach in Africa: Are We Seeing a Fair Trade?"