E.U Versus ECOWAS for the Purpose of Regional Integration

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Abstract

E.U and ECOWAS both are regional organizations which emerged through the same process with the same purpose and approach as well as their goals of achieving regional integration through the use of economic spill over as the leading sector towards the regional development and cooperation. E.U emerged as a regional organization known as ECSC in 1951 after second world war in order to hinder another occurrence of war in Europe and stop the rivalry and conflict between France and Germany, which was actually responsible for the most violent conflict in their continent and to bring prosperity to all member states, set up to vibrate the energy of France and Germany to be more productive in terms of development and achieve its own mission of regional integration. The successful economic integration of Western Europe after 1957 inspired West African leaders to start thinking about how to put their efforts and provide their resources together for regional integration as the only way out of achieving the dividends of independence to their people and a relief to the hardship of many years of colonial administration and sufferings. The primary objective of this paper is to show the similarity of emergence between E.U and ECOWAS for the purpose of regional integration. The research is qualitative in nature and It adopted content analysis which is descriptive. The result found, is a procedure followed by the both organizations for the purpose of regional integrations. In conclusion, one can understand the similarity between the two organizations.

Keywords: Regional Integration, Evolution of E.U, Evolution of ECOWAS, Roles of Regional Integration.

1. Introduction

For almost a century, especially after the Second World War, the nation-states Identified the need to work together in order to address issues that are of great concern to them. These issues include economic, political, socio-cultural and military. For this reason, integration becomes necessary for the nation states. It is on the basis of this understanding that various regional integrations were formed with different motives. The trend of globalization poses a serious threat especially to nation-states that compelled them to work together on different platforms. As a result, the European Union emerged as a regional organization (known as ECSC) in 1951 after Second World War in order to hinder another occurrence of war in Europe and stop the rivalry and conflict between France and Germany, which was actually responsible for the most violent conflict in their continent. The integration project was inspired by the seven-nation to create European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), set up to vibrate the energy of France and Germany to be more productive in development and forgive each other on the past occurrence. The Economic Community of West African States was created in 1975 in Lagos Nigeria to achieve regional economic goals and solve regional problems.

1.1 Theoretical Framework

The study will apply the neofunctional theory as its guiding theoretical framework. Neo-functionalism is a theory of regional integration built on the network of Ernst Haas (German) and Leon Lindberg (an American). The neofunctional theory is a theory that tries to adopt the use of spill-over as a concept that attempts to indicate that, whenever you want to integrate the first sector, then you have to incorporate the related area so as to enjoy the full benefits of that integration.

According to Tranholm-Mikkelsen, Jeppe, "neofunctional theory adopted spill-over as a key concept which states that, to achieve all the advantages of integration of the first sector you need to integrate the related areas. An example of this is the ECSC [European Coal and Steel Community] evolving into other energy sectors and forming EURATOM. There are three types of spill-over, functional spill-over, political spill-over and cultivated spill-over. Firstly, the functional spill-over, which regards spill-over in an economic context. For example, this might involve integrating coal and steel, then integrating transport systems so that coal and steel are moved around more quickly. Secondly, there is political spill-over, where political actors shift their allegiance to a new centre, for example from the National Parliament to Brussels.

Thirdly, there is cultivated spill-over, which is the idea that institutions drive further integration by being in practice; for example the European Commission's growing autonomy" (Trenholm-Mikkelsen, Jeppe, n.d.).

According to Hass (as cited in Anastassia, 2011), he defined regional integration as; "the method in which political actors in different national settings are persuaded to move their loyalties, expectations and political activities to the new established central authority, that institutions are in needs and possessions of jurisdiction in the former national states." Hass exposes the regional integration as a situation in which all political actors surrender their powers and loyalties of political activities to the central authority in order that there are cooperation and development in local integration settings.

According to Hass, Schmitter and Moravcsik, (as cited in Anastassia, 2011), he noted that "the major debate on the theories of regional integration was among neofunctionalism, inter-governmentalism as well as liberal intergovernmentalism. Neofunctionalism was selected for two main reasons. First reason, it enlightens the fundamental stage of European integration. Secondly, neofunctionalism expresses the process of regional integration worldwide not only in Europe, but globally, and it brings a criterion that exposes the success and failure of these processes beyond Europe." Due to these reasons the neofunctional theory was chosen for European regional integration due to its superiority to the intergovernmental and liberal intergovernmental theories. Because of neo-functional approach has superiority and global recognition, and it can be applied to ECOWAS regional integration.

According to Hass et al. (as cited in Anastassia, 2011), who noted the central idea of the new functional theory is that "regional integration is a way to develop through gradual integration of a particular sector which can "spill over" from the integrated area into new areas". When this occurs, other sectors will be integrated due to the integration of the first area which spilled over into other areas and caused their integration, as well as regional integration and development.

1.2 Problem Statement

The purpose of this research is to conduct a study on regional integration and its role. To discover the similarities of emergence of European Union (EU) and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and the theory that the both organizations applied.

1.3 Research Methodology

The research is a qualitative in nature and has adopted content analysis method which is descriptive (biased content analysis). This study heavily relied on secondary data whereby data was collected from books, journals, dissertations, newspapers, magazines, seminar papers, and articles.

1.4 Regional Integration

Regional Integration does not have a single accepted definition, but different scholarly views with different ideologies. According to Jacqueline Mambara, regional integration means, the collaboration of countries that are close to each other in terms of economic linkages and geographical location to sign an agreement on trade and other economic activities (Amadu et al., 2011). According to European Union, it defines regional integration as "the process of removing political, physical, economic and social barriers which sharply differentiated one country from its neighbours, and formation of economic linkages which will manage and share resources among countries for achieving common national goals by mutual agreement" (Lolette Kritzing-Van Niekerk, 2011). According to Ojo, integration can be seen as a system in which two or more persons or group of people agreed to cooperation with each other for the achievement of specific goals. Ojo et al. (as cited in Ali, 2013). He stated that, whenever individuals or community agree to share their resources together is it natural resources, human manpower, land, water etc., this considered as the integration.

Integration defined as a situation in which distinct state actors submit their national loyalties, sovereignty and powers to the central authority for cooperation. Doherty and Pfaltzgraff (as cited in Ali, 2013), he noted that, if state actors agreed to submit their power of sovereignty to the central authority for collective cooperation for the achievement of specific goals, is called integration. According to Thomas, he said, due to the importance of integration towards development, the African Union Summit in 1991 in Abuja, tried to initiate an African stock market, for the integration of the five African sub-regions: Central, East, North, South and West Africa (Thomas, 2010).

1.5 Evolution of E.U

European Union emerged as a regional organization (known as ECSC) in 1951 after Second World War in order to hinder

another occurrence of war in Europe and stop the rivalry and conflict between France and Germany, which was actually responsible for the most violent conflict in their continent. The integration project was inspired by the seven-nation to create European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), set up to vibrate the energy of France and Germany to be more productive in development and forgive each other on the past occurrence. According to Urwin, he said that "in Churchill's speech in Zurich in September 1946, he stated that, the important point of unity of cooperation among the European countries, was to reconcile the rivalry between France and Germany, while Britain would not take part in the new Europe due to the reason that Britain still has the dream and ambition of remaining the world hegemony" (Urwin, 1995). According to Gillingham, he said that, "in May 1950, Shuman advocated the Franco-German cooperation in European industries so as to prevent occurrence of war and forgive each other, he stated that, not only cooperation in ECSC, but to end the ancient rivalry between the two big countries and build new supranational authority" (Gillingham, 1991).

The signing Treaty of Rome in 1957 brought twelve European countries together to form a famous organization known as European Economic Community (EEC). The main target of EEC was not only to prevent the occurrence of war, but to bring prosperity to all member states, and develop its own mission. Thus, in 1973, the United Kingdom (UK) joined the organization, making the membership to thirteen after some critiques and Euro-sceptic reasons. According to Urwin, the treaties of Rome for creation of EEC and the EURATOM was signed in 1957 that stated the significant progress among the six member countries of cooperation that expanded from the coal and steel industries to trade and energy. The EEC Treaty said that, the customs union would be formed while the customs duties and other non-tariff trade barriers among the member countries would be abolished. The main objectives were to promote the economic activities, to establish a common market, to raise the standard of living, to increase stability and close relations among the member countries, (Urwin, 1995).

Indeed, the European Economic Community (EEC) and its successor the European Union (EU) succeeded in vibrating other countries and inspired them for regional integration. In 1960, the emergence of 'youth culture' which brought a cultural revolution and widened the generation gap that helped the economic development in Europe and caused the European Union countries to stop charging custom duties whenever they traded with each other. They also had an agreement over joint control on food production, so that everyone has enough to eat, and surplus agricultural products are provided for unforeseen contingencies. The EU regional policies started transferring huge amount of money to create jobs opportunities and infrastructural facilities in poorer areas. The European Parliament increased its power and influence in the E.U affairs so that in 1979 all citizens can, for the first time in history, elect their members directly.

According to Urwin, he said that, by the mid of 1970s and before the 1990s, the Council of Europe became the largest organization and its membership expanded to 20 member states, (Urwin, 1995). In 1981, Greece became the fourteen member of E.U, and then Spain and Portugal followed five years later making the membership sixteen. The treaty of six years program was signed for sorting out problems with the free-flow of trade across the European Union borders and creating the single market among the member countries. On 9 November 1989, the Berlin wall was destroyed for free flow across the border between East and West Germany for the first time in 28 years; this led to the unification of both East and West Germany in October 1990. As a result of the collapse of communism in Central and Eastern Europe, European countries came close to each other and became neighbors. In 1993, a single market emerged with the four freedoms to each member; freedom of movement of goods, services, people, and money. 1993 to 1999, Europeans were oriented on how to protect their environment and act together when it comes to security issues and defense.

1.6 Evolution of ECOWAS

The invitation for the formation of a West African community union was initiated by President of Liberia, William Tubman, in 1964. The first treaty was agreed and signed by Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone in February 1965. However, the treaty did not work as expected during the treaty. In April 1972, the two Generals in person of General Yakubu Gowon of Nigeria and General Gnassingbe Eyadema of Togo renewed the idea and re-launched it, and then they drafted its proposals and different treaties. The two Generals organized several trips to twelve West African countries to propagate their idea on forming an organization that will tackle and cope with economic problems of the region. According to Bundu (as cited in Chijioke, 2013), "economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was established on May 28, 1975 by the two generals, General Yakubu Gowon of Nigeria and General Gnassingbe Eyadema of Togo. The main ambition is to bring cooperation and collaboration in the socio-economic policies of the region. The integration of the sub-region became unavoidable need to set up the region as well as the African continent and redress the neo-colonial challenges and prepare for the global capital-driven economy. 19th century characterized by many changes and transformation and marked by communism, capitalism and globalization that involve general direction of

technological innovation that is a product of progressive research and experimentation in all human efforts"

On 10-15 December 1973, a meeting was held in Lome, (Togo) aiming at finalising the treaty documents. Experts and jurists examined the Treaty document at the meeting held in Accra, (Ghana) in January 1974. Another meeting of ministers took place in Monrovia, Liberia on January 1975; all the sessions were aimed at creating economic union for integration and cooperation. Eventually, the fifteen West African countries came together and signed the treaty for the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) on 28 May 1975 in Lagos, Nigeria. Then in 1977, Cape Verde joined the organisation after its independence from Portugal in September 1973. The economic community of West Africa is composed of the following member states: Benin, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Burkina Faso, Liberia, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Mali and Togo. However, in December 1999, Mauritania withdrew its membership from ECOWAS as a result of its disagreement with some decision made at the summit. According to Thomas (2010), "due to the need for Security and self-preservation, people with common language and culture used to come together to form communities. This Need for security, self-preservation and other issues makes communities to integrate, and nations emerge for achieving their goal, as well as development" According to Ogbonna and Ogunidin (2013), "the birth of the ECOWAS in 1975 by West African leaders through the signing of its treaty by pioneering members, is a great achievement and success in the region and entire Africa. The region is heterogeneous in terms of historical background, colonialism and other complexities. By formation of ECOWAS, West Africa will achieve economic integration and cooperation"

2. Roles of Regional Integration

2.1 Regional Integration as a Tool for Free and Fair Trade

It plays a vital role in the member states for free and fair trade, whereby the tariffs, custom duties, and other trade barriers as well as restriction of mobility of land, capital, resources and human, are removed among the member countries and imposed on non-member states. Regional integration increases free and fair trade in which a large regional market provides opportunities for economies of scale, well-stimulated competition and incentives for investment. It contributes to smooth and gradual integration of the global economy and promotes sustainable trade stability and security. According to Gavin, he stated that, "statistically, whenever countries integrate their factor endowments, technical efficiency, and market size, definitely the capacity will increase from intra-industry trade to intra-industry investment, while transport costs still important" (Gavin, 2001). Gavin tried to show the expansion of free and fair trade whenever member states attach their resources together for integration; their trade will improve to intra-industry investment.

2.2 Regional Integration as a Tool for Peace and Security

After the end of intra-state conflicts, the indicators show that, regional actors play a vital role as third parties in mediating conflicts between the warring parties as well as their active involvement in building peace and settlement of war outbreak pressure through the sending of intermediary troops for peace enforcement and effective crises management among the warring parties. According to Weaver et al., he said "at the end of the cold war, the security agenda changed from bipolar conflict to regional and local conflicts, while the security threat not only for military conflicts but political, economic, social, and environmental issues as defined by societal security, as in 1990s it witnessed the role of regional integration organizations serves as tools for regional peace and security as expressed by Copenhagen school" (Weaver, 1993; Buzan, 1993; Wiberg, 1993). According to Laakso, "EU as a giant organization that improved its conflict prevention and peacebuilding capacity as well as crisis management beyond the police and military measures to promote cooperation and conditional aid" (Laakso, 2002). According to Lehtinen, he said, "for the purpose of African regional integration mission, EU tried to integrate African countries into a global economy and regional security" (Lehtinen, 2002).

2.3 Regional Integration as a Tool for Global Democratic Governance

Regional integration initiatives are significant for building global democratic governance that serve as intermediaries for national, regional and global issues that arise, brought by globalization which need to find global solutions by having consensus from global institutions. EU as the giant institution for regional integration, it allowed for the creation of multi-level governance system for macro-regional decision-making whereby EU leadership donated for building multi-level climate change management system in the future. United Nations (UN) played a wonderful role in consolidating global solution on environmental problematic issues of global climate change which threatens the environment due to global

warming as a result of pollution and other environmental challenges that arise. According to United Nations Report said that, "the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) assured that, the UN conference on climate change as a tool for addressing climate change and global issues as well as its objective of reducing the greenhouse gases" (Report of the WSSD, 2002)

2.4 Regional Integration as a Tool for Human Development

It serves as a backbone of human development program, that was designed to contribute to the capacity welfare of member states citizens through education, creativity, women and youth empowerment, poverty reduction, economic growth and development, and implement regional action plan for controlling, consumption and trafficking of drugs, addressing money laundering, involvement of civil society, controlling for health problems, child trafficking, and abuse, child soldiers, etcetera. According to Salman, he said "the ECOWAS Parliament tries to contribute towards the attainment of the MDGs, because the MDGs are essential for sustainable human development, and it was also the means of achieving meaningful life and economic growth, it reduces hunger, ensures gender equality, improves health and education, accesses potable water and sanitation which all these really improve the quality of life of people as well as standard of living in the sub-region" (Salman R.K, 2011).

3. Conclusion

In conclusion, one can understand the similarity of emergence of the both organizations, ECOWAS and EU for the purpose of their regional integration, both used the same approach of economic spillover of neo-functional theory which served as a leading sector of their regional integration. European Union emerged as a regional organization (known as ECSC) in 1951 after Second World War in order to hinder another war outbreak in Europe and reconcile the rivalry and conflict between France and Germany, while the successful economic integration of Western Europe after 1957 inspired West African leaders to start thinking about regional integration as the only way out and achieving the dividends of independence to their people and a relief to the hardship of many years of colonial administration and sufferings. The African scholars and leaders saw cooperation as a way of achieving economic, political and social integration during the debate of radical wing of pan-African Union, which led by Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana. Regional integration played vital roles in the development of the both organizations ECOWAS and EU for the achievement of their objectives.

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