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KIGALI INDEPENDENT UNIVERSITY ULK

SCHOOL OF LAW

DEPARTMENT OF LAW

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Research proposal is submitted at school of law in partial fulfillment of the academic requirement for the award of bachelor degrees with honors in law prepared by:

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Kigali, August 2024

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to:

My family (My Parents, Brothers and Sisters)

My Girlfriend,

My head of Family,

My Supervisor, MR BAHATI Vedaste

The School of Law

Kigali Independent University ULK

All my friends and classmates

DECLARATION

I, NDONG MBA NDONG JEAN GEORGES YOANN, hereby declare that to the best of my knowledge the work presented in this dissertation entitled “THE IMPACTS OF EAC ON REGIONAL TRADE AND ECONOMIC INTEGRATION” is original and it has not been previously submitted elsewhere for any academic qualification. Any supportive materials used in terms of references from other persons’ works are found in the footnotes and in the bibliography.

Date:

Signature:

DECLARATION BY SUPERVISOR

.....

.....

Date:

Signature:

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Upon the completion of this final project, I am pleasing the Almighty God for his blessing and grace in my daily life. So, I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to all those who contributed to its completion. Through this view, I want to recognize the influence of my family members whose words of encouragement from the start of my life and assistance either morally or financially.

My head of family who had a vital influence on my academic life, and brothers and sisters, friends and families who helped directly or indirectly to achieve my work, I thank the authorities of the, KIGALI INDEPENDENT UNIVERSITY (ULK), specifically the School of Law for having put in place the module of final project to transform theoretical

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May God bless you all!

NDONG MBA NDONG JEAN GEORGES YOANN

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Art: Article

I.e.: in other words

USA: United States of America

No: Number

P: Page

Para: Paragraph

Vol: Volume

ADR: Alternative Dispute Resolutions

EAC: East African Community

EAPP: East Africa Power Pool

ICT: Information and Communication Technology

ONA: One Network Area

EASS: East Africa Submarine Cable System

OSBPs: One Stop Boarder Posts

SMEs: Small and Medium Enterprises

EABC: East Africa Business Council

NTB: Non-Tariff Barriers

SCT: Single Custom Territory

EASRA: East Africa Security Regulatory Acts

EACCOMI: East African Community Capital Market Infrastructure

EACFSDRP: East African Community Financial Sector Development Regionalization
Project

KCB: Kenyan Commercial Bank

CIS: Credit Information Sharing

EAPS: East Africa Payment System

EALA: East African Legislative Assembly

CSO: Civil Society Organization

EACOF: East African Community Organization Forum

INTERPOL: International Criminal Police Organization

MLA: Mutual Legal Assistance

ICC: International Criminal Court

RIB: Rwanda Investigation Bureau

ATM: Automatic Teller Machine

EACO: East African Community Organization Congress

ITU: International Telecommunication Union

NISS: National Information Security Strategy

NISP: National Information Security Policy

NICI: National Information and Communication Infrastructure plan

1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The East African Community (EAC) is a regional intergovernmental organization which objectives include the creation of a common market, the establishment of a monetary union, and the eventual formation of a political federation.¹ This study aims to investigate the influence and overall impact of the East African Community (EAC) legal framework on regional trade and economic integration within the region. This study explored the historical background of the EAC, its key objectives, and the various initiatives and policies implemented to promote economic cooperation and integration among member states. By analyzing the challenges that hinder the effective successful of regional trade and economic integration in the region, before the general conclusion and recommendation of this study, it proposes the necessary mechanisms to be implemented in EAC as the way of achieving sustainable development in the region resulting from regional trade and economic integration.

1.1. Background of the study

In history EAC has established in 1917 by British colonial territory composed by KENYA, TANZANIA and UGANDA, they establish Custom Union followed by East African High

commission in 1948 and East African Common Service Organization in 1961.² However, we have to note that EAC was established by treaty of East African Cooperation signed by KENYA; UGANDA and TANZANIA in 1967.³ A number of political and economic factors led to the original EAC's collapse in 1977,⁴ the treaty for the establishment of the East

African Community which was signed in 1999 and went into effect in 2000, ⁵ brought the EAC back to life after many years.⁶ The goal of the new EAC was to increase partner state collaboration and regional integration. Ever since it was resurrected, the EAC has grown and changed dramatically where different partner states joined the community like Burundi, Republic of Rwanda, Somalia; Democratique Republic of Congo and South Sudan.⁷ The

East African Court of Justice, the East African Legislative Assembly, and the East African Customs Union are just a few of the organizations that the EAC has founded, organization of EAC seeks to promote economic, social, and political integration among its member states, one of the key objectives of the EAC is to establish a common market and a monetary union, with the ultimate goal of creating a political federation.⁸

The EAC has implemented various initiatives to facilitate regional trade and economic integration, such as the establishment of a customs union,⁹ a common external tariff,¹⁰ and the free movement of goods, services, capital, and labor,¹¹ the regional cooperation and integration envisaged in the EAC is broad, the objectives of the Community shall be to develop policies and programs aimed at widening and deepening cooperation among the partner states in political, economic, social and cultural fields; research and technology, defense, security and legal and judicial affairs for their mutual benefit,¹² the key pillars of integration include the on-going implementation of the different stages of the customs union, common market, monetary union and Political Federation, to complement the key pillars of integration are the cross-cutting enabling and facilitating

interventions in legal and judicial affairs, infrastructure, energy, social development, and institutional developments.¹³ EAC's legal and institutional frameworks are mainly based on the treaty for the establishment of the East African Community, and its Protocols, its institutional framework consists of, inter alia, the Executive, Legislative and Judicial arms.¹⁴ EAC established organs of the community composed by the Summit; the Council; the Coordination Committee; Sectoral Committees; the East African Court of Justice; the East African Legislative Assembly; the Secretariat; and such other organs as may be established by the Summit.¹⁵ Summit is composed by heads of state or government of partner state,¹⁶ its role is to give general directions, to consider annual report submitted to them by council, review the state of peace, security and good governance within the Community and the progress achieved towards the establishment of a Political Federation of the Partner States, delegating the exercise of any of its functions, subject to any conditions which it may think fit to impose, to a member of the Summit, to the Council or to the Secretary General and others.¹⁷ The council is made of the Minister responsible for

East African Community affairs of each Partner State; such other Minister of the Partner States as each Partner State may determine; and the Attorney General of each Partner State,¹⁸ the function of council perform as policy organ of the community; promote, monitor and keep under constant review the implementation of the programmes of the Community and ensure the proper functioning and development of the Community in accordance with this Treaty, cause all regulations and directives made or given by it under this Treaty to be published in the Gazette.¹⁹

The co-ordination committee consists of the Permanent Secretaries responsible for East African Community affairs in each Partner State and such other Permanent Secretaries of the Partner States as each Partner State may determine,²⁰ in their function they submit from time to time, reports and recommendations to the Council either on its own initiative

or upon the request of the Council, on the implementation of this Treaty, implement the decisions of the Council as the Council may direct, receive and consider reports of the Sectoral Committees and coordinate their activities; may request a Sectoral Committee to investigate any particular matter; and shall have such other functions as are conferred upon it by this Treaty.²¹The sectoral committee responsible for the preparation of a comprehensive implementation programme and the setting out of priorities with respect to its sector; monitor and keep under constant review the implementation of the programmes of the Community with respect to its sector, submit from time to time, reports and recommendations to the Co-ordination Committee either on its own initiative or upon the request of the Co-ordination Committee concerning the implementation of the provisions of this Treaty that affect its sector; and have such other functions as may be conferred on it by or under this Treaty.²²

1.2. Interest of the study

This study is comprised by personal, academic, and scientific interests; the study on the impacts of EAC on the regional trade and economic integration, provided the key challenges which hinder the successful of regional trade and economic integration as a key objective of EAC, the study propose necessary mechanisms to be implemented in EAC as the way of achieving effective and successful trade and economic integration on the region.

1.2.1. Personal interest

As a year 3 law student, I am deeply interested in the legal and policy frameworks governing regional economic integration. The EAC, as a prominent example of a regional organization, presents a valuable opportunity to explore the role of law and policy in facilitating cross-border trade, investment, and economic cooperation. It is also a great opportunity to understand different mechanisms used in international trade which contribute to economic growth and cooperation among different countries not only

regionally as in the case of the EAC but also internationally. Finally, studying the impact of the EAC on regional trade and integration aligns with academic and professional aspirations in the field of international business law.

1.2.2. Academic interest

This study contributed to the existing body of literature on regional economic integration, with a specific focus on the East African context. The findings of this research may provide valuable insights for policymakers, academics, and practitioners working in the field of regional development and integration.

1.2.3. Scientific interest

The proposed study employed a rigorous, multidisciplinary approach, drawing on theories and methodologies from fields such as international law, economics, and political science. This interdisciplinary perspective allows for a comprehensive analysis of the complex and multifaceted issues surrounding the impact of the EAC on regional trade and economic integration.

1.3. Delimitation of the study

The study delimited to the East African Community (EAC) region, which includes partner states such as Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi, Rwanda, South Sudan, Federal of Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The study focuses on the legal frameworks, challenges, and mechanisms related with trade and economic integration within the geographical boundaries of the EAC member states.

1.3.1. Delimitation in space

The study focused on the East African region, specifically the member states of the EAC, Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania, Republic of Somalia and Uganda with a special emphasis on measure specifically used in the region to deal with the regional trade and economic integration, regional scope allow for a comprehensive analysis of the

EAC's impact on trade and economic integration within the East African context.

1.3.2. Delimitation in domain

The study is delimited to the domain of laws relating with regional organizations and taking emphasize on the international economic laws and international business laws within the EAC. It examined the existing legal instruments, judicial practices, and regional cooperation mechanisms established by the EAC to facilitate regional trade and economic integration. The study focused on analyzing the legal and practical challenges faced by member state as hindrance to the successful of regional trade and economic integration.

1.3.3 Delimitation in time

This study focused on the current state regional trade and economic integration in the EAC and the challenges faced in recent years. However, it may also consider the historical evolution of the EAC's efforts to strengthen regional trade and economic integration and the development of relevant legal frameworks over time. The study may also consider recent developments, trends, and emerging issues related to regional trade and economic integration within the EAC. The study focusses on the period from the establishment of the EAC in 1999 to the present day, this timeframe enabled the researcher to examine the evolution of the EAC's policies, the implementation of its initiatives, and the observable impacts on regional trade and economic integration over the past two decades as well the foreseeable future of the EAC in regards to the implementation of further measure in dealing with regional trade and economic integration.

1.4. Problem statement

The policies and legislations of EAC is clear in its purpose of promoting regional trade and economic integration²³ but the achievement is still challenged by different reasons like insecurity is some state of region, lack of common tariff, lack of custom union, lack of successful in political federation poor infrastructure, and a lack of harmonized policies

and regulations.²⁴ The establishment of the EAC was intended to address these challenges and promote regional cooperation and integration, however, the extent to which the EAC has been successful in achieving these goals remains uncertain, the East African Community (EAC) as the strongest regional integration in Africa aiming to create a unified regional trade, economic integration and political federation to facilitate prosperity and regional stability.²⁵

Despite significant progress, the EAC faces different obstacles that hinder the effective succession of regional trade and economic integration, these challenges include political challenges like sovereignty concerns, lack of political will, lack of harmonized trade policy, economic barriers like disparities in GDP of state members, social challenges such as language barriers and infrastructural challenges, addressing these barriers is crucial for the successful of regional trade and economic integration within EAC's integration and it must enhance sustainable development within state members.²⁶ Economically, the most issues facing the EAC as the hindrance to the successful of regional trade and economic integration is the persistent non-tariff barriers (NTBs) that continue to impede intra-regional trade, even if there is an agreement to dismiss these barriers, some member states still maintain protectionist policies that limit the free movement of goods, services, and people EAC region, Non-tariffs barrier not only affect regional trade and economic integration but also challenge the trust and cooperation necessary for deeper integration, the disparities in GDP of members state of EAC les to the challenge which hinder the harmonization of policies aiming to facilitate regional trade and economic integration.²⁷

Political instability and conflicts among state members of EAC complicate the integration process, here we can take an example for un-lasting conflicts between Rwanda and DRC which hinder regional trade and economic trade where there is no free movement

of goods, services and labor, as its consequences it hinder the cohesion of the community and diverted attention and resources from integration efforts, in addition to that, the insecurity in some state and different democracy found in those countries and lack of rule of law in some state hinder the creation of unified political federation which facilitate regional trade and economic integration.²⁸ To combat these challenges and advance the regional trade and economic integration based on the roots cause of which hinder the effective successful of regional trade and economic integration within member states of EAC, the study aims to critically analyses barriers to effective success of regional and economic integration within the EAC and propose comprehensive measures to overcome these obstacles. By analyzing both the challenges and potential solutions, this study seeks to contribute to the body of knowledge on regional integration in East Africa and provide practical recommendations for policymakers and stakeholders involved in the EAC integration process.

1.5. Research questions

1. What are the key challenges and barriers that have hindered the successful of regional trade and economic integration within EAC?
2. What further measures can be implemented by the EAC for effective regional economic integration?

1.6. Research hypotheses

1. The key challenges that hinder the successful of EAC's trade and economic integration include lack of uniformity in tariffs, political problems, culture different, different GDP of members states poor infrastructure and a lack of harmonized policies and regulations among member states.
2. The mechanisms for effective regional economic integration on EAC must be adopted as the way of achieving development in region and in members' state; there

must be political will to share benefits equally, harmonization of laws and policy relating with trade and economy, establishment of common tariff and establishment of custom union.

1.7. Research objectives

The study has both general objective and specific objectives, as it aimed to criticize the laws and obstacles that hinder the effective successful of regional trade and economic integration in EAC and it related specific objective with research questions by revealing the challenges faced by state members and international investors in the EAC when they engage in international investment and propose mechanisms to be enforced as the way of overcoming those challenges.

1.7.1. General objective

The primary objective of this research proposal is to analyze the impact of the East African Community (EAC) on regional trade and economic integration, with a view to identifying the key factors that have influenced the failure of the Community's initiatives and potential measures that can be further implemented in regards to dealing with the subject of regional trade and economic integration in the region.

1.7.2. Specific objective

1. To identify the key challenges and barriers that has hindered the effective successful of EAC's trade and economic integration.
2. To propose the mechanisms for effective regional economic integration implemented by EAC and its member states as the way of achieving sustainable development in the region resulting from regional trade and economic integration.

1.8. Research methodology

Research methodology comprised the methodical techniques applied to examine particular problems or queries that need to be answered. These techniques are a component of a larger process that frames and readies a topic for close examination. In

their constant effort to solve issues or provide answers to questions, researchers use a variety of strategies to manage the inherent risk and uncertainty involved in their work. The selected methodology offers an organized approach to collect and process data, hence influencing the way the topic is perceived and investigated. Researchers must maintain their adaptability and flexibility throughout this process because they are working in a dynamic, ever-evolving field of knowledge.²⁹

8.1. Research technique

In this work, documentary analysis is the main research method used. Unlike records made especially for research, written texts are examined using this method as socially situated products. The primary focus is on gathering and examining documentation pertinent to the effects of the East African Community (EAC) on economic integration and commerce within the region. This method is used because it can give relevant and accurate information about the topic. The procedure incorporates a reflective approach that takes the ethical implications of social research into consideration, going beyond simple fact-finding. A theoretical framework is used to ensure an organized and contextual understanding of the material in order to interpret document content efficiently. The ability of this documentary technique to provide extensive, pre-existing data sources makes it especially useful in social research.³⁰

8.1.1. Documentary technique

Documentary technique involves using official or personal documents for research, employing empirical methodologies, documentary research, and qualitative data analysis.³¹ This documentary review analyzed EAC's impacts on regional trade and economic integration using the doctrinal method, focusing on the legislative system and its administration rather than its intended state.³² The study primarily utilized primary data from legislations and laws through desk review, analyzing relevant regulations and policies related to regional trade and economic integration within EAC.

The legal status analysis under the doctrinal methodology, the study located and collect the applicable laws³³ and apply them to the specific set of facts related to the impacts of EAC in regional trade and economic integration. The documentary technique helped researchers identify gaps in regional trade and economic integration legal frameworks within the EAC region, examining root causes of challenges hindering successful cybercrimes and revealing current legal status.

8.2. RESEARCH METHODS

During this study the following methods of analytical and exegetic methods are employed to collect information for the issue of elaborating the research problem of this study in details.

8.2.1. Analytical method

The study analyzed the East African Community's (EAC) impact on regional trade and economic integration, focusing on legal frameworks, judicial practices, and regional cooperation mechanisms. It identifies similarities, differences, strengths, and weaknesses in EAC member states' approaches, challenges faced by judicial systems, and implemented solutions. The analysis also evaluates customs unions, tariffs, incentives, and infrastructure development initiatives.³⁴

8.2.2. Exegetic method

This study used an exegetic method to analyze legal documents and regulations related to regional trade and economic integration within the East African Community (EAC). It examines legislative background, preparatory studies, and discussions, providing insights into the practical implications and effectiveness of these legal structures, thereby enhancing the understanding of regional economic cooperation.³⁵

1.9. Subdivision of the study

This study is composed by only three chapters where chapter one is composed by conceptual framework and theoretical framework and defining key terms relating with my

topic, chapter two discuss the problems of this study in deep by analyzing challenges and barriers that have hindered the effective implementation of the EAC's trade and economic integration policies, the last chapter is chapter three which propose necessary mechanisms that can be implemented by the EAC in order to further combat challenges relating to regional trade and economic

CHAPTER1. CONCEPTUAL AND THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter combined conceptual and theoretical framework relating with regional trade and economic integration, it emphasizes on the key terms relating with regional trade and economic integration.

1.1. Definition of Key Terms

The following are key terms relating with the topic of this study as it stand as the impacts of

EAC on regional trade and economic integration.

1.1.1. Regional Trade

Regional trade agreement refers to the treaty that is signed by two or more nations to encourage the free movement of goods and services across the border of its members.³⁶

1.1.2. Intergovernmental organization

Intergovernmental organization refers to the entity created by treaty involving two or more states to work in good faith on issue of common interest³⁷

1.1.3. Economic Integration

Economic integration involves the agreement between states that usually include the elimination of trade barriers and aligning the monetary and fiscal policies leading to the more interconnected global economy.³⁸

1.1.5 Trade Liberalization

Trade liberalization is removal or reduction of restrictions or barriers on the free exchange of goods between nations, here member state emphasize on tariffs and non-tariff barriers.³⁹

1.1.6. Custom union

Custom Union are an agreement between two or more countries to remove trade barriers and lower or eliminate tariffs, members of customs Union generally apply a common external tariff on imports from non-member states.⁴⁰

1.1.7. Common market

The common market refers to the agreement between two or more countries removing all trade barriers between themselves, establishing common tariffs and non-tariffs barriers for importers and allowing for the free movement of labor, capital and services between themselves⁴¹

1.1.8. Common external tariffs

Common external tariffs refer to the identical rate of tariff imposed on goods imported from foreign countries.⁴²

1.2. Theoretical Framework

According to this study, the analyzed theoretical framework composed by regional economic integration process, stages of economic integration, intraregional trade trade creation and trade diversion

1.2.1 Regional Economic Integration Process

The goal of regional economic integration is to increase economic efficiency, foster political cooperation, and improve the overall welfare of participating countries. It is a multifaceted and intricate process that involves countries in a given geographic area working together to reduce or eliminate barriers to the free flow of goods, services, and factors of production between one another. The theoretical foundations of regional

integration are derived from a variety of economic theories, such as political economy, growth theory, and international trade theory, more economic interconnectedness is a common experience for nations progressing through the stages of integration, this can result in more political collaboration and, in certain situations, a shift toward shared governance systems.⁴³

1.2.2 Stages of Economic Integration

The commonly recognized stages of economic integration are Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA), Free Trade Area (FTA), Customs Union, Common Market, Economic Union, and Complete Economic Integration,⁴⁴ although the process can be more complex and non-linear in practice, the stages are typically presented as a linear progression, the loosest type of integration occurs when nations grant each other preferential access to specific items made in member nations,⁴⁵ tariffs between members of a free trade agreement (FTA) are eliminated,⁴⁶ but each nation is still free to keep its own external tariff policy, by creating a single external tariff, a customs union goes one step further, the characteristics of a Customs Union are enhanced by the unrestricted mobility of capital and labor, the factors of production in a common market.⁴⁷ Monetary and fiscal policies, among other economic policies, must be harmonized in an economic union, every step has its own advantages and disadvantages, and the degree of integration frequently reflects the political will and economic compatibility of the participating countries, complete economic integration, the last stage, would entail a common economic policy and a supranational body.⁴⁸

1.2.3 Intra-regional Trade

Intra-regional trade, referring to the exchange of goods and services between countries within a defined geographic region or economic bloc, is a crucial aspect of regional economic integration,⁴⁹ It serves as a key indicator of the success of integration efforts, as increased intra-regional trade suggests that member countries are becoming more

economically interdependent and that the regional market is functioning effectively,⁵⁰ the volume and pattern of intra-regional trade can reveal much about the comparative advantages of different countries within the region, the extent to which regional value chains are developing, and the overall competitiveness of the regional economy in the global market, furthermore, intra-regional trade can contribute to economic diversification, job creation, and the development of local industries, particularly in smaller economies that might struggle to compete on a global scale.⁵¹

Intra-regional trade development varies across regional blocs due to factors like member country size, economic diversity, trade facilitation effectiveness, infrastructure quality, and non-tariff barriers.⁵² In the European Union, it accounts for 60% of total trade, but is low in many developing blocs. Overcoming barriers requires political commitment, infrastructure investment, and productive capacity development, diversified trade, including higher value-added products, is more beneficial for regional economic development.⁵³

1.2.4 Trade Creation and Trade Diversion

Trade creation and trade diversion are key economic integration concepts. Trade creation occurs when a regional trade agreement shifts product origin from domestic producers to lower-cost member countries, leading to increased efficiency, lower prices, and economic growth, this can stimulate competition and innovation, the magnitude of trade creation depends on factors like trade barriers and import demand elasticity.⁵⁴

Trade diversion occurs when imports are shifted from lower-cost non-member producers to higher-cost member countries due to a regional trade agreement eliminating tariffs. This can lead to less efficient resource allocation, reduced economic welfare, and higher costs for consumers. Factors like external tariffs, producer competitiveness, and trade patterns before integration influence trade diversion. Designing regional integration

agreements that balance trade creation and diversion requires careful economic analysis.⁵⁵

1.3. Theories

The theoretical framework is the structure that can hold or support a theory of a research study, The theoretical framework introduces and describes the theory which explains why the research problem under study exists.⁵⁶ According to this study, the theory of economic integration, custom union theory and new trade theory analyzed.

1.3.1 Theory of Economic Integration

The Theory of Economic Integration, primarily provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the process and effects of regional economic integration, this theory posits that economic integration occurs in stages, progressing from a free trade area to a customs union, common market, economic union, and finally to complete economic integration.⁵⁷ The staged approach to economic integration involves eliminating trade barriers, increasing policy coordination, and removing tariffs between member countries. This provides a roadmap for policymakers and helps analyze progress and challenges in integration efforts like the East African Community (EAC).⁵⁸

Economic integration leads to both static and dynamic effects, such as trade creation and trade diversion. Static effects involve replacing high-cost domestic production with lower cost imports, while dynamic effects include increased competition, economies of scale, investment stimulus, and enhanced economic efficiency. As integration deepens, potential benefits increase but also challenges like coordination and conflicts of interest among member states.⁵⁹

1.3.2 Customs Union Theory

Customs Union Theory examines the welfare effects of forming a customs union, which involves member countries eliminating, tariffs and adopting a common external tariff with non-member countries. It involves trade creation and trade diversion, which are crucial

for analyzing regional integration agreements, trade creation increases welfare by shifting production from high-cost to lower-cost countries.⁶⁰ Customs Union Theory suggests that a customs union can have both positive and negative welfare effects, depending on trade creation and diversion; it considers economies of scale, trade effects, and foreign direct investment. Customs unions can enhance member states' bargaining power in international trade negotiations, but also face challenges like revenue-sharing mechanisms and divergent economic structures; this theory is useful for assessing the economic impacts of customs unions and identifying policy improvement areas.⁶¹

1.3.3. New Trade Theory

New Trade Theory, developed in the 1970s and 1980s, offers unique insights into international trade patterns by incorporating imperfect competition, increasing returns to scale, and product differentiation. It explains why countries with similar factor endowments engage in significant trade, especially in differentiated products within the same industry.⁶² The New Trade Theory suggests that regional integration can lead to increased interindustry trade, agglomeration effects, and strategic trade policy; it suggests that firms exploit economies of scale in larger markets and consumers benefit from greater product variety, this theory is relevant for understanding trade dynamics within integrated regions like the East African Community. However, it also acknowledges the practical difficulties of implementing such policies.⁶³

1.4. The role of member state to facilitate regional trade in EAC

Member state of EAC played a big role in the development of regional trade and economic integration, some of state tried to adopt laws which simplify the trade engagement for foreign investors within EAC, as an example in Rwanda a foreign investor is authorized to invest and purchase shares in an investment entity in Rwanda and is given equal treatment with Rwandan investors with regard to investment

incentives and investment facilitation.⁶⁴ In addition to that any investors from EAC member states are not considered as a foreigner, under Rwandan law foreigner is an individual who is not a Rwandan national or a resident of a Partner State of the East African Community or of a member State of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa or of a member State of any other Common Market Protocol that the Government of Rwanda enters into.⁶⁵ Rwandan government provide investment incentives that benefits both investors specifically those within EAC territory who come to invest in Rwanda like Preferential corporate income tax rate of zero per cent (0%), Preferential corporate income tax rate of three per cent (3%), Preferential tax incentives for a philanthropic investor, Preferential corporate income tax rate of fifteen per cent (15%), Preferential corporate income tax rate for export investments, Exemption from customs taxes and duties for products used in export processing zones, Incentives for internationalization, Corporate income tax holiday of up to seven (7) years, Corporate income tax holiday of up to five (5) years, Preferential withholding tax of zero per cent (0%), Preferential withholding tax of five per cent (5%), Preferential withholding tax of ten per cent (10%), Incentives for specialized innovation park developers and specialized industrial park developers, Incentives for Start-ups, Research and development incentive, Incentives for the mining sector, Preferential tax incentives for film industry investors.⁶⁶

The EAC Common Market Protocol, implemented in 2010, facilitated regional economic integration by allowing free movement of goods, services, labor, and capital, reducing nontariff barriers, and promoting cross-border business operations and investment, creating a more conducive environment for intra-regional trade.⁶⁷ The protocol's implementation has led to policy reforms in member states, such as Tanzania's where they adopt Non-Citizens Act of 2015 with aim of simplifying labor mobility in the region,⁶⁸ and Rwanda accept free movement of labor especially within EAC members, where they

recognize their ability and easy recruitment from whatever areas,⁶⁹ and facilitated harmonization of business registration processes like in Uganda through Uganda's Companies Act of 2012.⁷⁰

The EAC has implemented trade facilitation measures, including the Single Customs Territory and the Electronic Cargo Tracking System, to simplify trade procedures and reduce costs.⁷¹ This encourages Burundians to simplify investment by allowing foreign investor to engage in investment of Burundi.⁷² The SCT is supported by Burundi's Law No.

1/17 on Customs Management.

One-Stop Border Posts at key border crossings have streamlined cross-border trade by combining neighboring countries' border control activities, the EAC One Stop Border Posts

Act, 2016, provides the legal framework,⁷³ with Kenya's Border Control and Operations Coordination Act facilitating OSBP implementation.⁷⁴

The EAC is working on harmonizing tax policies to create a level playing field for businesses. The Council of Ministers has adopted guidelines for domestic taxes, including VAT and excise duties. Member states have agreed on common lists of exempt and zero-rated supplies, and the EAC Double Taxation Agreement aims to eliminate double taxation.⁷⁵ Uganda's Income Tax Act 2011⁷⁶ and Kenya's Special Economic Zones Act of

2015⁷⁷ have incorporated provisions for tax harmonization, reducing business costs

1.5. The advantages and disadvantages of regional integration

According to this study the disadvantages of regional economic integration based on the regional economic integration established in Africa like EAC, ECOWAS SADC and EU at little bit.

1.5.1. Advantages of regional economic integration

In the advantages this study analyzed the increased trade and market access, Economies of scale and increased competitiveness, enhanced foreign direct investment (FDI), improved infrastructure and connectivity and Enhanced policy coordination and harmonization.

1.5.1.1. Increased trade and market access

Regional economic integration boosts trade opportunities by eliminating trade barriers and creating larger markets. The East African Community (EAC) experienced significant growth in intra-regional trade due to the Customs Union's implementation of a common external tariff. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) also experienced increased trade volumes. The European Union (EU) also benefits from market integration, accounting for 63% of its total trade in goods.⁷⁸

1.5.1.2. Economies of scale and increased competitiveness

Regional integration enables firms to access larger markets, leading to economies of scale and increased competitiveness. This is particularly beneficial for smaller economies within regional blocs. Research shows that firms in East African countries can reduce production costs by 10-15% due to increased market size and input access. The EU Single Market has increased GDP by 9% due to increased competition and economies of scale.⁷⁹

1.5.1.3. Enhanced foreign direct investment (FDI)

Regional economic integration leads to increased foreign direct investment (FDI) due to larger markets and harmonized regulations. Studies show that EAC, SADC, and EU countries have seen significant increases in FDI inflows, with the Single Market increasing FDI stocks by 28% on average. This not only brings capital but also facilitates technology transfer and knowledge spillovers, contributing to overall economic development.⁸⁰

1.5.1.4. Improved infrastructure and connectivity

Regional integration boosts investments in cross-border infrastructure projects, enhancing connectivity and reducing trade costs. The East African Road Network Project and the North-South Corridor in the EAC and SADC have improved transportation links and reduced power system operating costs. Integrated infrastructure planning can lead to economic benefits of €1.8 trillion by 2030.⁸¹

1.5.1.5. Enhanced policy coordination and harmonization

Regional integration frameworks improve policy coordination and harmonization among member states, creating a more predictable and stable business environment. The Monetary Union Protocol in the EAC and COMESA has reduced inflation volatility and stable exchange rates. EU policy coordination has contributed to economic efficiency and consumer welfare, with reforms resulting in a 0.4% GDP increase. This enhances the region's resilience to economic shocks.⁸²

1.5.2. Disadvantages of regional economic integration

The study discussed about trade diversion, uneven distribution of benefits, loss of national sovereignty, adjust costs and short-term economic disruption and Increased vulnerability to external shocks.

1.5.2.1. Trade diversion

Regional integration can increase trade within a bloc, but it can also lead to trade diversion, where efficient producers from outside the bloc are replaced by less efficient ones within the bloc. Studies on ECOWAS, EAC, and SADC have shown trade diversion in agricultural products, manufacturing, and high external tariff sectors, potentially resulting in economic inefficiencies and higher prices.⁸³

1.5.2.2. Uneven distribution of benefits

Regional integration can lead to an uneven distribution of benefits, with developed countries often gaining more. Kenya's dominance in intra-regional trade, accounting for over 40% of intra-EAC exports, has raised concerns. Economic disparities between

member states, such as South Africa's over 60% of intra-SADC trade, have persisted in the EU, causing political tensions and potentially undermining the long-term sustainability of regional integration efforts.⁸⁴

1.5.2.3. Loss of national sovereignty

Regional integration often requires member states to relinquish some national sovereignty, especially in economic policy-making. This can be politically sensitive and may face resistance from national stakeholders. For example, the EAC's monetary union raises concerns about loss of policy autonomy, while COMESA's common external tariff implementation faces revenue loss and policy space issues. This loss of policy autonomy can be particularly challenging for developing countries.⁸⁵

1.5.2.4. Adjust costs and short-term economic disruption

Regional integration often requires significant economic adjustments, leading to short-term disruptions and costs. Industries previously protected may face increased competition, potentially causing job losses and economic dislocation. The Customs Union implementation in the EAC and SADC has led to revenue loss, while the EU integration process has led to significant adjustment costs, particularly for new member states.⁸⁶

1.5.2.5. Increased vulnerability to external shocks

Economic integration in regions like the EAC, SADC, and Eurozone can increase vulnerability to external shocks, potentially leading to faster spread of economic crises. Stronger trade and financial links to global markets can result in larger output declines, making these regions more susceptible to financial crises. This vulnerability can be particularly challenging for developing countries with limited fiscal and monetary tools.⁸⁷

1.6. Conclusion

Conclusively, this chapter discusses about the definition of key terms and theoretical framework theories relating with international and regional trade and economic

integration, as it is established above under the progress of establishing EAC as the idea of three first member state of Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya with the aim of establishing union political federation, custom union, common markets and others are well established in policies, laws are well adopted but its implementation is still problem. This study provides the role played by member state of EAC to facilitate regional trade and economic integration through adoption of laws with the purpose of simplifying regional trade and encouraging foreign investors to invest in the region, before the end of this chapter, this study reveals the advantages and disadvantages of regional economic integration.

CHAPTER2: CHALLENGES TO EFFECTIVE ECONOMIC INTEGRATION IN THE EAC

This chapter analyses the challenges that affect the development of regional trade and economic integration within EAC, some of challenges based on country level and others are at regional level

2.1. Political Challenges

Most of EAC member states are characterized by political problems like non international armed conflicts, conflicts of succession, external attacks and others, specifically to the successful of regional and economic integration, it is affected by sovereignty issues, lack of political will, lack of harmonized framework governing regional trade and others.

2.1.1 Sovereignty Concerns

Sovereignty concerns hinder East African Community integration, as member states hesitate to transfer authority, leading to delays in protocols and resistance to policy harmonization.⁸⁸ This tension between regional integration and sovereignty preservation can slow down integration. Sovereignty concerns in sensitive areas like monetary policy, taxation, and resource management pose challenges for the proposed East African Monetary Union, requiring careful negotiation and trust-building measures to balance national interests with regional objectives.⁸⁹

2.1.2 Political Will and Commitment

The absence of political will and dedication can seriously impede the EAC's progress, as both elements are essential to the success of regional integration initiatives. Shifting domestic objectives and changes in national leadership can cause the level of political will to fluctuate. This discrepancy may result in different member states implementing integration policies at different rates, which could cause inequality and possible conflict within the community. Furthermore, national leaders can be inclined to put short-term local issues ahead of longer-term regional objectives when presented with them, which could jeopardize the integration process.⁹⁰

A lack of consistent political will can show up in a number of ways, including inadequate funding for integration projects, a failure to domesticate regional accords into national law, or delays in ratifying protocols. For example, uneven political support among member nations has impeded the Common Market Protocol's implementation. Furthermore, sensitive matters like the harmonization of tax policies or the free movement of workers require political will. These difficult integration issues might not be resolved in the absence of strong and constant political support, which would reduce the integration efforts of the EAC's overall efficacy.⁹¹

2.1.3. Regional Security and Stability

The EAC faces challenges due to political instability, civil unrest, and cross-border conflicts, which can disrupt trade, deter investment, and divert resources from integration efforts, these issues affect countries directly involved and neighboring states, potentially undermining community cohesion.⁹² Security concerns can lead to border controls and travel restrictions, affecting the EAC's free movement of people and goods.⁹³ The challenge is to develop conflict prevention mechanisms without compromising integration

efforts, requiring political cooperation and shared security infrastructure, requiring high member state commitment.⁹⁴

2.1.4. Harmonization of Trade Policies and Regulations

Harmonizing trade laws and practices across EAC members is a crucial but difficult component of regional integration. Variations in standards, customs processes, and regulatory frameworks can result in substantial non-tariff trade barriers that impede the free movement of products and services among members of the community. These disparities are frequently caused by member nations' differing national agendas, diverse legal systems, and various stages of economic growth. In order to harmonize national policies with regional goals, significant negotiation, technical know-how, and political will are necessary.⁹⁵

Policy harmonization faces challenges in product standards, sanitary measures, and competition law, leading to fragmented regional markets and disputes. Slow pace can discourage cross-border investment and limit regional integration. Overcoming these requires technical solutions, capacity constraints, and a shared vision for regional economic development.

2.1.5. Case

The political challenges is the catastrophic barriers which hinder the promotion and development of regional trade and economic integration in EAC, as an example the problem of Rwanda and Uganda in 2020 which led to the closing of boarder affect the regional trade and economic integration within EAC, as we know more merchants used to imports goods from Uganda to Rwanda like maize floor and milk, the shortage of this products on the Rwandan markets produce the increase of price in region and also Ugandan faced with problem of many stocks of goods which result in damages.⁹⁶ The ongoing conflicts between Rwanda and DRC hinder the effectiveness of regional trade and economic integration, here there is no movement of goods from one country to

another's, there is no movement of people and labor, the insecurity in DRC hinder the international investors to invest in DRC which limit the development of regional trade and economic

integration.⁹⁷

2.2. Economic Barriers

The economic barrier hinders the effectiveness of regional trade and economic integration, this study analysis the role of disparities in economic development among member states, lack of developed infrastructure, non-tariffs barriers and informal cross border trade.

2.2.1. Disparities in Economic Development Among Member States

The East African Community faces challenges due to disparities in economic development among its member states, leading to imbalances in trade relationships and divergent interests. These differences, evident in GDP per capita, industrial base, and infrastructure development, can also hinder the implementation of common policies across the region, affecting manufacturing and agricultural sectors.⁹⁸

Economic disparities in regional integration raise concerns about the equitable distribution of benefits, as the gains may disproportionately benefit developed economies, exacerbating existing inequalities. This resistance to integration measures can affect less competitive sectors. Addressing these disparities requires targeted interventions and compensatory mechanisms, such as regional development funds or investment programs, similar to European Union cohesion policies.⁹⁹

2.2.2. Lack of developed infrastructure

The East African Community's inadequate infrastructure, including roads, railways, and ports, hinders regional trade and economic integration. Poor road conditions and inefficient port facilities increase transit times and maintenance costs, leading to higher prices for traded goods. This infrastructure deficit discourages investment in sectors

relying on efficient logistics, reducing export competitiveness and limiting economic growth potential.¹⁰⁰

Disparities in infrastructure development among EAC member states can hinder regional trade flows and create bottlenecks. Some countries have made significant progress, but others lag behind, creating weak links in transportation networks. The challenge is compounded by high costs and limited financial resources. Addressing the infrastructure deficit requires substantial investment, improved regional coordination, prioritizing trade corridors, developing multimodal transportation systems, and recognizing the importance of soft infrastructure like border management systems and harmonized customs procedures.¹⁰¹

2.2.3. Non-Tariff Barriers

Non-tariff barriers (NTBs) persist in the East African Community, despite tariff elimination through the EAC Customs Union. These barriers include complex customs procedures, excessive documentation, arbitrary standards, and restrictive rules of origin. They increase trade costs, complexity, and uncertainty, discouraging cross-border investment and undermining regional integration benefits, according to a study by the East African Business Council.¹⁰²

Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) persist due to regulatory concerns, protectionist impulses, and capacity constraints. The EAC has attempted to address NTBs through initiatives like the Time-Bound Programme and National Monitoring Committees. However, progress has been slow, and new barriers often emerge. Experts suggest stronger enforcement mechanisms, capacity building, technical assistance, and greater private sector involvement for more effective responses.¹⁰³

2.2.4. Informal Cross-border Trade

Informal cross-border trade (ICBT) is a significant portion of intra-regional trade in the East African Community, accounting for 30-40% of intra-EAC trade, this trade, often

evading formal regulations, can lead to revenue losses for governments, distort official trade statistics, and undermine formal trade agreements by creating parallel unregulated channels, potentially putting formal traders at a competitive disadvantage.¹⁰⁴ ICBT is vital for regional economies, providing livelihoods and food security. Approaches should focus on formalization, simplifying trade procedures, improving border infrastructure, and providing education, however, implementation has been uneven across EAC countries. Addressing ICBT requires addressing root causes like complex procedures, lack of information, and limited access to finance, a comprehensive approach combining trade facilitation measures with economic development initiatives could enhance small-scale traders' competitiveness in formal markets.¹⁰⁵

2.2.5. Case

The economic challenges in EAC affect the effectiveness of regional trade and economic integration, as an example for lack of developed infrastructure, most of EAC member countries are land locked countries like Rwanda and Burundi, this hinder the exports and imports and also in EAC there is no cross countries roads to be used in trading and about informal cross border trade in EAC which hinder the effectiveness of regional and economic integration within EAC, we may take an example of Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi and DRC, here many traders used to pass unlawful way for getting merchandise and for low price without tax payment. This affect the development of regional trade and economic integration.¹⁰⁶

2.3. Socio-cultural Challenges

The socio-culture different also challenge the effectiveness of regional trade and economic integration in EAC, as it is explained by this study, the language barriers, culture differences and mistrust, labor mobility issues and public awareness and participation affect the effectiveness of regional trade and economic integration.

2.3.1 Language Barriers

Language diversity in the East African Community (EAC) poses a challenge to regional integration, as English is the official language, but local languages and dialects vary across member states. This can hinder communication, collaboration, and harmonize regulations and policies, increase transaction costs, create misunderstandings, and limit companies' ability to operate effectively across borders.¹⁰⁷

Language barriers in the EAC can hinder social cohesion, cultural identity, and labor market integration. English dominance can lead to exclusion among non-English speaking populations, undermining public support for integration efforts. Experts suggest multilingual approaches, translation services, and language education to address these challenges, but implementing these measures requires significant resources and long-term commitment from member states.¹⁰⁸

2.3.2 Cultural Differences and Mistrust

Cultural differences and historical mistrust among East African Community member states hinder regional integration efforts. Despite shared histories, each country has distinct norms, values, and practices, leading to misunderstandings and conflicts in cross-border interactions. Historical grievances and stereotypes also influence perceptions and relationships, hindering cooperation and regional identity development.¹⁰⁹

Mistrust in East African countries hinders integration through political reluctance, economic protectionist tendencies, and public resistance to free movement. Overcoming these barriers requires long-term efforts in fostering cross-cultural understanding, including cultural exchange programs, regional sports events, and collaborative projects. Inclusive decision-making processes and promoting a shared East African identity are also needed to promote cultural sensitivity in integration policies.¹¹⁰

2.3.3 Labor Mobility Issues

Labor mobility is crucial for economic integration in the East African Community, but challenges include skill and qualification mismatches, high unemployment rates, and concerns about foreign workers displacing local labor, these issues can hinder the free movement of labor, leading to resistance to market liberalization.¹¹¹

The EAC faces challenges in social security and labor rights, hindering labor mobility and creating complexities for employers and employees. Policy harmonization and administrative cooperation are needed to address these issues. Progress has been made in recognizing qualifications, but implementation remains slow. Gradual labor market integration, better information systems, and skill gaps programs are suggested for better employability.¹¹²

2.3.4. Public Awareness and Participation

The East African Community (EAC) integration process faces challenges due to limited public awareness and participation. Despite its potential benefits, the general public often lacks understanding about the EAC's objectives and benefits, leading to indifference and skepticism. This lack of awareness can result in underutilization of integration benefits and limited public support.¹¹³

The EAC integration process has been criticized for being elite-driven, with limited involvement of civil society, local communities, and marginalized groups; this can lead to policies that don't reflect ordinary citizens' needs. To address this, efforts should be made to enhance public awareness, foster inclusive participation, and strengthen the role of civil society organizations and local communities; formal mechanisms for public consultation and engagement in EAC affairs could also be beneficial.¹¹⁴

2.3.5. Case

In the socio culture challenge is an obstacle to regional economic integration in EAC as it hinder its effectiveness, as an example for language barriers some of traders are not well educated then to serve international client become a big challenges, here we may take

an example some of Burundians they don't know English and when they meet with Kenyan clients the communication become a problem, and also the negotiation between traders is a challenges which may led to hand over and expel themselves in international business, and also EAC fails to establish common language to be used in EAC and become mandatory in school teaching.¹¹⁵

2.4. External Factors

The EAC an intergovernmental organization face with the challenges of external factors which hinder the effectiveness of regional trade and economic integration, this study based on global economic shocks, dependence on external donors, competition from other trading blocks and climate change and environmental challenges.

2.4.1. Global Economic Shocks

Global economic shocks present significant challenges to the East African Community's regional integration and economic development efforts, these shocks, which can include financial crises, pandemics, or sudden shifts in global trade patterns, often have farreaching consequences that ripple through the economies of EAC member states.¹¹⁶

For example, the COVID-19 pandemic caused severe disruptions to global supply chains, leading to a significant reduction in trade volumes and economic growth across the EAC.¹¹⁷ External shocks in the Eastern African Community often lead to reduced export demand, decreased foreign investment, and increased commodity price volatility, causing member states to prioritize short-term national interests over long-term regional integration goals.¹¹⁸

Global economic shocks asymmetrically impact EAC member states, exacerbating existing disparities, diverse economies like Kenya are better positioned to weather shocks, while heavily dependent countries like South Sudan face severe contractions, this disparity complicates regional economic policies and integration initiatives, global shocks also expose structural weaknesses within the EAC, such as inadequate financial

safety nets and crisis response coordination mechanisms, highlighting the need for more robust regional integration.119

2.4.2. Dependence on External Donors

The East African Community's reliance on external donors for integration projects and programs poses challenges to its autonomy, sustainability, and effectiveness, donor priorities can influence the pace and direction of integration, potentially misaligning with the region's needs and long-term objectives, this can lead to donor-driven initiatives lacking local ownership and failing to address regional challenges, resulting in unsustainable programs.120

The East African Community (EAC)'s reliance on external donors cause instability and uncertainty in its integration process, changes in donor funding or priorities can disrupt projects and complicate long-term planning, this instability can undermine regional initiatives, particularly in institutional strengthening and policy harmonization, additionally, stringent donor conditions can strain EAC institutions' administrative capacities, potentially diverting attention from core integration activities.121

2.4.3. Competition from Other Trading Blocs

The East African Community faces competition from larger trading blocs like the EU, ASEAN, and SADC, which can hinder its efforts to attract investment and expand trade, these blocs offer more attractive markets and investment opportunities due to their size, economic diversity, and advanced integration, the disparity in economic scale and market potential can divert potential FDI away from the EAC, limiting its economic growth and integration prospects.122

The spaghetti bowl effect, where multiple regional economic communities (RECs) are joined by EAC member states, complicates trade relations and policy harmonization.

This creates a complex web of trade agreements, leading to confusion, increased transaction costs, and potential conflicts of interest, overlapping memberships can

reduce intraregional trade by up to 15%, dilute political commitment, and undermine the effectiveness of the EAC's integration agenda, making it more challenging to achieve a customs union, common market, and monetary union.¹²³

2.4.4. Climate Change and Environmental Challenges

Climate change is posing a significant challenge to the East African Community's regional integration efforts, as the region heavily relies on agriculture and natural resources. Climate change impacts can disrupt agricultural production, trigger food price spikes, and destabilize rural economies; these challenges can exacerbate economic disparities among member states and potentially lead to resource-based conflicts, undermining regional cooperation and integration efforts.¹²⁴

Addressing climate change and environmental degradation requires significant financial resources and technical capacity, potentially diverting attention from other integration priorities within the EAC. Balancing economic development goals with environmental sustainability presents a complex challenge, requiring careful negotiation and compromise among member states. The cross-border nature of environmental issues and the varying national priorities and capacities within the EAC further complicate the situation.

Developing one-size-fits-all solutions or equitably distributing resources for climate action is also challenging.¹²⁵

2.4.5. Case

This external factors hinder the effectiveness of regional trade and economic integration in EAC as an example the climatic change and environmental challenges is a big barrier, here in Rwanda always sun of summer like to destroy plantation and then the production of goods become very low which result in low level of exports, and also in this time there is shortage of milk due to lack of food for cow, this reduce the percentage of production exported by Rwanda in international markets, and hinder the development of regional

trade and economic integration.¹²⁶The competition from other trading blocs like COMES and European Union hinder the effectiveness of regional trade and economic integration. This become a problem when all trading blocs produce more quantity of goods at market and the price fall, this would lead to low level of price as the way of making sure that the product are finished at market but the profit will be few, then the level of taxation also affected and contribution of member state become affected.¹²⁷

2.5. CONCLUSION

Conclusively, the successful of regional and economic integration in EAC is affected by different barriers as mentioned above, as this chapter analyzes the challenges that hinder effective successful of regional trade and economic integration in EAC, it reveals political challenges by presenting how sovereignty concerns, lack of political will, lack of harmonized policies and regulations hinder the achievement of union political federation and effective success of regional trade and economic integration within EAC, according to the economic challenges, the study examines the non-tariffs barriers and different GDP of economic member hinder the aim of establishing common market in the region which is the key pillar to the success of regional trade and economic integration. This study examines the social challenges by elaborating on how language barriers affect the communication between participants and other stakeholders in regional trade, the undeveloped infrastructure also hinder the effective regional trade and economic integration, where some state members fails to import or exports goods and services from other member state.

CHAPTE3. MECHANISMS FOR EFFECTIVE INTEGRATION IN THE EAC

This chapter proposes mechanisms to be employed by EAC as the way of achieving sustainable development in regional trade and economic integration, the study propose

infrastructures development by investing in regional transport network, investing in cross border energy projects, improving ICT connecting's, modernizing border posts and customs facilities. The trade facilitation measures through public awareness and stakeholder's engagement, reducing non-tariffs barriers, simplifying custom procedures and promoting paperless trade; the development of regional financial markets, harmonizing financial regulations, promoting cross border Banking, implementing a regional payment system; the public awareness and stakeholder's engagement by another mechanism proposed by this study by public education and campaign, enhancing citizen participation, engaging civil society organization, promoting regional identity and cohesion.

3.1. Infrastructure Development

As it is mentioned above the undeveloped infrastructure in EAC hinder the effectiveness of regional trade and economic integration, the study propose the mechanisms of infrastructure development as the way of promoting regional trade and economic integration by investing in regional transport network, developing cross border energy projects, improving ICT connecting and modernizing border posts and custom facilities.

3.1.1. Investing in Regional Transport Networks

Within the East African Community, regional transport networks are essential for promoting trade and economic integration, the EAC can greatly cut transportation costs and times by facilitating better road, rail, and aviation connections amongst its member states; this would increase the competitiveness of regional goods on both domestic and foreign markets. An effective cross-border flow of people, products, and services is made possible by a well developed transportation infrastructure, which promotes greater trade volumes and member state economic cooperation.¹²⁸

The EAC's dedication to improving regional transportation networks is best demonstrated by the Northern Corridor Integration Projects (NCIP), the goal of this project is to create a

smooth, economical, and efficient transportation corridor that connects South Sudan, Rwanda, and Uganda—all landlocked nations—to Kenya's Port of Mombasa, one of the main initiatives of the NCIP, the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) project, has already demonstrated encouraging outcomes in cutting the prices and transit times for moving cargo between Mombasa and Nairobi, it is anticipated that the SGR network further accelerate intraregional trade and economic growth when it spreads to other EAC nations.

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3.1.2. Developing Cross-border Energy Projects

In order to solve the power shortages impeding industrial growth and economic development in the East African region, cross-border energy projects are needed, the EAC member nations can attain economies of scale in energy production and distribution by combining resources and building linked power grids, which result in a more dependable and reasonably priced supply of electricity throughout the region, consequently, this fosters the expansion of industries, draws in foreign direct investment, and ignites economic activities that are essential for the integration of the region.¹³⁰

One of the best examples of regional collaboration in energy development is the Eastern Africa Power Pool (EAPP), the goal of this project is to unify the power markets of Eastern

African nations, including those that are members of the EAC, initiatives like the UgandaKenya petroleum products pipeline and the Kenya-Tanzania-Zambia power interconnection show how cross-border energy cooperation may improve energy security and advance economic integration.¹³¹ These initiatives support a more robust and cohesive regional energy industry by utilizing each nation's comparative advantages in energy resources.

3.1.3. Improving ICT Connectivity

In the East African Community, successful regional commerce and economic integration are largely dependent on increased information and communication technology (ICT) connectivity, reducing transaction costs and boosting the effectiveness of cross-border trade depend on a robust ICT infrastructure that supports e-commerce platforms, promotes information interchange, and allows the digitization of trade processes, moreover, enhanced ICT connection facilitates the growth of regional financial services by facilitating smooth cross-border transactions and encouraging financial integration among the EAC member states.¹³²

The EAC member states' One Network Area (ONA) program is a prime example of the advantages of regional ICT collaboration, for companies and individuals operating beyond EAC borders, ONA has drastically decreased communication costs by standardizing mobile roaming pricing and doing away with fees for cross-border calls inside the region, better international connectivity has also been made possible by initiatives like the Eastern Africa Submarine Cable System (EASSy), which has made the EAC a competitive competitor in the global digital economy and drawn investments in ICT-enabled services.¹³³

3.1.4. Modernizing Border Posts and Customs Facilities

For the East African Community to streamline cross-border trade procedures and lower non-tariff trade barriers, border posts and customs facilities must be modernized, modern technology and standardized protocols at border crossings can help the EAC drastically cut down on the time and expense of customs clearance, which helped the free flow of products across borders. In addition to strengthening tax collection and security measures, contemporary border infrastructure also address major member state concerns and advance regional integration.¹³⁴

An important step in modernizing border management is the establishment of One-Stop Border Posts (OSBPs) throughout the Eastern African Community (EAC), OSBPs, like the border post in Namanga, Tanzania and Kenya, consolidate the border control activities of two adjacent nations into a single building, this method cuts down on redundant procedures, speeds up transit, and improves coordination amongst border agencies, moreover, the implementation of risk-based approaches to customs inspections and integrated border management systems has resulted in more effective trade facilitation while upholding essential regulatory constraints.¹³⁵

3.2. Trade Facilitation Measures

Trade facilitation facilities improved regional trade and economic integration through public awareness and stockholders engagement, reducing nontariff barriers, simplifying custom procedures and promoting paperless trade

3.2.1. Public Awareness and Stakeholder Engagement

In order to improve the efficiency of regional trade and economic integration within the East African Community, public awareness and stakeholder participation are essential. Through promoting awareness among enterprises, merchants, and the wider public regarding the advantages and mechanisms of regional integration, the East African Community (EAC) can encourage increased engagement in international commerce and economic endeavor, with a greater sense of ownership among stakeholders, integration programs receive more support, and trade policies are implemented more skillfully as a result of this awareness.¹³⁶

The EAC has put a number of initiatives into practice to raise stakeholder participation and public awareness. These include setting up public-private interaction forums, holding capacity-building workshops for small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs), and planning regional trade shows. As an example, the East African Business Council (EABC) is essential in fostering communication between business and EAC

policymakers. Through active stakeholder involvement in the policy-making process and regular updates on integration progress, the EAC has improved its ability to resolve complaints and customize its programs to suit different economic actors' demands.¹³⁷

3.2.2 Reducing Non-Tariff Barriers

The facilitation of smooth trade within the East African Community is contingent upon the removal of non-tariff barriers (NTBs), the flow of goods and services across borders can be severely hampered by NTBs, which include arbitrary standards, onerous documentation requirements, and regulatory barriers. This limits the potential advantages of regional integration. The EAC can improve trade efficiency, lower transaction costs, and encourage fair competition amongst enterprises in the area by methodically identifying and removing these impediments.¹³⁸

Through a variety of methods, the EAC has addressed NTBs with notable success, the implementation of the EAC Time-Bound Programme for Elimination of Identified Non-Tariff Barriers offers a methodical way to find, document, and address non-tariff barriers. Furthermore, the EAC Non-Tariff Barriers Act of 2017's¹³⁹ enactment has reinforced the legislative framework for resolving these issues. The Act gives the EAC Regional Monitoring Committee and national monitoring committees the authority to look into and quickly address reported NTBs. These initiatives have resulted in a notable decrease in NTBs inside the EAC, which has boosted intraregional trade and enhanced the competitiveness of EAC goods on international markets.¹⁴⁰

3.2.3 Simplifying Customs Procedures

One important trade facilitation strategy that can greatly increase the effectiveness of cross-border trade within the East African Community is the simplification of customs procedures. Complicated and drawn-out customs procedures can raise transaction costs, cause delays at border crossings, and make local goods less competitive, the EAC can encourage more trade flows and greater economic integration by lowering the

time and expense involved in importing and exporting goods by optimizing these processes.¹⁴¹ The EAC has put in place a number of initiatives to streamline customs processes throughout the area. Adoption of the Single Customs Territory (SCT), which permits duty assessment and collection at the moment of first entrance into the EAC, is one significant milestone, the time and paperwork needed to clear goods have been greatly lowered by this approach, resulting in speedier cross-border cargo transportation, furthermore, the introduction of risk management tools into customs operations has made it possible for inspections to be more focused, which has eliminated needless delays for goods that pose little danger. The EAC's trading climate is now more predictable and efficient thanks to these actions as well as attempts to standardize customs paperwork and processes among member nations.¹⁴²

3.2.4 Promoting Paperless Trade

In order to modernize trade procedures and strengthen regional integration within the East African Community, it is imperative that paperless trade be promoted. The EAC can drastically lower transaction costs, increase transparency, and quicken the flow of commodities across borders by digitizing trade paperwork and procedures. Paperless trading systems also help to increase compliance and lower the chance of corruption by facilitating more effective data interchange between dealers and government organizations.¹⁴³

With a number of measures, the EAC has advanced paperless trade significantly. Trade procedures have been expedited by the installation of electronic single window systems in member states, such as TradeNet in Kenya and ReSW in Rwanda. These systems enable businesses to electronically submit and process all trade-related papers at a single point of entry. In addition, the EAC is striving to create a regional electronic single window system to enable smooth cross-border information sharing. The region's transit operations are now more secure and efficient as a result of the use of electronic freight

tracking systems, it is anticipated that these paperless trade efforts become increasingly important in lowering trade costs, enhancing regulatory compliance, and promoting deeper economic integration within the EAC as they develop and grow.¹⁴⁴

3.3. Financial Integration Measures

Financial integration measures help to end those mentioned economic challenges that hinder the effectiveness of regional trade and economic integration through developing regional financial markets, harmonizing financial regulations, proposing cross border banking and implementing a regional payment system

3.3.1 Developing Regional Financial Markets

For the East African Community to trade more and integrate economically, strong regional financial markets must be developed, the EAC can lower the cost of capital for companies, increase the efficiency of capital allocation, and offer a variety of investment options to both domestic and foreign investors by developing a bigger, more liquid market for financial instruments. Thus, the region's financial stability and economic growth are supported throughout.¹⁴⁵

The growth of regional capital markets has been greatly assisted by the East African Securities Regulatory Authorities (EASRA). Increased cross-border investments inside the EAC have been made possible by EASRA through efforts including cross-listing of securities and harmonization of listing standards. The region's dedication to developing an integrated financial market is further evidenced by the launch of the East African Community Capital Markets Infrastructure (CMI) initiative. As these markets expand, they should be crucial in bringing long-term capital for important areas like infrastructure development together, which would speed up the integration of the economies in the region.¹⁴⁶

3.3.2 Harmonizing Financial Regulations

To establish fair competition and promote trust in the regional financial system, financial regulations must be harmonized throughout EAC member nations. The EAC can lessen regulatory arbitrage, improve transparency, and ease cross-border financial activity by harmonizing regulatory frameworks, supervisory procedures, and reporting standards. In areas like insurance regulation, securities market oversight, and banking supervision, harmonization is especially important.¹⁴⁷

Initiatives such as the East African Community Financial Sector Development and Regionalization Project (EAC-FSDRP) demonstrate the EAC's efforts to harmonize regulations. The goal of this initiative is to harmonize financial rules and regulations in order to create a single financial market among the EAC countries. Progress in this direction can be seen in the implementation of uniform prudential norms for banking supervision, such as Basel III-based regulations. Financial institutions are in a stronger position to grow throughout the area as regulatory frameworks converge, which must ultimately lead to greater economic integration, enhanced financial services, and more competition.¹⁴⁸

3.3.3 Promoting Cross-border Banking

Within the East African Community, cross-border banking is essential for promoting regional commerce and economic integration. The EAC can improve financial intermediation, increase credit availability for companies involved in regional commerce, and encourage the transfer of banking knowledge and technology among its member nations by enabling banks to function seamlessly across national borders. By giving businesses that operate in several EAC nations access to integrated financial services, cross-border banking also aids in the development of regional value chains.¹⁴⁹ Cross-border banking has advanced as seen by the growth of regional banking companies like Equity Bank and Kenya Commercial Bank (KCB) throughout the East African Community (EAC). By utilizing their regional reach, these banks have been able to provide cutting-

edge services like multi-currency accounts and trade finance facilities that are specifically designed for international trade. Furthermore, the EAC Credit Information Sharing (CIS) project aims to facilitate the exchange of credit information across borders, enabling banks to better assess credit risks and potentially increase lending to SMEs involved in regional trade. Cross-border banking is anticipated to become increasingly important in fostering financial integration and bolstering economic growth in the EAC as it develops.¹⁵⁰

3.3.4 Implementing a Regional Payment System

The implementation of an efficient and secure regional payment system is fundamental to facilitating seamless cross-border transactions within the East African Community. By reducing the time and cost associated with cross-border payments, a regional payment system can significantly enhance trade flows, promote financial integration, and support the development of a single market for goods and services. Such a system also contributes to the de-risking of regional trade by providing a transparent and reliable mechanism for settling international transactions.¹⁵¹

An important turning point in the EAC's financial integration process has been reached with the launch of the East African Payment System (EAPS). EAPS eliminates the need for intermediary currencies and lowers transaction costs by enabling real-time gross settlement of cross-border transactions in the currencies of member states. Additionally, the implementation of mobile money interoperability across EAC countries has further enhanced cross-border payments at the retail level. As these payment systems continue to evolve and expand their reach, they are expected to play a crucial role in promoting intraregional trade, supporting remittance flows, and fostering greater economic integration within the EAC.¹⁵²

3.4. Public Awareness and Stakeholder Engagement

The lack of awareness for citizens in different regions of EAC member state hinder the effectiveness of regional trade and economic integrations, to settle this challenges, this study propose the public awareness and stakeholders engagement by conducting public education, enhancing citizenship participation, engaging civil society organizations and promoting regional identity and cohesion.

3.4.1 Conducting Public Education Campaigns

Campaigns for public education are essential to increasing the efficiency of economic integration and regional trade within the East African Community. These initiatives aim to educate the public, corporations, and other interested parties on the advantages, procedures, and prospects connected to regional integration. Such campaigns can generate more support for integration efforts and stimulate active involvement in crossborder economic operations by raising awareness of EAC initiatives.¹⁵³

To increase public understanding of regional integration, the EAC has carried out a number of public education campaigns. These include distributing information on EAC policies and programs through the use of social media, mainstream media, and community outreach initiatives. For example, the yearly EAC Media Summit brings together journalists from all over the region to better media coverage of integration concerns and to deepen their awareness of EAC matters. Furthermore, the EAC has created curricula and instructional tools for schools to encourage youth to understand regional integration. By raising public awareness of the EAC and its potential advantages, these initiatives have helped to create an atmosphere that is more favorable to successful trade and economic integration.¹⁵⁴

3.4.2 Enhancing Citizen Participation

To ensure the legitimacy and durability of regional trade and economic integration initiatives within the East African Community, it is imperative to augment citizen

engagement. The EAC may better connect its policies with the needs and ambitions of the people it serves by incorporating individuals in decision-making processes and the implementation of integration efforts. This participatory approach not only improves the quality of integration policies but also builds a sense of ownership among citizens, leading to greater support for and engagement with EAC initiatives.¹⁵⁵

In order to improve citizen participation in the integration process, the EAC has put in place a number of measures. Public hearings and consultations on a range of topics are held by the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), giving the public a chance to voice their opinions on proposed laws and policies. A further initiative to involve youth in advancing regional integration and cultivating a feeling of East African identity among youth is the EAC Youth Ambassadors Programme. Additionally, the EAC has made use of technology to improve public participation through programs including online platforms for public commenting and input on EAC policy. These initiatives have helped to create a more welcoming integration process, which has increased public support and involvement with the goals of the EAC.¹⁵⁶

3.4.3 Engaging Civil Society Organizations

In order to promote equitable and sustainable regional trade and economic integration within the East African Community, it is imperative that civil society organizations (CSOs) be involved, CSOs play a crucial role as go-betweens for the public and legislators, contributing a variety of viewpoints and areas of expertise to the integration process. By actively involving CSOs in policy formulation and implementation, the EAC can ensure that integration initiatives are responsive to the needs of various segments of society and benefit from grassroots insights and support.¹⁵⁷

In an attempt to involve CSOs in the integration process, the EAC has worked hard. The creation of the East African Civil Society Organizations' Forum (EACSOFF) gives CSOs a formal forum on which to engage in EAC activities. In order to guarantee that the

opinions of civil society are taken into account during the policy-making process, EACSOF promotes communication between civil society and EAC bodies. Furthermore, the EAC has used CSOs' networks and experience to evaluate how EAC policies affect local communities by involving them in the monitoring of integration projects like the Common Market Protocol. The legitimacy and longevity of EAC projects have been strengthened by this interaction, which has led to more inclusive and effective integration policies.¹⁵⁸

3.4.4 Promoting Regional Identity and Cohesion

The East African Community's trade and economic integration initiatives must succeed by fostering a strong sense of regional identity and solidarity. Greater trust, cooperation, and solidarity among member nations and their inhabitants can be fostered by a common sense of East African identity, which can facilitate the smoother execution of integration measures. Through highlighting shared cultural, historical, and economic connections, the EAC may establish a basis for more profound integration that surpasses simple economic collaboration.¹⁵⁹

The EAC has put in place a number of programs to support cohesiveness and regional identity. The development of a common East African identity is symbolized by the adoption of the East African passport, which facilitates travel within the region. Cultural exchange initiatives that highlight the region's rich cultural legacy and promote unity include the EAC Arts and Culture Festival, the EAC has also endeavored to promote student exchange programs and harmonize education systems, both of which help young East Africans develop a sense of regional identification. A stronger regional community has resulted from these initiatives, laying the groundwork for future trade and economic integration.¹⁶⁰

3.5. COMPARATIVE STUDY FROM EUROPEAN UNION

This study elaborates more on the challenges which hinder the effective successful of regional trade and economic integration in EAC and it proposes the strategies needed to combat those challenges, in this comparative approach, the study proposes on how European Union as regional integration has challenges by obstacles that affect EAC to day and how European Union tried to overcome those challenges until perspective level of development. This study makes comparative by analyzing those challenges and elaborates more on how European Union put more efforts on the development of regional trade and economic integration and the study recommends EAC to take an example to the European Union as the way of achieving sustainable development in regional trade and economic integration.

3.5.1. Historical context and Formation

The East African Community (EAC) and the European Union (EU) emerged from historical conflicts to promote peace and economic prosperity through regional integration.¹⁶¹ The EU's origins trace back to the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951.¹⁶² The EAC, established in 1967, collapsed in 1977 due to political and economic disparities, but was revived in 2000 with renewed commitment to regional integration, learning from the EU's history, the EU's gradual integration approach, emphasizing cooperation in key sectors, could be beneficial for the EAC, as it emphasizes reconciliation and peace-building, a lesson the region needs to learn.¹⁶³

3.5.2. Institutional framework and governance

The European Union's success is largely due to its robust institutional framework, consisting of a complex system of supranational institutions including the European Commission, Parliament, Council, and Court of Justice.¹⁶⁴ The European Commission, Parliament, and Council collaborate to ensure effective policy-making, implementation,

and dispute resolution within the EU, representing the country internationally and passing laws and budgets.¹⁶⁵

The East African Community's institutional structure, similar to the UN, is less developed and faces challenges in authority and effectiveness, with key institutions including the Summit and the Council of Ministers, the EAC could improve integration by strengthening the East African Court of Justice and the East African Legislative Assembly, enhancing regional governance and policy implementation, and enhancing the rule of law.¹⁶⁶ The EAC could establish a similar institution to the European Commission, enabling community-wide legislation proposal and enforcement, thereby enhancing integration agenda effectiveness and policy consistency across member states, the EU's principle of subsidiarity, which prioritizes citizen involvement, could be applied to the EAC to balance regional integration with national sovereignty concerns.¹⁶⁷

3.5.3. Harmonization of policies and rules

The European Union effectively promotes regional integration by harmonizing policies across member states, fostering a truly integrated market across competition, consumer protection, environmental standards, and product regulations.¹⁶⁸ The EU's harmonization strategy combines direct regulations across member states with directives that set common goals, ensuring a level playing field for businesses while respecting diversity, the EU's REACH regulation successfully harmonizes chemical registration and control, ensuring health and environmental protection while facilitating free market movement within the EU. ¹⁶⁹

The EAC can learn from the EU's regulatory harmonization strategy, focusing on trade and economic integration, while still requiring significant work across sectors, the EAC could establish a regional body similar to the European Committee for Standardization

(CEN) to prioritize harmonization of standards for goods and services, reducing non-tariff barriers.¹⁷⁰ The EAC could learn from the EU's competition policy harmonization, potentially establishing a regional authority to investigate and sanction anti-competitive practices affecting inter-state trade, the EU's harmonization process emphasizes stakeholder involvement, and the EAC could improve its efforts in developing and implementing harmonized policies and regulations.¹⁷¹

3.5.4. Monetary integration and financial stability

The EU's EMU and euro introduction have significantly influenced economic integration, providing valuable lessons for the East African Community in pursuing its own monetary integration plans; the EU's monetary integration process began with the European Monetary System in 1979, followed by the Maastricht Treaty of 1992, requiring member states to meet convergence criteria.¹⁷²

The European Central Bank's establishment in 1998 and the introduction of the euro in 1999 marked significant European integration milestones, ensuring monetary policy coordination and maintaining price stability, the EU's 2009 Eurozone crisis exposed weaknesses in the monetary union, prompting the implementation of measures like the European Stability Mechanism and the Banking Union.¹⁷³

The EAC can learn several lessons from the EU's experience as it moves towards its own monetary union, Importance of convergence criteria: The EAC should establish and enforce strict convergence criteria for member states before monetary union, ensuring that economies are sufficiently aligned. Strong institutional framework: Creating a strong and independent central bank, similar to the ECB, are crucial for effective monetary policy coordination, fiscal coordination: The EAC should consider mechanisms for fiscal coordination and support, learning from the EU's post-crisis reforms.¹⁷⁴

Phased approach: Adopting a gradual approach to monetary integration, possibly starting with an exchange rate mechanism similar to the ERM, could help smooth the transition.

Crisis resolution mechanisms: Establishing tools and institutions to address potential economic crises and imbalances from the outset could enhance the resilience of the monetary union.

Financial sector integration: Developing integrated financial markets and a banking union could support monetary integration and enhance financial stability.¹⁷⁵

While monetary union can bring significant benefits in terms of trade facilitation and economic integration, the EAC must carefully consider the challenges and ensure that necessary fiscal and economic foundations are in place before introducing a common currency.¹⁷⁶

3.5.4. Infrastructure development and connectivity

The European Union's success in regional integration is largely due to its significant investments in cross-border infrastructure, enabling the free movement of goods, services, capital, and people, the EU's Trans-European Networks (TEN) program aims to develop interconnected transportation, energy, and telecommunications networks across the EU, including high-speed rail, integrated energy grid, and 5G networks.¹⁷⁷

The EU has established funding mechanisms like the Connecting Europe Facility and EFSI to support infrastructure projects, mobilizing public and private investments, especially in less developed EU regions, the East African Community can draw valuable lessons from the EU's approach to infrastructure development: Regional planning: To improve connection throughout the community, the EAC should create a thorough regional infrastructure plan akin to the EU's TEN initiative, highlighting important projects.

Funding mechanisms: Creating specific funding sources for infrastructure projects in an area could aid in resource mobilization and draw in outside capital. The EU's CEF-style infrastructure fund might be emulated by the EA.

Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):

The experience of the EU highlights the significance of utilizing resources and private

sector knowledge in the construction of infrastructure. A framework for PPPs in regional infrastructure projects might be created by the EAC. Put an emphasis on multi-modal connectivity: The EAC, like the EU, ought to concentrate on creating integrated transportation networks that incorporate land, air, sea, and rail transportation. Energy integration: By creating a regional energy market and grid that is integrated, as the EU has done, the EAC may improve energy security and trade. Digital infrastructure: The EAC's ability to compete in the global digital economy have to depend on its investments in digital connections, including as broadband networks and digital services infrastructure.¹⁷⁸

The EAC has made progress in integrating projects like the Northern Corridor, but more coordinated efforts are needed to reduce trade costs, improve market access, and boost economic growth, improved connectivity fosters cultural ties and people-to-people contacts, enhancing regional integration. EU's Erasmus+ program exemplifies this through student mobility.¹⁷⁹

3.5.6. Capacity building and Human resources development

The European Union has invested heavily in human capital, education, training, and research to drive economic growth, promote innovation, and competitiveness in the region, Erasmus+, an EU program that promotes youth, sport, education, and training throughout Europe, is one of the main initiatives in this field. Through facilitating staff and student mobility around the EU, the program fosters skill development and cross-cultural exchange, with over 10 million participants since the program's launch in 1987, Erasmus has greatly aided in the development of a European identity and improved participants' employability, the EU's Horizon 2020 program, now Horizon Europe, is the main funding for research and innovation, fostering collaboration between researchers, businesses, and innovators across the EU and beyond.¹⁸⁰

The East African Community can enhance human capital, promote knowledge transfer, and build capacity in key sectors through potential strategies. Regional student exchange program: To encourage student mobility within the community, the EAC may create a program like to Erasmus+. Building regional networks, improving intercultural understanding, and creating a common East African identity could all result from this. Research and innovation fund: By establishing a regional fund to facilitate cooperative research and innovation initiatives, the EAC may become more competitive and tackle shared regional issues. Initiatives for vocational training: Given the significance of technical skills for industrialization, the EAC may create regional programs for vocational training, maybe in collaboration with business. Centers of excellence: Creating regional hubs for important industries like technology, agribusiness, and renewable energy could facilitate the sharing of knowledge and resources. Recognition of professional credentials: Labor mobility and knowledge transfer would be facilitated by creating a framework for the mutual recognition of professional qualifications throughout the EAC. Development of digital skills: The EAC should give priority to initiatives that improve digital literacy and advanced digital skills throughout the region, given the growing significance of the digital economy. Building public sector capacity: efforts to improve public officials' abilities in areas like project management, policy formulation, and regional integration may be supported by programs that help them carry out EAC efforts more successfully. Language proficiency: Programs that encourage multilingualism could improve regional integration and communication given the multiplicity of languages found in East Africa. 181

Initiatives can boost human capital in the EAC, promote knowledge transfer, innovation, and economic growth, while fostering connections and strengthening regional identity, implementing such programs would require substantial resources and coordination,

necessitating the EAC to explore funding options including member state contributions, private sector partnerships, and development partner support. 182

3.6. Conclusion

Conclusively all member states of EAC has to take initiative to implement elaborated mechanisms to achieve sustainable development in regional trade and economic integration, , this, there must be collaborations between member states in addressing those challenges that hinder the effective successful of regional trade and economic integration, as it is proposed by this study both member states of EAC must take part in infrastructure development, trade facilitation measures, financial integration measures and public awareness and stakeholders engagement.

4. GENERAL CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIOIS

This study is composed by three chapters, general introduction is composed by elaborating the background regional trade and economic integration in EAC, the problem statement, research questions, research methodologies, interest of study and research objective, after that there is chapter one which comprise the theoretical framework about regional trade and economic integration within EAC, by elaborating definition of key terms, like regional trade, intergovernmental organizations, economic integration, trade liberalizations, custom unions, common markets, common external tariffs and others, it discusses the conceptual basing on regional economic integration process, interregional trade, stages of economic integration trade creation and trade diversion; and the theoretical framework by discussing t6heory of economic integration, custom union theory and new trade theory, chapter one is ended by short history of EAC.

Chapter two is composed by elaborating the problem of this study in details by elaborating the challenges and barriers to EAC that hinder the effective succession of regional trade and economic integration in EAC, the study provide numerous challenges

like political challenges composed by sovereignty concerns, lack of political will and commitment, regional security and stability, harmonization of trade policy and regulations; the economic barriers made by disparities in economic development of members state, lack of developed infrastructure, non-tariffs barriers, informal cross border trade; the social culture challenges composed by language barriers, culture differences and mistrust, labor mobility issues, public awareness and external challenges of global economic shocks, dependence on external support, competition from other trading blocks and climate changes and environmental challenges

The last chapter is three which is made of necessary mechanisms and solutions to combat the challenges that hinder successful of regional trade and economic integration with in EAC, where this study propose the infrastructure development by investing in regional transport network, developing cross border energy projects, improving ICT connectivity and modernizing border posts customs facilities; the trade facilitations measures composed by public awareness and stakeholder's engagement, reducing non-tariffs barriers, simplifying customs procedures and promoting papers trade; the financial integration measures made by developing regional financial market, harmonizing financial regulations, promoting cross border Banking, implementing a regional payment system; the public awareness stakeholder awareness through conducting public education campaign, enhancing citizenship participation, engaging civil society organizations and promoting regional identity and cohesion.

Conclusively, as emphasized in this study, combating the challenges that hinder the effective success of regional trade and economic integration is no longer a national matter but a global concern. Therefore, countries need to combine efforts in addressing those issues. This is true for EAC Member States since it is better for the interests of the Community that their high level of sustainable development specifically in regional trade and economic integration. The EAC is also bound to provide services to its citizens and

in the course provide a safe environment at both the regional and international levels.

This study has revealed that EAC Member States depend on each other in the fight promoting regional trade and economic integration. It is until such efforts are realized and the financial laws are harmonized when the war towards the achievements of effective regional trade and economic trade may be said to be won. As revealed from the study, currently there are challenges when trying to address these challenges that hinder the effective successful of regional trade and economic integration involving other regional states due to the fact that these challenges discussed and solutions to them are proposed differently in the EAC States. What are the challenges in Kenya and Burundi may not be a barriers in Rwanda and Uganda.

Even though individual EAC Member States are making efforts in addressing those challenges that hinder the effective successful of regional trade and economic integration at their national level more needs to be done towards establishing effective cooperation channels among each other. The institutions tasked with the research, investigation and prosecution of these challenges that affect effective success of regional trade and economic integration should work with greater synergy. The study has identified a number of initiatives made and areas of convergence and divergence, challenges and proposed some direction in addressing these challenges that hinder the effective successful of regional trade and economic integration. This study recommends to the EAC legislative body, member states and other stakeholders to implement those mechanisms and solutions proposed under chapter three of this study by emphasizing on the harmonizing financial laws, strengthening of existing legal framework and policies, infrastructure development, reducing non-tariffs barriers, trade facilities measures and promoting papers trade, public awareness by conducting educational campaign, enhancing citizenship participation, engaging civil society organizations and promoting regional identity and cohesion. This enabled the achievement of effective regional trade

and economic integration within EAC and indicate the image of sustainable development
In economic integration and regional trade in EAC and for its member states.

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