







Pan-Africanism of Statehood: Exploring Africa's Complex Dynamics Towards Development and Integration

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ABSTRACT

Pan-Africanism's ideology has long promoted African society's unity, fostering cohesion among people living in various states across the continent. After gaining independence, African states have evolved from colonial structures into independent entities, resulting in a heightened manifestation of the "Pan-Africanism ideology" and a more profound understanding of statehood. This study examined the impact of the Pan-Africanist movement on present-day statehood in Africa by investigating socio-economic and political variables, its effect on post-colonial African society and its ongoing significance in the pursuit of regional integration. The study analysed several limitations that result from the continent's historical colonial origins, political structures, and the tension between the autonomous states and the demand for a more cohesive union. A comparative analysis of the African integration agenda was conducted using a case study approach from several African institutions, including the African Union (AU) and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). This analysis highlighted the cultural and social integration efforts of a shared regional identity among separate sovereign states. This study contributes to the ongoing discussion on the integration and growth of African nations by examining how the Pan-Africanism of statehood shapes the complex dynamics of the continent. The need arises for a fresh perspective on an integration that upholds the autonomy of each African state while safeguarding African society's collective cohesion. Consequently, it asks for enhanced cooperation among policymakers and stakeholders engaged in Africa's economic success.

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INTRODUCTION

The emergence of independence in different states of the African region led to the monumental emancipation of African unity and integration with a shared aim of confronting common challenges and working with enthusiasm towards regional development. Although the African process of integration has been a challenging one, faced with different setbacks.¹ This process of unity of the African states is known as the Pan-African movement, with its roots in the pursuit of unity, liberation, and solidarity among

¹ Chubado Babbi Tijjani and Kemal Ozden, "Cost-Benefit Analysis of Nigeria's Continued Role in ECOWAS," *Journal of Management, Economics, and Industrial Organization* 5, no. 2 (May 1, 2021): 10–23, <https://doi.org/10.31039/jomeino.2021.5.2.2>.

Africans; this was with the ideology of the decolonisation of Africa, transforming its colonial legacies into independent states within the continent separated by borders. African states with various colonial antecedents have, over the years, grappled with the efforts to achieve political, social and economic sustainable development.²

At the independence of African states, it was glaring that regional development lies at the mercy of the unity of the people; the quest for unity among its people led to the ideology of Pan-Africanism.³ Pan-Africanism, as an intellectual force and theoretical framework, advocates for the aspirations and actions of Africans to express, resist, and champion the cause of African independence both on the continent and in the diaspora.⁴ It recognises the disjointed states of African existence, along with the marginalisation and alienation experienced on the continent and globally. Pan-Africanism seeks to address these issues in the context of Africa's underdevelopment, exploitation, and persistent need for external assistance. It advocates for Africans to assess their abilities and resources to attain self-sufficiency.⁵ Hence, it acknowledges that Africans are consistently in rivalry with one another, lack genuine autonomy over their resources, and are encircled by paternalistic external influences.⁶ The movement acknowledges that the only method to overcome this existential sociopolitical crisis is to strengthen African unity. It is an ideology or movement spearheaded by Black-Indigenous individuals in Africa and the Diaspora, aimed at attaining ethnic, cultural, and political liberation.⁷

Pan-Africanism is a global movement that promotes solidarity among all people of African descent, both within the continent and in the diaspora. It is an ideology promoting the unification of Africans due to their common interests. Adogamhe considers it a formal integration agreement aimed at fostering economic progress and African unity. Advocates of Pan-Africanism possess a common historical narrative and shared fate among the African populace.⁸ It is a movement of 'ideas and emotions' of the African people, with a clarion call of 'Africa for Africans', which began not in the homeland but in the diaspora.⁹ Legum viewed Pan-Africanism as a manifestation of Africans displaced in the Diaspora, enduring a feeling of "homelessness" and encountering different cultures.¹⁰ It is increasingly imperative for African nations to unite to create a basis for effective entry and integration into the global economy by developing, strengthening, and consolidating their economies. This results from the disproportionate allocation of advantages favouring dominant economies, the extensive movement towards economic liberalisation, and the accelerated tempo of globalisation. Thus, regional integration serves as Africa's answer to globalisation and a strategy to counteract the continent's tendency towards marginalisation.¹¹ Pan-Africanism was a movement against black oppression, a political movement that promoted the union of all Africans into a single African state to which the African diaspora could return.¹² The historical origin of Pan-African can be traced to the resistance against colonisation and slavery. It began as a movement for self-assertion and resistance to enslavement.

² Vusi Gumede, "The African Continental Free Trade Agreement and the Future of Regional Economic Communities," *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 39, no. 3 (July 3, 2021): 470–83, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02589001.2020.1852198>.

³ Lanre Olu-Adeyemi and Bonnie Ayodele, "The Challenges of Regional Integration for Development in Africa: Problems and Prospects," *Journal of Social Sciences* 15, no. 3 (November 9, 2007): 213–18, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09718923.2007.11892585>.

⁴ Samuel Ojo Oloruntoba, "Pan-Africanism, Regional Integration and Development in Africa," in *Pan Africanism, Regional Integration and Development in Africa* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2020), 1–14, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-34296-8_1.

⁵ Ernest Tooichi Aniche, "Post-Neo-Functionalism, Pan-Africanism and Regional Integration in Africa: Prospects and Challenges of the Proposed Tripartite Free Trade Area (T-FTA)," in *State and Development in Post-Independent Africa*, ed. S. O. Oloruntoba and V. Gumede (Austin: Pan-African University Press, 2018).

⁶ Oloruntoba, "Pan-Africanism, Regional Integration and Development in Africa."

⁷ E. I. Akombo, E. E. Nwagu, and L. N. W. Ngah, "Historicizing the Emergence of Pan-Africanism," *A Journal of Research and Development* 6, no. 1 (2022): 119–55.

⁸ Paul G. Adogamhe, "PAN-AFRICANISM Revisited: Vision and Reality of African Unity and Development," *African Review of Integration* 2, no. 2 (2008).

⁹ Colin Legum, *Pan-Africanism: A Short Political Guide* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), <https://doi.org/10.2307/2609532>.

¹⁰ Legum, *Pan-Africanism: A Short Political Guide*.

¹¹ Olu-Adeyemi and Ayodele, "The Challenges of Regional Integration for Development in Africa: Problems and Prospects."

¹² Tesema Ta'a, "Pan-Africanism: A Historiographical Analysis," *Ethiopian Journal of Social Sciences and Language Studies* 1, no. 1 (2014): 63–77.

Pan-Africanism emerged in the 1960s as a movement against African exploitation and racism against blacks.¹³ In the post-independent African societies, Pan-Africanism took a new form with statehood, marked by the collaboration of independent nation-states, which were built upon boundaries set by ethnicity, cultural differences as well as colonial legacies; this division gave room for diverse ideologies and challenges in political governance, economic development and regional integration, regularly posing the quest for national sovereignty against the shared interests of African unity.¹⁴ Hence, the dynamics and complexities in the Pan-African movement negate the reality of statehood. The integration of diverse societies as well as the promotion of a united Pan-African society, is often hampered by legacies inherited by colonialism.¹⁵ This division led to the struggles of state sovereignty and the realisation of a unified Africa, causing delays in efforts towards integration as well as in political and economic development.

Statehood of African nations has shaped and promoted nations that transcend regional diversities, building tensions within the continent.¹⁶ The notion of statehood is inherently connected to the quest for regional integration in Africa, but the colonial powers established boundaries across Africa that divided cultural and ethnic communities while grouping disparate groups into single territories, resulting in a statehood model that prioritised the interests of colonial powers.¹⁷ This legacy has intensified the difficulty of forming cohesive national identities and has resulted in ongoing political issues inside African countries as various ethnic and cultural groups vie for resources and acknowledgement within the boundaries established during the colonial era.¹⁸ These structures in many African nations complicated the establishment of effective governance and accountability.

Hence, this paper focuses on the dynamic intersection between Pan-Africanism and statehood, analysing their impact on the development and integration of modern African society. It seeks to elucidate how contemporary Pan-Africanism can address the continent's current development challenges by providing a distinctive perspective on the unification of Africa's sovereign nations and the advancement of socio-economic progress.

Synopsis of Pan-Africanism Development

The early 20th century saw the rise of the Pan-Africanism movement as a unifying ideology for the African continent. This gave birth to the voice of leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, and Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, who championed the creation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1963, aimed at addressing common challenges facing African states while unifying its people and fostering its economic development.¹⁹ Kwame Nkrumah, the first black president of Ghana, championed the formation of the United States of Africa (USA) to bolster their competitiveness in the global market and ensure their views were acknowledged. This would lead to the union of African states under a singular authority that would strive for equitable resource distribution.²⁰ The rise of the Pan-Africanist Movement and the fervour driving it was intrinsically connected to the profoundly adverse socio-political and economic perceptions attributed to the Black race by the white race. The transatlantic slave trade and colonialism intensified these forces. The propagation of Pan-

¹³ Victor Adetula, Redie Bereketeab, and Cyril Obi, "Regional Economic Communities and Peacebuilding in West Africa and the Horn of Africa," in *Regional Economic Communities and Peacebuilding in Africa* (Routledge, 2020), 1–19, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003093695>.

¹⁴ Stelios Michalopoulos and Elias Papaioannou, "Historical Legacies and African Development," *Journal of Economic Literature* 58, no. 1 (2020): 53–128, <https://doi.org/10.1257/JEL.20181447>.

¹⁵ Anthony J. Christopher, "Secession and South Sudan: An African Precedent for the Future?," *South African Geographical Journal* 93, no. 2 (December 15, 2011): 125–32, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03736245.2011.619322>.

¹⁶ Arnold Hughes, "Decolonizing Africa: Colonial Boundaries and the Crisis of the (Non) Nation State," *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 15, no. 4 (December 2004): 833–66, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09592290490886892>.

¹⁷ Olu-Adeyemi and Ayodele, "The Challenges of Regional Integration for Development in Africa: Problems and Prospects."

¹⁸ Mahmood Mamdani, *Neither Settler nor Native: The Making and Unmaking of Permanent Minorities* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2020).

¹⁹ Innocent Chirisa, Artwell Mumba, and Simbarashe Dirwai, "A Review of the Evolution and Trajectory of the African Union as an Instrument of Regional Integration," *SpringerPlus* 3, no. 1 (December 19, 2014): 101, <https://doi.org/10.1186/2193-1801-3-101>.

²⁰ Stephen Okhonmina, "The African Union: Pan-Africanist Aspirations and the Challenge of African Unity By," *The Journal Of Pan African Studies* 3, no. 4 (2009): 85–100.

Africanism was hastened by the increasing perception of White supremacy over Blacks, juxtaposed with the intensifying atrocities of the slave trade and colonialism.²¹

Pan-Africanism has evolved into a complex framework for African unity, identity, and development, transitioning from its origins as a primarily anti-colonial and diasporic movement.²² As the countries in the continent of Africa confront the problems of state-building and integration in the post-colonial period, the notion of Pan-Africanism has functioned as both a unifying element and a point of dispute, encapsulating the diversity and intricacy of Africa's developmental processes.²³ The Pan-African ideology sought to strengthen economic ties among the African heritage, thereby enhancing the political and economic integration of African nations.²⁴ It seeks to create a government of Africans for Africans by Africans to honour racial and religious minorities desiring to coexist in Africa on equal terms with the black majority.²⁵ The Pan-African movement has undergone several pivotal periods, each characterised by substantial alterations in its goals, techniques, and impact on African identity and statehood.

Pan-Africanism arose from the Africans in the diaspora during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, with the passion of putting an end to colonial oppression, exploitation and marginalisation of blacks.²⁶ Activists and scholars such as Marcus Garvey and Du Bois embarked on a mission which advocated freedom and unity for the African people during this era. Du Bois convened the first Pan-African Congress in 1919 to unite activists and intellectuals in addressing the challenges faced by African and Afro-descendant communities globally. In addition, Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) aimed to foster black pride and facilitate a return to Africa. This objective was embodied by Garvey's slogan, "Africa for the Africans."

The political and nationalist dimensions of Pan-Africanism became increasingly evident as it served as a stimulus for the independence movements across the African continent in the mid-twentieth century.²⁷ After World War II, Pan-African ideology shifted its emphasis from the diaspora to political freedom and decolonisation in Africa. In 1945, a Pan-African congress was held in Manchester, UK, which had in attendance notable African leaders who sought to align the Pan-African movement with the goal of political freedom and the formation of independent African nations through the immediate dissolution of colonial rule in Africa and thereby promote the implementation of self-rule.²⁸ During this period, politicians like Julius Nyerere in Tanzania and Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana championed a politically unified Africa as a means to attain economic progress and resist neo-colonialism. Nkrumah's notion of a "United Governments of Africa" highlighted the significance of unity during this period, as he contended that individual African governments, formed along arbitrary colonial boundaries, could not attain true independence or economic stability without regional cooperation. His 1963 publication "Africa Must Unite" is a seminal work for continental political union.²⁹ The formation of the Organisation of African Unity in 1963 represented a critical moment in the development of Pan-Africanism. The OAU charter encapsulated the divergent ideological viewpoints within the Pan-African movement, attempting to harmonise the conservative, sovereignty-oriented ideas of many African leaders with the radical integrationist ambitions of Nkrumah and his supporters.³⁰ OAU was formed as the inaugural substantial institutional effort to realise Pan-African goals via a continental organisation. It was

²¹ Akombo, Nwagu, and Ngah, "Historicizing the Emergence of Pan-Africanism."

²² Thomas Adino Taye, "A Critical Reappraisal of Pan-Africanism: A Quest for SupraState Formation and Authentic Development in Africa," *International Journal of Innovative Research in Electronics and Communications* 6, no. 4 (2019): 34–45, <https://doi.org/10.20431/2349-4050.0604004>.

²³ Taye, "A Critical Reappraisal of Pan-Africanism: A Quest for SupraState Formation and Authentic Development in Africa"; Rita Abrahamsen, "Internationalists, Sovereignists, Nativists: Contending Visions of World Order in Pan-Africanism," *Review of International Studies* 46, no. 1 (January 14, 2020): 56–74, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210519000305>.

²⁴ Aniche, "Post-Neo-Functionalism, Pan-Africanism and Regional Integration in Africa: Prospects and Challenges of the Proposed Tripartite Free Trade Area (T-FTA)."

²⁵ Kurt B. Young, "Towards a Holistic Review of Pan-Africanism: Linking the Idea and the Movement," *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 16, no. 2 (July 26, 2010): 141–63, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13537113.2010.490733>.

²⁶ Tamba E M'bayo, "WEB Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, and Pan-Africanism in Liberia, 1919–1924," *The Historian* 66, no.1 (2004): 19–44.

²⁷ M'bayo, "WEB Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, and Pan-Africanism in Liberia, 1919–1924."

²⁸ Mark Malisa and Phillippa Nhengeze, "Pan-Africanism: A Quest for Liberation and the Pursuit of a United Africa," *Genealogy* 2, no. 3 (August 14, 2018): 28, <https://doi.org/10.3390/genealogy2030028>.

²⁹ J. G. Kiano, "Africa Must Unite by Kwame Nkrumah London, Heinemann, 1963. Pp. Xvii + 229. 21 S .," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 1, no. 3 (September 11, 1963): 405–6, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022278X00001877>.

³⁰ Chirisa, Mumba, and Dirwai, "A Review of the Evolution and Trajectory of the African Union as an Instrument of Regional Integration."

instituted to protect the sovereignty of African states, foster African unity, and endorse decolonisation efforts. The OAU facilitated collaboration, yet its adherence to non-interference in member states' domestic affairs often hindered its ability to resolve disagreements and advance integration.³¹ The OAU played a pivotal role in aiding liberation movements in southern Africa, facilitating the dismantling of apartheid in South Africa and the independence of nations like Angola and Zimbabwe, notwithstanding several disadvantages.

In 2002, the African Union (AU) was formed to replace the OAU as a renewed dedication of African leaders to the Pan-African ideology with a greater commitment towards political and economic integration.³² The AU became more strategic in its approach to resolving conflicts, curbing human rights abuses in the region, as well as advancing the course for economic development. It prioritised the promotion of peace and collective security, fostering political unity and good governance, advancing economic integration and self-reliance as well as building collective African diplomacy and global influence. This transformation signified a redefinition of Pan-Africanism, now incorporating a dedication to political unity, socio-economic development, peace, and an efficient system of government.³³

Consequent to the Pan-Africanism movement, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) was established in 2021 as a key project of the African Union, aimed at forming a cohesive market for goods and services throughout Africa.³⁴ Its main target is to encourage intra-African trade, enhance industrialisation and diversify the economy, attract foreign and domestic investment, support small and medium enterprises, empower the youth and women, strengthen Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and foster pan-African economic identity. AfCFTA represents the latest embodiment of Pan-African economic integration and can evolve into the largest free trade area globally. Its core value is to reduce unemployment and alleviate poverty by fostering intra-African trade.³⁵ The creation of a single market for the region became a giant step towards the integration of the African economy. The AfCFTA's vision of boosting intra-African trade, creating jobs and reducing poverty aligns with the Pan-African notion of economic development and self-sufficiency. By and large, the Agenda 2063 of the African Union delineates a strategic vision for Africa's socio-economic growth and development, highlighting the importance of regional economic communities (RECs) and the African diaspora in fostering a successful and unified continent.³⁶ Therefore, Pan-Africanism has redirected its emphasis towards development, aiming to utilise Africa's pooled resources and human capital to promote sustainable advancement.³⁷ It has transitioned from its roots in anti-colonial resistance and diasporic unity to a continental initiative for political and economic integration, embodying a flexible and progressive ideology.

At present, Pan-Africanism includes a variety of objectives, such as economic progress, cultural rejuvenation, and political stability. The AU, AfCFTA, and Agenda 2063 are contemporary projects exemplifying the institutionalisation of Pan-African ideas and the promotion of a unified Africa capable of overcoming the problems posed by colonialism.

Statehood in Post-Colonial Africa

Statehood connotes the acknowledgement of a sovereign society backed up by a given population, separated by borders and with a government that has the political authority to enact laws and make autonomous decisions without the interference of any kind. This implies the sovereignty of a nation whereby the government exerts supremacy over its territory, free from external influences, thereby

³¹ Chitja Twala, "The 50 Years Struggle of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU): A Search for a Developmental Paradigm in Africa?," *Journal of Social Sciences* 39, no. 1 (April 9, 2014): 103–9, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09718923.2014.11893273>.

³² Zeray Yihdego, "The African Union: Founding Principles, Frameworks and Prospects," *European Law Journal* 17, no. 5 (September 2011): 568–94, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0386.2011.00567.x>.

³³ Saliou Dione, "Re-Envisioning Pan-Africanism in Today's World Politics, Economy and Culture," *Review of History and Political Science* 6, no. 2 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.15640/rhps.v6n2a2>.

³⁴ Vera Songwe, Jamie Alexander Macleod, and Stephen Karingi, "The African Continental Free Trade Area: A Historical Moment for Development in Africa," *Journal of African Trade* 8, no. 2 (Special Issue) (2021): 12, <https://doi.org/10.2991/jat.k.211208.001>.

³⁵ Regis Y Simo, "Trade in Services in the African Continental Free Trade Area: Prospects, Challenges and WTO Compatibility," *Journal of International Economic Law* 23, no. 1 (March 1, 2020): 65–95, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jiel/jgz031>.

³⁶ Ndizera Vedaste and Muzee Hannah, "A Critical Review of Agenda 2063: Business as Usual?," *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations* 12, no. 8 (October 31, 2018): 142–54, <https://doi.org/10.5897/AJPSIR2018.1114>.

³⁷ Taye, "A Critical Reappraisal of Pan-Africanism: A Quest for SupraState Formation and Authentic Development in Africa."

instituting the foundation for its legitimacy among other nations in the global setting.³⁸ The concept of statehood is essential for establishing a state's legal and political identity in the international community.³⁹ The development and transformation of statehood in post-colonial Africa represent a multifaceted process intricately influenced by the remnants of colonial governance and the distinct obstacles encountered by nations emerging from independence.⁴⁰

The concept of statehood in post-colonial Africa is deeply rooted and shaped by colonial legacy, thereby influencing the socio-political development and governance structures of African states. Colonial legacy and the process of balancing between a nation's sovereignty and Pan-Africanism have continuously shaped statehood in Africa. As noted by Mamdani in Matshanda, the pervasive political despondency throughout all of Africa since independence is a direct consequence of colonialism's legacy.⁴¹ He outlines the characteristics of the power structure that developed during the last phases of colonialism and contends that its legacy has hindered African states' ability to shift from oppressive colonial governance to the systems necessary in the post-independence period; hence, Mamdani advocated for the decolonisation of the idea and practice of political communities.⁴²

Statehood has been a subject of serious concern since African nations gained independence from colonialism, with the struggle to balance between the reality of statehood and the requirements for governance.⁴³ Following independence in the mid-20th century, African leaders faced the challenges of establishing viable nations from the remnants of colonial governance.⁴⁴ The new African leaders sought to reconfigure their nations to embody indigenous identities and address local needs. While efforts to reconfigure African statehood sought to transcend colonial legacies, they frequently neglected to confront entrenched structural issues, exacerbating socio-political challenges in numerous African nations.⁴⁵ This dynamic occasionally resulted in "personal rule," wherein leaders amassed power, frequently at the expense of democratic governance, thereby nurturing a pervasive culture of corruption.⁴⁶ The post-colonial African societies have been faced with tensions arising from strengthening statehood and regional integration.⁴⁷ Kwame Nkrumah advocated for a federal African government (United States of Africa), which he argued would foster the political and economic unity of member states; by so, the continent achieved true independence and fought against oppression from the colonial powers.⁴⁸ Although the Pan-African vision offers a framework for confronting the issues posed by colonial legacies, the tension between national sovereignty and regional integration persists as a major concern. The AfCFTA and the AU exemplify the complex and dynamic character of sovereignty in post-colonial Africa. These initiatives demonstrate continuous efforts to promote Pan-African unity while preserving the statehood of individual nations.

³⁸ J. Samuel Barkin, "Sovereignty," in *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Race, Ethnicity, and Nationalism* (Wiley, 2015), 1–2, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118663202.wberen277>.

³⁹ David Storey, "States, Territory and Sovereignty," *Geography* 102, no. 3 (November 1, 2017): 116–21, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00167487.2017.12094021>.

⁴⁰ Berihun Adugna Gebeye, "Global Constitutionalism and Cultural Diversity: The Emergence of Jurisgenerative Constitutionalism in Africa," *Global Constitutionalism* 10, no. 1 (March 16, 2021): 40–71, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S2045381720000350>.

⁴¹ Namhla Thando Matshanda, "The Crisis of the Postcolonial Nation-state and the Emergence of Alternative Forms of Statehood in the Horn of Africa," *History Compass* 20, no. 10 (October 27, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.1111/hic3.12750>.

⁴² Mamdani, *Neither Settler nor Native: The Making and Unmaking of Permanent Minorities*.

⁴³ Namhla Thando Matshanda, "Teaching & Learning Guide for: The Crisis of the Postcolonial Nation-state and the Emergence of Alternative Forms of Statehood in the Horn of Africa," *History Compass* 20, no. 12 (December 2, 2022): 1–5, <https://doi.org/10.1111/hic3.12753>.

⁴⁴ Jutta Bolt et al., "African Political Institutions and the Impact of Colonialism," *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4259493>.

⁴⁵ Richard T. Talla and Reymond Njingti Budi, "Colonialism, Ethnic Disintegration and Clan-Based Politics, among the Mbum of the Bamenda Grasslands-Cameroon, 1916-1961," *South Asian Research Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* 02, no. 01 (January 15, 2020): 28–36, <https://doi.org/10.36346/sarjhss.2020.v02i01.006>.

⁴⁶ Andrea Cassani, "Autocratisation by Term Limits Manipulation in Sub-Saharan Africa," *Africa Spectrum* 55, no. 3 (December 22, 2020): 228–50, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002039720964218>.

⁴⁷ Tijjani and Ozden, "Cost-Benefit Analysis of Nigeria's Continued Role in ECOWAS."

⁴⁸ Grilli, "A Historiographical Overview of Nkrumah's Ideology and Foreign Policy"; Alice Hoover, "Pan-Africanism: A Selective Bibliography," *A Current Bibliography on African Affairs* 4, no. 1 (January 1, 1971): 10–24, <https://doi.org/10.1177/001132557100400103>.

Pan-Africanism and Statehood: A Socio-Political and Economic Nexus

An important aspect of Pan-Africanism is the revival and development of the African personality, temporarily submerged during the colonial period. It finds expression in a re-awakening consciousness among Africans and people of African descent of the bonds that unite Africans - the historical past, the culture, the common experience, and the aspirations.⁴⁹ Pan-Africanism has historically promoted the unity and solidarity of African people, overcoming the political, economic, and cultural divisions present across the continent.⁵⁰ Pan-Africanism seeks to create a unified African identity with a robust socio-political and economic base to rectify the historical rifts instigated by colonialism and to promote African activity in global political discussions.⁵¹ This viewpoint promotes African-led integration, governance, and economic autonomy through the encouragement of unity and cooperation. The complex basis of this ideological framework is the interaction between the realities of African nations and the principles of Pan-Africanism. Thus, the socio-political and economic dynamics of Pan-Africanism persist in shaping African government, regional cooperation, and the continent's global identity.

The relationship between Pan-Africanism and statehood is analysed through three primary dimensions: political dynamics, economic impacts, and socio-cultural integration. These dimensions illustrate the intersection of Pan-African ideals of solidarity, unity, and self-determination with the realities of governance, economic disparity, and cultural diversity in African states. This analysis seeks to enhance comprehension of the influence of Pan-Africanism on African statehood while emphasising the persistent challenges and opportunities in the pursuit of a united and self-sustaining Africa.

Political Dynamics

The emphasis on political frameworks that prioritise African sovereignty and unity reflects the impact of Pan-Africanism on governance in Africa. Kwame Nkrumah and Julius Nyerere, along with other early Pan-African leaders, promoted the development of African governance systems that diverged from colonial frameworks and reflected Indigenous values, aiming to create unified governments capable of representing Africa internationally.⁵² The objective of leading leaders is to shape the political discourse in newly independent African nations to create governance frameworks that emphasise peace, stability, and collaboration.

The AU, founded in 2002, supersedes its predecessor, the OAU, and represents the political aims of Pan-Africanism with its mandate of collective security and intervention.⁵³ The AU aggressively advocates for democratic governance, regional stability, and conflict resolution to establish a Pan-African governmental framework that maintains sovereignty while encouraging collaboration. The AU's Peace and Security Council exemplifies how Pan-Africanism fosters a proactive, coordinated strategy for maintaining stability among African nations by involvement in peacekeeping operations to resolve regional conflicts. This political dynamic highlights the significance of Pan-Africanism in creating a governance framework that emphasises advancement and collective security while preserving Africa's autonomy.

Economic Impacts

Integrating African economies to enhance regional commerce, promote economic self-sufficiency and combat external economic dependence is a major economic objective of Pan-Africanism. Therefore it became a significant effort to create a cohesive economic framework, enhance trade among member nations, and form a singular African market.⁵⁴ Through the reduction of trade barriers, AfCFTA aims to

⁴⁹ Sharkdam Wapmuk, "Pan-Africanism in the 21st Century: African Union and the Challenges of Cooperation and Integration in Africa," *Brazilian Journal of International Relations* 10, no. 2 (November 30, 2021): 283–311, <https://doi.org/10.36311/2237-7743.2021.v10n2.p283-311>.

⁵⁰ Malisa and Nhengeze, "Pan-Africanism: A Quest for Liberation and the Pursuit of a United Africa."

⁵¹ Dione, "Re-Envisioning Pan-Africanism in Today's World Politics, Economy and Culture."

⁵² Lamine Doumbia and Ousmane Diouf, "African Unity and the Process of Integration from the Grassroots: The Case of Mali and Senegal," in *African Histories and Modernities* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2020), 107–29, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-52911-6_5.

⁵³ Doumbia and Diouf, "African Unity and the Process of Integration from the Grassroots: The Case of Mali and Senegal."

⁵⁴ United Nations, "African Continental Free Trade Area: Advancing Pan-African Integration Some Considerations," in *United Nations Conference on Trade and Development* (United Nations, 2016).

improve the continent's competitiveness within the global economy and promote collaboration among African businesses, thereby facilitating regional value chains and driving industrialisation.⁵⁵

Nonetheless, the complete actualisation of Pan-African economic integration is hindered by the economic inequalities present among African governments. Given the variations in industrial capacity, infrastructure development, and resource endowment, trade liberalisation may confer greater advantages to more developed economies at an uneven pace, potentially intensifying inequality across the continent. Strategies that foster economic fairness and comprehensive development, alongside focused investment in marginalised areas, are crucial to addressing these inequalities. Pan-Africanism seeks to enhance economic integration to create a more cohesive economic framework that harmonises the interests of diverse economies while promoting autonomy and collective prosperity.⁵⁶

Social and Cultural Integration

The fundamental thrust of Pan-Africanism is to promote the political, economic, and social union of all Africans to emancipate the continent from the effects of racism, enslavement, and colonialism. Pan-Africanism enabled the acknowledgement of the common history and the adversities faced by formerly enslaved Africans in the Americas as victims of discrimination.⁵⁷ This collective identity and purpose established the groundwork for a pan-African mentality that subsequently motivated nationalist movements throughout the continent. The emergence of a unified African identity that surpasses national borders, a vital component of social cohesion throughout the continent, has been profoundly advanced by the principles of Pan-Africanism.⁵⁸

This cultural integration mitigates the divisive impacts of colonial borders by promoting unity among African states and populations. Initiatives such as the AU's Agenda 2063 demonstrate that a revitalised African identity and legacy are crucial for progress and unity.⁵⁹ These initiatives highlight the significance of an Afrocentric cultural renaissance that enhances a sense of "Africanness", thereby strengthening societal unity and honouring African customs, dialects, and artistic expressions.

Cultural diplomacy has also played a crucial role in the promotion of Pan-Africanism by cultivating a transnational identity and facilitating the exchange of African cultural assets. The African diaspora has significantly advanced Pan-African ideas through festivals, educational exchanges, and exhibitions of African art. As noted by Abrahamsen, the African diaspora not only strengthens ties within Africa but also advocates for Africa's interests on international platforms, showcasing Africa's rich cultural heritage and uniting diverse African communities across the globe.⁶⁰ By leveraging cultural diplomacy, Pan-Africanism continues to cultivate a shared identity and fosters a collective social foundation for a united Africa.

Challenges of Achieving Pan-African Unity

Despite the efforts of visionary leaders and grassroots movements, the realisation of a truly united Africa has remained elusive because the inherent diversity and complexity of the African continent stand as one of the principal obstacles to the realisation of Pan-African unity.⁶¹ Achieving concrete unity throughout the African continent has proven to be a difficult and diverse task, notwithstanding the goals and ideals of Pan-Africanism. The aspiration for a unified Africa under the Pan-African vision faces considerable challenges stemming from historical legacies, intricate political dynamics, economic disparities, and the rich tapestry of societal diversity. The challenges at hand, transcending mere institutional issues, are

⁵⁵ Lisandro Abrego et al., "The African Continental Free Trade Agreement: Welfare Gains Estimates from a General Equilibrium Model," Working Paper No. 2019/124, June 7, 2019.

⁵⁶ Taye, "A Critical Reappraisal of Pan-Africanism: A Quest for SupraState Formation and Authentic Development in Africa."

⁵⁷ Malisa and Nhengeze, "Pan-Africanism: A Quest for Liberation and the Pursuit of a United Africa."

⁵⁸ K Nantambu, "Pan-Africanism Versus Pan-African Nationalism," *Journal of Black Studies* 28, no. 5 (1998): 561–74; Dione, "Re-Envisioning Pan-Africanism in Today's World Politics, Economy and Culture"; Taye, "A Critical Reappraisal of Pan-Africanism: A Quest for SupraState Formation and Authentic Development in Africa."

⁵⁹ Vedaste and Hannah, "A Critical Review of Agenda 2063: Business as Usual?"

⁶⁰ Abrahamsen, "Internationalists, Sovereignists, Nativists: Contending Visions of World Order in Pan-Africanism."

⁶¹ Saganga M. Kapaya, "Financial System and Economic Development in Africa: A Review and Policy Recommendations," *International Journal of Academic Research in Accounting, Finance and Management Sciences* 9, no. 4 (January 2, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARAFMS/v9-i4/6726>; Aniche, "Post-Neo-Functionalism, Pan-Africanism and Regional Integration in Africa: Prospects and Challenges of the Proposed Tripartite Free Trade Area (T-FTA)."

profoundly shaped by the continent's colonial legacy, the unevenness of its political and economic frameworks, and the rich tapestry of cultural identities that have moulded its present geographical landscape.⁶² Some of the challenges inhibiting the achievement of Pan-Africanism unity are discussed as follows.

Colonial Legacies and Fragmentation

The legacy of colonialism stands as a significant barrier to Pan-African unity, having imposed external governance frameworks and fragmented the continent through arbitrary borders that often bisected ethnic communities. The neglect of the social, cultural, and linguistic linkages across populations due to these borders has led to a fragmented continent where adjacent nations may possess divergent colonial histories, legal frameworks, and official languages.⁶³ The fragmentation has complicated the development of coherent policies, as integration requires substantial resources, and distinct states face unique post-colonial challenges.

Sovereignty and Nationalism

While Pan-Africanism advocates for unity and collective advancement, efforts to centralise authority across the continent have often encountered challenges related to the principle of sovereignty. In light of their independence, African states ardently safeguard their sovereignty and national interests, often prioritising these over regional or continental initiatives.⁶⁴ The focus on sovereignty may hinder collaboration, as governments may be reluctant to transfer authority to regional organisations like the AU or to adopt laws that could limit their internal governance.

Economic Disparities and Developmental Gaps

The ultimate goal of the AU is full political and economic integration leading to the United States of Africa, but Africa's economic progress has become a significant obstacle.⁶⁵ Unlike East and South Asia, which underwent internal economic liberalisation and external orientation leading to prosperity, poverty alleviation, and social advancement, most African nations achieved minimal economic development.⁶⁶ A further impediment inhibiting African unity is the continent's economic diversity, characterised by significant disparities between less developed nations and more affluent ones such as South Africa, Nigeria, and Egypt. These discrepancies are interconnected with differences in the allocation of natural resources, the degree of industrialisation, and economic advancement. Addressing economic inequalities is crucial for achieving a balanced approach to unity and avoiding the marginalisation of smaller or less developed states.

Political Instability and Conflict

Political instability remains a persistent issue across many parts of Africa, with ongoing conflicts in countries like Sudan, Mali, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. These issues hinder unification efforts by undermining regional stability and local government.⁶⁷ Conflicts within and between nations may strengthen borders and divisions rather than promote a collective identity. Conflicts frequently arise from disagreements regarding power, resources, or ethnic tensions.⁶⁸ The African Union and regional entities, such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), persist in facing obstacles stemming from intricate political dynamics and limited resources, even in the light of advancements in conflict resolution and peacekeeping efforts.⁶⁹

⁶² Ernest Tooichi Aniche, "From Pan-Africanism to African Regionalism: A Chronicle," *African Studies* 79, no. 1 (January 2, 2020): 70–87, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00020184.2020.1740974>.

⁶³ Talla and Budi, "Colonialism, Ethnic Disintegration and Clan-Based Politics, among the Mbum of the Bamenda Grasslands-Cameroon, 1916-1961."

⁶⁴ Moorosi Leshoele, "AfCFTA and Regional Integration in Africa: Is African Union Government a Dream Deferred or Denied?," *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 41, no. 4 (October 2, 2023): 393–407, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02589001.2020.1795091>.

⁶⁵ Wapmuk, "Pan-Africanism in the 21st Century: African Union and the Challenges of Cooperation and Integration in Africa."

⁶⁶ Wapmuk, "Pan-Africanism in the 21st Century: African Union and the Challenges of Cooperation and Integration in Africa."

⁶⁷ Adetula, Bereketeab, and Obi, "Regional Economic Communities and Peacebuilding in West Africa and the Horn of Africa."

⁶⁸ Clionadh Raleigh and Andrew Linke, "Subnational Governance and Conflict: An Introduction to a Special Issue on Governance and Conflict," *Political Geography* 63 (March 2018): 88–93, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2017.09.014>.

⁶⁹ Adetula, Bereketeab, and Obi, "Regional Economic Communities and Peacebuilding in West Africa and the Horn of Africa."

Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

Africa hosts a multitude of ethnic and cultural identities, encompassing over 1,500 languages, rendering it one of the most diverse continents globally.⁷⁰ Although Pan-Africanism acknowledges this diversity as a strength, the practical barrier to unity lies in the presence of varied cultural, linguistic, and social norms among governments and groups. Creating a cohesive Pan-African identity requires overcoming these divisions; however, this may be challenging without a common cultural or linguistic basis.⁷¹ In light of the AU's focus on cultural diplomacy and the rejuvenation of African arts and history, it is essential to foster togetherness and understanding across cultural divides to alleviate these separations.

Institutional Weaknesses and Limited Resources

Robust and adequately financed institutions capable of implementing and overseeing policies at the continental level are essential for the realisation of Pan-African unity. Nonetheless, the African Union and various other continental institutions often face challenges stemming from financial constraints, limited capacity, and a reliance on external assistance to maintain their functions.⁷² The potential for dependencies that contradict the Pan-African ideal of self-sufficiency may undermine the legitimacy and effectiveness of regional organisations. African institutions require strengthening via capacity-building initiatives, sustainable financial strategies, and effective governance structures that support regional organisations to fulfil Pan-African goals.⁷³

DISCUSSION

This study has explored the complex impacts of Pan-Africanism on African statehood by analysing the development of unity concepts in the contemporary period to foster political, social, and economic integration while preserving the sovereignty of individual African states. This study highlighted the following critical results from the perspectives of the AU and the AfCFTA:

1. **Political and Institutional Impact:** Pan-African institutions, such as the AU, have markedly enhanced the unity and collaborative governance of African nations. These organisations facilitate policy collaboration, conflict resolution, and peacebuilding while yet honouring the autonomy of each member state.
2. **Economic Integration through AfCFTA:** The AfCFTA represents a significant milestone in economic integration, promoting economic interdependence and intra-African trade. This framework can stimulate economic growth throughout the continent, diminish Africa's reliance on foreign markets, and foster native manufacturing. However, logistical challenges and economic disparity require further consideration.
3. **Social and Cultural Cohesion:** The Pan-African movement has cultivated cultural solidarity and a collective African identity. Social connections across African nations are formed through programs that promote cultural exchange and identity development, thereby laying the groundwork for political and economic unity.
4. **Balancing Sovereignty and Unity:** Pan-Africanism has arisen as a strategy to promote collaboration among African states on common objectives while preserving national autonomy, so establishing a harmonic balance between state sovereignty and unity. This equilibrium is crucial for the ongoing integration of regional activities, as it guarantees alignment with national goals and fosters the development of each state.

⁷⁰ Barack Wanjawa et al., "Kencorpus: A Kenyan Language Corpus of Swahili, Dholuo and Luhya for Natural Language Processing Tasks," *Journal for Language Technology and Computational Linguistics* 36, no. 2 (June 21, 2023): 1–27, <https://doi.org/10.21248/jlcl.36.2023.243>.

⁷¹ Michael Onyebuchi Eze and Katja van der Wal, "Beyond Sovereign Reason: Issues and Contestations in Contemporary African Identity," *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 58, no. 1 (January 18, 2020): 189–205, <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.12979>.

⁷² David Mickler and Kathryn Sturman, "Pan-Africanism, Participation and Legitimation in the African Governance Architecture," *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 59, no. 2 (March 7, 2021): 446–58, <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.13172>.

⁷³ Andrew Mkh Enaifoghe and Sandile Blessing Wanazi, "The Polity of Regional Integration Development and the Challenges Hampering Southern Africa Economic Growth," *Journal of Economics and Behavioral Studies* 12, no. 5 (2020): 44–52.

Opportunities for Advancing the Pan-African Agenda

1. **Improved Economic Integration Through AfCFTA:** With the continued implementation of the AfCFTA, an increase in intra-African trade is ensured, consequently strengthening economic ties among member states. Economic interconnection can augment mutual prosperity, stabilise the economy, and diminish reliance on foreign markets.
2. **Enhancing Digital and Technological Integration:** Africa's swiftly growing technology industry offers a distinctive opportunity for advancing digital integration. The Pan-African e-Network Project and the Smart Africa initiative exemplify efforts to enhance the integration of African nations, fostering cultural and economic connectedness. These projects emphasise e-commerce, digital infrastructure, and telecommunications.
3. **Enhanced Security and Health Coordination:** The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) and the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) provide frameworks for coordinated responses to natural disasters, health crises, and security issues. This improves security and health cooperation. These projects can bolster continental stability by augmenting the capabilities and resilience of individual nations.
4. **Enhancing Cultural and Educational Exchanges:** Collaboration in education can promote the transnational exchange of information and aid young Africans in developing a Pan-African identity. By financing regional education and training initiatives, Africa can cultivate a workforce capable of contributing to and sustaining integration efforts.

The study highlights the possibilities and obstacles inherent in the concept of Pan-Africanism as it pertains to statehood, urging African leaders, policymakers, and scholars to renew their dedication to exploring and achieving the collective goals of the continent. Pan-Africanism recognises that the enhancement of African unity and the resolution of intra-African challenges can solely be accomplished through the promotion of deeper solidarity among Africans. The pursuit of Pan-African unity, a noble and ambitious goal, has long been a subject of scholarly discourse and political debate. The notion of Pan-Africanism has captivated the interest of Africans and the African diaspora for over a century. This philosophy and movement encapsulate a dedication to self-determination and unity with a profound sense of pride in the African continent and its identity. Although the Pan-African movement originated beyond the continent during the 1950s and 1960s, it ultimately established a profound presence within Africa, championing the liberation and dignity of Africans and individuals of African descent while also seeking to eradicate colonialism, slavery, and all manifestations of racism and racial exploitation. Furthermore, they endeavoured to overcome the developmental challenges that the continent encountered. The transition from the OAU to the AU did not signify the end of the African unity, collaboration, and integration movement; instead, it catalysed the creation of new institutions aimed at tackling the continent's myriad challenges in the twenty-first century.

Policy Implications and Recommendations

African leaders and stakeholders must adopt policies that accord with regional aims and national interests. The following guidelines provide a course of action:

1. **Prioritising Regional Synergies in Policy Design:** National policies must align with broader Pan-African frameworks, such as the AfCFTA and the AU Agenda 2063. Leaders can enhance integration by synchronising security strategies, aligning trade policies, and bolstering regional infrastructure.
2. **Strengthening Institutional Capacity:** To effectively promote integration, regional organisations like the AU necessitate political backing and financial resources to execute policies, handle issues, and manage regional initiatives. The effectiveness of integration measures will be augmented by strengthening institutional capacity.
3. **Enhancing Transparency and Accountability:** To foster confidence in the Pan-African agenda, leaders must advocate for transparency in the decision-making processes of regional entities and guarantee the representation of all relevant stakeholders, including civil society. This strategy can synchronise policy with the needs and goals of African individuals.

4. **Promoting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Integration Efforts:** To guarantee that economic growth is environmentally sustainable and equitable, the SDGs must be incorporated into integration efforts. Regional programs that emphasise poverty reduction, environmental conservation, and social welfare can promote sustained prosperity.

CONCLUSION

The idea of progress and unity inherent in Pan-Africanism continues to exert a profound influence on African statehood, especially as the continent grapples with the intricate dynamics of modern integration. The dynamic progression of Pan-Africanism offers a multitude of avenues to advance the integration of African nations across political, economic, and social dimensions. African nations continue to strive for more unified approaches to common challenges, the Pan-African agenda holds the promise of fostering sustainable development, enhancing political alliances, and expanding Africa's presence on the global stage. While African governments strive for political and socio-economic unity, this study highlights the critical necessity of preserving sovereignty to realise the goals of Pan-Africanism. Through the implementation of strategic policies, the adoption of inclusive approaches to infrastructural and economic development, and a steadfast commitment to cultural unification, African governments are poised to further the Pan-African agenda in a way that enhances their independence and resilience as a unified entity. A unified strategy for these policies is essential to tackle the interconnected challenges faced by African nations, such as economic disparity and security crises. The foundation of Pan-Africanism would be strengthened and integration goals be promoted through the collaboration of states, the African Union, and regional entities while maintaining state sovereignty.

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