

Analytical Appraisal of The Factors Responsible for the Metamorphosis of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) to African Union (AU)

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Abstract

The OAU was the first continental organization in Africa formed by Pan-Africanism through which many countries in Africa achieved their political independence. Similarly, the metamorphosis of OAU to AU was done in order to correct some of the imbalances and hindrances that have been affecting the former from achieving its goals and objectives effectively. The study appraises analytically some of the factors responsible for the transformation of OAU to AU where views and professional opinions of experts were reviewed. It also revealed and appraised that challenges confronted by the OAU such as high poverty rate, economic stagnation, gross human rights violation, disunity in Africa among others needed to be addressed for Africa's goals and objectives to be actually realized. The study makes use of neo-functionalism theory to describe possibility of waxing stronger and great if there is mutual sense of belonging among African States, particularly which has led to the formation of AU. The study is a qualitative that uses both primary and secondary sources of data. Twelve informants were interviewed from different Nigerian government parastatals and higher institutions. The interview data was thereby analysed thematically with the aid of Nvivo 10.

Keywords: OAU, pan-Africanism, metamorphosis, African Union, Africa

Introduction

The struggle for independence from Western colonialism and the formation of the first ever inter-government organization in the African continent, the Organization of African Union (OAU) constitute an integral part of the rich tapestry of African modern history. The catalysis behind these events was arguably a culmination of sustained efforts and campaigns initiated by the Pan-Africanism since the early 20th century. A worldwide intellectual movement, Pan-Africanism aimed at securing national self-determination, as well as strengthening the solidarity between all peoples of African descents (Padmore, 1972). It also placed a strong emphasis on the belief that such solidarity will foster political, social and economic growth of ethnic Africans (Mark, 1979).

One may argue that Pan-Africanism is a reference to an ideological and philosophical movement created and carried out by the Africans themselves. Underpinning the very essence of these ideology and philosophy is the urgency and importance for the Africans to unchain the long shackle of destructive influence of Western colonialism. The dark period of colonialism in the continent has caused destabilization and oppression, eventually laying out the foundation of disunity among the African people, with its ripples can still be seen and felt until this present day (Young, 2016).

Prominent Pan-Africanists, most notably Henry Sylvester-William, Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, Herbert Macaulay, Gamal Abdel Nasser, Jomo Kenyatta, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa among others shared a consensus that both slavery and colonialism were largely to be blamed for the widespread and pervasive practice of racism in the African continent. Such practice has subsequently eroded not only African culture, but also local custom and value (Chirisa, Mumba, & Dirwai, 2014).

The aftermath of the Second World War led to series of agitation for self-independence in the African continent became increasingly popular and active (Mark, 1979). Series of meeting and conferences were held around the world, with the primary focus on how to accelerate the decolonization process in Africa. In April 1958, the first regional meeting involving leaders and delegations from the newly independent African

States was held in Accra, Ghana which was attended by eight independent States of Western and Northern Africa. Some of the prominent issues that were discussed include: (a) formulating suitable mechanism aimed at creating mutual understanding among the African States; (b) considering means for safeguarding the sovereignty and independence of participating States and assisting dependent African territories towards self-determination; (c) addressing ongoing problems of common interest; (d) planning cultural exchange and mutual assistance schemes (Johnson, 1962). A number of deliberations and resolutions of the 1958 Accra Conference were later incorporated into the Charter of OAU which came into operation on 13th September, 1963 (Saho, 2012).

Prior to the creation of the OAU in 1963, ideological differences, particularly on African unity, became the main source of obstacles for many newly independent African State to forge solidarity among themselves. Such division was visibly displayed through three different ideological blocs dominating the African geopolitical scene at the time: the Brazzaville bloc, Monrovia bloc and the Casablanca bloc with the first two would later join forces to establish the OAU (Duodu, 2013). These three particular groups – Brazzaville, Casablanca and Monrovia were commonly associated with the ideological labels of conservative, radical and moderate respectively. Hence, the signing of the OAU Charter on May 25, 1963 which Obayiuwana (2013:4) described as the “birth of OAU” was not only represents the most significant milestone in the Pan-Africanism movement, but also in the African history (Mathews, 2011).

While the OAU, to some degrees, successfully achieved parts of its aims and objectives, particularly in eliminating colonial and apartheid ruling in the African continent (Young, 2016), the Organization had failed to achieve a number of goals for the continent (Williams, 2007). The failure on the part of OAU canvassed for its metamorphosed to African Union (AU).

Prior to the official transformation of the OAU to AU, there were several notable meetings and summits held by African leaders which few among them include: the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA) which was a product of Kampala Movement of 1991; Algeria Summit of 1999; 35th Summit of Heads of State and Government held on September, 1999 at port city of Sirte, Libya which was popularly referred to as Sirte Declaration; and 36th Summit of OAU held in Lome, Togo in July, 2000.

It was at the 36th Summit of OAU that the draft of AU Constitutive Act formally ratified by the member States (Packer & Rukare, 2002). Following the ratification of the Act, the official inauguration of AU as the successor of OAU was made during the summit of OAU Heads of State and Government on 9th July, 2002 involving the convergence of 53 African leaders in Durban, South Africa.

It is worth noting at this juncture that, the periods from 1999 to 2002 witnessed gradual transformation of the OAU to the AU. This initial transformation process is what Tieku (2004) referred to as a fusion or convergence of three projects individually initiated by three different African countries, namely: (a) a Libyan quest for pan-African unity; (b) a Nigeria project for a Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa; and (c) a South African project for an African Renaissance. These programmes have arguably facilitated the transformation of the OAU to the AU.

Similarly, as it has been earlier mentioned that failure of the OAU to achieve certain aims and objectives for the African continent necessitated its metamorphose to AU. Therefore, it is against this backdrop that the study appraises the metamorphosis of the OAU to AU as a continental body in Africa in order to examine some of the factors responsible for the transformation of the former to the latter.

Methodology

The study uses a systemic review of literature related transformation of continental organization particularly on OAU to AU. This review also cut across the position of economic integration in Africa, regional peace and security in Africa, issues on African politics and the shift from policy of non-intervention to non-indifference policy. The study is qualitative that adopts the use of both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary source of data reflects the professional views and opinions granted to

practitioners/experts in the field of international studies. The literature on the transformation of the OAU to AU is sourced from books, journal articles, newspapers among others that formed component of secondary data source.

Theoretical Framework

Theory as posited by Asika (1991) specifies the relationship between the concepts and the constructs of a phenomenon in order to explain and possibly predict the phenomenon. Hence, this study makes use of Neo-functionalism theory to appraise the metamorphosis of the OAU to AU as a continental organization in Africa. Scholars of neo-functionalism identified with the functionalists' propositions on the common pursuit of welfare needs through interstate cooperation but consider the process as basically political (Biswaro, 2012). According to Ernest Haas, in his book titled, "The Uniting of Europe – Political, Social and Economic Forces, 1950-1957", argued that contrary to what functionalism predicts, the process of integration is not restricted only to the intensification of policy collaboration in a specific functional area, economic or technical but also political approach (Dosenrode, 2008). To the neo-functionalists, "interests, rather than common ideals or identity, are the driving force behind the integration process, but actors may learn and develop common ideals and identities" (Schmitter & Ernst, 2005, p. 258).

Drawing from the above assertion, neo-functionalism attempts to be practical in explaining the process of regional integration. Its opinion is that regional integration is an inevitable process which could be initiated by political leaders of States who are interested in participating. From this, neo-functionalism notes that States are important participants in the integration process but emphasizes that the States are constituted by different interest groups and political parties (Niemann & Schmitter, 2009). Thus, neo-functionalism believes in supra-nationality as the "only method available to the state to secure maximum welfare, underpinning the idea that there are inseparable linkages between the social, economic and political domains in integration" (Biswaro, 2012:31).

Hence, the theory is able to explain how regional integration begins; how it progresses and the end result of the process. The theory could best be explained the formation of OAU through the pan-Africanists ideas in bringing peace and stability to African continent (Jiboku, 2015). These ideas have made countries in Africa to feel mutual sense of belonging through harmonization of resources and collective deliberation on issues bothering the continent in order to achieve a common objective. Part of the products in doing this together by African member States led to the decision of transforming OAU to AU for promotion of economic, political and security matters in the continent. However, the neo-functionalism theory has its defect that has been pointed out by experts particularly on the claims that, the authority and role of member states decrease as integration proceeds. Nevertheless, the researcher has made provision for such as part of the claims was proved wrong by African experiences. This among other reasons, canvassed for the adoption of neo-functionalism as a suitable theory to appraise the metamorphosis of the OAU to AU in Africa.

Economic Integration in Africa

Several scholarly works in literature have exhaustively examined and analysed the cause of the OAU weakness as a continental organization. This weakness is linked to its failure to fully achieve its established goals and objectives. One of the causes of such failure as identified in the works by Naldit and Magliuerast (1999), Obeng-Odoom (2013) and Makinda, Okumu and Mickler (2016) is the inability of the OAU to promote and attain the socio-economic goals and objectives embedded in Article II of the organization's Charter. One of the prescribed goals was to coordinate and harmonize economic cooperation, including transport and communication, among member States (OAU Charter, 1963). Opiko (2013) asserted that the idea of continental economic integration is to improve the economy of African continent. Thus, this idea was institutionalized in the Lagos Plan of Action and finally concluded in the Abuja Treaty of 1991.

The 1991 Abuja Treaty, as affirmed by Adar, Juma and Miti (2010), proposed the establishment of the African Economic Community (AEC) which motivated the creation of Regional Economic Communities (RECs). The creation of RECs arguably integrated African continent together economically. This gives rise

to the establishment of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), and the Community of Sahel-Saharan State (CEN-SAD). These regional economic organizations added to services provided to the continent by the existing organizations like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the East African Community (EAC). However, in emulating the European Union (EU) model, Adar *et al* further argued that the overlapping memberships in the RECs would prove to be a future challenge to the organization (Adar, Juma & Miti, 2010). It is for this reason that the AU assembly instituted a protocol that guided the relationship between the AU and the RECs in order to cater for the challenges forecasted by Adar *et al* (Bamidele, 2016).

The realization of economic integration in Africa started in the twenty-first century immediately after the establishment of AEC in the year 2000 from the Lagos Plan of Action led by Nigeria and other committed African leaders. The formation of AEC aimed at hastens the economic integration and to harmonize market for the African continent. The emergence of RECs as part of efforts towards booming the African economy as asserted by Murithi (2008) was considered as the building blocks to the harmonization of economic development and progress of Africa to avoid marginalization in the global level.

Several works have highlighted that the markets and economic integration in Africa could be prevented from being marginalized by other continent. For example, Adejumbi and Olukoshi (2008, p. 82) affirmed that “only if the regional integration efforts can be fully developed through a developing macro-states approach that would facilitate better strategies for integration in a globalized world”. The authors supported the attempts towards African economic and regional development as incorporated in the AU by adopting a historical perspective approach of Pan-Africanism towards achieving the economic integration in Africa. This particular approach was employed during the transition of OAU to AU while highlighting the challenges faced by OAU and the way forward to AU to address the challenges (Adi & Sherwood, 2003).

While suggesting way forward to the African economic integration, Adebajo and Whiteman described the African economic and regional integration as being “loosely modeled” compared to EU (2012, p. 53). Both argue that EU begun to explore the idea of cooperation among European countries given the failing economic situation attributed from the effect of the cold war. In a bid to rescue its economic status, European nations were confronted with the option of, either forming integrative forces or succumb to failed economies. The authors at this point added that for African continent to have economic integration and development there is a need for collective will and cooperation in the continent.

The failure of OAU as a continental organization was not restricted in achieving its goals and objectives to promote economic prosperity and growth in the African continent, it also failed as an institutional structure that could not handle the functional tasks set in the AEC. This argument is supported by Parker and Rukare (2002):

By the time of its thirtieth anniversary, most analysts of the OAU concluded that the organization could not meet future demands without serious reforms and re-organization... Analysts also generally agreed on the structural/functional weakness of the OAU and its charter, particularly with regard to the secretariat and secretary-general (p. 367).

Therefore, it turned out to be paramount for African leaders to seek for alternative to revive the economy or device a new institutional framework to achieve the continental goals and objectives. Several committed leaders of African countries like Nigeria and South Africa under Olusegun Obasanjo and Thabo Mbeki respectively embarked on reform packages that led to the formation of New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) and African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) (Tieku, 2004).

The initiative behind the formation of the NEPAD as argued by Offu and Okechukwu (2015) were assisted by the existing sub-regional economic organizations in achieving some of its goals and objectives. These sub-regional organizations include the ECOWAS, the Arab Maghreb Union (UMA), the COMESA and the SADC. These sub-regional organizations played significant role in actualizing some of the objectives of NEPAD in Africa.

Regional Peace and Security in Africa

A good number of studies have been done on Africa's regional peace and security. Some of these works centred on the inability of OAU to maintain peace and stability in the continent. As argued by Williams (2007), the OAU as a continental organization had a focus on State's sovereignty related to its non-interference policy in the affairs of its members. It was more of an exception of rule if the OAU involved itself in its members' internal affairs beyond condemning actions or passing resolution and declarations (Williams 2007). The non-interference policy of the OAU has caused great havoc to Africa particularly in the area where there is conflict within a state. This conflict has contributed to some hindrances confronting OAU from maintaining absolute peace in Africa.

The OAU as a continental organization had failed to act and intervene in many intra-state conflicts. As stated earlier, this failure is due to the principles of respecting sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of other States contained in Article III of the organization (OAU Charter, 1963). This paralyzed decision making in the OAU and prevented it from responding to pressing issues on the continent (Zoubir, 2015; Hanspeter, 2016). The OAU was considered weak as it embarked on a number of failed initiatives to influence national politics, the behaviour of its member states and in prevention of human rights violation and other atrocities in the continent (Murithi, 2008). The OAU was tasked to defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity, independence, and human rights as per outlined in its Charter. Regardless of positive signs pointing towards progress and hope, Hanspeter (2016) opined that the OAU had failed to execute the said task effectively, partly due to its own self-prescribed norm of non-intervention embodied under its charter.

Some of these conflicts, as posited by Rother et al. (2016) and Dustmann et al. (2017), were predominantly intra-state and interstate in origin and generated huge refugee flows and displacement of persons. A relevant example is the observation made by the Habeeb (2014) when he revealed that more than 2.5 percent of all Africans in 1990s were refugees streaming from political violence. Similarly, in 1996, 14 out of the 53 African states were in armed conflict, accounting for more than half of all wars resulted to deaths world with over 8 million refugees, returnees and displaced persons. All these and many more which could have been managed and prevented from been escalated by the OAU proved abortive due to some hindrances confronted by this African continental organization then.

Political Issues in Africa

Glaringly, efforts have been made by scholars to examine the political challenges in Africa. The African continent has faced with series of challenges particularly in the area of democratization. As asserted by Clionadh (2016), in most cases it has been impossible to transfer the political power successfully from one democratic government to another in the continent. This condition has forced the OAU as a continental organization to strive hard in ensuring that the principle of political independence for member States as contained in its Charter is achieved (Young, 2016). This notion has been equally embedded and entrenched into the Article 4 (m & p) of the AU Constitutive Act. The new organization, AU has been working hard to ensure full implementation and enforcement of the Article on its erred member states in African continent.

The African continent has experienced series of military interventions in politics due to some abnormalities among the political leaders in government. These abnormalities as described by Houngnikpo (2016) to include corruption, embezzlement, misappropriation of funds, ethnics' imbalances and unhealthy rivalry among the politicians. These particular challenges are what give African militaries the conventional wisdom to feel emboldened to take out civilian leaders from office causing unconstitutional change of government. In fact, the military interventions in Africa's politics as argued by Jeffrey (2014) and Houngnikpo (2016) to have caused set back and even conditioned the present state of the African continent.

The Africa as a continent is not a monolithic entity because the pace of democratization and military interference in politics vary not only from sub-region to sub-region but also within each sub-region. While West and Central Africa suffered tremendously from military interference, the southern cone of Africa

escaped from what Houngnikpo sees as the “diktat of men on horseback” (2016: vii). This democratic coup as observed by the scholar is a way of staying in government by the military through tactical withdrawal to hold elections and then wining those elections to themselves to become a legitimate elected leader. The examples of this could be seen in Democratic Republic of the Congo under Mobutu Sese Seko, Nigeria under Sanni Abacha regime, Gambia under Yahya Jammeh, among others.

However, the last two decades have witnessed the democratic journey in most of the African States. In fact, the military as observe by Sanghamitra and Elliott (2013) has been playing an important role in peaceful political transition in countries like: Benin, Mali, Niger, Mauritania, Guinea and Guinea-Bissau. The positive influence of military is as a result of the fact that the military has been fully professionalized and given political incentive to play a positive role in African democratization. The military role in all transitions as argued by Sebastian et al (2015) that whether from single party politics to more pluralistic systems, from military to civilian government, or from war to peace, the military seems a key variable depending on how positive it been used.

The positive use of military to promote democratization in Africa has been observed by Charles (2003) when Nigeria government under Olusegun Obasanjo promised to reinstate the former President of Sao Tome. The former President of Sao Tome, Fradique de Menezes was overthrown in 2003 while attending the Leon Sullivan Summit in Abuja. Nigerian government as part of its African leading roles in promoting democratization assured Menezes to restore power back to him and Nigeria eventually ensures that national accord and constitutionality were restored to Sao Tome and Principe.

In another similar development, Nigerian government under Goodluck Jonathan had equally achieved OAU/AU objectives by restoring peace and democracy to Guinea Bissau (Panapress, 2013). Nigerian government assured the United Nations at the 42nd Ordinary Session of the Authority of ECOWAS Heads of State and Government (HSG) that “Nigeria is committed to resolving crises in Africa and will work with the UN and ECOWAS to restore democracy to Guinea Bissau” (Panapress, 2013, p. 1). Having pledged to the UN that the democracy will be restored back to Guinea Bissau, Nigerian government returned peace, normalcy and democratization to the region as fulfilment of its promise.

In addition to the effort towards positive use of military to achieve democratic consolidation in Africa, Nigerian government under President Muhammadu Buhari was appointed by ECOWAS as chief mediator to liaise with Yahya Jammeh on peace transition in Gambia (Premium Times, 2016). Nigerian president was reported by Rawlins (2017) to have threatened to use military force through ECOWAS if Gambian president Yahya Jammeh refuses to hand over power to the President elect, Adama Barrow. The use of positive military threatening at this point influence the decision of Yahya Jammeh to make room for negotiation between him and the President elect, Adama Barrow. This also attests to the fact that positive use of military can promote democratic consolidation and peace in Africa.

Shifting from OAU’s Non-Intervention to Non-Indifference Policy of AU

Various scholarly opinions have conveyed on the shift from non-intervention policy of OAU to non-indifference policy of AU. These scholarly views on the changes in the OAU/AU policy are diverse and formed parts of the yardsticks used to measure and compare the performance of the OAU and the AU. The Sirte Declaration of September 8-9, 1999 at the 35th OAU Summit of Heads of State and Government held in Port city of Sirte, Libya marked the transformation of AU from OAU (Roach & Schaefer, 2012). In addition to the 35th OAU Summit as part of the transition process, the OAU held its 36th Summit in Lome, Togo on the July, 2000 where the draft of AU Constitutive Act was ratified. The ratification of AU Constitutive Act at the Summit as argue by Francis (2006) and John-Mark (2016) called for the public pronouncement of the AU as the successor to the OAU. The official inauguration of AU was made during the convergence of 53 African leaders in Durban, South Africa in July 9th, 2002 at the summit of OAU Heads of State and government (Jaoko, 2016). Meanwhile South Sudan became the 54th member of the Union on the 9th July 2011 (Bamidel, 2016). Furthermore, the re-absorption of Morocco back to the AU on

the 31st January 2017, has increased the number of the organization into 55 members (Abubeker, 2017; Gaffey, 2017).

The AU Constitutive Act and transformation of the OAU-AU are indeed a major development in the evolution of African integration. This process is what Apuuli (2016, p. 120) views as the “ideals of Pan-Africanism”. This is because the process of transformation represents the Pan-African ideology towards Africa. The point of departure of the AU from OAU is expressed more in the area of peace and security, human rights and democracy. The most important item on the AU agenda is ensuring peace and security which the non-interference policy of OAU failed to accommodate. For the continent to experience meaningful development, there is need to promote peace, security and stability (Lamidi, 2010). This formed part of the reason for the shift in the non-interference to non-indifference policy in the Constitutive Act of the AU.

Packer and Rukare (2002), Kioko (2003), Hunt (2016) and Karen (2016) are among the scholars who assessed the functionality and impact of non-indifference policy adopted under the auspice of AU. They argued that the policy empowered the AU of the right to intervene in the internal affairs of member states. It worth noting that, Article 4 of the AU Constitutive Act upholding national sovereignty as its principle, with each member is expected to respect the existing independence rights of other member States. However, in a situation where there is crime against humanity, Article 4(h) upholds the right of the Union to intervene upon the recommendation of the Peace and Security Council (Lamidi, 2010). This reverses the primacy that the OAU accorded to the member States. The pertinent thing is that a member State under AU, is no longer protected by the principles of sovereignty and non-interference most especially when there is tendency of crime against humanity (Solomon, 2010).

As a result of the above, the AU Constitutive Act reverses the understanding and scope of the application of the principles of state sovereignty and non-interference as previously embraced by the OAU. The Act addressed all the issues covered by the principles from the domestic jurisdiction of the states as matters of continental concern. The power of State ends and that of the Union begins when there are cases of grave danger to the lives of citizens (John-Mark, 2016). In line with the Union passions for peace, the AU recognized and welcomed African people’s participation in the Affairs of the continent. It was discovered that effective functioning of the AU requires both civil society and private initiative.

Additionally, as argued by Murithi (2012) and Omorogbe (2012), there is no single State in the African continent that can stand alone without the support from other African countries to sufficiently address security and instability issues. These issues, ranging from civil conflict, recruitment of child soldiers, refugee flows, prostitution, bonded labour, drug trafficking, genocide, illicit arms trade, to money laundering. As a result of the above issues, Articles 4(h) and (j) of the AU Constitutive Act is arguably a significant difference that show case a change in the OAU Charter which explicitly prohibit interference in the internal affairs of other members. The policy of non-indifference under the 2002 Act of AU enshrines the right to intervene in the internal affairs of other State whenever gross violation of human right is perceived. The Constitutive Act of AU, as posited by Murithi (2012, p. 95), implies that “African countries have agreed to pool their sovereignty to enable the AU to act as the ultimate guarantor and protector of the rights and well-being of African people”. The scholar concluded that the principle of non-indifference could be separated with both the continental solidarity and collective security towards ensuring stability in Africa.

Therefore, with the successful introduction of non-indifference as a replacement for non-interference policy of the AU and OAU respectively, the former as a new continental institution in Africa has been seen differently by scholars. The scholars like Nitin, James and Shakur (2001, pp. 1-2), Nkusi (2016, p. 1) and Sipalla (2016, p. 32) view the transformation of OAU to AU as “far from simple name change”. The transformation process to them is a welcome development that is likely to put an end to all sorts of crises and conflicts in Africa. The aspiration that the emergence of a new institution like AU to replace OAU in the continent motivated member states to work towards the success of the organization.

However, scholars like Adejo (2001:125) and Onuoha (2004:370) were of the opinion that the replacement of the ‘talking club’ and ‘toothless bulldog’ known as OAU to AU was rather a continuation of the same institution. This is what Adejo (2001, p. 119) describes as nothing but ‘an old wine in a new bottle’. In supporting Adejo and Onuoha’s views, Kimenyi (2011), Kura (2013) and Ubaku et al. (2014) observed that despite the transformation from the OAU to the AU in 2002, the Union is still confronting with a myriad of challenges of achieving regional cooperation in continent. The regional cooperation and stability according to the scholars can only be achieved through the strengthening of the institutional mechanisms in the continent. Nevertheless, one cannot undermine some of the benefits and progress recorded under the AU compared to the condition of Africa before the transformation.

Driving Factors and Achievements of the Transformative Objectives: An Appraisal of AU from OAU

The final transformation of the OAU into the AU epitomizes a testament of perseverance and commitment of the African nations towards establishing a new regional organization that will be more effective and efficient in bringing greater benefits to the continent than its predecessor. Throughout its existence, the OAU recorded a quite few achievements in attaining its designated objectives and purposes. Nevertheless, these achievements have been overshadowed by a myriad of contextual factors, both situational and structural, that led to the eventual demise of the organization. Indeed, the decision to replace the OAU with the AU coincided in a period imprinted by phenomena of security challenges, political struggles and socio-economic crisis that swept across practically every corner of the African continent.

Suffice to note that the central objectives of AU clearly share some similarities with its predecessor’s objectives. The *raison d’ être* of the OAU establishment, was to secure continental peace and security, facilitate sustainable economic growth and poverty eradication, and attain and promote greater unity and solidarity in the continent. The OAU, nevertheless, was only good in making promises, as it fell short on delivering them. The prospects for economic recovery and sustainable development for many debt-ridden developing African countries remained elusive under the auspices of the OAU. In short, the establishment of the AU is arguably a product of disillusion and disappointment for many African nations towards the OAU’s failure to accomplish its intended goals and objectives. As reiterated by a Rwanda leader, President Paul Kagame at one of the conferences held in Addis Ababa that “economic growth and performance in Africa has significantly improved in comparison to the era of OAU. The AU era has witnessed a decline in poverty levels, although the African continent is experiencing low intra-African trade” (African Union, 2002). This argument pointing to the fact that the priority of AU policy and programme concentrate on accelerating the economic growth and development in Africa which made the Union to embark on revamping process of the regional economic unions such as ECOWAS, ECCAS, and AMU.

The push for substituting the OAU with the AU was driven by several factors. The following driving factors encompass economic stagnation, lack of unity, poverty issue, security and political instability, human rights violation, and epidemic of deadly diseases in Africa. Some of the aforementioned factors have also been the subject of analytical discourse. Numerous scholars have ascribed the causes behind the advent of the AU from the OAU due to the inability of the latter to deliver accordingly its objectives for the benefit of the African continent (Adebajo & Whiteman, 2012; Apuuli, 2012; Wapmuk, 2014; Agupusi, 2016; and Williams, 2007). Similarly, these driving factors behind the replacement of the OAU to AU have also been validated based on the input obtained from the respondents during series of interviews conducted for this study as exhibited in Figure 1 below.

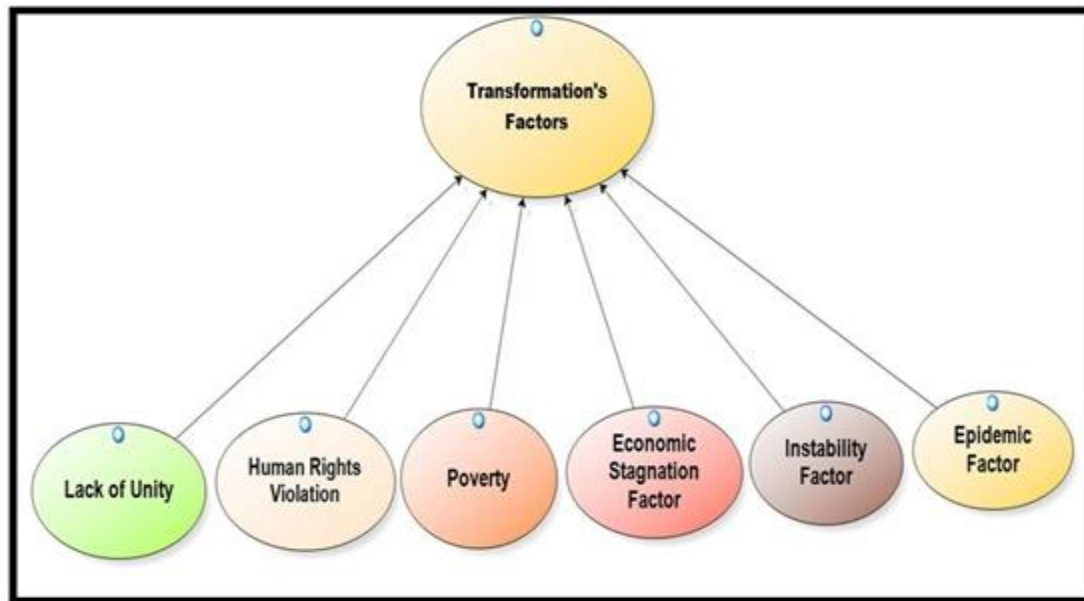


Figure 1: Thematic mapping of the transformation's factors to the OAU to the AU

a. Economic Stagnation

Economic stagnation experienced in many African nations is arguably one of the main reasons that driven the process of transforming the OAU into AU. Throughout the existence of the OAU, economic crisis was a common phenomenon, badly affecting most of the low-income developing countries in the continent. Excessive accumulation of external debt, crippling high inflation rate, and steady decline of per capital income were some of the instances of economic stagnation spreading across the continent. As reflected in the World Bank database, the level at which Africa's economy decline rate canvassed for economic performance in African continent. For instance, Nigeria and some notable African countries whose economy were buoyant during the OAU recorded less than 0.8 percent which amounted to high poverty rate and unemployment in the continent (World Bank, 2018).

As remarked by Wapmuk (2014), the pronounced low-rate at which Africa's economy was under the OAU, propelled African leaders to come up with the idea of regional economic institutions. The outcome of the Abuja Treaty of 1991 according to Wapmuk:

...were raised as a central idea of collective self-reliance of the continent. This idea was strongly reinforced by the Abuja treaty of June 1991, establishing the African Economic Community (AEC) which sought to increase economic self-reliance and promote self-sustaining development (2014, pp. 72-73).

The policy outcome of Abuja treaty received tremendous boost through financial aids from foreign donors, together with technical and budgetary assistance received by OAU from both regional and global organizations. The continued suffering endured by many post-independent African nations to extreme poverty, external debt problem, and high inflation rate was largely due to a number of reasons. Most notable among them, include the continuing adoption of economic system from the legacy of Western colonialism, a system that had dominated and exploited the continent for more than five centuries. The OAU was aware of this exploitative nature of this system. It is for this reason why reforming the continent's economies was utmost important in the OAU economic agenda.

Conservative economic reform measures, mostly through structural adjustment, were introduced to address the debilitating impacts of excessive indebtedness in many African economies in the 1970s and early 1980s. Under this flawed economic structure, most African State relied heavily on cash crops (e.g., corn, cocoa,

and sugar) and natural and mineral resources e.g., gold, columbite, iron ore, and diamond as their main source of national revenue. For instance, both Ghana and Nigeria were known worldwide for their high deposition of gold. Iron ore and columbite deposits are found in abundance in Nigeria. In sum, African States are blessed differently in terms of mineral resources (Adesope & Asaju, 2004).

Similarly, frequent occurrence of natural disaster is also a contributing factor leading to the stagnation to Africa's economy and none is more prevalent in the continent than the drought. Based on a report written by Mistry (1992), he critically observed the adverse impact of natural calamity to the continent's economies. As he further elaborated, "a prolonged and devastating drought between 1981 and 1984 which severely impaired the continent's agricultural cash crop production and resulted in extensive damage to output and to the financial structure of Africa's fragile economies".

To overcome poverty and underdevelopment in the Africa, the OAU was actively involved in promoting economic reforms across the continent. Defining feature of these reforms was the implementation of structural adjustment programme. For instance, the Organization sensitized its members on the likely repercussion of taking loans, particularly a long-term loan, in almost of its meetings on boasting of Africa's economy.

Despite of the earnest efforts made by the OAU to tackle the problem of economic stagnation that continued to be pervasive in the African continent, its efforts fell short of attaining the economic-related goals and objectives stipulated in the organization's charter. As argued by Hentz (1997), the economic stagnation in sub-Saharan Africa could be attributed to Afro-pessimism. The scholar further described Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) as neoliberal stabilization that had contributed to the failure of economic reform in Africa. This failure according to him occurred due to implicit bargain between the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Western countries. For instance, between 1960 and 1980, Africa's investment declined from 30.7% to 2.5%. The resultant effect of this was that, African countries failed to diversify its exports.

Another discernible example of economic stagnation that continued to persist in Africa is manifested in the amount of external debts and foreign investment flow among African nations. As was stressed by Soludo:

External debt of African States stood at US\$330 billion in nominal terms, equivalent of fifty percent of the continent's GDP. At the same time, there was considerable decline in foreign aid and investment coming into the continent. Official aid had dropped from US\$17.9 billion in 1992 to US\$10.8 billion in 1999. Foreign investment had also remained modest totalling US\$ 7.3 billion in 2000 that is equivalent of four percent of aggregate Foreign Direct Investment flows of US\$178 billion in the developing world (2003, p.45).

In supporting the argument that economic backwardness in many parts of the African continent was a justified cause for replacing the OAU with the AU, informant BUK elaborated:

The African Economic system was backward compared with other continent such as Asian countries and other developed countries like. Despite the deposition of varieties of natural resources, African continent are backward. For that reason, there is a need for the leaders to sit tight and think of the way forward (Informant BUK, personal communication, August 26, 2017).

Furthermore, informant ABU2 confirmed the effectiveness of OAU efforts to achieve the desire outcomes in dealing with the stagnated trend of economic growth in Africa. He argued that the Lagos Plans of Action has not recorded much progress:

The Lagos Plans of Action and all the efforts at the African Economic Integration has not been moving progress much. So, the African leaders and with the very energetic and financial muscles of the Colonel Gaddafi and really push very hard (Informant ABU2, personal communication, September 16, 2017).

As opined by the informant above on LPA, Ravenhill (2016) observed that OAU's prescription on LPA short-run policy formulation in achieving long-term goal was rejected by policy analysts. Similarly, the OAU and other international organization such as ECA and African Development Bank (ADB) were conflicting with the modality and strategy proposed by LPA in reforming African economy.

In addition to the claim made by informant ABU2, informant UniAbuja affirmed that the central argument behind reason for OAU to be replaced by AU "was because of the absence of economic integration that can bring about economic unity among African States." This argument was further supported by informant ABU1 that:

The major reason was economic. The economic integration was the reason for the transformation. If you look at the Economic Community of African States, which was 1993, look at its Article of Association of the African Union, the Constitution of African Union, you will see that they are similar. So, the essence at that time was basically the Treaty of African Economic Community (Informant ABU1, personal communication, September 11, 2017).

Economic backwardness that stretched across most of the African continent is generally associated with the problem of debt crisis. Excessive indebtedness because endemic in many poverty-stricken African States in 1980s and early 1990s. For instance, the statistics for Africa paints a bleak picture such as 1.5% export volumes grew in each year between 1980-1986, while declining rate of trade grew up to 25% (Hentz, 1997). The crisis has disastrous repercussions to these States, not only stifling their economic development, but also depriving local population access to basic infrastructure and facilities. Informant NIIA1 stressed that:

Most countries were using their money to service debt rather than to build infrastructure, to put in place modern health system as well as to build schools or educational sector, to revamp agriculture and so many other requirements that would have accelerated the development within the continent (Informant NIIA1, personal communication, October 4, 2017).

Therefore, finding durable solutions for economic stagnation in the African continent was one of the great challenges confronting the OAU. Its failure to effectively deal with these challenges provided justification for the African leaders to replace it with the AU. Figure 2 below shows a consensus among the interviewees to confirm that problem of economic stagnation is one of the key reasons behind the replacement of OAU with AU.

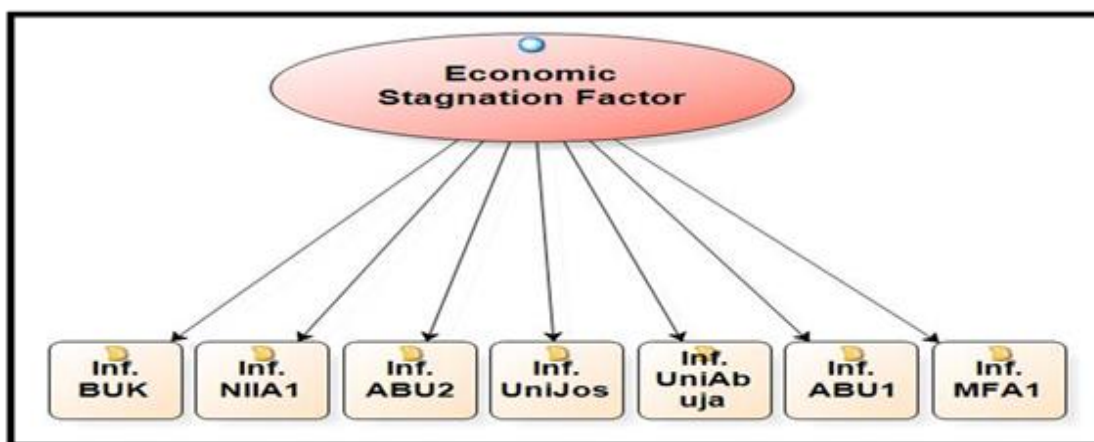


Figure 2: Economic stagnation as a transformation reason

b. Poverty Issue

The widespread incidents of excessive poverty in many African nations commonly associated with prevailing economic backwardness of the continent during the existence of OAU, subsequently, canvassing the rationale behind its replacement with AU. It can be argued that whenever there is problem in the economic sector in Africa the likely aftermath of its poverty (Mekuriyaw, 2016). Many peoples in Africa were found living in abject poverty under the OAU where an average individual cannot boost of three square meals in a day (World Bank, 2016; Hunger Note, 2016). This depressing situation was made worsen when "...over 300 million Africa's population, live on barely US\$0.65 a day, and this number is growing relentlessly" (World Bank, 2001, as quoted in Soludo, 2003, p. 23). Similarly, in Somalia, more than 800,000 people experienced chronic hunger and the threat of famine (Hunger Note, 2016).

Poverty-stricken conditions, coupled with stagnated economic growth and intolerable debt burden, had forced most of the OAU members to apply for loans and financial aids outside of the continent, especially from the World Bank and Western countries. Among the countries that applied for the World Bank and Western countries' loans were Nigeria, Niger, and Gambia among others. In most cases, such loans were normally attached with terms and conditions, most of which somewhat punitive that were likely to place the borrowing States in a disadvantage position. Among the common terms and conditions imposed by the lenders were price liberalization, trade reform and privatization (Eurodad Report, 2006). Some of these financial terms and conditions superseded national autonomy, forcing the borrowing States to carry out economic reform and structural adjustment measures.

Whilst the loans may provide temporary cash flow relief to the borrowing States, they were also detrimental to their national economic interest. The terms and conditions of the loans were often set in such ways that the borrowers would be deprived the autonomy to make their own economic policy and decision. For instance, Nigeria's economy started witnessing backwardness which deteriorated country's trade with Western World since acceptance of loan from IMF. In the course of paying back the loan, Muchie et al. (2017) argued that other social and infrastructural amenities, in which the borrowing State should provide for the benefit of its own people, were left neglected or underdeveloped. Policy priority for social progress was set a back at the expense of repaying the loan. This, coupled with poor governance, protracted civil war, and economic mismanagement practices, exposed many of the African States to pervasive impoverishment throughout (and even beyond) the period of OAU existence. This aforementioned argument was also reiterated by informant ABU1 that, "*One of the reasons for the Africa or why there is poverty in Africa was because of the poor governance. Poor governance and also poor administration were part of the reasons*".

The relative poverty that continued to be predominant in many of the African nations was a cause of worrying concern among OAU members. This exposed the organizations inability and capacity to eradicate or address the underlying cause of the problem. Even, some members publicly called for the replacement of OAU with a new continental organization. Although, all African leaders were ready for the transformation, but Muammar Gaddafi, Olusegun Obasanjo and Thabo Mbeki were the active members in the campaign for OAU-AU transformation. Informant ABU1 further contended:

The (Africa) think and hoped that it will be of their interest to make or create a Union that is more cohesive, a Union that is more effective, that is why we have the African Union's formation. And if you look at the AU Constitutive Act also compared it with the Charter of the Organization of African Unity, you will see that they are different (Informant ABU1, personal communication, September 11, 2017).

In fact, given the rate at which poverty was relatively much pronounced in the Africa than in any other continents, many of the African leaders publicly voiced out their dissatisfaction over the performance of the OAU to address the problem (Mekuriyaw, 2016). Moreover, Informant UniAbuja believed that African nations have a role to play in securing economic prosperity and social progress: "*let the African continent*

work towards the plight of our people, the need to create jobs, employment, [and] welfare, among others in order to improve the well-being of our people”.

However, Ekwealor (2017) had adopted different stand than informant UniAbuja and NIIA1. He instead argued that poverty in Africa under the OAU was not an integral part of the factors necessitating the need to transform the organization. Ekwealor was of the opinion that the widespread incidents of poverty in Africa were part of the Western colonial legacy of resource exploitation system. This system bore a considerable part of the blame for stifling economic growth and causing persistent impoverishment in many African States.

Contrary to the Ekwealor’s assertion, Odey (2017) insisted that irrespective of whether the havocs that caused the African economies were transpired during the colonial era, the OAU as a continental organization has an obligation to correct the abnormalities. As part of the measure to eradicate poverty in the continent, the Article II of the OAU Charter tried to incorporate economic cooperation as antidote to the spread of poverty in Africa. Thus, the OAU was expected to promote and facilitate economic cooperation among its members. Nonetheless, the Organization had failed to fulfil the objective leading to its transformation to the AU. Hence, Figure 3 below illustrates a consensus among the interviewees regarding poverty as identified by various interviewees, as one of the key factors driving the transformation of the OAU to the AU.

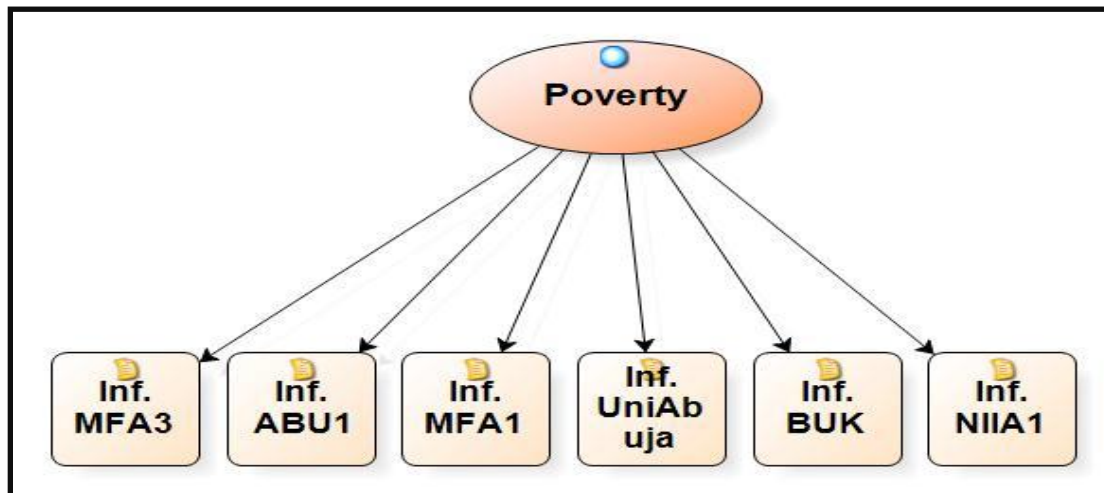


Figure 3: Poverty as a transformation reason

c. Lack of Unity

The issue of lack of unity among the African States is another key factor responsible for pushing the transformation of the OAU to the AU. Figure 4 below indicates a consensus among the interviewees regarding the lack of unity among African states during the OAU as a factor responsible for the transformation of the OAU to the AU.

Scholars such as Niyitunga (2014), Guzansky (2015), Ekwealor and Okeke-Uzodike (2016), acknowledged that the issue of disunity in Africa had pre-existed even before the OAU was formally established in 1963. Such disunity is evident in several regional meetings, most notably those that took place in Africa from the late 1950s to early 1960 to discuss the idea of setting up a new organization in the continent. At that time, the rivalries and conflicts between and among the dominant political blocs in the continent were pervasive during those meetings. In particular, three major political blocs – the Casablanca, the Monrovia and the Brazzaville – were bitterly engaged in their struggle to dominate the continent’s political landscape of the post-colonial period. The primary cause of this disunity was arguably due to their divergent ideological views and contrasting opinions on how to achieve the objectives of OAU. The Pan-Africanists tried to

harmonize the groups' conflicting opinions which invariably led to the creation of OAU. The Organization tried to maintain unity and cooperation in the African continent, but it has yielded limited success.

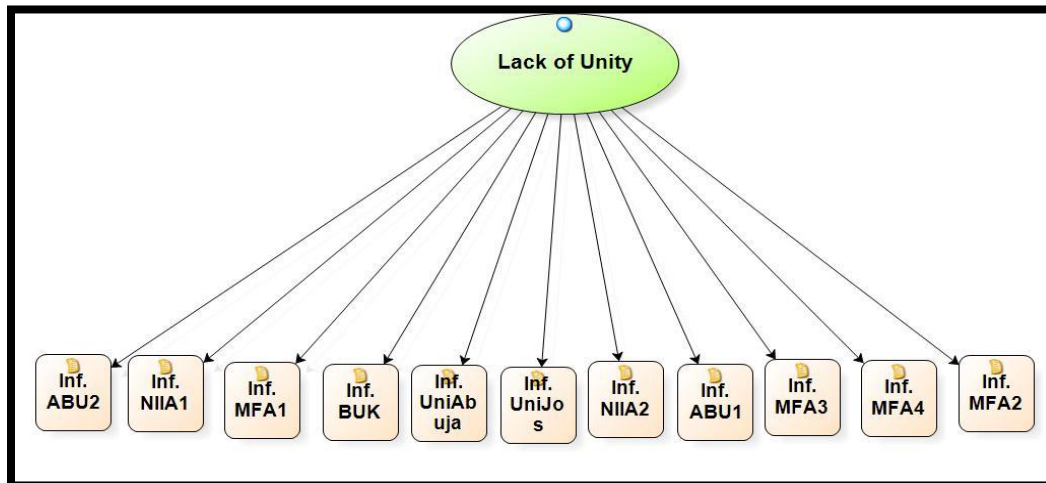


Figure 4: Lack of unity as a transformation reason

Similarly, informant ABU1 and BUK argued that, the OAU as a continental organization in Africa could not adequately maintain unity among its members in the continent. Conscious that the spirit of oneness among the African nations can only be attainable if there is a unity among them, the main purpose behind the OAU's establishment was to unify all these nations. Once there is unity and cooperation in the continent, one can expect economic development, stability, and social progression to follow. The OAU, however, was increasingly losing its credibility as an effective continental organization that would unite African nations. For instance, the OAU had failed to control or mediate the crisis in Congo due to loss in its credibility.

Such failure to forge African unity has serious repercussion on matters concerning security and stability in the continent. Of relevantly, most of the OAU members had experienced one form of intrastate conflict or the other. For instance, the 1995 crisis in Ivory Coast and 1999 crisis in Guinea-Bissau were part of the intrastate conflicts that occurred due to lack of unity among member states. This position has been argued by informant MFA3 that *"disunity and lack of cooperation among African states attributed to what prompted the arrangement of the OAU has not been accomplished"*.

The inability of OAU to meet up with the demand of Africa states which has created vacuum for series of imbalances geared up African leaders to canvass for its transformation. As affirmed by informant NIIA1, the failure of the OAU to unify African continent clearly departs from the common expectation that, *"the organization will serve as a platform so that the African leaders will be able to work together in order to bring about African Unity"*. Both informants UniJos and MFA1 provided the same argument in explaining the move to replace the OAU with a new continental organization. Informant UniJos provided explanation behind the justification of replacing OAU as he asserted, *"the significant purpose for the change of the OAU to the AU is that they trusted that the [former] has not been powerful in upgrading or realizing African unity"* (Informant UniJos, personal communication, September 13th, 2017).

As the prospect of realizing the goal of unifying African nations was increasingly looking bleak, the push by the African nations to replace OAU with AU became inevitable as *"it was discovered that parts of what led to the formation of OAU has not been achieved"* (Informant MFA1, personal communication, September 8th, 2017). Without an effective organization to act as an avenue to unify African nations and its peoples, many African leaders were adamant only by replacing OAU with a new organization that the unification of African can be materialized and subsequent mobilization of resources towards greater benefits of the continent would be possible. Complementing this argument is the opinion from informant UniAbuja in which he is optimistic on the potential that AU can offer:

Let us see how African continent can forge their resources together, and see how the continent can work together as African people, let us see how within the continent how African can make use of the little resources they have for the betterment of Africa (UniAbuja, personal communication, September 9th, 2017).

d. Security Instability

The problem of political and security instability in Africa is one of the factors responsible for the transformation of the OAU to AU. There is a consensus shared among the interviewees regarding the political and security instability in Africa as one of the driving factors behind the transformation of the OAU to AU. This consensus is depicted in Figure 5 below.

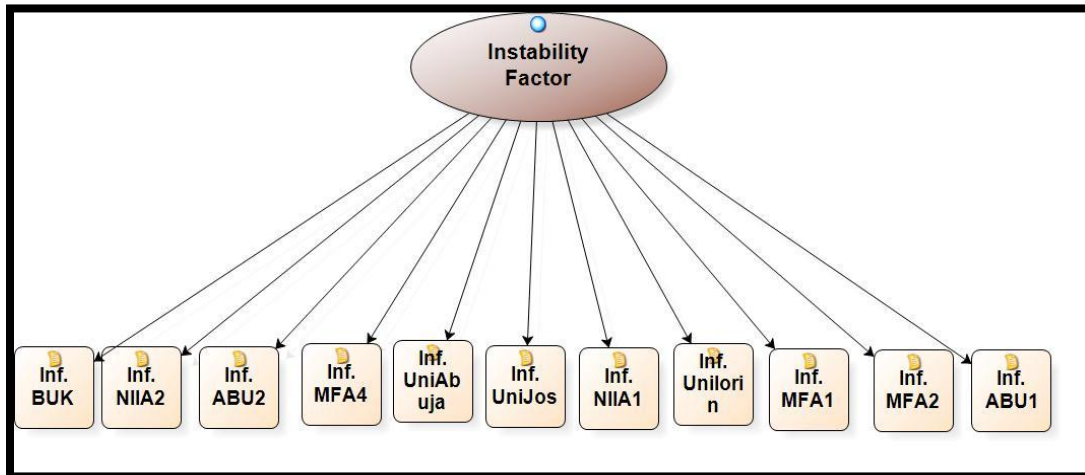


Figure 5: Security instability factor as a transformation reason

Thirty years of the OAU's existence is largely viewed as a conflict-prone period in which African continent experienced a sporadic, with some prolonged outbreak of violent conflicts, a situation in which the organization was incapacitated to curtail. As Wapmuk (2014) elaborated:

The OAU was deeply handicapped in the face of tragic conflicts such as the Rwanda genocide of 1994, the collapse of the state of Somalia, the crises of Sierra Leone, Liberia, Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, Cote d'Voire and others (p. 74).

The OAU had witnessed numerous cases of intrastate conflicts in Africa and this argument is supported by informant NIIA1:

By the late 90's, a fair number of African countries were boiled in a lot of conflicts. The OAU was quite incapacitated and not do much to avert those conflicts. For example, when the Rwanda's genocide ensued, the OAU could do next to nothing because of the basic principles that defined the OAU then, particularly the principle of non-interference and the non-intervention in the entire affairs of member nations. (Informant NIIA1, personal communication, October 4, 2017).

As reiterated by the same informant, some of the key provisions in the OAU Charter, namely the principle of non-interference, had hindered the performance and actions organization to address the conflicts effectively. Most often, this particular principle, as noted hitherto, prevented the organization from meddling in the internal affairs of its members during a crisis. This argument is attested by Murithi who posited that, "certain principles of the OAU such as non-interference in the internal affairs of member States affected the organization negatively" (Murithi quoted in Wapmuk, 2014, p. 74). Zambia crisis of 1988 was another form of conflict that OAU failed to curb in Africa (Duodu, 2013).

Another factor that contributed to the inability of the OAU to effectively deal with the conflicts in Africa is the absence of unity and peaceful coexistence among African States. This is equally attested to by Murithi (2012) that, lack of unity and cooperation in Africa gives room for bad governance, economic mismanagement, abuse of human rights among others. Thus, disunity could not bring in any development to African countries.

The OAU in general had arguably failed to achieve much in managing and bringing the end of intrastate conflicts and ensuing incidents of widespread abuses of human rights (Sönmez, 1998). Such failure has rendered the OAU ineffectual in which scholars like Ajayi (2014), Ofori (2013) and Ibrahim (2016) strongly criticized the organization by describing it as a “toothless bulldog.” Therefore, the call for the OAU to be replaced by AU seems to be warranted, as informant MFA1 affirmed:

The rate at which conflict here and there in African continent made it mandatory for a new continental organization to take over in order to reposition and achieve the objectives setup for the establishment of OAU in which the organization failed to achieve (Informant MFA1, personal communication, September 8, 2017).

In the same vein, informants ABU1, MFA2, Unilorin, and ABU2 shared similar consensus that to achieve the desire goals and objective of securing peace and stability in the continent, the time was ripe for OAU to be placed with a new organization.

e. Human Rights Violation

Another reason behind the transformation of the OAU to the AU is due to the prevalence of human rights violations incidents in Africa. As indicated in Figure 6 below, all the interviewees shared a consensus regarding the human rights violations in Africa being one of the factors responsible for the transformation of the OAU to the AU.

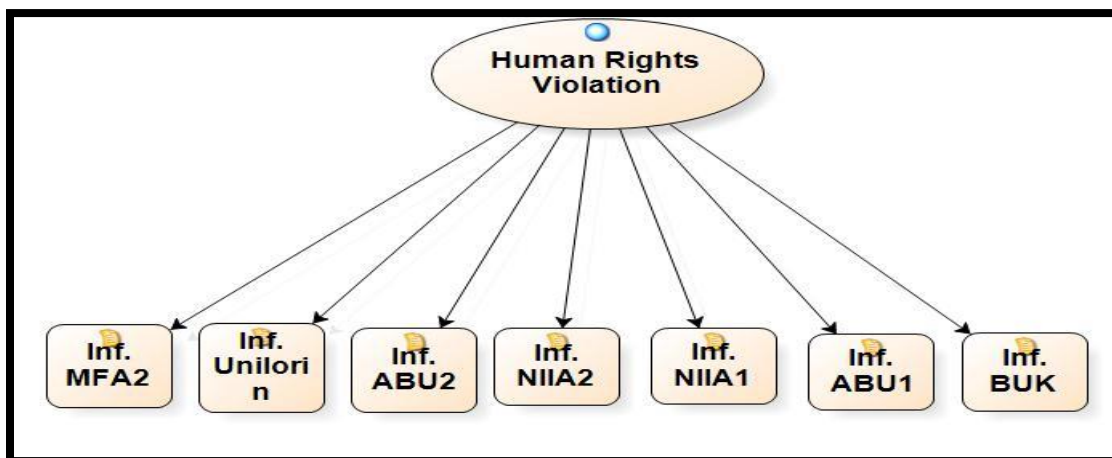


Figure 6: Human rights violation as a transformation reason

Throughout the period of the OAU’s existence, significant number of African States experienced first-hand excessive human rights violations, mostly emanating from intrastate conflict (Magnarella, 2000; Marques, 2017). Most of these conflicts predominantly triggered from ethnic or clan clashes as exemplified in the civil wars of Rwanda, Burundi and Chad. In the case of the Rwandan genocide of 1994, for example, such is the brutality and intensity of the conflict that over 800,000 lives were lost within 100 days (Jones, 2013; Hitchcott, 2015). In a similar vein, more than 998 lives were reportedly loss during the Zambia crisis of 1988 (Duodu, 2013).

The use of excessive force, intimidation, harassment and other abuses against refugees, political dissidents, journalists, civil society activists and academic communities was a norm in Africa. In many instances, refugees who fled from intrastate crises or ethnic conflicts were often being subjected to abuses and human

rights violations. This was especially so in Chad when most of its refugees fled to Nigeria for their safety. Correspondingly, the highest recorded numbers of refugees in the continent were the one that took place in many of the OAU members. The issue of refugees, in the views of some scholars, attributed to the continent's security challenges confronting the OAU throughout its existence (Marques, 2017).

Informant BUK attested to the assertion of the gross violation of human rights as part of the factors expediting the push for transforming the OAU into AU:

It is understood that once there is no peace and stability in an environment, the violation of human rights will be the order of the day. Example of this can be seen in Rwanda genocide issue where there was no respect for human life, so all these need to be stopped in Africa (Informant BUK, personal communication, August 26, 2017).

In the opinion of informant ABU2, the role that the OAU would play to protect human rights and fundamental freedom of African peoples from abuses was far from being effective. He further added that, there were “*some serious issues such as massive violation of human rights like genocides in Rwanda,*” in which the organization “*was incapable of addressing it even in principle*”. Thompson (2015) equally stressed on the lives lost in genocide of Rwanda as part of issues that inherent destabilizing potential of processes of political transition in most of the African countries.

The OAU's ability to prevent and defuse effectively human right abuses emanating from conflict situations was greatly restricted due to a number of factors. One such factor of significance is the restriction imposed by its own Charter to intervene internal affairs of member States in a time of conflict. NIIA1 blamed the OAU's own constitutive clause of non-intervention that hindered the organization's role to prevent and act against cases of human rights abuse. He elaborated that the Organization “*could do next to nothing because of the basic principles that defined the OAU then, particularly the principle of non-interference and the non-intervention in the entire affairs of member nations.*” Similarly, Williams (2007) argued that African continent under OAU was hindered from performing up to the expectation due to the policy that restrained members from interfere in the internal affairs of other country. As a result of the policy of non-interference numerous cases of human rights violations were reported in Africa.

f. Epidemic of Deadly Diseases

The failure of the OAU and its members States to effectively deal and prevent the widespread epidemic of diseases in the African continent is one of the underlying causes behind the replacement of the OAU with the AU. Figure 7 below indicates the epidemic factor identified by interviewees as one of the transformation's reasons. Since the inceptions of the OAU, many of the African States had experienced at least one time an outbreak of deadly infectious diseases, ranging from Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), cholera, tuberculosis to malaria. For instance,

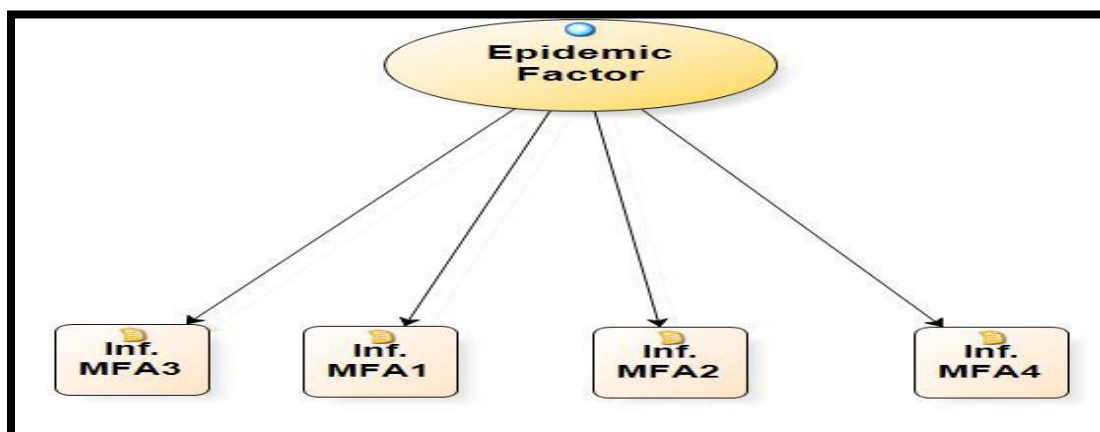


Figure 7: Epidemic factor as a transformation reason

Glass et al (1991) expressed that epidemic cholera was spread to over 30 countries in Africa which accounted to 90% cases of disease in 1990 alone.

In comparison to other continents worldwide, Africa had been by far the worst affected area with the deadly epidemic of HIV/AIDS, in particular the sub-Saharan, western and eastern regions. The devastating impacts from the HIV/AIDS pandemic had led to the enormous loss of human life, claiming millions of Africans within the period of OAU existence (Alli & Wapmuk, 2014; Poku, 2017). According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 25 million out of approximately 38 million victims recorded worldwide to have died of HIV/AIDS by 2005 were Africans (United Nations, 2000). The devastating impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic not only resulted significant mortality in Africa, but also exacted disastrous effects on socio-economies of the affected region. In addition, the pandemic had caused tremendous pressure on the already crumbling local public health system, compounded by inadequate funding, medication, and personnel, along with run-down and outdated facilities and equipment.

The outbreaks of deadly diseases in the African continent were not only confined to HIV and AIDS, but Tuberculosis and malaria epidemic were frequently reported in many developing countries across the continent. As argued by St Louis et al (2008), Africa is facing the worst tuberculosis epidemic since the advent of the antibiotic era. They stressed further that between 1990 and 1999, some African countries have the highest incidence rates of tuberculosis in the world coupled with the pronounced rate of HIV positive.

Despite the gravity of health pandemic to the African continent and its life-threatening impact on the population, the OAU noticeably had failed to provide a concrete solution to control and prevent the spread of such diseases swiftly and completely (Poku, 2017). The reason for such failure was arguably attributed to lack of commitment and cooperation among its members to fight for a noble course and challenges facing the African continent.

Conclusion

The transformation of the OAU to AU in Africa was considered necessary in order for meaningful development to take place in the continent. The African continent under the OAU experienced series of imbalances ranging from disunity, gross violation of human rights, economic stagnation, highly pronounced poverty rate, epidemics, unstable security among others, but one cannot conclude that the organization failed to achieve for the African continent. Similarly, the concerted efforts of Pan-Africanism over the formation of OAU could not be considered to be in vain simply because the organization had achieved and fulfilled parts of its objectives to Africa which include its fight against colonialism, racism and apartheid in Africa. Those initiatives had made it possible for most of the African States to attain their dreams of self-determination from colonial occupation. Hence, the transformation of the OAU to AU was not to mean that the former was a total failure as earlier mentioned, but rather to revive and re-strategize the organization in order to be more active and effective towards achieving its objectives to the African continent. The idea of reviving the OAU to achieve African goals and objectives is in consonance with the neo-functionalism theory.

The transformation process of the OAU to the AU which ended with an official inauguration of the latter at Durban, South Africa, as a new continental organization in Africa has provided greater benefits to the African continent. As it might sound incorrect to describe the process of transformation objectives as not been achieved. Many among the respondents of this study considered such evaluation as too early to judge whether the objectives of the OAU to AU transformation has been achieved or not. Nevertheless, the following achievements could be attributed to some of the products of the transformation of the OAU to AU. These include; the modification of non-interference policy to non-indifference policy, economic progress, formation of Peace and Security Council (PSC), establishment of African Standby Forces (ASF), respect for the rule of law, political stability, unity and integration, establishment of African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), abolition of trade barriers among others. This could be categorized as the economic mechanism which comprised of NEPAD, APRM and abolition of trade barriers that are put in place by the

AU, while the creation of PSC, R2P, ASF, APSA among others are the security mechanism built by the AU as parts of the product of the transformation in Africa.

With the transformation achievements mentioned, one can argue that the metamorphosis of the OAU to AU was carried out in order to revamp the former with high expectation that this newly formed continental organization will be able to deliver a range of objectives benefiting the African continent. It could be recalled that the strength of the AU was built on the foundation of the identified weaknesses of the OAU. Similarly, great achievement of the objective of transformation could be credited to the Constitutive Act of the AU, particularly Article 4(h) that prohibit the barriers that prevented Member State from intervening in the affairs of other members even when there is war or conflict. Therefore, the transformation of OAU to AU in Africa has done a great favour to African countries in averting many difficulties encountered while under the OAU.

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