

**THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION IN
AFRICAN INTEGRATION:
CASE STUDY OF THE AFRICAN UNION
COMMISSION**

Presented by:

DESMOND T. ORJIAKO

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UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
EAST AFRICANA COLLECTION

**A Research Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Award of Master of Arts Degree
in Communication Studies of the University of
Nairobi's School of Journalism**

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Declaration

I declare that this project entitled "The role of communication in African integration: Case Study of the African Union Commission" is my original work and has not been submitted, either wholly or partially, to any other University or Examining Body for the award of any Degree or Diploma.

Desmond T. Orjiako

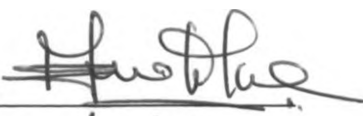
Signature: 

Date: 27th November, 2008.

This is to certify that this project was undertaken independently by Desmond T. Orjiako, under my supervision.

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Name of Supervisor: Mr. Patrick Maluki

Signature: 

Date: 29/11/08

Dedication

This study is dedicated to a ‘praying mother’, my darling wife, Mrs. Virginia Chibogwu Orjiako, who throughout the period remained an inspiration, a committed mother and a devoted wife. She fed me with prayers and rare words of encouragement which kept me going in the melodramatic journey of life.

It is also dedicated to our five children, namely:

- ♣ Chihoroge Emmanuel, who provided the ICT backup
- ♣ Chiaka Esther- the “lady in the house”
- ♣ Mmaezi Judith- the “home doctor”
- ♣ Ebubenna Ikechukwu- the “caring available,” and
- ♣ Emeka Philip- the artist.

All of you contributed and encouraged me to ‘accept what I cannot change and change what I cannot accept’.

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To The Only Wise God Be Glory and Majesty For Ever.

Desmond T. Orjiako

October 31st 2008

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

1. AU	African Union
2. AUC	African Union Commission
3. EC	Executive Council
4. AHSG	Assembly of Heads of State and Government
5. OAU	Organization of African unity
6. PAFMESCA	The Pan-African Movement for East, Central and Southern Africa
7. RECs	Regional Economic Communities
8. CSSDCA	Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa
9. DCI	Division of Communication and Information
10. CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
11. PSC	Peace and Security Council
12. ECOSOCC	Economic, Social and Cultural Council
13. PAP	Pan-African Parliament
14. CIDO	African Citizens' Directorate
15. CAMEI	Conference of African Ministers of Economic Integration
16. AEC	African Economic Community
17. NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's development
18. CA	Constitutive Act
19. ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
20. COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
21. ECCAS	Economic Community for Central African States
22. AMU	Arab Maghreb Union
23. SADC	Southern African Development Community
24. CEN-SAD	Community of Sahelo - Saharan States
25. EAC	East African Community
26. IGAD	Inter-governmental Authority for Development
27. ADB	African Development Bank
28. ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
29. PRC	Permanent Representatives Committee
30. ARPKE	African Regional Action Plan on Knowledge Economy
31. UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

Abstract

This study proposed to evaluate the role of communication in the African Union Commission in the integration of Africa. It thus sets out to investigate how communication could advance or retard the vision of integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, an Africa driven by its own citizens, a dynamic force in the global arena.

Using the African Union Commission in Addis Ababa as a case study, the research examines the place of communication in the ongoing discourse of African unity, while attempting to find out the adequacy and efficiency of communication structures, channels and tools used by the Commission to disseminate messages, the position of member states and government, the role of the media in the African integration process and with what effect on the AU Commission in creating awareness among the citizenry.

Whereas it is no longer questionable whether or not media systems are powerful and can contribute to global awareness and sophistication as proven by scholars like McComb & Shaw's Media Agenda, buttressed by others, what however is new is the impact of mass media on the African audiences in the pilot project of Africa's desire for deeper unity popularly known as "the United States of Africa".

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"How an issue is reported is as important as whether the issue is reported at all" said James Dearing and Everett Rogers (1996) in an article 'Agenda-Setting'. This fact as well as the historical urge to unite Africa prompted the research topic.

As James Watson, author of Media Communication: An Introduction to Theory and Process (2003) contends that there are many agendas, in relation to Africa's integration agenda, this research sought to find out:

- (i) Who owned the integration agenda
- (ii) Obstacles to the agenda and solution
- (iii) Recommendations.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0: Introduction

The idea of African renaissance was propelled by the realization that feasible and inspiring vision, accompanied by a well planned and thought out strategy are essential to the very survival of people on the continent. Kwame Nkrumah, one of the founders of Pan-Africanism had said in 1958: “Without a serious commitment to a people centered development process and collective self-reliance and without political unity at the continental level, neo-colonialism would continue to balkanize and under develop Africa and poverty would be perpetuated”¹. Reginald Green and Anne Seidman, two economists who taught at the University of Dar-es-Salaam in the 1960s, confirmed Nkrumah’s thesis in a book that was highly celebrated by Pan-Africanists, and was appropriately titled *Unity and Poverty: The Economics and Politics of Pan-Africanism*. Over forty years since independence, Africa is poor and still searching for unity to salvage its people from poverty.

W.E.B Dubois, George Pad Moiré, Nnamdi Azikiwe, Sekou Toure, Julius Nyerere, Kenneth Kaunda, Emperor Haile Sellasie, Gamel Nasser and others have championed Nkrumah’s teaching - that Africa should be independent of colonial rule as one political entity. The latter day Pan-Africanists like Thabo Mbeki, Muammar Ghadaffi, Yoweri Museveni, and Phillip Ochieng et al. have time and again emphasized that the continent is faced with basic challenges of eradicating illiteracy, and disease, targets that were set at independence four to five decades ago.

According to Phillip Ochieng, an opinion writer in one of Kenya’s leading dailies, the Daily Nation: “those who see value in an African Union must push on and never relent. They have history on their side. It is fatalism to declare, as with Uganda’s president, Yoweri Museveni, that it is too difficult. No human ideal falls into the lap like manna. But nothing is likely to fail when people unite their minds, their hands and language.

¹ Nyong’o, P.A., and Ghirmazion, A., and Lamba, D., 2002. *NEPAD: A New Path?*, Heinrich Foundation, Nairobi, Kenya, p. 20

Failure to unite our words, hands and resources has been the problem since independence.”²

Indeed, there was a time, very recently when a united European was unthinkable. But history took its course methodically and that union is now closer than ever. Of course trend powerfully suggests former colonial powers would be reluctant to let Africa develop a viable plan for its unity. Africa’s national, political and intellectual institutions hinge so precariously on foreign interests, technologies and ideas that the foreigners always silently intervene through those institutions to stop attempts towards a united Africa. But that is no reason to feel hopeless and give constant excuses before we try. To try but fail is much more respectful than not to try at all, because one man’s failure counts as another man’s victory and no master ever gives his slave a free hand to rival him.

The discourse on African integration reveals a divide between the radicals and the moderates. At the African Heads of State Summit in Accra, Ghana, in June 2007, the moderates rejected a proposal for immediate establishment of a United States of Africa. The radicals fronted by Muammar Ghaddafi, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya leader and supported by Ethiopia, Chad and Senegal pushed for the immediate establishment of the United States of Africa.

A larger group of moderate leaders from countries including Kenya advocated a gradual and structured approach to the goal of a continental government. In the end the African Union Commission was tasked with carrying out further studies on the steps required towards full economic and political integration, while member states would be expected to carry out internal hearing so that their citizens can make an input into what has been dubbed the “Great Debate”.

Regional economic communities such as ECOWAS, SADC, COMESA, ECCAS, UMA and EAC would then “speed up free movement of goods and labour, common services, customs and monetary unions and other steps towards more complete integration”.³

² Phillip Ochieng, our own USA has history on its side, Kenya, *Sunday Nation*, The fifth columnist, July 8, 2007, p.11.

³ Ibid. p.11

Today, the continent does not have as many visionary and pan-Africanist leaders as it had at independence. Yet Pan-Africanism seems to have come back in full swing as the only viable continental ideology that could save Africa from sinking into the dungeon of political, social and economic decay. The question now being asked is why did Africa not heed the warnings of Nkrumah? Why did African leaders read Green and Seidman and ignore them, or did they not read the book at all? Why did the African governments fail to win the confidence of the people they governed? Perhaps by ignoring their basic needs?

The process of integrating Africa requires a common contemporary strategic communications approach. Increasingly, the world is becoming a global village and this is not an ideology or a particular political posture. It is an objective fact of the modern world economy. Yet it is also a fact that, as globalization has swept the world under its feet, Africa has become a victim, getting poorer and poorer. The submission of this study is that our inability to move forward is compounded by flawed communication.

Since the African union is such an important vehicle for our continent's socio-economic well being, the Union is obliged to take charge of our destiny. In this regard, fighting misrepresentation of news on Africa is a major issue which deserves priority attention if the African union is to be built on a solid foundation.

Misinformation already is causing divided loyalties of the African Union Member States. The Union must of necessity have the capacity to handle this misinformation while at the same time giving priority attention to the issue of effective information and communication management. Significantly, the Constitutive Act mentions "*popularization of the Union*" as the most important function assigned to mass communication. Indeed, this should be the backbone of the integration of African Union. It is important to evaluate how popularization has enhanced African integration among various segments of African population.

This study proposes effective communication as the means to inform, educate and communicate the best approach toward African integration. How shall Africa ever overcome marginalization if Africans don't rise up and define themselves? Who should define Africa? Others or Africans? Obviously, the African Union as the sole continental organization empowered by its "Constitutive Act" the legal instrument founding it,

represents the best platform which fundamentally addresses issues of concern to Africa and hence this study focuses on its role.

Above all international rhetoric, mismatch between rhetoric and reality, between policy prescription and delivery, what is the African Union's perspective? Using Africa's geographical regions – Eastern, Western, Northern, Southern and Central; the study will, besides identifying the challenges conduct a survey among a cross section of stakeholders in these regions.

What is communication in the African context? Does communication have a role to play in African integration? How would mass communication uniquely define and disseminate the issue of Pan-Africanism?

1.1: Statement of the Problem

Failure for Africa to unite despite much effort, and communication being neglected in the African integration efforts are the two problem statements that prompted this research. This one felt was not normal but was contrary to the power of the news media to set a nation's agenda, to focus public attention on a few key public issues. Not only do people acquire factual information about public affairs from the news media, readers and viewers also learn how much importance to attach to a topic on the basis of emphasis placed on it in the news. Thus it was incomprehensible that mass communication was being neglected in the African integration effort. "According to McCombs, through his patterns of selection and play of the daily news, the press presents the public with a continuous stream of cues about the relative importance of various topics and events. Newspapers clearly communicate salience through page placement, headline size, and the amount of space accorded an item. Television news formats also provide cues about the relative salience of news events. Television news producers provide cues about the news salience of the events they package for their news audience by not only the placement of the news stories within the news segment, but also by the amount of time and the nature of illustrations".⁴

Unfortunately, no serious thought is given to the importance of communication - mass, interpersonal, traditional and folk in the integration of Africa. For the authorities in Africa, there is no difference between information (provision of facts and figures) and communication (exchange of ideas). Provisions are usually made for publicizing development plans and objectives, but very little is done for feedback and discussions. Hence, the common complaint of communication researchers and practitioners is that communication policies and plans are too often in the hands of those who do not know enough about communication to set up or contribute to the communication systems that best serve the needs of countries. Yet it is no longer questionable whether or not media systems are powerful and can contribute to global awareness and sophistication. There appears to be a dramatic realization or a renewed consciousness concerning the position of the media in the integration of Africa.

⁴ Okolo, Dan Edogbo, 1994, Agenda Setting Role of the Mass Media in Political Reporting, *Reporting Politics and Public Affairs*, Edited by Okigbo, Charles, Africa Council for Communication Education, Nairobi, Kenya, p.36.

This study proposes to evaluate the role of communication in the integration of Africa. It will investigate the role of communication in realizing the vision of integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, an Africa driven by its own citizens, a dynamic force in the global arena. Using the African Union Commission as a case study, it proposes to examine the place of communication in the ongoing discourse of African unity.

1.2: Objective of the Study

- i. To evaluate the communication structures of the AU Commission in Addis Ababa to ascertain their adequacy and efficiency.
- ii. To analyze the channels and tools being used by the Commission to disseminate messages on African integration.
- iii. Assess the impact of the Commission in creating awareness in respect of the ongoing African integration, among various segments of African population.

1.3: Justification of the Study

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The will of African countries to build a larger entity, not only to contain internal and external threats but also to promote the economic and social well being of their peoples is historical: From the founding fathers in the 1960s through the 70s and 80s to the beginning of this 21st century, the will to unite Africa still persists. The inaugural meeting of the African Union was indeed a milestone in our quest for dignified and equitable place in the family of nations. The president of the Republic of South Africa, Mr. Thabo Mbeki, who resigned on the 21st of September 2008, displays the optimism that propels the dream for a united Africa: “Just as Africa was the birth place of modern humanity, we stand once more in the cusp of history.”⁵

In an editorial in the African Union Directory 2002, Desmond T. Orjiako, then the Acting Head of the Union’s Communication and Information Division, even put it more poignantly: “Africa’s historic moment has come, when beyond geography, religion, race

⁵ Mbeki, Thabo, 2002, This is Africa’s time, *African Union Directory*, Millennium African Communications, South Africa, p.9.

and language, its people have committed themselves to the need to be identified and bound by stronger unity in sharing common values, under the framework of the African Union”.⁶ For the African Union to succeed, it requires that all Africans take ownership of the process, he added. It is thus the responsibility of the regional and sub-regional organizations, governments and other stake holders – including the media- to provide information about all aspects of African Union to the people of Africa. This historical urge to unite provides the initial impetus into this study. This study particularly singles out communication and its relevance in this historical discourse. *Since the Chairperson of the Assembly can only perform effectively with a pro-active Commission, the study shall see to what extent the AU Commission is empowered or delegated by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government to establish a robust Communication and Information Department.*

1.3.i Policy Relevance

The study aims to address the challenges to Africa’s integration and assess the role played by communication in redressing these challenges and in creating awareness among stakeholders. Specifically, it will investigate whether the Union is popularizing the African Union, using contemporary communication technologies to expedite the ongoing economic and political integration process of the continent. Therefore, besides undertaking a major inventory of the communication structures/resources at the Commission Headquarters in Addis Ababa, it will further investigate the significance of various tools and channels in creating needed awareness among various segments of African population.

The study represents a major attempt at addressing the mismatch between oratory and rhetoric, theory and practice that has dominated Africa’s historical antecedents. By proposing to examine communication and how it is being factored in at the African Union Commission, this study aims to provide a practical way forward in policy area.

⁶ Orjiako, Desmond T., 2002, Road to the African Union: opportunities and challenges, *African Union Directory*, Millennium African Communications, South Africa, p.14.

1.3.ii Academic Justification

The study will therefore, be relevant to the pan-Africanists, the media fraternity, the communication experts and researchers, as well as students of history and communication in Africa and the Diaspora. Its findings will add to already existing knowledge on the role of communication in African integration.

1.4: Theoretical Framework

This study anchors its Theoretical Framework on the Agenda-Setting Theory. Agenda-Setting Theory like some other communication theories examines the main schools of thought that have shaped our understanding of media effects. In this regard, we shall be analyzing Agenda-Setting Theory as a backdrop against which we would compare its techniques with the role of mass communication in African integration.

1.4.i The Agenda-Setting Theory: Telling us what to think about

The Agenda-Setting Function is significant because it strengthens the theory on powerful effects. The research on the agenda setting function was prompted by Gladys Lang and Bernard Cohen who assert that people tend to respond to issues in direct proportion to the emphasis placed on them by the manner of presentation in the media. Bernard Cohen (1963) notes that the press may not be successful in telling its readers what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about.

The best known of the more recent proponents of the Agenda-Setting Hypotheses are the American researchers: Donald McCombs and Malcolm Shaw in their discourse on agenda-setting model of media (1972, 1976). The two scholars gathered the scattered ideas about agenda setting theory and synthesized them into a Hypothesis with the assumptions that:

- (i) The media determine issues that are regarded as important by the masses or audience.
- (ii) Media have the potential to influence people's way of life.

(iii) Agenda setting through the media tend to be believed.

These scholars offered a scientific explanation of the agenda setting role of the media by stating that media emphasis of issues or events influences audience to also view the events as important and thus media had a critical role to play in stimulating discussions among individuals. Undertaking an empirical study to verify the agenda setting function of the media in the study of voters in the 1968 US elections, they found out that:

“Audiences not only learn about public issues and other matters through the media, they also learn how much importance to attach to an issue or topic from the emphasis the media place upon it. For example, in reflecting what candidates are saying during a campaign, the mass media apparently determine the important issues. In other words, the mass media set the agenda of the campaign. This ability to affect cognitive change among individuals is one of the most important aspects of the power of mass communication”.⁷

Everett Rogers and James W. Dearing on their part open critical evaluation and appreciation of the Agenda-Setting Research by quoting Abraham Lincoln, the sixteenth president of the United States of America as saying concerning public sentiment (or opinion):

“Public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment, nothing can fail. Without it, nothing can succeed. Consequently, he who moulds public sentiment goes deeper than he who enacts statutes and pronounces decisions”.⁸

James Dearing and Everett Rogers (1996) argue that although the mass media may systematically organize sets of statements which they express and give meaning about an institution through different channels of communication, but beyond the mass media, there are other sources which serve as ‘triggers’ or ‘issue champions’:

The authors are of the view that “‘How an issue is reported is as important as whether the issue is reported at all’ and this may in part gain in momentum through what they refer to

⁷ Denis McQuail and Sven Windahl, 1981, *Communication Models for the Study of Mass Communication*, Longman Inc., New York, USA, p.62.

⁸ Rogers, Everett M. and James W. Dearing, 1987, Agenda-Setting: Where Has It Been, Where Is It Going?, *Communication Yearbook*, US Sage, p. 11.

as *triggers*, that is, particular incidents, or personal involvements by usually well known people”,⁹ citing examples with rock musician Bob Geldoff for the 1984 Ethiopia famine and former San Francisco Chronicle reporter Randy Shilts for the issue of Aids in San Francisco.

In a later model of agenda-setting, Everett M. Rogers and James W. Dearing (1988), identify three interactive agendas namely: the Policy Agenda, the Public Agenda and the Media Agenda, of which they say provides a useful update of McCombs and Shaw's model but fell short of explaining why the three agendas are presented as being of equal size and presumably equal power.

Furthermore, Denis McQuail and Sven Windhl point out in *Communication Models for the Study of mass communication*, that the model leaves us uncertain 'whether agenda setting is initiated by the media or by members of the public and their needs, or as James Watson adds, 'by institutional elite who act as sources for the media'.¹⁰

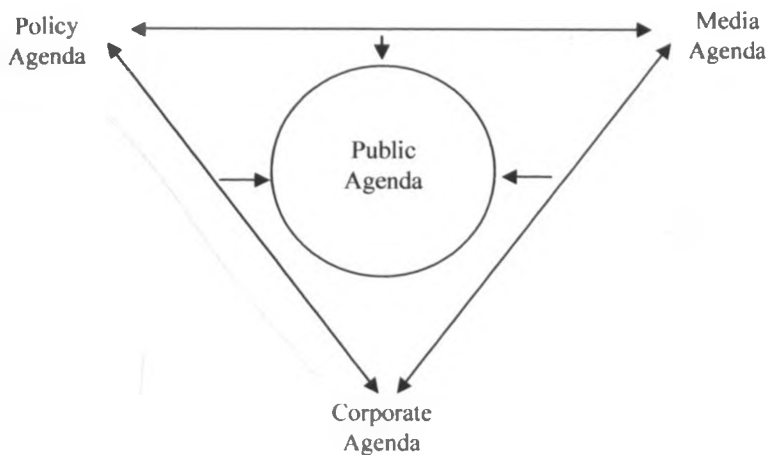
James Watson, author of *Media Communication: An Introduction to Theory and Process* (2003) contends that there are many agendas, so any analysis of agenda settings must start with the question, whose agenda and articulated through which discourse? He goes on to say that what is obvious is that there is much more to the agenda-setting process than merely listing what is important and what is less important. What is for certain, he argues, is that celebrities are usually part of the 'frame' and may well dictate the nature of agenda-setting. "To focus on the actual distribution of influence one would have to add an extra agenda - that of the Corporations which dominate contemporary life".¹¹

He said that corporate agendas often work in alliance with, and occasionally in competition with, the policy agendas of government aiming to influence if not order public agendas. The public agenda is the only one that does not arise consciously formed with articulated aims and objectives. Governments, corporations and media largely know what they want from the public and how to go about it.

⁹ James Watson, 2004, 2006, *Media Communication: An Introduction to Theory and Process* (2nd Ed.), Palgrave Macmillan, New York, USA, pp. 133-134.

¹⁰ Ibid. p.129.

¹¹ Ibid. p.129.



Tripolar Model of Agendas: Policy, Corporate and Media

Government and corporation are also aware that in order to create and influence public opinion they have to do so through cultural apparatuses of which the media is arguably the most important. “On the other hand, pressure groups in society are instrumental in influencing public opinion with a view to using the force of that opinion to influence government or the corporations.”¹²

Contemporary media scholars, however, have moved away from examining how particular messages influenced people, to exploring the nature of media audiences. Arguing from the cultural approach, Kevin Williams in his book ‘Understanding Media Theory’, (2003) states that: “Media researchers are more interested in what audiences say about the influence of the media in their lives”¹³

The discovery of the ability of audiences to make meaning has produced new audience and reception theoretical paradigm of which Kevin Williams (2003:191) described as ‘*Active Audience Theory*’, which according to him has established itself as the new orthodoxy in media studies.

This is different from “two main agenda research traditions of which Rogers and Dearing (1988:556) referred to as:

¹² Ibid. p.131.

¹³ Kevin Williams, 2003, *Understanding Media Theory*, Hodder Arnold, Britain, pp.190, 191.

- (i) Agenda-Setting, a process through which the mass media communicate the relative importance of various issues and events to the public (an approach mainly pursued by mass communication scholars), and;
- (ii) Agenda-Building, a process through which the policy agendas of political elites are influenced by a variety of factors, including media agendas and public agendas. The agenda setting tradition is concerned with how the media agenda influences the public agenda, while the agenda building tradition studies how the public agenda and other factors and occasionally the media agenda, influence the policy agenda".¹⁴

1.4. ii Relevance of Agenda setting theory to research problem

Perhaps, one of the strongest evidence of the media's agenda setting influence may be observed from the fact that issues and events that are completely ignored by the mass media hardly appear in the public agenda. In this respect, the Agenda-Setting Theory will be utilized in my research to analyze how effectively the mass media has influenced the Africa's integration process; measure the level of media coverage, access and exposure, and in particular the acceptance or rejection of the AUC popularization policy, which is meant to achieve stronger United States of Africa. The research will help to unravel the puzzle of who sets the agenda in pursuit of Africa's seemingly intractable quest for a stronger unity; why Africa is so close and yet too far apart. Is this a problem of lack of tools of communication, inadequate channels, untargeted information or inactive audience participation? Why are there a few bridges of unity between and among African nations in spite of many declarations and decisions taken by African leaders? This explains why Mutuma Mathieu (2007) is baffled on: "The rhetoric, the pronouncements, the conferences, all sounds like idealistic commitment to Pan-Africanism. But the reality is still out of sight".¹⁵

¹⁴Barrier Gunter, 2000, *Media Research Methods: Measuring Audiences, Reactions and Impact*, Sage Publications, London; Thousand Oaks, California; New Delhi, India, p.193.

¹⁵Mutuma Mathiu, Enabling African States to meet, talk and trade, Kenya, *Sunday Nation*, July 8, 2007, p.10.

1.5: Hypotheses

This research will try to answer the following questions: Why is there failure for Africa to unite despite much effort? What factors hinder African integration? What is the role of communication in the African integration process? Is the omission of this presumed role of communication in the African integration efforts the cause of failure to unite?

As these questions concern African integration, the study will focus on the African Union Commission (AUC) to resolve the following hypotheses:

- (i) Effective communication strategies enhance African integration;
- (ii) Communication gap acts as a barrier to the African integration process;
- (iii) Lack of a communication policy for Africa has slowed down African integration.

1.6: Scope of the Study

The scope covers the year 2002 to 2007. This research will undertake a case study of the Communication Department of an Organization with a life span (development time frame) of six years, and provides for the establishment of an extensive structure whose organs include:

- (a) The Assembly of the Union; (b) The Executive Council; (c) The Pan-African Parliament; (d) The Court of Justice; (e) The Commission; (f) The Permanent Representatives Committee; (g) The Specialized Technical Committees; (h) The Economic, Social and Cultural Council; (i) The Financial Institutions; and other organs the Assembly may decide to establish.¹⁶

The study will be restricted to (i) the role of information/communication within the African Union Commission (AUC); highlighting major statements by policy bodies on this; (ii) Structures and functions/activities of the Information Division; how and why?

¹⁶ African Union Constitutive Act, Information and Communication Division, AUC, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, p 2.

Place in organogram; is it valued? (iii) Relations with media; local, African, international; (iv) Speaking for the African union Commission (AUC); who when, why? (v) Special projects: AU radio; website etc. (vi) Annual budget for communication; (vii) Examine any memorable incidents of particular information problem or campaign or response to member states or foreign media.

The study, in this regard, will not only be descriptive but also analytical, taking into account the working languages and whether they are cumbersome in popularizing the efforts of the AUC at uniting a multinational and multifarious continent. The Emphasis will be placed on how media workers, particularly in the electronic media (Television and Radio) as well as the Internet, could contribute to the AU Commission's efforts in making the organs of African Union work better, considering the Commission's given mandate (policy decisions on communication and information) and how they are addressed by the policy implementers. Popularization of the African Union is a key provision of the Constitutive Act of the African Union. Can it provide the magic keys for a stronger African Unity - the United States of Africa? Which working languages as vehicles of communication could be most effective in achieving the goal of African integration?

Channels of Study will concentrate mainly on radio, television, internet and interpersonal communication.

1.7: Limitations of the Study

The investigation is likely to be confronted by emotions which would be carefully isolated and ignored for substantive issues. There is already a divide among moderates and radicals on the continent. This is a challenge to the commission and as well as to the study itself. Regions could be inclined to the predisposition of their political and religious leadership. Literacy levels in most of Africa are low and this presents limitations to the study due to high dependence on interpreters. As earlier stated, the African Union uses four working languages: namely Arabic, English, French and Portuguese. Kiswahili and Spanish are recognized as part of the official languages. Each one is completely different from the other and this may pose difficulties in interpretation and could convey wrong information from the intended meaning to the respondents. The study is further constrained by the volatile nature of the continent, and its rich diversity. The prevailing

conflicts on the continent may necessitate adjustment of the projected time. It may also present difficulties of movement of those administering the survey in some of the affected regions. Questionnaires will be emailed while others will be administered by telephone interviews. Success of these may largely depend on vagaries of information superhighway such as delays in conveying and receiving responses. This study is exploratory in nature because little if any research has been done, in what may be considered a specialized field in an organization relatively new, born June 2002.

1.8: Chapter Outline

Chapter one covers the introduction and background of the study, the statement of the problem, the objectives of the study, the justification of the study, the theoretical framework and the scope and limitations. Chapter two of this study will be centered on review of relevant and related literature. Chapter three will be on methodology (details on sampling procedure, data collection procedure and data analyses procedures). The 4th and the 5th Chapters will be on data analysis and presentation of the findings and discussions and recommendations, respectively.

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CHAPTER TWO

2.0: Literature Review: The Pursuit of African Unity: A Historical Overview

2.1: Introduction

The African Union besides a few studies such as the Adebayo Adedeji led (i) 'Independent High Level Audit Panel of the African Union'; (ii) 'The Rationalization of the Regional Economic Communities', a review of the Abuja Treaty commissioned by the Economic Affairs Department of the African Union Commission, research efforts being deployed by the Commission to accelerate African unification hasn't been vibrant. Information among stakeholders has not generated much public interest and multiplier effects across the continent. If it has, it is not orchestrated through radio and TV communication, mass media publications, public education programs, music, poems, songs, theatre and other forms of communications geared towards popularization and mass mobilization for intensified African unity. Materials for literature review in this project are therefore mainly those generated from in-house documentations, some of which are not yet published.

In the report commissioned by the African Union 2007,¹⁷ Professor Adebayo Adedeji and his team point out the values of community and social solidarity which have deep roots in the African world. Noting that state and nation building preceded the arrival of the first Europeans in Africa, the team goes on to demonstrate the resilience of the urge by Africans to unite. These values of community and social solidarity come under strain in the face of external pressure, such as the advent of the slave trade and its deeply disruptive impact on the development process on the continent. Like the slave trade, the Berlin conference was one of the most momentous events in the trajectory of Africa. Driven exclusively by the need to maximize their competing cultural, economic and political interests, the participants in the Berlin conference (1884-1885) could never have grasped the full import of the balkanization of the entire continent of Africa in one fell swoop. Once partitioned and atomized, the stage was set for full-scale colonial domination until forcefully challenged by the African people.

¹⁷ Adebayo, Adedeji, 2007, *Independent High Level Panel of the Audit of the African Union*, p.1.

Ironically such external pressures and their disruptive impacts also contained the seeds of new forms of solidarity and community. Specifically, the slave trade prompted the idea of Pan-Africanism.

The objective of Pan-Africanism were among other things, to build African unity through the establishment of the United States of Africa, with the aim not only of eliminating colonial borders, but also of eradicating the differences arising from ethnic, racial and linguistic pluralism.¹⁸ It aimed at galvanizing united actions by the African people who had been wronged by a dark moment in their history to re-master their destiny. *"The aftermath of the slave trade reinforced the sense of affinity and solidarity among Africans. This was so, especially among succeeding generations of the African Diaspora in Americas, the Caribbean and Europe. These generations would be determined first to sustain memories of the motherland from which they and their forbears had been forcibly removed and then to unite directly with their homeland. They did so through the construction of a comprehensive all-round Pan-African consciousness and the pursuit of various return-to-Africa movements. These movements constructed projects that saw large-scale resettlements taking place in Freetown and Monrovia"*.¹⁹

2.2: The Emergence of the Organization of African Unity (OAU)

It will be recalled that the Founding Figures of the Pan-Africanist Movement which started in the 19th century, hailed from the Diaspora (William Dubois :1868-1963) United States; Marcus Garvey: 1887-1972, Jamaica; George Padmore:1902-1952, Trinidad. "Nkrumah's historic proclamation in 1957 that Ghana's independence would be meaningless unless it was linked to the total liberation of Africa reflected this aspiration".²⁰ In this way, the essential unity and indivisibility of the peoples of Africa structured the language of anti-colonialism.

"The immediate aftermath of Ghana's independence was marked by an intensification of consultations on the pursuit of the freedom and unity of Africans from the shackles of colonialism and the pursuit of the unity of Africans. For the first time on the African

¹⁸ Vision of the African Union and Mission of the African Union Commission, March 2004, the Office of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission.

¹⁹ Adebayo, Adedeji, 2007, *Independent High Level Panel of the Audit of the African Union* , p.25.

²⁰ Ibid p.2.

continent, independent African countries came together at the behest of Prime Minister Kwame Nkrumah, to discuss mutual support and the acceleration of the de-colonization of the continent. In addition, in 1958, he convened the All African Peoples' Conference in Accra. This marked the first occasion when leaders of independent African countries met with representatives of various organizations, nationalist parties and liberation movements".²¹

Various experiments in unification were pursued during the course of the 1960s. The most prominent among them included:

"The Ghana-Guinea Union (1958) which was joined on 21 April 1961 by Mali to form the Ghana-Guinea-Mali Union, and by Morocco, the United Arab Republic and the Algerian Provisional Government under the umbrella 'The Casablanca Group' (1961); 'The Monrovia Group' (1961) composed of Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Senegal, Malagasy Republic, Togo, Benin, Chad, Niger, Burkina Faso, Congo Brazzaville, Central African Republic, Gabon, Ethiopia and Libya; and The Pan-African Movement for East, Central and Southern Africa (PAFMESCA)".²²

Two schools of thought emerged among the independent African States on the alternatives that were open to the continent for its unification. The Casablanca Group advocated a rapid programme of unification to reverse the colonial legacy of artificial boundaries. The Monrovia Group sought a more gradual approach that would recognize the boundaries inherited at independence as a starting point for the gradual construction of continental unity. Thus the "block by block", "step by step" approach would start the functional economic and political cooperation arrangements that would culminate, over the long haul, in a politically-united Africa. "To a stunned world, all regional groupings had come to a compromise to safeguard Africa's honor, freedom and permanent interests. The world henceforth was to be faced with an organized African group (OAU) to be reckoned with".²³

²¹ Ibid p.3

²² Organization of African Unity, 1996, *Short History*, OAU General Secretariat, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, p.1

²³ Ibid p.2

The Organization of African Unity emerged on May 25, 1963 as the product of a compromise that was reached between the Casablanca and the Monrovia groups. It was established as a Pan-African framework for the promotion of cooperation among African States and the total liberation of the continent from colonial rule. Its guiding principles were good neighborliness among African states, “the sovereign equality of all Member States, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each State and for its inalienable right to independent existence and the peaceful settlement of disputes by negotiation, mediation, conciliation and arbitration”.²⁴ For the member states of the OAU, comprising all independent African States, there was no dispute about the desirability - even the eventual inevitability - of African unity. What was in question was the modality of realizing it, the speed with which it should be achieved and the form it should take.

Still, it is remarkable that the OAU survived the various stresses and strains from its founding in 1963 to the time it was transformed into the African Union (AU) in 2002, having served as the primary focal point for the complete liberation of Africa and the abolition of apartheid. It should not be forgotten in this regard that even if the belief in unity informed many activities undertaken by the OAU, the integrative unity of the continent was not the objective of the OAU, whose more modest mission was to “coordinate and intensify cooperation”²⁵ according to Article 11 (b) of the OAU Charter.

The link between the OAU and the AU is the Abuja Treaty (1991). “The Abuja Treaty, adopted by the OAU Summit of 1991 and which made regional integration the strategic model for the transformation of African economies suddenly regained its legitimacy, as the Founding Fathers passed on to the African Union the responsibility of speeding up the realization of this integration”.²⁶ The Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community (AEC) carried forward some of the commitments made in the Lagos Plan of Action and the Final Act of Lagos (1980). The Lagos Plan of action and the Final Act of Lagos represented the first major step towards injecting new life into the African

²⁴ Ibid., p.5.

²⁵ Ibid., p.4

²⁶ Vision of the African Union and Mission of the African Union Commission ,March 2004, Office of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, p.17

unification and integration project.²⁷ The demise of apartheid in South Africa with the establishment of majority rule (1994) in that country gave greater momentum to the integration process. It marked a paradigm shift on how Africa is to be viewed in world history. It also became a turning point for the OAU and the project of African unity, since with Africa rid of the last vestige of European colonialism; the widespread feeling across the continent was that of self-fulfillment and belief that the time has come to accelerate the project of an all inclusive and effective African unification.

This was amplified in the Sirte Declaration of 9.9.99. "In accordance with the decision of the 35 Ordinary Session of the African Union (AU) Summit held in Algiers, Algeria, from 12 to 14 July 1999, the Heads of State and Government, at the invitation of the Leader of the El Fatah Revolution, Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, held the Fourth Extraordinary Session of the Assembly in Sirte, in the Great Popular and Socialist Libyan Arab Jamahiriya from 8 to 9 September 1999 which involved the following decisions:

- (i) To establish the African Union, in accordance with the basic objectives of the Charter of our Continental Organization and with the provisions of the Treaty establishing the African economic Community;
- (ii) To accelerate the implementation process of the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community, in particular: (a) to shorten the timetable for the implementation of the Abuja treaty.....(c) to strengthen and consolidate the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) which formed the pillars for achieving the objectives of the African Economic Community and the proposed Union".²⁸

The Decision of the 9th Ordinary Council of the Conference of African Ministers of Information Doc.CM/2151(LXXI) later ratified by the Council of Ministers conferred a distinct role to the status of information on the continent, as the pivotal means for popularizing the ideals and objectives of African unity through the implementation of Sirte Declaration. The Sirte Declaration was aimed at expediting the establishment of all the institutions provided for in the Abuja Treaty, and soon it became the flagship for

²⁷ Adebayo, Adedeji, 2007, *Independent High Level Panel of the Audit of the African Union*, p.6.

²⁸ African Integration Review, 2007, African Union Commission pp. 11-12.

recognition of the urgency of a reinvigorated push towards collective action for greater unity. “The Declaration sets the stage for the Constitutive Act of 2000,”²⁹ in Lome, Togo. Africa once again was confronted with a historic challenge to forge a new common framework within which to realize its shared destiny, the OAU having achieved its goal. “African leaders seized the initial step on which consensus was achieved and replaced the OAU with the African Union (AU) in 2002”.³⁰

2.3: The Birth of African Union (AU)

The launch of the African Union (2002) in Durban, South Africa, marked the beginning of a new chapter in Africa’s history. The idea was that “political integration should be the *raison d’être* of the African Union, the objective being to achieve a federation or a confederation in the long run. This key idea is fully in line with the thesis advocating political integration, that was in the minority in 1963, and of which President Nkrumah was the most ardent proponent. However, the position of the advocates of the Unity of African States, without passing through stages, did not prevail, nor was the idea of achieving unity on the basis of cooperation. What won the day was the idea of building African unity on the basis of regional grouping”.³¹

Speaking of the birth of AU, President Nelson Mandela said: it is “the start of a more coordinated effort by African people to realize their dreams of achieving economic, political and social integration”.³²

The birth of “the African Union has, therefore, been inspired by several conceptual and programme sources, prominent among which are the OAU (1963); the Abuja Treaty (1991); the Arusha Declaration on the African Charter on Popular Participation in Development; the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA) (1999); marking involvement of civil society and bringing in accountability, transparency under four key action areas known as ‘4 Calabashes’:³³

²⁹ Adebayo, Adedeji, 2007, *Independent High Level Panel of the Audit of the African Union*, p.8.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Vision of the African Union and Mission of the African Union Commission, March 2004, Office of the Chairperson, of the African Union Commission, p.18.

³² Mandela, Nelson, 2002, Message from Nelson Mandela on the Occasion of the Launch of the African Union, *African Union Directory*, Millennium African Communications, South Africa, p.11.

³³ Opcit., Vision of the African Union, p.21.

- Security –AU to be responsible for security in Africa.
- Stability – rule of law, good governance, human rights, democracy etc.
- Development – promotion of economic cooperation and integration.
- Cooperation – member states should act jointly and collectively.

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) (2001):³⁴ a partnership for development between African leaders and the international donor community and in which the former pledged to work to eradicate poverty, ensure good governance and efficiency while the latter would provide new and additional resources. NEPAD embodies an African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). Each of these developments put in a block of integration characterized by the crystallization of a set of common challenges to which collective responses were made.

In the audit of the AU (2007), Adebayo Adedeji and his panel point out that the people of Africa strongly desire and expect that the African Union should achieve its vision of becoming 'people-centered and driven'. One of the "significant differences between the principles under-pining the OAU and the AU include the greater recognition given within the institutional framework of the AU, to the involvement of the African Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in the continental project of unification. This recognition represented the first time in the post-independence history of institution-building for continental unification that such close attention was paid to mechanisms for securing popular participation in development and transformation adopted in Arusha, Tanzania".³⁵ As clearly stated by Adedeji, what we need is: "a new transformation ethic-based on a human centered development paradigm which puts the people at the center of the development process, on the driving seat as it were and is predicated, above all on the rational proposition that development has to be engineered and sustained by the people themselves through their full and active participation. In other words, the new African transformation ethic rests on the firm belief that development should not be undertaken

³⁴ Ibid. p.21.

³⁵ Adebayo, Adedeji, 2007, *Independent High Level Panel of the Audit of the African Union*, p.9.

on behalf of a people; rather that it should be the organic outcome of a society's value system, its concerns and endeavors".³⁶

The African Union has since established several other important institutions such as the Peace and Security Council (PSC), the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) and the Pan-African Parliament (PAP). Also, the Commission has African Citizens' Directorate-CIDO—which aims at involving the African people in the Diaspora in AU activities. In addition, it has a Communication Unit in the office of the Chairperson of the Commission for providing information on the AU to the public and to serve as an outreach instrument of the Commission, and also the Economic Affairs Department to oversee economic affairs and integration issues.

Despite these institutional frameworks for involving African citizens, the Adedeji AU Audit Panel found that there are many institutional obstacles which still impede the realization of the AU's original vision. .

2.4: The African Union's Vision

African Union's vision entails "a united and integrated Africa; an Africa imbued with justice and peace; an interdependent and robust Africa determined to map for itself an ambitious strategy; an Africa underpinned by political, economic, social and cultural integration which would restore to Pan-Africanism its full meaning; an Africa able to make the best of its human and material resources, and keen to ensure the progress and prosperity of its citizens by taking advantage of the opportunities offered by a globalized world; an Africa capable of promoting its values in a world rich in its disparities".³⁷

The Adedeji led Independent High level Panel further finds that the involvement of African citizens, civil society organizations (CSOs) and the private sector is still at a nascent stage hence there is, therefore, a critical need for this institutional framework to become more effective in involving African citizens and the Diaspora in moving forward

³⁶ Adedeji, Adebayo, 2002, *From the Lagos Plan of Action to the New Partnership for Africa's Development and from the Final Act of Lagos to the Constitutive Act: Wither Africa?*, Heinrich Foundation, Nairobi, Kenya, p.41.

³⁷ Vision of the African Union and Mission of the African Union Commission, March 2004, Office of the Chairperson, of the African Union Commission , p. 18

the integration process. Yet, as the panelists conclude, the choice before Africa is not so much whether to unite or not to unite, that indeed, is already a settled historical issue.

“The real options center on a set of starker choices:

- Collective self-reliance or perpetual foreign dependence;
- Collective autonomy or continued foreign domination;
- A continent with one voice or a later-day tower of Babel;
- A people-centered union or a high profile members’ club;
- A pact for transformation or a land of stagnation and retrogression;
- A place which all Africans and people of African descent can recognize as home or a place where foreign adventurers come to scavenge at will. In sum, Africa is called upon to choose between progress and backwardness”.³⁸

Many Africans and political observers are still wondering what the difference is between the AU and the not-too-distant past OAU. “Different from the OAU, the African Union’s Constitutive Act focuses on working towards building a rapidly homogenizing continent. In the circumstances, the AU has responsibility based on its own power of initiative to engage in capacity building mission or reduction of institutions to keep moving the integration forward.”³⁹

2.5: Challenges and Constraints in the Full Implementation of Integration Schemes

From literature review of integration process in Africa, questions arise as to: what major perspectives have emerged and what lessons can be drawn from them for expediting

³⁸ Adebayo, Adedeji, 2007, *The Independent High Level Panel of the AU Audit Report*, p.14
³⁹ (Pls. see appendix 1 for details on the differences p.97. Box 9 entitled: From OAU to AU).

integration? What has been wrong with Pan-Africanism? Is it the vision or the actualization of the vision? Or is it the impetus - the interests and forces driving both?

A reference to the First Conference of African Ministers of Economic Integration (CAMEI) held at Experts Level (2006) Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, exposes some of the constraints for the full implementation of the integration scheme as follows:

2.5. (i) “Political will: despite the good intentions of the Abuja Treaty, the political will and commitment to push forward the regional integration agenda are lacking. The evidence for this is the absence of enforcement mechanisms to deal with African States that decide not to adhere to protocols and treaties they are signatories to.

2.5. (ii) Fear of loss of Sovereignty: The integration agenda is not effectively pursued because some countries are not prepared to cede powers to supra-national bodies for fear of losing independence and sovereignty. Most secretariats of the RECs have no legal power to ensure that member countries fulfill their obligations.

2.5. (iii) The lack of communication inter-linkages: The lack of communication inter-linkages, transport, power pools for energy supply, pooling efforts and enhancing productive capacity for rational and optimal exploitation of natural resources.

2.5. (iv) Poor infrastructure and inadequate Trade Facilitation Mechanism: Poor infrastructure is also responsible for the inability of African countries to rationalize the RECs. These factors contribute to poor trade within and outside Africa”.⁴⁰

Further challenges are induced from outside Africa. The pressures for the atomization of Africa within the ambit of contemporary globalization are many and correspond with the interest of the powerful forces exercising dominance in the global order. There is now an attempt by some leaders of the European Union to further divide Africa. The launch of Mediterranean Union Integration Scheme on Sunday, July 13, 2008 which brings together countries on both sides of the Mediterranean - North African, Middle Eastern and European Union countries, ⁴¹ confirms this foreign induced challenge.

⁴⁰ African Ministers of Economic Integration Experts’ Meeting, 27-28 March 2006, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.

⁴¹ BBC News, Sunday July 13 2008.

This development undermines the effectiveness of the Arab Maghreb Union, a building block of the African Economic Community (AEC) and the planned United States of Africa.⁴² Furthermore, its very purpose conflicts with the Vision of African Union.

“The Africa one is referring to is indeed the whole of Africa, from North to South, from East to West without distinction as to race, colour and religion. One should, therefore, discard the nomenclatures ‘Black Africa’ and ‘White Africa’ and some of the terminologies used in some North and East African countries which apply the term ‘Africa’ to countries south of the Sahara. It is needful to avoid the classification of ‘North Africa’ under the Middle East’ and do away with cooperation agreements that embody the division of the continent.....Proposals to create a league of Black States put forward in the recent past would be inadmissible. Africa’s future resides in its total unity.”⁴³

While the vision of the unity of Africa is yet to be popularized among the people of Africa, but in particular it ought to begin with the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). The inter-governmental discourses have tended to focus mainly on structures. But structures derive from clarity of vision and policy as understood by people. Little wonder the recurring question: To what extent are the issues of speedier African unity being addressed?

2.6: Fast-Tracking African Integration:

2.6. (a) Suggested Way Forward

The 53 member states of the African Union, its organs including those stipulated in the Constitutive Act, and the five Regional Economic Communities provided for in the Abuja Treaty, are key players in the continental integration coalition. The same is true of the continent’s existing myriad intergovernmental organizations. It is, however, necessary to spell out the guidelines and roles that should enhance the accomplishment of the

⁴² See stage of integration 2.6.b (iv) p.99 Sub-regional wide-cooperation and integration entities.

⁴³ Karthala, 2003, Vision d’Union Africain vide Africa 2025, *Quels futures possibles pour l’Afrique au Sud du Sahara. Future africains*, p.3.

objectives and define the obligations of the various institutions, as well as those of member states.⁴⁴

In this respect, some critical ways to fast track African integration should include:

2.6. (a) (i) Rationalizing and strengthening the RECs through integrating into the AU Commission the operational programmes and activities of the New Partnership for Africa's development (NEPAD) as was done with the (CSSDCA). At present, the NEPAD is yet to be merged into the AU Commission as was decided (2003) by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government in Maputo, Mozambique.⁴⁵

2.6 (a) (ii) Capacity Building Mission aimed at invigorating the capacities of the Commission, other organs and specialized institutions of the African Union, particularly the national structures responsible for integration.

2.6. (a) (iii) Advocacy Mission to ensure that African public opinion is not sidelined in this initiative.

2.6. (a) (iv) Information Mission which in the context of this study is expected to constitute the most important element to fast track African unity.

The Economic Affairs Department's commissioned work notes that the AUC has played a critical but inadequate role in coordinating the integration process. Besides delays arising at national parliaments (56%), lack of communication and coordination at the level of member states (22%) came second, alongside inadequate human capacity (22%) and States' multiple membership of RECs (22%).⁴⁶ This finding corroborates the fact that coordination function is lacking between the AUC Communication Unit and the RECs. The reason for the poor communication and co-ordination between the organs of the Union is what this project would like to find out probably through examining the role assigned to information and communication at the AUC in respect of African integration.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p.24.

⁴⁵ 2nd AU Summit, July 2003, Maputo, Appendix 2 Box 8, Vision of the African Union and Mission of the African Union Commission, p.98.

⁴⁶ See table 3, Appendix 4, Reasons contributing to the delays in integration, p.100.

The Constitutive Act (Article 20) does not make detailed reference to the Commission, although the responsibilities entrusted to the Chairperson of the Commission and his colleagues are considerable.⁴⁷ But it is clear that supreme power rests with the Assembly of the Union. The functions of the Assembly are among others: “1 (a) to determine the common policies of the Union; (b) (i) to appoint the Chairman of the Commission and his or her deputy or deputies and Commissioners of the Commission and determine their functions and terms of office”.⁴⁸

The Constitutive Act (CA) vests authority on the Chairperson of the Assembly of the Union. According to Article 9.2. of the Constitutive Act, he or she on behalf of the Assembly delegates any of its powers and functions to any organ of the Union. At the Heads of State and Government meeting in Accra, Ghana, July 2007, the leaders set up the Adedeji led AU Audit Review Panel. “The audit seeks to provide an in-depth review and assessment of the structures, review the nature of the relationships between these Organs and Institutions and the other continental Organizations; review and evaluate the current state of integration especially the functioning of the activities of the Regional Economic Communities”.⁴⁹

African Union in a Nutshell (2003), an in-house AU flyer states that: “the Commission is the key organ playing a central role in the day-to-day management of the African Union. Among other things, it represents the Union and defends its interests; elaborates draft common positions of the Union; prepares strategic plans and studies for the consideration of the Executive Council; promotes, coordinates and harmonizes the programmes and policies of the Union with those of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), ensures the mainstreaming of gender in all programmes and activities of the Union”.⁵⁰

The African Union Commission in this regard is at the centre of the integration efforts. Consequently the Chairperson of the Assembly and the Chairperson of the Commission must work hand in hand in pursuit of the goal of greater African Unity backed by the

⁴⁷ African Union Constitutive Act, Article 20, p.8.

⁴⁸ Ibid., African Union Constitutive Act, Article 9, p.5

⁴⁹ Adebayo, Adedeji, 2007, *The Independent High Level Panel of the AU Audit Report*, p.15

⁵⁰ African Union in a Nutshell, an AU Flyer, p.2.

collective support and the political will of other leaders. But does this symbiotic relationship exist at present? If it does, how well has it been utilized by the leaders? How has it benefited the Union in opening consultations with the population in line with the multiple sources of authority provided for in the Constitutive Act of the African Union?

An AU press release issued on May 22, 2008, states that at the First Session of the Committee of Twelve Heads of State and Government on the African Union Government held in Arusha, Tanzania, Mr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, President of the United Republic of Tanzania and the current Chairperson of the Assembly of the African Union, underscored the role of the Heads of State tasked to examine the proposals made by the Ministerial Committee of Ten on the establishment of the Union Government. He said, *inter alia*:

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“We are all agreed on the ultimate goal of the establishment of the African Union Government, the only critical difference is between those who want the immediate establishment of the Union Government, and those who prefer a gradual approach. The Committee of Twelve, he noted is therefore tasked with the challenge of advising on how the process should advance further.”⁵¹

Mr. Jean Ping, the African Union Commission Chairperson, recognizes the role of mass communication in the sensitization of the African peoples for improved coordination of efforts between the AU Commission and the Regional Economic Communities. He notes “effective communication was also necessary to mobilize resources to fund the organization and facilitate the work of the Committee of Twelve”.⁵² Prof. Alpha Oumar Konare, the former Chairperson of the African Union Commission, while receiving a joint delegation of the African Editor’s Forum and the Network of African Freedom of Expression Organizations at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa on Friday, February 16, 2007 “supported freedom of the Press and expression in Africa...Prof Konare agreed with the delegation led by forum Chairperson Mathatha Tsedu that the state of media freedom and expression on the continent left a lot to be desired”.⁵³

⁵¹ Kikwete Jakaya, AU Press Release, 22 May 2008, Arusha, Tanzania, p.1.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Tsedu, Mathatha, Kenya, *Sunday Nation*, February 18, 2007, p.32.

This is an indication that the Commission is willing to work with the mass media in triggering deliberate mass action targeting grassroots people everywhere on the continent and the African Diaspora to join the drive for deeper African unity. But can the Union effectively communicate the message of greater African unity with ideological void at the continental level as Pan-Africanism appears to have lost its steam? If not, what new common ideology or alternatively a national political culture would be acceptable to the continent? Since, the question is not whether Africa should unite, but how soon, what follows then, should be how to fast track the integration process through the persuasive power of communication. As stated in the Vision of the African Union the “objectives of Pan-Africanism include the need to build African Unity through the establishment of the United States of Africa, with the aim not only of eliminating colonial borders and frontiers, but also of eradicating the differences arising from ethnic, racial or linguistic pluralism.”⁵⁴ The AU’s Vision further suggests that the integration momentum should be embarked upon by groups of countries that will serve as the engine of integration process within and among the Regional Economic Communities (RECs). By implication, it is not necessary for all countries to be ready at the same time to embark upon the integration process because it is expected that integration will occur at variable speed.⁵⁵

The Founding pillars of the African Union include the five highest contributing countries; Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Nigeria, and South Africa. With their collective contribution which amounts to 75% of assessed annual dues to the Union, they qualify to serve as the lead economic engines of African integration around which others could coalesce to move the process forward. Yet, some people think that United States of Africa is not for now. The skeptics argue that economic power is not all there is to unity. One then wonders whether ‘political will’ exists to make a difference. Unfortunately as earlier indicated in the report of the African Ministers of Economic Integration Expert’s Meeting, ‘the political will and commitment’ to push forward the regional integration agenda is lacking, due to the ‘fear of loss of sovereignty’.”⁵⁶

How much political will have the presumed engines of integration agreed to cede national sovereignty? Oscar Kimanuka, a Kigali based commentator on social and economic

⁵⁴ Vision of the African Union and Mission of the African Union Commission, p.16.

⁵⁵ Ibid. p.18.

⁵⁶ Report of African Ministers of Experts Meeting, 27-28 March 2006, Burkina Faso, Ouagadougou, p.16.

issues, cited the former African Union Commission Chairperson, Alpha Oumar Konare, as having summed it up with his remark: "African leaders must ask themselves which part of their executive powers they are willing to cede to the African Union parliament, Court of Justice, Defence Council and other institutions so that we can get the issue of the Union Government off the table into reality".⁵⁷ Muammar Gaddafi, the Libya leader is credited with being at the forefront of the Union Government thus taking after late president Kwame Nkrumah, a trendsetter in this respect. "One of his most outstanding legacies was a political commitment to African continental unity. The Arabic-speaking states of North Africa were, in his vision, no less African than those predominantly non-Arab states south of the Sahara".⁵⁸ But skeptics are asking - should we not talk of Africa and Arab unity first? "There are many in Africa and in the West who wished to extricate Arab countries from costly African commitments and interventions south of the Sahara".⁵⁹ They ask: "How do we identify ourselves in the United States of Africa?" An 'African'? An 'Arab'? Or An 'Afrikaner' etc.? Can the concept of 'Africanity' cover for a white 'Afrikaner', an 'Arab' and an 'African'? Is it enough to say that what unites Africans is greater than what divides them and therefore move up the ladder to cede national sovereignty? This again is answered; "Nevertheless, the destinies of 'Arabs' and 'Africans' have historically and geographically been inextricably intertwined."⁶⁰ How does one measure the willingness of the nationals of member states to join the integration drive for unity? Hopes reposed in South Africa and Libya, in particular; being two of the leading giants of African integration movement appear to have been dented after xenophobic attacks on fellow Africans in the recent past in those two countries. Do these unfortunate isolated xenophobic attacks remotely suggest that the ordinary citizens of Africa and indeed in these leading countries of integration are not yet ready and persuaded to join the greater African unity drive?

James Kariuki, a columnist in 'Voice from Diaspora', in the Kenyan Sunday Standard, remarks of what Mr. Thabo Mbeki said: "South Africa is part of Africa, that they are indeed Africans," while addressing issues such as "African Renaissance and Afro-centrism". "Apartheid's force so distorted Africa's image the Black South Africans came

⁵⁷ Konare, Alpha Oumar, Kenya, *the East African*, Opinion, July 16-22, 2007.

⁵⁸ Nkrumah, Gamel, BBC, *Focus on Africa Magazine*, Thursday, 11th January 2007

⁵⁹ BBC News/Africa/Viewpoint, *African unity still a dream*.

⁶⁰ Ibid.p.3.

to believe that 'African-ness' was something to be avoided".⁶¹ Does ignorance imply that Pan-African consciousness has not caught up with many Africans? What about the Pan-African parliamentarians (PAP) who are at present based in South Africa and represent member states? Are the parliamentarians yet to debate the issue of national sovereignty before informing their constituents about the urgent need for greater African unity? By their assignment, they are meant to provide a common platform for African peoples and their grassroots organizations to be more involved in discussions and decision making on the problems and challenges facing the continent.

Faced with these challenges, what has the African Union achieved in terms of deeper African integration?

2.6. (b) Fast-Tracking African Integration: Sub-Regional Wide Co-operation and Integration Entities .

In retrospect, between 1975 and 1999, Africa did succeed in establishing sub regional wide-cooperation and integration entities- such as:

- (i) Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) 1975 based in Lagos, Nigeria with stage of integration as 'Free Trade Area',
- (ii) Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, (COMESA) 1994, based Lusaka, Zambia with stage of integration as 'Free Trade Area',
- (iii) Economic Community for Central African States (ECCAS) 1983, based in Libreville, Gabon with stage of integration as 'Free Trade Area',
- (iv) Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) 1989 based in Rabat, Morocco with stage of integration as 'cooperation and coordination',
- (v) Southern African Development Community (SADC) 1990, based in Gaborone, Botswana with stage of integration as gradual elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers',

⁶¹ Kariuki, J., Voice from Diaspora, Kenya, the *Sunday Standard*, May 20, 2007. p.28.

(vi) Community of Sahelo - Saharan States (CEN-SAD) 1998 based in Tripoli, Libya with stage of integration as 'Free Trade Area',

(vii) East African Community (EAC) 1999, based in Arusha, Tanzania with stage of integration as 'Customs Union',

(viii) Inter-governmental Authority for Development (IGAD) 1996, based in Djibouti with stage of integration as 'Harmonization of policies and programmes'.⁶²

The emergence of these regional entities has not led to rationalization of the multitude neither of multi- governmental organizations, nor for that matter stopped the formation of new ones. Some 130 inter-governmental, multi-sector economic organizations still exist side by side with them. This means that a large number of countries still hold multiple memberships - some belonging to as many as 20-25 of such organizations.⁶³ This is in spite of the fact that: "at its 27th Ordinary Session in 1976, the Council of Ministers by paragraph 2(a) of its resolution CM/Res.464 decided that there shall be Five regions of the OAU, namely Northern, Western, Central, Eastern and Southern."⁶⁴

The Executive Council Decision on the Report and Declaration of the 3rd Conference of Ministers in charge of integration has gone further to "encourage member states to consider allowing a gradual transfer of part of their sovereignty to the regional and continental institutions along the principle of subsidiary for the realization of integration programmes".⁶⁵

Yet again, the panelists of Economic Affairs Department's study on how to fast track the integration process recommend that the African Union Commission (AUC) enhance its visibility. Their findings are summarized in tables 1 and 2 (appendices 5&6).

⁶² Rationalization of Regional Economic Communities, April 2007, study commissioned by the Economic Affairs Department, pp 71-75.

⁶³ Ibid. p.74

⁶⁴ African Ministers of Economic Integration Experts' Meeting, 27-28 March 2006, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.

⁶⁵ Decision on the report and declaration of the 3rd Conference of Ministers in charge of Integration (Doc. EX.CL/436 (X11)).

2.7: Decisions of African Leaders on Acceleration of Integration

African leaders in Accra, were presented with three options: “first, to strengthen the AU and existing regional groupings; second, to create a Union Government by 2015 with executive powers in specific areas as a transitory phase towards a ‘United States of Africa’; and third, to proceed immediately towards a ‘United States of Africa’.”⁶⁶

“In Accra (2007) the Assembly agreed to accelerate the economic and political integration of the African continent, including the formation of a Union Government for Africa with the ultimate objective of creating a United States of Africa”.⁶⁷ This position is a middle ground between the countries pushing for immediate formation of a Union Government and those calling for a gradual approach.

The Accra Declaration in this regard established a Ministerial Committee of Ten on the Union Government, part of whose terms of reference was to undertake an audit of the African Union and its organs and to strengthen the RECs and harmonize its activities. A follow up Committee of Twelve Head of State and Governments on the Union Government was later appointed.⁶⁸

In conformity with the Accra Declaration, the ‘Terms of Reference (ToR), of the Committee of Twelve, in practical terms meant: identifying the contents of the Union Government in relation with National Governments; how the Union Government would impact on the sovereignty of member states and relate with the Regional Economic Communities (RECs).

In addressing the issues of how and when, the Committee of Twelve recommends a Union Government of independent and sovereign States to be achieved through a gradual process that would involve accelerating free movement of persons across borders as contained in both the Abuja Treaty and the Constitutive Act; development of transcontinental and inter-regional infrastructure (such as multinational African firms); and early establishment of the continental financial institutions identified in Article 19 of

⁶⁶ Adekeye, Adebajo, Africa’s quest for El Dorado, *Mail and Guardian*, June 29 - July 5, 2007, p.27.

⁶⁷ Report of 1st Meeting of the Committee of Twelve Heads of State and Government on the Union Government, Assembly of the African Union, July 2008, Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, p.2.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p.2.

the Constitutive Act (i.e. the African Central Bank, the African Monetary Fund, and the African Investment Bank).⁶⁹

The benchmarks for measuring progress lie in popularization and internalization of the core values underpinning the Act, as it also depends in engagement and mobilization of the peoples of Africa for the unity and integration project.⁷⁰ These recommendations were endorsed by the Assembly during its meeting in Sharm El-Sheikh in May 23 2008 further indicating the need for effective communication to foster integration.⁷¹

2.8: Literature on Communication and Integration

From birth to death, all types of communications play an integral part in human life: whether in pictures or music, verbal or non - verbal, informative or persuasive, frightening or amusing, clear or unclear, purposeful or accidental, person to person or mediated, communication is the link to the rest of humanity. Communication pervades everything we do. It is in reality, in the words of Gamble and Gamble (1989), "the essential human connection".⁷²

Teri Kwal Gamble and Michael Gamble (2002) underscore the importance of Communication and state: "Because it is truly our bridge to the future, our link to the rest of humanity, and the tool we will rely on most as we make our way in the world".⁷³

They contend that communication skills help us meet our needs, find happiness, and attain personal fulfillment. "Whatever your sex, your occupation, and your goals, communication of one form or another plays a major role. The challenge is to communicate as effectively as possible-to build your communication skills so that communication works for you, not against you".⁷⁴

⁶⁹ Report of 1st Meeting of the Committee of Twelve Heads of State and Government on the Union Government,: Assembly of the African Union (July2008) Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, p.2

⁷⁰ Ibid. p.2.

⁷¹ Decision On The Report Of The Committee Of Twelve Heads Of States and Government On The Union Government Assembly/AU/Dec.206 (X1) : Doc Assembly/ Au/11 (X1)

⁷² Gamble and Gamble, 1989, *Introducing Mass Communication: A World View*, Natural Press Books, USA. p.3.

⁷³ Gamble Teri Kwal and Gamble Michael, 2002, *Communication Works* (7th ed), Magraw-Hill Companies, New York, p.4.

⁷⁴ Ibid. p.6.

When we communicate writes Wilbur Schramm (1972) we are trying to share information, an idea or an attitude.⁷⁵

Besides the physical requirements of food and shelter, argues Gamble and Gamble, man has another fundamental need, the need to communicate with his fellow human beings. "How we communicate with each other shapes our lives and our world....By making the effort to become more effective at interacting with persons from diverse backgrounds and by working at developing relationships based on mutual respect, and a sense of ethical fairness, we increase our chances of leading more fulfilling personal and professional lives".⁷⁶

As a subject of scientific inquiry, Communication is not unique to the field of Mass Communication. This has led to many definitions and uses of the concept, which range from the very broad, to the specific. Here is a representative sampling of these definitions.

Sociological definition as given by Charles Woley (1909) defines it as "the mechanism through which human relations exist and develop - all the symbols of the mind, together with the means conveying them through space and preserving them in time. It includes the expressions of the face, attitude and gesture, the tones of the voice, words, writing, printing, telephones, telegraphs, and whatever maybe the latest achievement in the conquest of space and time"⁷⁷.

Behavior psychologist (S.S Stevens) saw it "as the discriminatory response of any organism to a stimulus... If the stimulus has been ignored by the organism, there has been no communication."⁷⁸

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Wilbur Schramm simply defined communication as the art of transmitting information, ideas and attitudes from one person to another.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ Ibid. p.54

⁷⁶ Ibid., p.4.

⁷⁷ Tan, Alexis, S., 1984, *Communication Theories and Research*, John Wiley and Sons, New York, p.53.

⁷⁸ Ibid. p.54.

⁷⁹ Opcit. p.54.

Contemporary society is far too complex to function only through direct communication between one individual and another. Communication in modern society has another dimension to it. It is rich in mass-media which have the power to influence us directly and indirectly, overtly and covertly on daily basis. Notably, despite the differences between inter-personal communication and mass-communication, the mass-media have expanded, not destroyed, personal, group, and public communication, for this media environment, also serves as a background, for all our other communication relationships. It is as a result of personal communication that most friendships and eventually most intimate relationships are formed.

Basically, like inter-personal communication, mass communication is a process involving the following components: source, message, channel, feedback, effect, context, and noise. However, there are special characteristics of mass communication that distinguish it from other types of communication. The main difference is that in mass communication we consider as receiver a vast-number of people receiving simultaneously but independently, the communication of a very few. Moreover, the messages are sent to the receiver indirectly through mechanical devices such as a TV, radio, and the source and receiver are not physically in the same place; thus face to face, or direct interaction is not possible. It has many gate keepers.

2.9: The Role of Communication in Society

“An important characteristic of communication is that it is purposive and goal directed, both from the view point of the sender of the message and the receiver..... Both parties participate in the transaction expecting a return for their efforts”.⁸⁰

Why do people and social institutions communicate? Tan discusses three functions/objectives of communications as surveillance, correlation and transmission.

2.9 (i) Surveillance: communication informs the community about threats and opportunities by scanning the immediate and far-away environment. Successful control of

⁸⁰ Tan, Alexis, S., 1984, *Communication Theories and Research*, John Wiley and Sons, New York, p.69.

the environment requires knowledge of its components. This surveillance function is often attributed today to the mass media.

2.9 (ii) Correlation of the components of society in making response to the environment since continued existence depends on adaptation to the environment. There must be some agreement or consensus on what the response should be and then some cooperation in carrying it out. Only through communication can environmental problems be understood and consensus regarding appropriate response reached.⁸¹ The mass media in many modern societies attempt to fulfill this correlation function by providing their “publics” with “a free market place of ideas” or with a discussion of the day’s issues. This phenomenon is referred to by communication researchers as the agenda setting role of the media; which has been dealt with in greater detail in a previous chapter.

2.9 (iii) Transmission of the social inheritance; since for a community to survive, its members must share common values and must agree on what behaviors and roles are appropriate. Communication is necessary in this socialization process. The major objective of the communicator; however, is to preserve existing relationships.⁸² To do this the communicator:

2.9.1. (i) Informs (transfers information to the receiver) so that the message can be recalled.

2.9.1. (ii) Teaches (transmitting information so that it can be used in the subsequent performance of legitimate tasks), e.g. a TV program on gardening.

2.9.1. (iii) Persuades (convincing the receiver to accept new attitudes and behaviors).

2.9.1. (iv) Pleases (ensures the satisfaction of the receiver’s needs).⁸³ Sometimes the receiver may need information for enjoyment or entertainment. With this in mind, this study will undertake a thorough survey of the information and communication mission at

⁸¹ Opcit. p.69

⁸² Ibid. p.70

⁸³ Opcit. p.70

the AUC with a view to determining its capacity to function as a multilateral catalytical mechanism for accelerating the African integration project.

2.10: Role of Information in the African Integration Process

Information is important as it facilitates integration. The African Union indicates that “the information mission is vital as it would enable the African Union to involve all players in the process of regional and continental development and integration. If it is the aim of the African Union to ensure that Africa makes its voice heard, rediscover itself and projects its true image - the African Union Commission should set for itself the task of serving as the interface between Africa and the rest of the world”.⁸⁴

Unfortunately, the use of mass media to create understanding and goodwill for the African Union does not exist as there is no media relations section and no African Union policy on communication and information outreach in the African Union Commission. The existing Information and Communications Unit is not a directorate and only serves as a media liaison office which is simply a publicity outfit, although saddled with the important function of Spokesperson of the Union. Of the eight Commissioners, (besides the Chairperson and the Deputy Chairperson), running the affairs of some sixteen directorates in the Union, none is responsible for oversight on matters concerning information and communication. The responsibility lies within the office of the Chairperson of the Union. The head of Information and Communications Unit reports to the Chief of Staff (equivalent to a director) of the African Union Commission Chairperson and as such is incapable of taking direct professional responsibility. Furthermore, as of 2005, there was no organ of the Union such as the Conference of African Ministers’ of Information and Communication of which to resort to in drawing up communication and information policies for the Union as was the case with most other directorates within the AU Commission. The reason for this revolves much around the Permanent Representatives Committee (a policy organ at ambassadorial level) said to be reluctant to cede sensitive national sovereignty hence the matter was being treated with extra care. From February 2000 to September 2005, the Information and Communication

⁸⁴ Vision of the African Union and Mission of the African Union Commission, March 2004, the Office of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission.

Unit had only one staff member with training in mass communication. Six others in the Unit were support personnel. In this regard, the mass media were inadequately cultivated and used by the Commission as strategic partners in building reputation and goodwill to realize the Union's objectives, because there was limited association. This gap in communication is confirmed by the Adedeji led High Level Panel (2007) which urged the Commission to prepare a policy on 'information disclosure and access' modeled on international best practices for adoption by the Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC); adding that: "the AU's Communications Unit, should regularly and pro-actively, reach out to the African and international media and broadcast Union priorities and achievements by anticipating the need for press briefings, holding conferences and monitoring the press by keeping a media file".⁸⁵

Inadequate mass communication hinders the Union's public policy advocacy, and consequently hamstrings strategic communication for African integration. As a result the Commission receives criticisms far more than the authority and budget it is given to execute communication core functions. Talks of setting up a radio and television channel to give an African perceptive to Africa, thus projecting not only African history, cultures and heritages, educational and health care and for promoting African businesses, commodities, news and sports have met with stiff obstacles. Prof. Alpha Oumar Konare, the former Chairperson of the Commission, stated that: "the year 2005 would be a key year in the history of Africa, because it would mark the year of integration through the proposed radio and television channels, which in his opinion, would facilitate exchanges among Africans, making it possible to establish a pan-Africanist conscience and correct the bad image of Africa".⁸⁶ Three years on, it is yet to be realized, giving credence to a statement by Terence Corrigan that: "unity is worthless unless it is underwritten by a common commitment to values".⁸⁷

The Priority Plan of Action of the Commission sets out to achieve greater popularization of the African Union's core functions through elaborate sets of action including a

⁸⁵ Adebayo, Adedeji, 2007, *Independent High Level Panel of the Audit of the African Union*, p.74.

⁸⁶ Report of the Experts' Meeting on the Establishment of the Pan-African Radio and Television Channel, 21-23 November 2005, Cairo, Egypt.

⁸⁷ Terence Corrigan, Kenya, *the Saturday Standard*, November 10, 2007.

communication strategy, e-newsletters, quarterly publications and strengthened website. By the time of the report, most of these actions and activities had not taken place.⁸⁸

This confirms that there is no strong communication culture within the Commission as also; there are no links to national communication networks in member states which could bring the AU closer to its citizenry. In this regard, Africa is left at the mercy of unchallenged foreign negative media content and subversive social and political communications exacerbated by the onslaught of modern information and communication technologies (ICTs) emanating from Western countries.

On the challenges of foreign media agenda, Alexis S. Tan (1984) in *Mass Communication Theories and Research*, talks of 'Exogenous Media' meaning 'the media that originated from outside Africa'. He states that they bring into the third world, new values, lifestyles, and world perceptions carefully choreographed and packaged in branded agenda referred to as 'cultural imperialism'. Cultural imperialism in his definition "is the imposition by an exogenous source of new values, ways of thinking, life styles, behavior patterns, and world perceptions on members of a social structure with an existing culture of their own".⁸⁹

"Daya Thussu (2000) argues that Western media domination is more pronounced today than during the New World Information Order (NWIO) debates promoting western lifestyles and values through private global media and a market system that cooperate with governments to present a Western geopolitical view of global events".⁹⁰

Paul Grosswiler observes that: "Negative media content, monopoly control of communication technologies and imbalanced global information current have raised new controversies in international mass communication which began with the creation of the European telegraph system in the mid-1800s".⁹¹

⁸⁸ Adebayo, Adedeji, *Op cit*, p.70.

⁸⁹ Tan, Alexis S., 1984, *Mass Communication Theories and Research*, John Wiley and Sons, New York, p. 386.

⁹⁰ Arnold S. de Beer and John C. Merrill, 2000, *Global Journalism: topical issues and media systems* (4th ed.), New York, USA, p.114.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, P.113

The concern about media imperialism has increased internationally, in advocacy organizations such as Voices 21 and at world-wide protests against the neo-liberal globalization policies of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Group of 8 (G-8) nations.⁹²

Cees Hamelink (2002) goes further and notes that the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) in 2001 was the third unsuccessful attempt since World War II, to address global media issues, which have always met with a highly charged and politicized debate over merits of a new global media structure, adding that the first was in 1948, the second in the 1970s and 1980s by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). This led to unimplemented McBride Report (1980) and the withdrawal from UNESCO of the United States and Britain. Hamelink characterized the new WSIS challenge as encompassing issues such as equitable access, cultural diversity, the digital divide, rural communication, e-commerce, e-government, data protection, security, gender, and education issues.⁹³

“Initiated by the UN in late 2001, the WSIS faces the political challenge of fostering a democratic information society, the social challenge creating an information society based on dialogue and conversation, and the regulatory challenge of adopting a universal declaration on the right to communicate, Hamelink argues in presenting his vision of communication societies that are inclusive, open, and democratic”.⁹⁴

2.11: The Role of Mass Communication in the African Union Commission

AUC's Communication Unit has the historic responsibility of being the architect of and catalyst for an Africa victorious over its current challenges today and asserting itself tomorrow despite pessimistic forecasts. “Its Information Mission is vital as it would enable the African Union to involve all players in the process of regional and continental development and integration”.⁹⁵

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⁹² Ibid., p.113

⁹³ Ibid p.113

⁹⁴ Ibid.p113

⁹⁵ Vision of the African Union and Mission of the African Union Commission, March 2004, Office of the Chairperson, of the African Union Commission, p.29.

The Daily Nation (Kenya) Monday July 2, 2007, reports of how journalists are mistreated at AU Summits. In Accra (2007): "there was drama at the opening of the Summit as armed policemen and soldiers faced-off with angry journalists marching towards the conference hall. Hundreds of journalists, who had converged from all over the world, had been barred from entering the main hall at the Accra International Conference Centre. As President Kufuor was delivering the opening speech, journalist signed a petition of protest and started marching towards conference hall ...but armed policemen and soldiers in battle fatigues were deployed to set up a barricade. Even journalists who wanted to leave the conference centre entirely were blocked provoking an angry stand-off that continued for nearly an hour until after the morning programme was concluded and the large retinue of assembled presidents had left."⁹⁶

"It is frustrating and difficult to find out what is happening inside the venue."⁹⁷

Adebayo Adedeji's (2007) audit report adds that despite the website being the source of news about AU policy positions, staff, upcoming activities, tenders and vacancies at the Commission, it is clearly under resourced and undervalued. "There is no information disclosure policy or clear editorial policies in place. Between two to three persons on short term contracts, have manned the multi-lingual website since 2002. The Commission has no server of its own and the website is located in a folder on the UNDP server in North America. For this reason there are no ways of monitoring the number of users or pages that are visited. The Webmaster receives fifteen to twenty e-mails on average each day asking for information or informing her that the links do not work. At the time of the audit, at least twenty-one pages on the website are still in a state of construction and readers are met only with the message 'coming soon' ".⁹⁸ These are some shortcomings in communicating the African Union. The reasons are some of the things this study will endeavor to find out.

Meanwhile, drawing lessons for the AUC from the United States of America, President Woodrow Wilson utilized public relations (PR) to build America. He established the 'Committee for Public Information', which was a public relations outfit he effectively

⁹⁶ Macharia Gaiho, Around Africa, Kenya, *Daily Nation*, Monday, July 2, 2007, p.17.

⁹⁷ BBC News/ Africa/AU Summit, Reporter's Diary of February 2, 2007

⁹⁸ Adebayo, Adedeji, 2007, *Independent High Level Panel of the Audit of the African Union*, p.72.

used to mobilize public opinion in support of the war. Similarly in the Roosevelt era and World War II, he used radio very well to inspire the Americans to give public support for his policies which subsequently led to victory in the War. Recently, Presidential hopeful, Barack Obama won the Democratic Party nomination using e-mails to overcome a formidable opponent and to twater suggestion he was a Muslim and later to overcome the controversies that Rev. Jeremiah Wright and Rev. Michael Pfleger generated in his Trinity Church.

Communication in the context of the African Union's integration efforts implies that the AUC should do more, initiate a continent-wide campaign to accelerate the pace of the efforts being deployed towards African unification and use 'cross-cultural communication' to bridge the gap between it and the global mass media, on the one hand, and between it and the local media and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) on the other. The AUC's Information and Communication Unit as stated earlier is not a department in the Commission and as such may lack the necessary financial muscle and human resource to engage with multi-media organizations in popularizing and internalizing accelerated African unity. Africa has neither a continental radio nor TV stations run by the Commission. Therefore, the Commission must find the means of advertising and marketing, traditional communication and inter-personal communication, educational channels, music, poems, songs, theatre, mobile phones and the internet as variable alternative means of communication. Cultural entrepreneurs, artists and sports associations should be mobilized to play a part in the African unity drive.

Motivation of journalists to raise public awareness highlighting the great potential embedded in continental unity requires use of a language to build multilateralism, nationalism and patriotic feelings for continental unity. Africa at the time of liberation struggle also had difficulties of different tribes, different political and religious affiliations, but together Africans marched forward and achieved their common goal of liberating the continent. The same could be achieved again in respect of successful drive towards greater African unity. How else can support for African integration be measured without weighing the level of support from mass media coverage and mass media access to which African Union is exposed? Effective mass media coverage and monitoring of AU activities offer ample insight into the commitments from African leaders and citizenry on whether or not they support the quest for accelerated establishment of a

Union Government leading to the United States of Africa. As at present constituted, it is doubtful whether or not the African Union Communications Unit, is capable of effective communication with member states of the Union, which are also struggling with underlying in-house communications problems, talk less of tackling Western media domination.

2.12: Conclusion

From the literature review, it is discovered that poor communication and coordination between the AUC, the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Member States is a major obstacle to African integration. The reason so far deduced is the lack of policy guidelines on communication and information management at the Commission. To achieve effective communication and determine public consent for speedier African unification there is need to forge a communication strategic design to involve all stakeholders. This will validate the benchmarks for measuring progress underpinned in popularization and internalization of the core values of the African Union recently approved by the Assembly of the Union in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt.⁹⁹ At present information and communication are poorly resourced and with limited communication capacity.

Information materials made available to the public is quite limited to enable the African audiences understand the important milestones already reached in the AU integration agenda. It is not clear whether the Commission has embarked on a study to communicate the African integration project. News monitoring of the Commission's activities so far, is restricted to TV, Radio, Newspaper and the African Union Website said to have limited visits. African local and international journalists have had restricted accreditation in terms of coverage of AU events and sometimes have been restricted outright. Monitoring, evaluation and feedback are not a routine measure to gauge AUC's performance in terms of news and information exposure, thus denying the Commission knowledge of self-image. Considering the inadequacies and the many question marks arising from the literature review and faced with mounting pressure to popularize and internalize deeper African unity, this study from the onset is tempted to inquire what the AU intends to do

⁹⁹ Assembly/AU/Dec.206 (xi):Doc.Assembly/Au/11 (xi).

next to improve communication and information infrastructure and mandate given to the Commission. There is evidence that the African Union at the moment focuses on establishing ICT structures at the expense of strengthening policies and human capacities for communicating the Commission's activities. Proof is that the Executive Council, (May 2008) in Cairo, Egypt endorsed the recommendation of the Second Session of the Conference of African Ministers in charge of Communication and Information Technologies (ICTs) requesting the Commission to submit an official proposal to the African Development Bank (ADB) seeking support to establish a Communication and Information Technologies Fund before 2010. This is with a view to developing a strong, integrated and viable Communications sector in the Continent.¹⁰⁰

Reading through the recommendations, mention was not made of putting in place a complimentary continental communication policy on content use. This indirectly confirms the alleged fear among African leadership to grant freedom of expression and access to information in the public domain. They are reportedly afraid that if people should have information it could be used to hold them accountable. In this regard, this project shall endeavor to uncover the true disposition and commitment within the African Union leadership in respect of releasing a policy on information content use and disclosure. For deeper African unity to materialize, public awareness of and public engagement in public debate of African unity may be necessary at all levels in Africa. This could make it easier to mobilize citizens' commitment to support deeper African unity and help determine the significance of communication in accelerated African integration agenda.

¹⁰⁰ Doc. EX.CL/434 (X111) of the Conference of African Ministers In Charge of Communication and Information Technologies.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0: Methodology

3.1: Introduction

This chapter details the research design, target population, sampling procedure, the data collection instruments, actual data collection and analysis, procedures and operational definition. The term research as used here refers to the total plan of an investigation or study. The study is largely exploratory, that means, it aims to explore how communication at the African Union Commission is viewed in respect of other issues of concern in the African integration project.

Methodology refers to the system of explicit rules and procedures upon which research is based and against which claims of knowledge are evaluated. The rules in turn enable communication, constructive criticism and scientific progress. Through its explicit (public and accessible) rules, methodology according to Nachmias and Nachmias (1996) provides a framework for replication. It uses logic as the foundation of scientific reasoning and thus enhances internal consistency of the scientific claim for knowledge.

Further they note that a major function of methodology is to help the blind man 'see', to facilitate communication between researchers who have shared or want to share a common experience.

3.2: Research Design

The study is based on an experimental design which seeks to compare the perceptions of various groups in respect of the relevance of communication and other variables in the African integration process; hence it calls for analysis of variance.

A survey questionnaire (structured and non-structured) will be administered at the African Union Commission in Addis Ababa among other places. The research questions are constructed such that they elicit relevant information that would be analyzed to

answer the research questions (hypothesis). Key informant interviews (KII) will be conducted among informed stakeholders randomly selected from Embassies and resident Permanent Representatives of African Union member states (PRC members). The aim would be to determine how they have benefited from the mass media tools used in the African Union Commission, to effectively or otherwise enhance their work. If necessary, Focus Group Discussions will be conducted because “they offer dynamics and ways – not available in individual interviews – of eliciting, stimulating, and elaborating audience interpretations”.¹⁰¹ The interaction found where several people are brought together to discuss a subject, is seen as the attraction of this mode of data- collection over individual interviews. “The hallmark of focus groups (Morgan 1998) is the explicit use of the group interaction to produce data and insights that would be less accessible without the interaction found in the group.”¹⁰² Adopting this methodology implies that this study method adopts the use of quantitative methods with qualitative approaches and techniques and it is aimed at marrying the quantification of the traditional behavioral phenomena measured numerically with the qualitative research methodology framed by critical social scientists with emphasis on interpretative measurement.

“The renaissance, in the last fifteen years, of the focused group interview as a method for media and communication research relates to the turn away from the traditional effects paradigm, and variations thereof which include such predominantly survey based approaches as cultivation, analysis, agenda-setting, and uses and gratification research.”¹⁰³

Furthermore, staffs in the Communication and Information Unit of the Commission form the main interviewees on structures, tools and channels of communication in use at the Commission and their core functions, while those in the Directorate for Economic Integration will throw more light on the challenges facing African integration.

Having viewed communication and integration from a continental perspective, appropriate measures are taken to balance their views with national perspectives.

¹⁰¹ Anders Hansen et al., 1998, *Mass Communication Research Methods*, Macmillan press, Hampshire London, p. 262.

¹⁰² Ibid p.262

¹⁰³ Ibid p.259

Consequently, opinions will be sought from Kenya, in East Africa, Nigeria in West Africa, Mozambique in Southern Africa, Egypt in Northern Africa and Cameroon in Central Africa. The study in this regard assumes a cross sectional survey design which is appropriate as it enables the researcher to give an account of the role played by communication in mobilizing sections of the continent for African integration. Coopers and Emory (1995) prescribed this type of research design where several respondents give answers to specific questions at a one point in time survey.

3.3: Target Population

The population one is targeting (target population) is determined by the status of AUC communications out reach at present. Information and communication status at the AU Commission at present is a 'niche brand' and not a 'mass brand' as communication is targeted to the urban elite audiences and not the masses or the ordinary people living in the rural areas who constitute over 65 per cent of the continent's population.

The target population is therefore essentially the urban elite, amply represented at the African Union Commission Headquarters which by design is a macrocosmic representative sample of the African continent. Other stakeholders in the continent's five geographical regions are factored into the survey along with the official languages of the African Union, endorsed in the Constitutive Act. These as explained earlier in literature review include Arabic widely spoken in Northern Africa Region, English predominantly in Southern Africa Region, French mostly in Western Africa and Central Africa Regions; and Portuguese in parts of Southern and Western Africa and Kiswahili mainly in Eastern Africa Region. Selection of respondents captured these considerations as further explained in the sampling process.

3.4: Sampling

Sampling is the planned way that is used to select subjects for a study because it is not practically possible to study an entire population like Africa largely due to constraints of time and resources.

Sakaran, (2003) explains ‘sampling’ as the process of selecting sufficient number of elements from the population, so that a study of the sample and understanding of its properties or characteristics will make it possible to generalize such properties or characteristics to the population elements.

For population validity, the representative sample for this study comprises a total of 200 respondents consistently drawn from the sampling frames of the five regions of the African Union. The questionnaire is to be administered to a cross section of respondents comprising AU Staff, Business Community, the Media Fraternity, Government Officials, the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Non–Governmental Organizations (NGOs) is detailed in each region as outlined in the following diagrammatic representation.

Region	AU Staff	Business Community	The Media	Government Officials	Civil Society/ NGOs	Total
Eastern	5	10	10	5	5	40
Western	5	10	10	5	5	40
Northern	5	10	10	5	5	40
Central	5	10	10	5	5	40
Southern	5	10	10	5	5	40
Total	25	50	50	25	25	200

3.4. i: Sampling Procedure for Content Analysis

Sampling procedure refers to the steps this researcher has taken in carrying out sampling after determining the sample size and who, which or what should be included in the sample. The procedure utilized here is that the study has drawn respondents from the African Union member states as divided into five regions based on geographical criterion. A given number of cases (40) are randomly selected from each sub-region of the population without distinction in sex, age, educational level, marital status, or even religion, as these are considered to be secondary in determining whether or not Africa should unite. However, language was considered exceptionally important since it is the only means to communicate Africa’s efforts towards deeper integration. In that respect, language groups were covered under sub-regional groups.

Special focus was given to administering the questionnaire to respondents at the African Union Commission considered in this project as the target audiences being a microcosm of Africa. So also were the Business Community seen as an interested party in Africa's economic integration project; the Mass Media directly involved in communicating knowledge of world view and in particular the African unification project to the publics who owe much to what the media have selected, omitted, shaped and interpreted; the Civil Society Organizations/ Non-Governmental Organizations who serve as pressure groups checking on accountability of government establishments and government policies. Government officials across the continent are also listed as part of the respondents.

Probability sampling was used to select a reasonable number of subjects (200) which form the units of observation in this study and represent the 'target population' described in this study as the urban elite audiences. It is estimated that about 65 per cent of the continent's population lives in the rural areas and is not in direct communication with the African Union Commission. To realize a selection of a sample that is representative of the population, the African Union Commission provided a forum for probability sampling, capturing in a small group, variations or heterogeneity that is the African population. Probability sampling enables random selection, giving each subject in the accessible population equal non-zero chance of being selected and allowing generalization to a larger population with a margin of error which is statistically determinable. It also allows the use of inferential statistics in analysis.

Stratified Random Sampling was applied to ensure inclusion in the sample of sub-groups which would otherwise be omitted by other sampling methods because of their small numbers in the population and with the aim to achieve desired representation (200 sample units) from the five sub-regional groups in the population. It has been argued by researchers that, for accuracy of findings the guiding principle should be the relative variability of the characteristics under study rather than the proportionate relative size of each population sub-group. This argument is based on the fact that the more heterogeneous the population, the bigger the sample required.

3.5: Data Collection Methods

The first step in solving a research problem is collection of data, referred to in this project as the technique of eliciting information regarding the social phenomena under study. Considering the importance of data, this study shall ensure a qualitative process of data collection which could be primary or secondary data. Primary data refers to first-hand information such as interviews or discussions with communities and or individuals, or any other information deciphered through observing phenomena. Any information obtained for the first time by a researcher on a topic of interest can be described as a primary data. Secondary data, on the other hand, are information obtained from a preceding study or written sources or documents e.g. literature compiled by an earlier study, magazines, periodicals, text books, theses, etc. Thus, the study will use primary data derived from a structured (close-ended questions) and unstructured (open-ended) questionnaires as well as self administered interactive interviews and discussion. Use of the internet will shorten geographical distance between the interviewer and the interviewees, in case the interview schedule is not orally administered.

Every none face to face dispatch of questionnaire will be accompanied by a cover letter debriefing about the research- its importance and benefit it is accruing. Respondents will be assured of confidentiality and anonymity in treatment of sensitive information, while politely spelling out the deadline by which questionnaire should be completed. Follow-up either with a letter or a call shall be done to ensure early retrieval of questionnaire accompanied with an expression of appreciation for providing useful information.

3.6: Data Analysis

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Once field data is received, responses are edited and assigned serial numbers (coded) to avoid repetition during sorting or analysis and the data code-sheets are used for data entry (key-punching data into computer) to process, analyze and interpret them objectively. Objectivity implies that all sessions of interpreting the quantitative (structured questionnaire) and qualitative (content analysis) must be guided by an explicit set of rules that minimize subjectivity. The statistical procedure of data analysis (quantitative data) is conducted using the statistical package for social scientists (SPSS for windows). That means the coded data are entered into the SPSS program where it is developed into a data

base and hence analyzed and interpreted. Descriptive statistics or analysis of the variance is appropriately applied to test the study’s hypotheses (drawing inferences from the available variables). The researcher will then conduct individual analysis of each of the variables followed by a bivariate analysis using the Theoretical Framework as a guide to the variables determining independent and dependent variables. Independent variables are then correlated with indicators of the dependent variables. An attempt is further made to test the levels of statistical significance using the Chi Square tests. Both qualitative and quantitative data are illustrated using graphs, charts and tables for presentation. It will be recalled that this study anchors its Theoretical Framework on the Agenda-Setting Theory; hence the variables are tested against a backdrop of the Agenda-Setting Theory. This implies comparing techniques of the Agenda-Setting Theory with the role of mass communication in African integration— in short, testing the Hypotheses against the findings of the analyzed data.

3.7: Quantitative Analysis, Summary of Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Statistical Test
1: Effective communication strategies enhance African integration	Role of communication	Effect on African integration	Descriptive: • Measure of central tendency • Measure of spread • Measure of shape Inferential: One way ANOVA F-Test R-Square
2. Communication gap acts as a barrier to the African integration process	Role of communication	Effect on African integration	Inferential: One way ANOVA F-Test R-Square
3. Lack of communication Policy for Africa has slowed down African integration	Role of communication	Effect on African integration	Inferential: One way ANOVA F-Test R-Square

3.8: Ethical Consideration

The researcher ensured qualitative collection of data and applied the ethics of research in respect of the sensitivity of information gathered and protecting the confidentiality of respondents. As was practically possible the anonymity of respondents was observed. The questionnaire design was crafted to omit names of respondents and to win their confidence in volunteering accurate information. From the onset, the researcher explained the purpose of the research to avoid ambiguity and to guarantee the rights of the respondents not to answer questions they were uncomfortable with and to voluntarily contribute answers. Respondents were given the opportunity to ask questions before, during and after the interviews. As is usually the standard research ethics practice, the researcher properly identified himself, going as far as showing the University of Nairobi School of Journalism identity card before proceeding with the interviews.

3.9: Potential Threats to Validity

Gathered data was clearly presented with accurate interpretations, suggestions and corroboration of facts thoroughly considered and reflected. The most common threats to the validity to which experimental studies such as this are often susceptible, were controlled, ensuring a formal document with consistent and logical flow of arguments.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0: Data Analysis, Interpretation and Presentation

4.1: Introduction

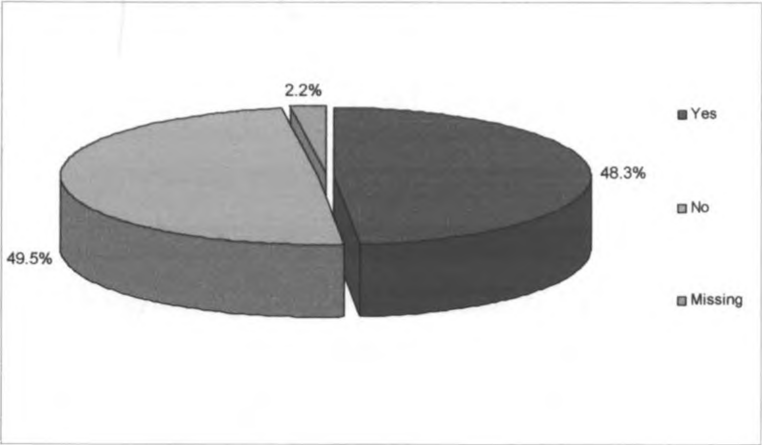
This chapter provides the findings of the study by presenting and analyzing the data collected. For population validity, the representative sample for the study comprises a total of 200 questionnaires distributed to staff members of the AU and people from member states at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa and African Embassies and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) dealing with African Union issues such as IGAD, ECOWAS, SADC, COMESA, NEPAD, the Pan African Parliament (PAP) as well as in media houses in parts of Africa. From the 200 questionnaires 180 (90%) were completed and returned. According to Babbie Earl (2004) a 50 % response is adequate for analysis¹⁰⁴. Data presented in this chapter consists of both qualitative and quantitative data. Primary data was gathered through questionnaires and presented using frequency tables, pie charts, bar graphs, mean and standard deviation. Secondary data was obtained through content analysis using AU journals and documented literature about the AU. The study aimed to achieve the following objectives.

- i. To evaluate the communication structures of the AU Commission in Addis Ababa to ascertain their adequacy and efficiency.
- ii. To analyze the channels and tools being used by the Commission to disseminate messages on African Integration.
- iii. Assess the impact of the Commission in creating awareness in respect of the ongoing African integration.

¹⁰⁴Babbie Earl R., 2004, *the Practice of Social Research* (10th Edition), Thomson Wadsworth, Belmont, CA, USA, p.65.

4.2: Adopting a single Language

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	87	48.3
	No	89	49.4
Missing	System	4	2.2
Total		180	100.0

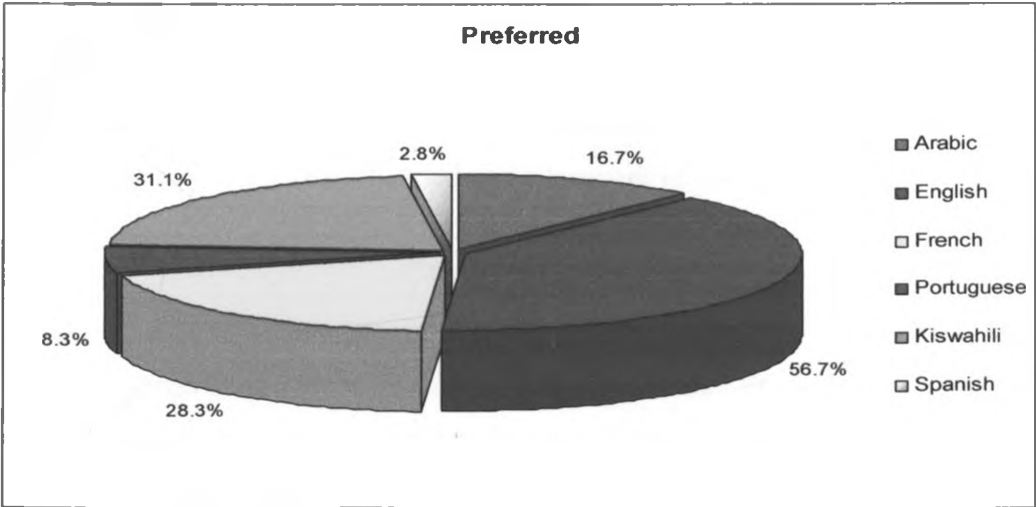


Language is said to be the glue that binds society. From the figure above 49.5% of the respondents indicated that the AU should not adopt a single language. Another 48.3% said it should be adopted. This implies that more people by a margin of 1.2 % contend that Africa is not ready to adopt one working language for its official business. This is in spite of claims by some respondents that four working languages delay official business at the African Union while having to translate every document in the four working languages before getting business done, when in fact transactions could move much faster if for example, English most preferred by a majority of respondents (56.7%) if used, can move the organization’s business faster.

4.3: Preferred Language of Communication in Africa

Preferred language of communication in Africa	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Arabic	85	1.00	4.00	2.4706	1.23045
English	132	1.00	3.00	1.2576	.50374
French	89	1.00	4.00	1.6517	.86735
Portuguese	61	1.00	4.00	2.3607	1.03332
Kiswahili	105	1.00	4.00	1.7048	.88713
Spanish	64	1.00	4.00	2.8281	.96863
Other	17	1.00	4.00	3.3529	.93148
Valid N (list wise)	6				

The table above used means to rank languages preferred for communication in the African Union. From the rankings English has a mean of 1.2576 and therefore the most preferred language of communication. The second preferred language is Kiswahili followed by French and Portuguese. Spanish (2.8) was the least preferred language.



The figure above indicates that majority (56.7%) of the respondents preferred English to be used as the language of communication while 31.1% said that Kiswahili was preferred. Another 28.3% indicated that they preferred French and 16.7% preferred Arabic. A very small percentage ranked Portuguese (8.3%) and Spanish (2.8%) as the preferred languages of communication in Africa. Other languages that respondents in a small scale indicated could be used to communicate were German and Zulu.

The researcher here took every necessary measure there is no bias in favor of English during the survey. Some of such measures included travelling to Addis Ababa twice in the course of data gathering and distributing the questionnaire first to all language groups represented at the AU Commission and then at three international conferences with participants from across the continent. These included the Strategy Review Workshop of the Framework for Information, Communication and Advocacy of the African Union held at the AU Headquarters from 17 to 18 September, 2008 and another workshop and at a Seminar on Retirement held at Nazareth town in Ethiopia early October 2008 with participants drawn from the African Union staff serving in different parts of the continent. Furthermore, deliberate efforts were made to distribute the questionnaire in Embassies of African Missions in Nairobi taking due cognizance of the language factor. The bias of favoring one language was therefore removed by not drawing respondents from less than the five geographical regions of Africa as clearly stated in the methodology.

Arabic

From the table above 16.7% of the population support the use of Arabic as the preferred language. This may be attributed to the fact that quite a number of respondents were from the predominantly Arabic speaking North Africa. About 36% of the respondents say it is the least preferred or should not be used as the language of communication in Africa.

English

From the findings above 56.7% of the respondents preferred English as the language of communication while 14.4% less preferred it. Only 2.2% least preferred it as the language of communication.

French

The findings above indicate that 28.3% of the respondents preferred French as the language of communication. About 12% do not prefer French to be used to communicate in Africa.

Portuguese

From the findings above only a small percentage of 8.3 preferred Portuguese as the language of communicating African issues. The researcher noted that these respondents were mainly from Lusophone countries; Mozambique and Angola.

Kiswahili

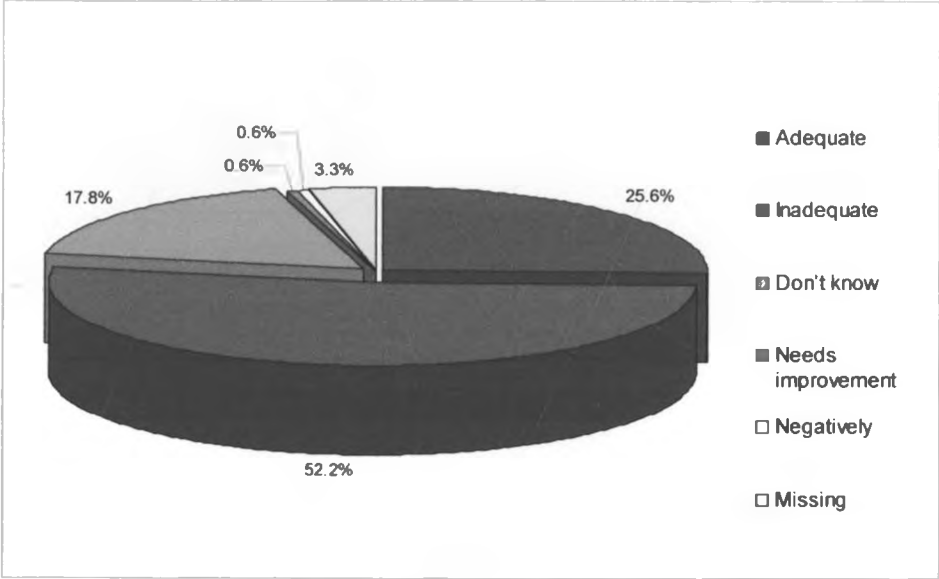
Kiswahili was the second most preferred language of communication in Africa after English with a percentage of 31.1. Only 2.8% said that it should never be used for communication in Africa. The apparent general support for Kiswahili appeared to be because some respondents said it was the only indigenous African language already recognized as an official language of the African Union. Respondents in a small scale expressed preference for German and Zulu.

Spanish

From the findings above a small population (2.8%) preferred Spanish as the language of communication in Africa.

4.4: Mass Media Influence on Africa’s Integration Process

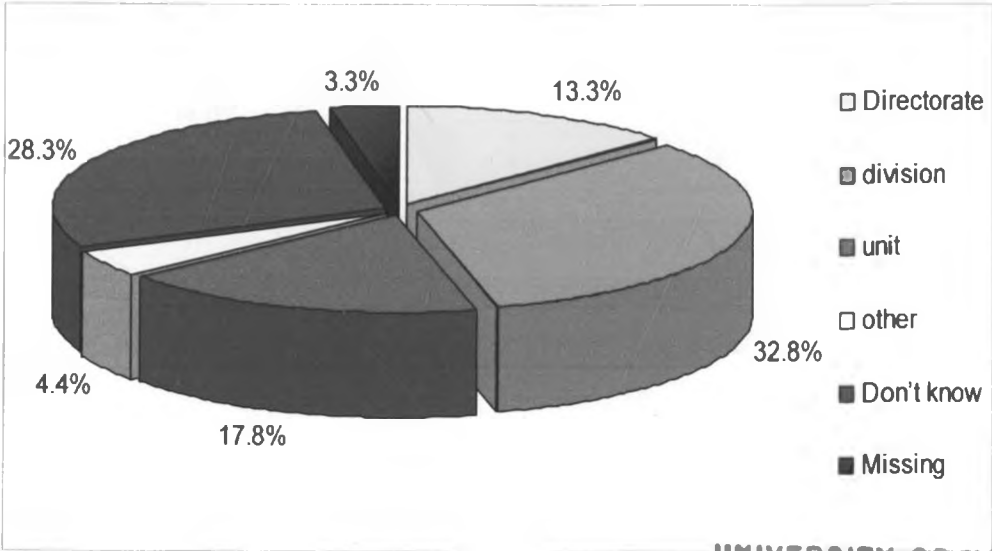
How has mass media influenced Africa's integration process?		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Adequate	46	25.6
	Inadequate	94	52.2
	Don't know	32	17.8
	Needs improvement	1	.6
	Negatively	1	.6
Missing	Total	174	96.7
	System	6	3.3
Total		180	100.0



The results above show that 52.2% of the respondents think that mass media have influenced Africa’s integration process inadequately while 25.5% said the influence has been adequate. 17.8% of the respondents indicate that they do not know how the mass media have influenced Africa’s integration process. As only 17.8 % are not aware how the mss media have influenced Africa’s integration process while 52.2 % confirm it has negatively influenced the integration process, it follows that emphasis must be placed on the mass media as a force to reckon with if the African integration process is to take off the ground.

4.5: Status of Communication in the AUC

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Directorate	24	13.3
	Division	59	32.8
	Unit	32	17.8
	Other	8	4.4
	Don't know	51	28.3
	Total	174	96.7
Missing	System	6	3.3
Total		180	100.0

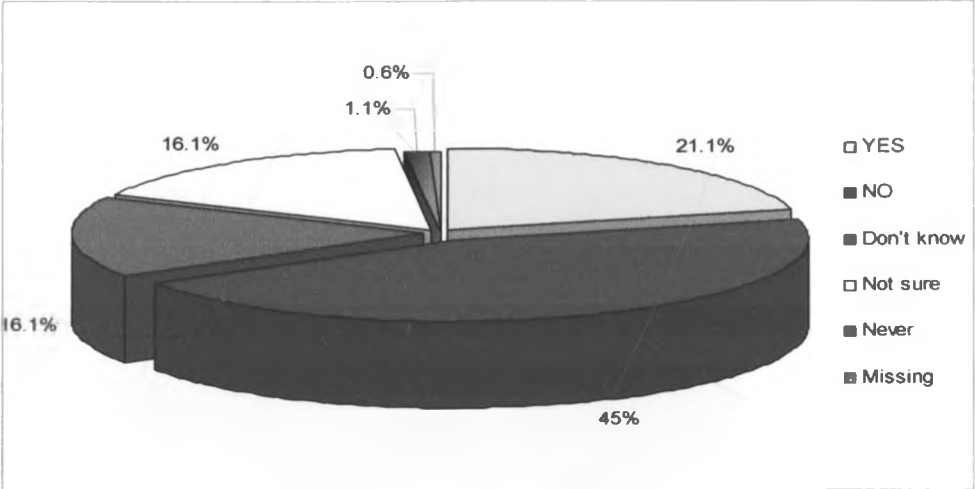


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About 32.8% of the respondents said that the status of communication in the AUC is a division and 28.3% indicate that they do not know. Those who indicated that the status of communication in the AUC is a unit were 21% while 13.30 % said it is a directorate. The fact is that before December 2005, communication was a Unit run by a unit head and supervised by a director in the Bureau of the Chairperson. Since January 2008, Communication became a division .It is yet to become a directorate. It is recommended that the Division of Information and Communication (DCI) be restructured with a view to raising its status to a directorate at the AUC, to make communication become a management function where its head becomes a director and able to rub shoulders with other directors and senior officials at every level of managerial function.

4.6: The Rightful Place of Communication in the AUC

The rightful place of communication in the AUC		Frequency	Percent
Valid	YES	38	21.1
	NO	81	45.0
	Don't know	29	16.1
	Not sure	29	16.1
	Never	2	1.1
	Total	179	99.4
Missing	System	1	.6
Total		180	100.0

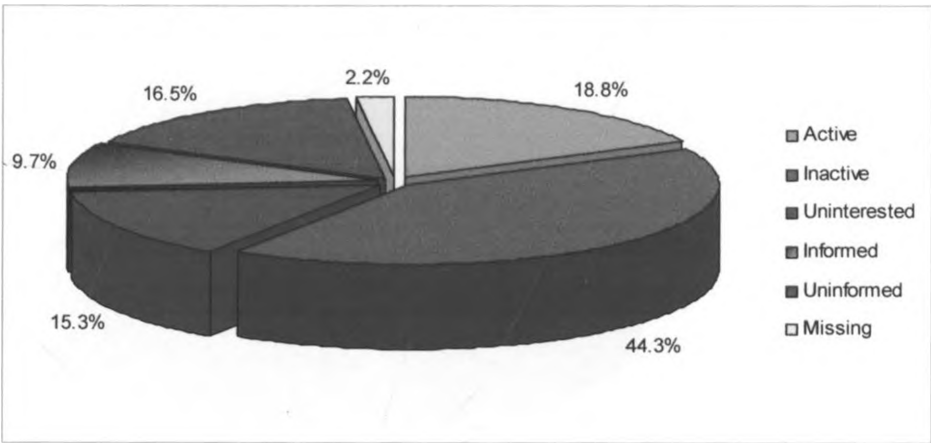


This question sought to know whether communication is given its rightful place at the AUC. Almost half of the respondents were of the view that it was not and 21.1% said communication was given its rightful place in the AUC. About 16.1% did not know whether or not and only 1.1% was of the view that communication was given its rightful place in the AU. For communication to take its rightful place the Maputo decision of the Assembly of the Union must be reversed and the division upgraded to a directorate. This will enable the division have the necessary enhanced structure with requisite personnel and financial resources seen as an obstacle to engaging with the wider world and making Africa more visible at the international stage through appropriate and factual reporting of African news at international fora and for a successful campaign to be launched in respect of African integration.

4.7: Why Africa Can't Have Its Own Radio/T.V? ¹⁰⁵

4.8: How the African Media is Rated In Popularizing AU Activities

How do you rate African media in popularizing AU activities?		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Active	33	18.8
	Inactive	78	44.3
	Uninterested	27	15.3
	Informed	17	9.7
	Uninformed	29	16.5
	Total	176	104.6
Missing	System	4	2.2
Total		180	106.

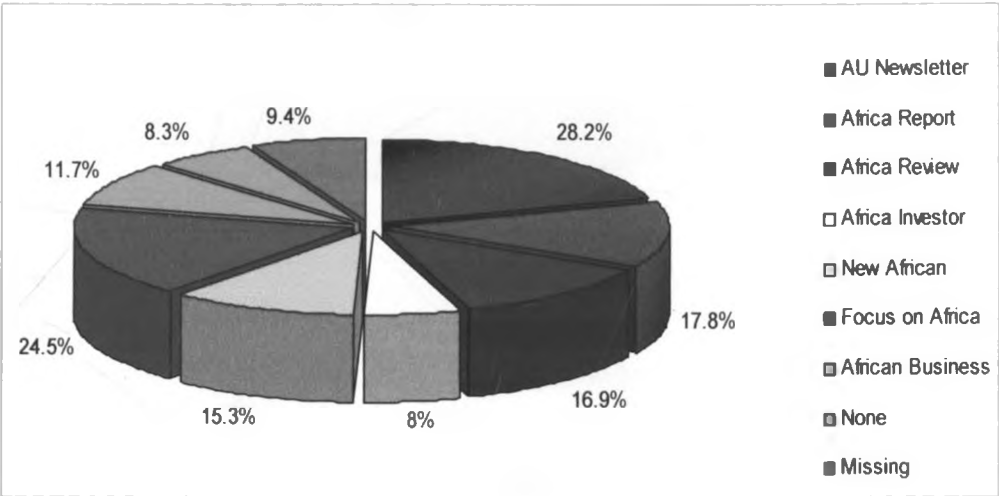


The above findings indicate the majority (44.3%) respondents' rate African media as inactive in popularizing AU activities, 18.8% rate African media as active and 16.5% rate it as uninformed. A small percentage of 9.7% rate the African media as informed in popularizing AU activities. A combination of factors appears to be responsible for the reported inertia of the African media in popularizing AU activities. The most apparent according to this survey is the division does not enjoy its rightful place hence it lacks authority, adequate personnel and financial resources to popularize AU activities.

¹⁰⁵ The answer to this question will be provided in Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations because from the complex set of varied characteristics, the research found it hard to draw any firm conclusions in terms of percentages.

4.9: On Publications Read Regularly by Respondents

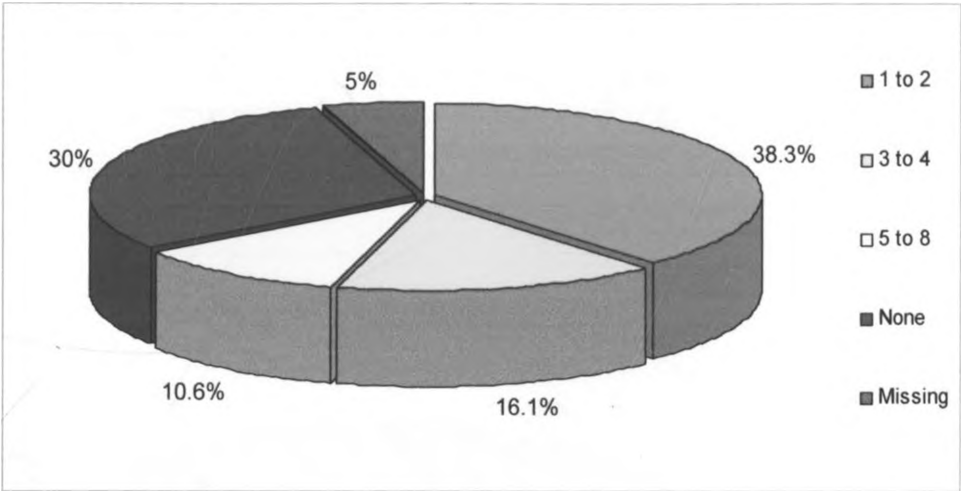
Publications read		Frequency	Percent
Valid	AU Newsletter	47	28.2
	Africa Report	29	17.8
	Africa Review	26	16.9
	Africa Investor	13	8
	New African	25	15.3
	Focus on Africa	40	24.5
	African Business	19	11.7
	None	15	8.3
	Total	163	130.6
Missing	System	17	9.4
Total		180	140.1



From the figures above the most read publications on Africa are the AU newsletter (28.2%) and Focus on Africa (24.5%). Other widely read publications include Africa Report (17.8%), Africa Review (16.9%). New African (15.3%). 8.3% of the respondents do not read any publications on Africa. From the above surprise finding, one is encouraged to urge the African Union to do more publications and have them published in other AU working languages for wider circulation across the continent. With such a large audience the AU Newsletter could even grow larger to compete with global publication like the Times magazine or the Jeune Afrique.

4.10: On Number of Publications Read per Month

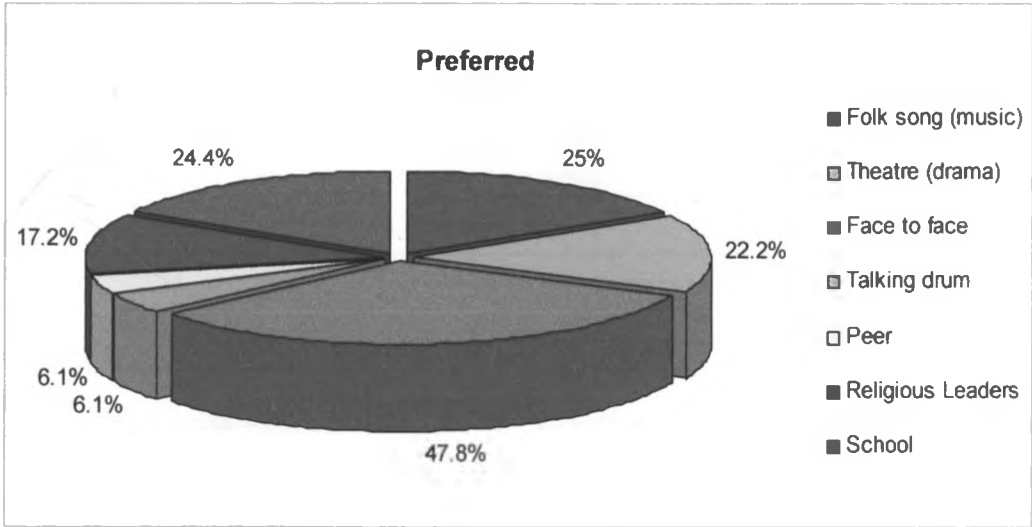
How many publications		Frequency	Percent
Valid	1-2	69	38.3
	3-4	29	16.1
	5-8	19	10.6
	None	54	30.0
	Total	171	95.0
Missing	System	9	5.0
Total		180	100.0



The findings above indicate that 38.3% of the respondents read 1-2 AU publications in a month and 16.1% read 3-4 publications. Interestingly 30% do not read any AU publication monthly. Only 10.6% read 5-8 AU publications monthly. The researcher by this question wished to find out the level of interest shown in domestic publications at the African Union. The positive interest shown on African Union publications has demonstrated that nothing happening within the Union is actually local as the Organization is the only continental one of its nature serving the interest of the 53 member states of the African Union all over the world.

4.11: Preferred Interpersonal Communication Channel

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Rank your preference of the interpersonal communication channels:					
Folk song (music)	104	1.00	4.00	1.9519	1.01809
Theatre (drama)	106	1.00	5.00	2.0283	.97059
Face to face	115	1.00	6.00	1.4174	.83753
Talking drum	69	1.00	4.00	2.6232	1.07240
Peer	75	1.00	4.00	2.1467	1.14719
Religious Leaders	76	1.00	4.00	2.1711	1.15917
School	74	1.00	11.00	1.7838	1.43604
Valid Number(List wise)	41				



From the pie chart above it is clear that most (47.8%) of the respondents ranked face-to-face as the preferred interpersonal communication channel, 25% preferred folk song (music) while another 24.4% ranked school as the preferred channel of communication. Talking drum and peers were the less preferred interpersonal channels of communication. The ordered preference of face- to-face interpersonal communication underscores its long established importance as a powerful communication tool with spectacular ability to make direct impact on people and produce quick results and reception of which Kevin Williams in his book ‘Understanding Media Theory,(2003:191) described as ‘Active

Audience Theory’¹⁰⁶. But the emergence of folk song (music) in the second place in preference ahead of school underscores the importance of rendering music for change and of singing for unity. Little wonder, for example, late Nigerian Musician and praise singer Sonny Okosuns. “Sonny Okosuns was one of Nigeria’s leading artist.He was described as a Pan-Africanist by a fan. Among his most popular songs is ‘Africa Soldier which honored African past and present leaders”¹⁰⁷. Sonny Okosuns was a celebrated pan-Africanist hero for founding a music genre called “OZIDDI” that unleashed patriotic songs like ‘Fire in Soweto’ and ‘African Soldier’ songs against apartheid that won him international fame as contributor to African solidarity.

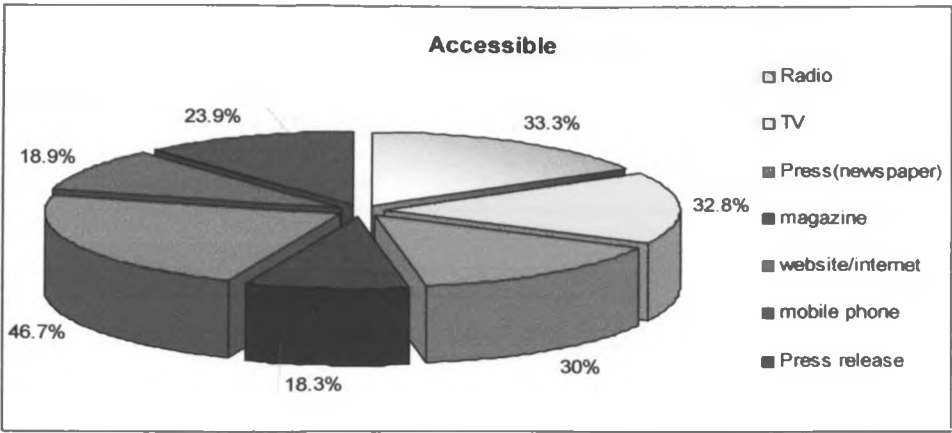
4.12: Exposure to Communication Tools

Exposure to communication tools	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Radio	102	1.00	5.00	2.2745	1.71860
TV	113	1.00	5.00	2.2124	1.56097
Press(newspaper)	116	1.00	5.00	2.0776	1.24517
magazine	92	1.00	5.00	2.4783	1.39448
website/internet	130	1.00	5.00	1.7154	1.15627
mobile phone	93	1.00	5.00	3.0000	1.79371
Press release	91	1.00	5.00	2.3297	1.54959
Valid N (list wise)	57				

In the question above respondents were asked to rank the accessibility to various communication tools used by the AU Communication Unit for popularizing of the AU. The ranking was on a scale of 1-5,1 for accessible, 2 for less accessible, 3 for least accessible, 4 for occasionally accessible and 5 for never. From the means above it can be concluded that the website was accessible with a mean of 1.7, followed by newspaper (mean 2.1). TV, Radio, press release and magazine were ranked less accessible. The mobile phone was ranked as least accessible with a mean of 3.0.

¹⁰⁶ Williams, K., 2003, *Understanding Media Theory*, Arnold, a member of Hodder Hedline Group, 338 Euston Road, London, p. 191.

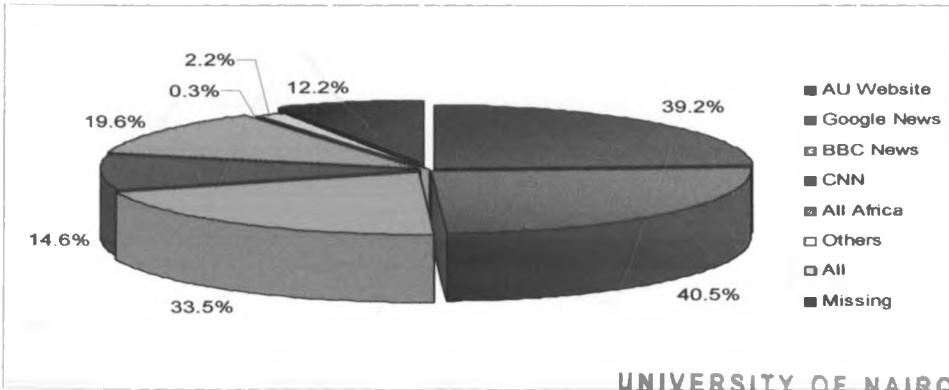
¹⁰⁷ www.africanews.com/site/list messages quoting Mohammed Muritala a reporter.



The figure above indicates that the internet is the most accessible communication tool used by the AU Communication Unit for popularization of the AU. This is followed by Radio (33.3%) and TV (32.8%). The views from the respondents indicate that mobile phones (18.9) and magazines (18.3%) were least accessible communication tools used by the AU Communication Unit for popularization of the AU.

4.13: Website Accessed Regularly while Surfing Information on the AU

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	AU Website	62	39.2
	Google News	64	40.5
	BBC News	53	33.5
	CNN	23	14.6
	All Africa	31	19.6
	Others	5	0.3
	all	4	2.2
		158	149.9
Missing	System	22	12.2
Total		180	162.1

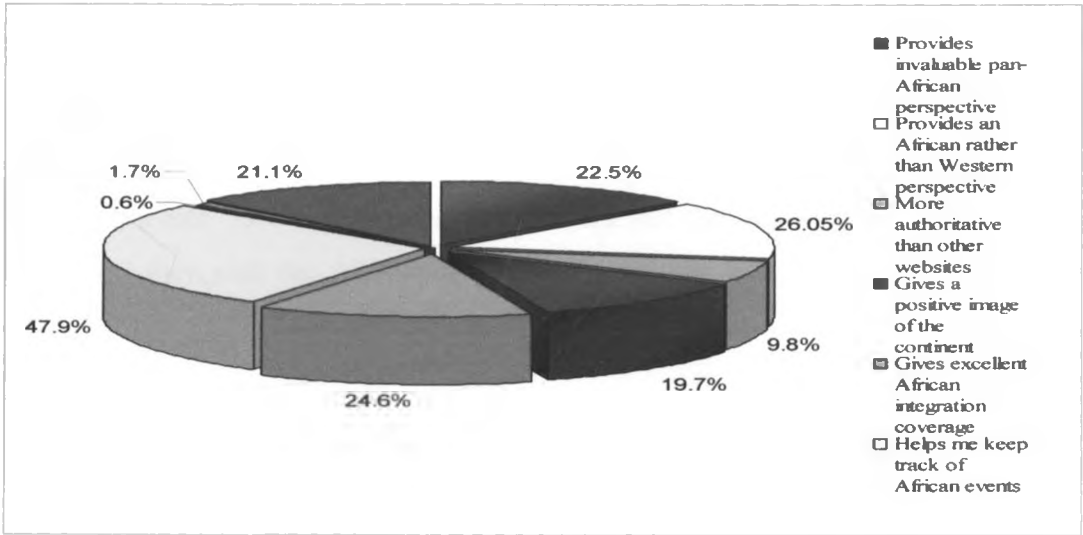


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This question sought to find out the website regularly accessed while surfing information on the AU and the respondents had the chance to tick more than one answer. The respondents indicated that Google news (40.5%) and the AU website (39.2%) were the most accessed for information on the AU. Another 33.5% indicated that they regularly accessed the BBC News for information on the AU. A small percentage of 2.2% accessed all the websites for information on the AU. Other websites used were Aljazeera and Reuters.

4.14: Reason for Visiting AU Website

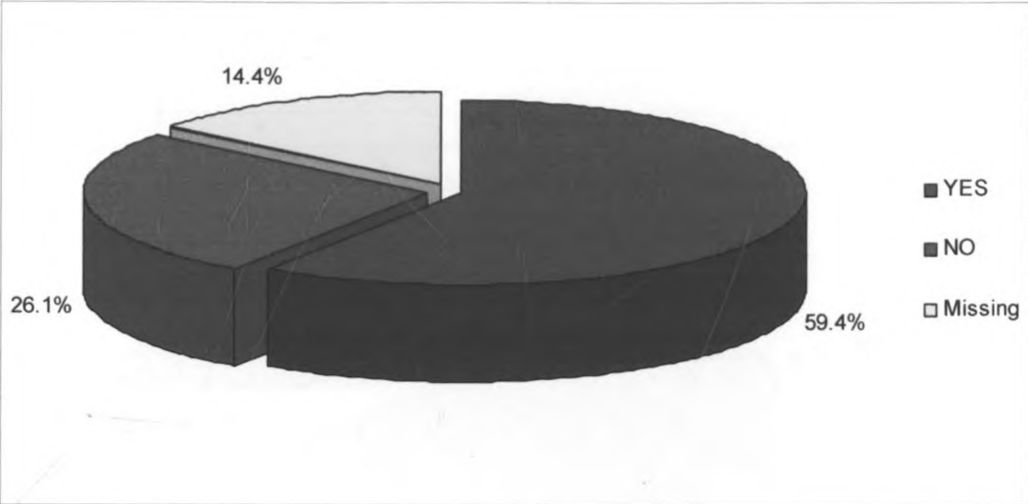
Reason for visiting website		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Provides invaluable pan-African perspective	32	22.5
	Provides an African rather than Western perspective	37	26.05
	More authoritative than other websites	8	9.8
	Gives a positive image of the continent	28	19.7
	Gives excellent African integration coverage	35	24.6
	Helps me keep track of African events	68	47.9
	Don't visit	1	.6
	None	3	1.7
	Total	142	152.9
Missing	System	38	21.1
Total		180	173.95



The researcher sought to know reasons why people visited the AU website. From the findings majority (47.9%) indicated that the website helped them track African events, 26.05% indicated that the AU website provided an African rather than a Western perspective. 24.6% said that the website gave excellent African integration coverage and another 22.5% indicated that they visited the website because it provides invaluable pan-African perspective. A small percentage of 2.3 said they do not visit the AU website.

4.15: Do You Access the Information when You Visit the AU Website?

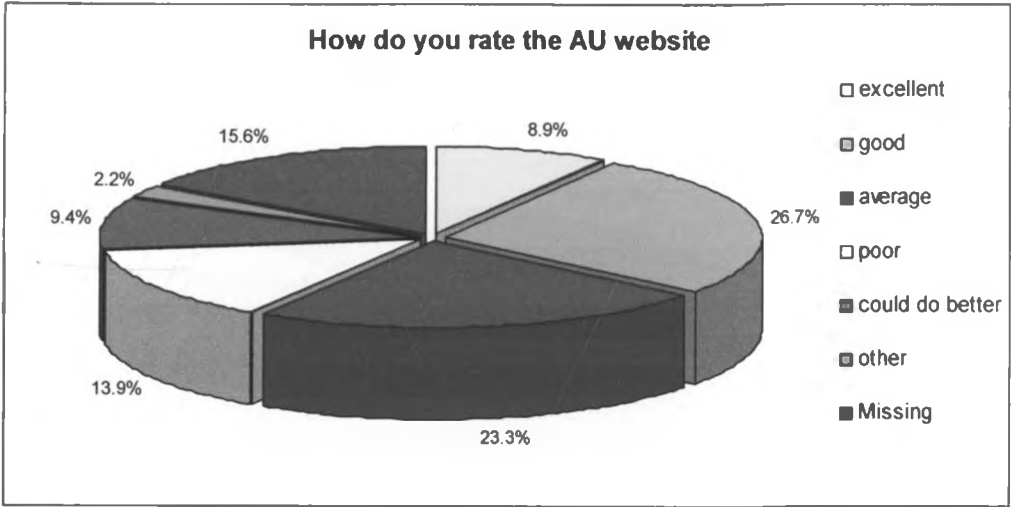
Do you access the information when you visit the AU Website?		Frequency	Percent
Valid	YES	107	59.4
	NO	47	26.1
	Total	154	85.6
Missing	System	26	14.4
Total		180	100.0



More than a half, 59.4 % of the respondents said that they access the information they seek when they visit the AU Website. About 26% say that they did not access the information they seek from the AU Website.

4.16: How Do You Rate the AU Website?

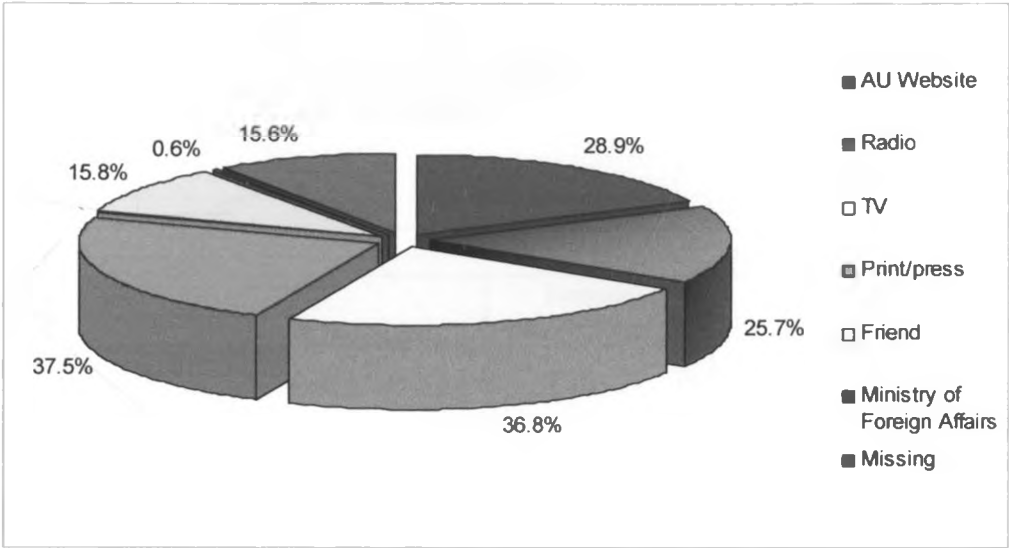
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	excellent	16	8.9
	good	48	26.7
	average	42	23.3
	poor	25	13.9
	could do better	17	9.4
	other	4	2.2
	Total	152	84.4
Missing	System	28	15.6
Total		180	100.0



The figure above shows that slightly more than a quarter of the respondents (26.7%) rated the AU Website as good, 23.3% rated it as average while 13.9% indicated that it was poor. Another 9.4% said it could do better.

4.17: How Did You Get to Know about the Unification of Africa?

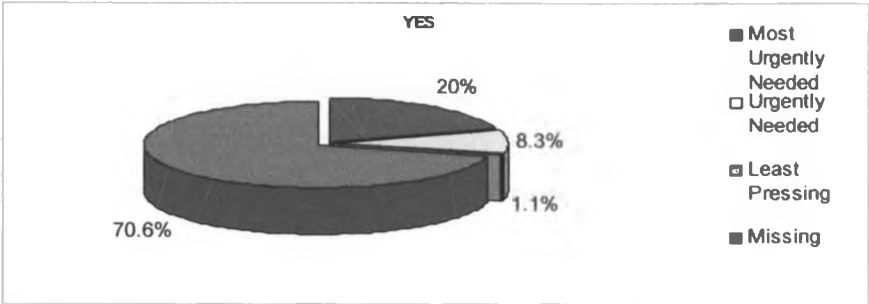
How did you get to know about the unification of Africa?		Frequency	Percent
Valid	AU Website	44	28.9
	Radio	39	25.7
	TV	56	36.8
	Print/press	57	37.5
	Friend	24	15.8
	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	1	.6
	Total	152	145.3
Missing	System	28	15.6
Total		180	160.9



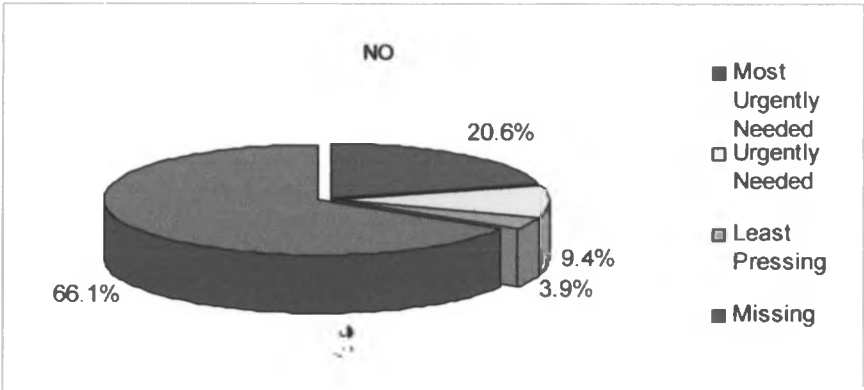
The researcher sought to find out how the respondents got to know about the efforts at unification of Africa. The respondents were allowed to tick more than one option. Majority (37.5%) of the respondents said that they got to know about it through the print media (press) while 36.8% knew about the unification of Africa through TV. Another 28.9% got the information from the AU website and 25.7% learnt about the unification through radio. 15.8% got the information through friends while one of the respondents got informed through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

4.18: Does African Union Have Efficient Communication Strategy on the Integration Process of Africa?

YES			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Most Urgently Needed	36	20.0
	Urgently Needed	15	8.3
	Least Pressing	2	1.1
	Total	53	29.4
Missing	System	127	70.6
Total		180	100.0



NO			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Most Urgently Needed	37	20.6
	Urgently Needed	17	9.4
	Least Pressing	7	3.9
	Total	61	33.9
Missi ng	System	119	66.1
Total		180	100.0

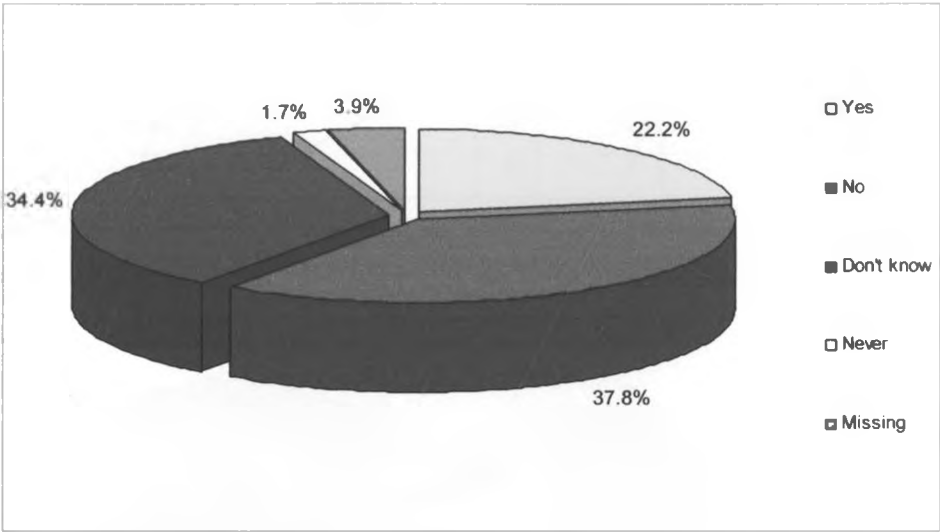


20.6% reported no, noting that such strategy is most urgently needed. 9.4% of respondents hold the view that action to this effect is urgently needed, whereas 3.9% say that it is the least pressing at present. Almost evenly spread, 29.0% say 'yes', meaning that an efficient communication strategy has been put in place on the integration process of Africa. 8.3% of the respondents are of the view that action urgently needs to be taken on setting up a communication strategy on the African integration process. Only 1.1% is saying such a move is least pressing because they are of the view that an efficient communication is already in place.

From the pie chart it could be seen that two thirds (2/3) of the respondents either did not know, were not sure, or never had an idea if the AU Commission had an efficient communication strategy on the African integration process. Although 9.4% of them nevertheless say such a communication strategy is urgently needed, with only 1.1% in denial that such a communication strategy was necessary.

4.19: Has the AU Commission Made Any Effort at Networking the Whole Continent Using Available Communication Resources?

Has the AU Commission made any effort at networking the whole continent using available communication resources?		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Yes	40	22.2
	No	68	37.8
	Don't know	62	34.4
	Never	3	1.7
	Total	173	96.1
Missing	System	7	3.9
Total		180	100.0

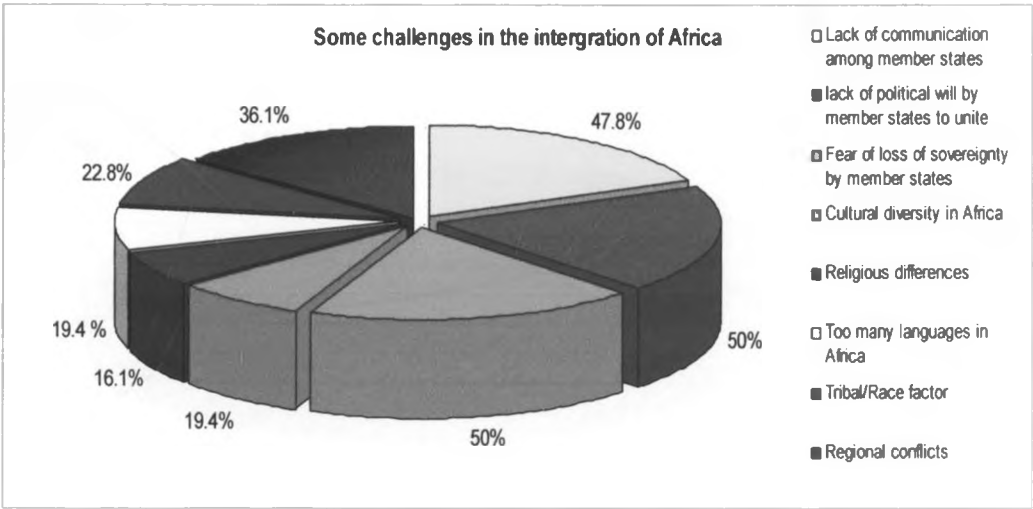


The researcher aimed to find out whether the AU Commission has made any effort at networking the whole continent using the available communication resources. Majority (37.8%) of the respondents said that the AU had not made any effort to network the continent while 34.4% said they did not know. Less than a quarter said that the AU Commission made efforts at networking the whole continent using available communication resources. Only 1.7% said that the AU has never attempted networking the whole continent.

4.20: Some Challenges in the Integration of Africa are given below

The researcher also sought to find out the most pressing challenges in the integration of Africa.

Some challenges in the integration of Africa	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Lack of communication among member states	109	1.00	3.00	1.2661	.55515
lack of political will by member states to unite	120	1.00	3.00	1.3333	.62622
Fear of loss of sovereignty by member states	133	1.00	3.00	1.4135	.65282
Cultural diversity in Africa	101	1.00	3.00	1.9604	.81143
religious differences	90	1.00	3.00	2.0889	.85649
too many languages in Africa	97	1.00	3.00	2.0000	.85391
Tribal/Race factor	100	1.00	7.00	1.9900	1.01000
Regional conflicts	106	1.00	3.00	1.5943	.81391
Valid N (list wise)	75				

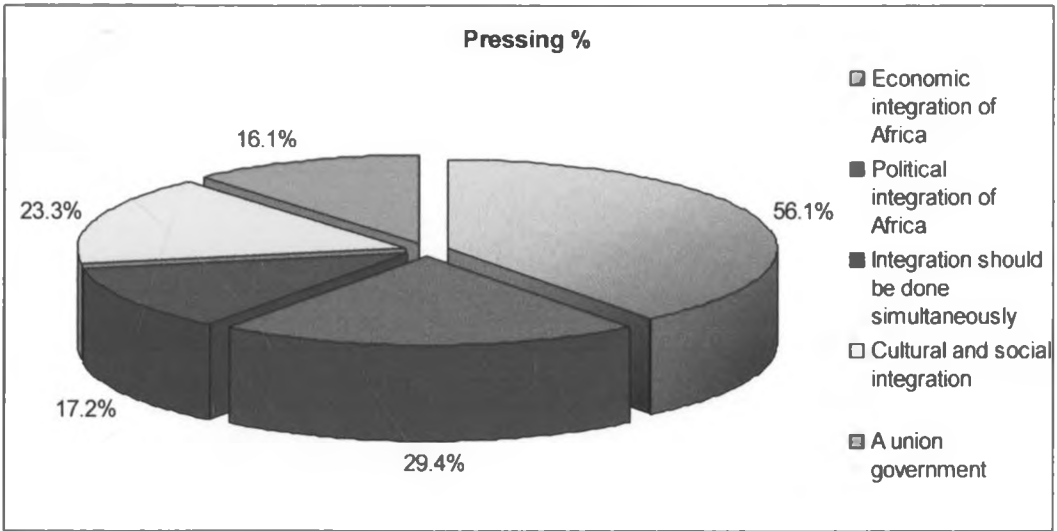


From the figure above the most pressing issues were lack of political will by member states to unite and the fear of loss of sovereignty by member states which were both ranked at 50%. About 48% of the respondents said that lack of communication among member states was also a pressing challenge. Regional conflicts were ranked 36.1%. Cultural diversity, religious differences and too many languages were seen as the least pressing challenges. The frequency tables, pie charts and bar graphs below indicate how

individual challenges in the integration of Africa were ranked using the levels pressing, less pressing and least pressing.

4.21: Challenges Hindering Faster African Integration

Challenges hindering faster African integration	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Economic integration of Africa	116	1.00	3.00	1.1552	.42943
Political integration of Africa	111	1.00	3.00	1.6667	.71774
Integration should be done simultaneously	85	1.00	3.00	1.9294	.81340
Cultural and social integration	90	1.00	22.00	1.9333	2.26750
A union government with executive powers in foreign affairs, military command (single army) and a common passport	101	1.00	5.00	2.2475	.91001
Valid N (list wise)	56				



The findings above indicate that economic integration and political integration of Africa were pressing issues and are the issues that should be implemented first. The respondents indicated that a union government with executive powers in foreign affairs, military command (single army) and a common passport was ranked as the least pressing issue.

The chart above shows some of the challenges hindering faster African integration. The respondents were asked to give their opinion on which of them should be implemented first. From the results above majority (56.1%) of the respondents were of the opinion that economic integration of Africa was the most pressing. Political integration of Africa was ranked the second pressing issue. Cultural and social integration was also ranked as pressing. Minority respondents (16.1%) said that a union government with executive powers in foreign affairs, military command (single army) and a common passport was the least pressing issues. The above pie chart, indicate how the challenges were ranked individually.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0: Conclusion and Recommendations

In this concluding chapter, we would briefly give a background by way of introduction. Then we would set out and answer a number of questions to aid us in evaluating the evidence presented by this research. Based on the answers to these questions, we would conclude. In our conclusion we would attempt to validate the Hypothesis and make our recommendations.

Tracking the progress of the African Union (AU) against its goals, vision and mission, this research after doing a cross sectional survey can now give an account of the implications of the role of mass communication in African integration. As we confirm that the African Union has successfully established almost all its key organs to achieve its global objectives, through this research one would dare state that it has not adequately articulated communication and information function to favorably support African integration process.

5.1: Structure

According to the research, communication is not given its rightful place at the AUC. Almost a half (45%) of the respondents declared it was not rightfully placed in the hierarchy while (21%) said it had its rightful place. The function of the Division of Communication and Information (DCI) at present is led by a head of division in the office of the Chairperson and reporting to the Chief of Staff¹⁰⁸. This lowers its ranking in the organizational chart as it is not a directorate. The division was a Unit from 2000 to 2005 with one head of division; no communication officer; one clerk and one secretary inherited from the former OAU and has since remained so until January 2006 when a new head of division was appointed. But communication as Harry West and Ellen Fair (1993) acknowledged can act as the single most important engine capable of generating change necessary for African integration and AUC must pay due attention to it.

¹⁰⁸ Chief of Staff - Director of Cabinet in the Office of the Chairperson of the Commission

5.2: Channels and Tools

In addition, our study on accessibility to communication tools revealed that internet (46.7%) is the most accessible communication tool used by the DCI followed by radio (33.3%), television (32.8%) and press (newspaper) 30.9%; press release (23.9%), mobile phone (18.9%) and magazine (18.3%), and hence they cannot be ignored.

Furthermore, the AU Newsletter topped the list with (28.2%) readership of publications on Africa read regularly by respondents, followed by Focus on Africa (24.5%) and Africa Report (17.8%). Africa Review and New Africa have (16.9%) and (15.3%) readers respectively. Only (8.3%) of respondents do not read any publications on Africa. 38.3% read 1-2 AU publications in a month, 16.1% read 3-4 publications and 10.6% read 5-8 AU publications.

On website accessed regularly while surfing information on the AU, respondents indicated that Google News (40.5%) and the AU website (39.2%) were the most accessed for information on AU. From the findings majority (47.9%) indicated that the website helped them track African events. Besides 2.3 % who said they do not visit the AU website, 26.05 % indicated that the website provided an African rather than a Western perspective, 24.6 % said it gave excellent African integration coverage and another 22.5 % indicated that they visited the website because it provides invaluable Pan-African perspective. More than a half of the respondents 59.4% said that they accessed the information they sought when they visited the AU website. The AU website also came third with 28.9 % of respondents saying they got information about the unification of Africa from the website that is, coming behind the print media (press) with 37.5% and TV 36.8% respectively. These findings underscore the order of importance of communication tools utilized by the DCI and confirm that communication is indispensable and particularly the use of internet as a communication tool. Yet according to Adebayo Adedeji's (2007) audit report, cited in page 43 of our study, the African Union Commission's website has no server of its own and the AU website is located in a folder in the UNDP server in North America.

The audit report adds that despite the website being the source of news about AU policy positions, staff, upcoming activities, tenders and vacancies at the Commission, it is clearly under resourced and undervalued. Between two to three persons on short term

contracts, have manned the multi-lingual website since 2002. For this reason there are no ways of monitoring the number of users or pages that are visited. With so much importance attached to the website one thinks it should be made readily available at the African Union Commission.

The spokesperson, although a core duty performed by the Division, was not mentioned in the questionnaire. But research rating from interpersonal communication placed face-to-face communication which is a form of direct interaction with people (e.g. press briefings) at (47.8%), while the use of the internet stands at (46.7%) amongst the same respondents interviewed showing how very important the AU spokesperson could be even above the internet if properly utilized. The impact of these communication tools in creating awareness for African integration is thus immeasurable. With the following research finding: the AU website with (46.7%) internet access is the most accessible communication tool used by the DCI, and as such the most potent tool, followed by radio (33.3%); television (32.8%) and press (newspaper) (30.9%); press release (23.9%); mobile phone (18.9%) and magazine (18.3%). With so much importance also attached to radio and television, for information and communication, they should be made readily available at the African Union Commission as tools to win public opinion in favour of the organization but unfortunately this appears not to be the case. AU has neither a radio nor a television channel what more a station.

On why Africa can't have its own continental radio-television channels, the research received a cacophony of mixed answers depicting the confusion surrounding the establishment of the R/TV project.

A respondent summed it up in a written phrase "lack of serious policy accepted by all for management of such channel". Another said it could be for a "lack of follow up." A third noted "African private promoters have to deal with this issue." A fourth wrote "Africa Radio-TV Station has not yet been given due priority and recognition. In Uganda almost everybody watches Nigerian movies". There exists "insufficient political will," the fifth respondent wrote. "African Union has no reason. It should quickly establish one" another respondent admonished in writing: These were views written by those who felt dissatisfied with answers provided in the questionnaire.

For this research, it has been proved that it is difficult to establish an African Union Radio/TV Station and this emerges as one of the major hindrances to African integration.

It is recommended that for serious talks on African integration to begin and in order to make progress this proven hindrance of lack of R/TV station must first be addressed. But skepticism still surrounds it hence another respondent said: “On the issue of press freedom and democracy, member states won’t let go”. This statement carries a lot of weight on how press freedom is viewed by leaders on the continent and this appears to confirm previous fears why successive attempts by the former OAU and now the African Union to set up a Radio/TV station have been futile. The overwhelming evidence of low level of awareness and high invisibility of the work and achievements of the African Union underline the importance of the establishment of an African Union Radio/TV Channel similar to Aljazeera serving the interests of the Arab world or the Cable News Network, (CNN) for Western interests.

Commenting on this subject, Onwumechili Chuka in “Nigeria: Equivocating while Opening the Broadcast Liberalization Gates” quoted David Webster in Building Free and Independent media as follows: “One way to create viable private-sector broadcasting in small and underdeveloped markets involves greater regional cooperation. Together, small countries can use economies of scale. By pursuing joint activities, they can acquire more “muscle” in the market place. Satellite technology offers the possibility of regional distribution in various languages. Another political imperative is to ensure that ethnic and linguistic minorities are fully served”¹⁰⁹.

He added “building an open society is never easy. If the world’s new democracies are to preserve and extend their new found freedoms, institutions that reflect and sustain free communication must be developed in both the public and private sectors. Journalists, politicians, and officials must learn the difficult lessons of how to interact in a free, open society. Even within long established democracies this interaction is a struggle. In the emerging democracies, it is both more difficult and more urgent”¹¹⁰.

¹⁰⁹ Webster, David, 2008, *Management and the Media*, “in Onwumechili, Chuka. Nigeria: Equivocating While Opening the Broadcast Liberalization Gates. Paper presented to the annual meeting of the International Communication Association, Sheraton New York, New York City, USA. <http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p12571_index.html>

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

5.3: Impact of Communication in Creating Awareness

Do the research findings throw light on the impact of communication in the African integration program? Our study clearly demonstrates that although there is a continent-wide desire to consume information from the African Union Commission, much more needs to be done to liberalize information and communication at the Commission. Few people know about the communication strategy underway to ensure follow-up and enforcement of decisions taken in respect of African integration. Two thirds (70.6%) of the respondents had no response, that is because they did not know, were not sure or never had any idea about it. This thus highlights the glaring communication gap at the AUC.

On whether the African Union Commission made any efforts at networking the whole continent using available communication resources, 29% said yes while 20.6% reported no and 34.4% does not know. The most important point here is that many respondents agreed on the urgent need to network the whole continent for easier communication purposes. The fact is that by decision Doc.EX.CL/434 (XIII)¹¹¹ of the Second Session of the Conference of African Ministers in Charge of Communication and Information Technologies (ICT), evidence exists that the AU Commission has made some efforts in this regard. The above Ministerial Conference endorsed the Reference Framework for the Harmonization of Telecommunication/ ICT Policies and Regulations in Africa. They also endorsed the eleven flagship projects of the African Regional Action Plan on Knowledge Economy (ARPKE) with a view to developing a strong integrated and viable Communication sector in the Continent. But little was known about this.

According to Agenda-setting Theory, because people tend to respond to issues in direct proportion to the emphasis placed on them by the mass media and in the manner of presentation in the media, these important decisions were not widely reported if at all. The mass media communicate the relative importance of various issues and events to the publics. Any issue the mass media ignore hardly receives mention or audience attention.

¹¹¹ The Executive Council Decision on the Second Session of the Conference of African Ministers in Charge of Communication and Information Technologies (ICT)

This finding has thus shown that the media agenda influences policy agenda on the one hand and by implication public agenda and corporate agenda on the other hand. This question was clearly asked in No.3 of the questionnaire: How has the mass media influenced Africa's integration process? Most respondents (52.2%) think that mass media have influenced Africa's integration process inadequately while 25% said the influence has been adequate. 17.8% said they did not know. Furthermore, asked: How do you rate African media in popularizing African Union activities? Here again, our findings illustrated that the majority (44.3%) rated African media as inactive in popularizing AU activities. Only 18.8% said they were active and 16.5% said they were uninformed. This explains that the level of awareness of the ongoing African intergration is quite low.

This diagnosis thus justifies Gladys Lang and Bernard Cohen's (1963) claim which we have earlier quoted in Agenda –Setting Theory, and which confirms our present finding that people respond to issues in different proportion to emphasis placed on them by the mass media, thus proving beyond any reasonable doubt that even if African leaders, presidents, prime ministers, parliamentarians and senior government officials make the best policies for the people on the continent and deliver the best speeches at assemblies of the African Union and other important public gatherings, it is the level of emphasis placed on them by mass communication and the manner in which the mass media cover or refuse to cover such issues that will make a difference and determine whether or not they are important to the population.

Maluki, P.M. in Regionalism in the Indian Ocean notes there are inevitable benchmarks that must exist to foster regional integration. These, he stated include conducive climate for business, security, educational affinities, common wealth of people, geographical proximity, corporation, trade and investment and natural resources sharing. Writing on community formation in the Indian Ocean Region, Maluki notes that "a security community is one that shares common core values and aspires to maintain a certain way of cultural economic and political life. According to the communication theorists, community formation includes the growth of 'we' feeling and mutual responsiveness and esteem between people. It leads to mutual trust confidence and predictability of behavior

as well as heightening mutual awareness at all societal levels”.¹¹² He further quoted Donald Puchala as saying “there is a cause and effect relationship between mass communication, mutual elite responsiveness and community formation. Intense transactions flows create regular patterns of interaction between groups that lead to the emergence of a security community”¹¹³.

Journalists carry out the important function of furnishing material for discussion in almost all the interactions. It is in this respect that the mass media are best suited to create the necessary conducive climate for business interaction among AU member states in order to cooperate with creating political goodwill necessary for African integration. Therefore, the African Union Commission ought to do more to develop a culture of mass communication and cultivate the interest and full participation of the mass media in the African integration process if it is to succeed.

In comparing the result of our research with the study commissioned by the Economic Affairs Department of the AUC, in respect of the challenges delaying African integration process, both findings corroborated each other. The Economic Affairs Department study found out that besides delays arising from national parliaments (56%), lack of communication and coordination at the level of member states (22%) came second¹¹⁴. From our own research, a similar finding confirms that the most pressing issue delaying African integration was first of all lack of political will by member states to unite (50%) and the fear of loss of their sovereignties (50%). About 48% of our respondents said that lack of communication among member states was the second key pressing challenge to African integration.

Few respondents were of the view that African unity is a victim of foreign interest. But from our research finding, neither this assertion of external intervention, the issues of raging conflicts in parts of the continent, racism and tribalism, nor differing religious beliefs stand as an obstacle. These are seen as considerable factors but are not significant enough to stop the surging tide in favor of deeper African unity. The presumed obstacle

¹¹² Maluki Patrick M., June, 1996, *Regionalism in the Indian Ocean: Order, Cooperation and Community*, M. A. Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India, p.75.

¹¹³ Ibid p.75

¹¹⁴ See table 3, Reasons contributing to the delays in integration, p.100 of this study.

towards deeper African unity is rather how the mass media, inform, communicate and report the views held by Africa's leaders and also how the leaders themselves interpret the messages and manage democracy in the transition toward the planned United States of Africa. From our study, the majority of respondents (44.3%) rate the mass media as inactive in popularizing AU activities while another (16.5%) said they were uninformed.

If this thought is the bottom line, the onus lies with the African Union Commission to create the viable communication framework (a continent-wide communication policy) that will allow conducive communication environment and enable journalists to do their jobs freely, responsibly and professionally. The ability of the AUC to cultivate, motivate and mobilize the persuasive power of the mass media to its own advantage will certainly determine the speed of fast-tracking and consolidating the African integration agenda, provided that the challenges namely: 'lack of political will' and the 'fear of loss of sovereignty' by member states, found here as the number one obstacle hindering faster African integration is addressed. Lacks of political will by member states to unite and fear of loss of sovereignty, both ranked 50% were the most pressing obstacles. Closely following is the 48% which said that lack of communication among member states was pressing and a challenge to regional integration. Regional conflicts were ranked 36.1 %. Cultural diversity, religious differences and too many languages were seen as the least pressing challenges, thus disregarding the differences arising from ethnic, racial and linguistic pluralism.

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By shunning the diversity of faith in Africa as a major obstacle to deeper unity, respondents in this research have accorded recognition and 'a-go-ahead' to the United States of Africa and to the fact that, diversity of languages, culture, ethnicity and race will rather enrich than fragment socio-economic transformation and development of the continent. Those who thus contend that the United States of Africa is not for now and should wait are dead wrong. Africa is ready to go and is willing to unite. The integration fever is catching up everywhere. Our study has confirmed this along with what the current Chairperson of the Assembly of the African Union president Jakaya Kikwete once said while addressing The Committee of Twelve Heads of State and Government on the Union Government that:

“The question is not whether Africa should unite, it is how soon and how to fast-track it. We are all agreed on the ultimate goal of the establishment of the African Union Government, the only critical difference is between those who want the immediate establishment of the Union Government, and those who prefer a gradual approach. The Committee of Twelve is therefore tasked with the challenge of advising on how the process should advance further.”¹¹⁵

With the ball in the court of African political leaders, this research confirms that the policy agenda of Africa’s integration is set by senior government officials. The role of mass communication in the AU’s integration process, therefore, is to serve as a benchmark for measuring progress of the core values (decisions) underpinning the Constitutive Act and in mobilizing the peoples of Africa for deeper unity.

5.4: Recommendations

It is recommended that there is need to build a strong communication culture at the African Union Commission. In this regard, the Division of Information and Communication (DCI) ought to be restructured with a view to raising its status to a directorate. This would elevate communication to a senior management function. This will help strengthen human and material capacity to ensure adequate African Union’s programmes implementation. The Head of DCI should be elevated to a Director. AUC should hasten to build communication links to national communication networks to bring African Union closer to its citizenry because AU’s information activities are vital to all players and stakeholders in the process of regional integration. Building the conducive climate for business interaction among member states must exist side by side with creating the political good will necessary for African integration.

Furthermore, the AUC ought to undertake an immediate needs assessment survey to determine quick wins to counter the multiple persistent negative images of Africa and the African Union perpetrated by the international mass media. It is suggested that the AUC establish African Union Annual Prize Awards for the best pan-African journalists and

¹¹⁵ Jakaya, Kikwete (May 22 2008) AU Press Release Arusha, Tanzania

writers of the year in line with the gratification principle of culture of fair reward for hard work.

The Director of Communication and Information who also is the Spokesperson of the Union ought to be invited to most management and coordination meetings chaired by the Chairperson of the Commission or his Deputy. This is to enable him or her to learn from first hand information and benefit from policy discussions, in order to appropriately respond to queries concerning the organization and address them from the point of privileged information.

For deeper African unity to materialize, public awareness of and public engagement in debate and discussion of issues pertaining to African unity may be necessary at all levels in Africa. The AUC must therefore build closer rapport with journalists, civil society organizations and all other groups including the mass media institutions and engage on a continent-wide campaign for purposes of mobilization of total support for deeper African unity.

Our literature review strongly supported by this research finding give proof of poor communication between AUC, the RECs and the AU member states. This constitutes a major obstacle to African integration. The reason among others is the lack of policy guidelines on communication and information management at the African Union Commission. Thus, there is need to hasten the adoption of a common communication strategic design to involve all stakeholders. Furthermore the AU's decision making organs such as the Permanent Representatives' Committee (PRC), the Executive Council (EC) and the Assembly of Heads of State and Government (AHSG) of the Union ought to respond to AU's diverse needs by providing DCI with adequate resources commensurate with expectations. This will help to improve the quality of AUC's products and positively rebrand its image and portray the continent positively. The AU commission receives criticism far more than the authority, personnel and budget given to it.

That the African Union Commission's website has no server of its own because it is hosted by the UNDP and located in a folder in the UNDP server in North America is tantamount to the African Union communication engine being completely dependent on the UNDP whereas our research discovered that the AU website is the greatest

information and communication asset the Organization has. The website content must be owned and controlled by the African Union, which must also ensure that such content is regularly updated while the site is made more user-friendly.

Needless to overemphasize the urgent need to hasten the establishment of Pan-African Radio/TV channels because the organization needs them to find its own voice. However, we recommend that further diagnosis of the underlying factors militating against the establishment of an African Union Radio/TV station be urgently undertaken. Failure to do this will make more skeptics grow in number in the widening belief reconfirmed by our research finding that member states lack the 'political will' to set up an African Union Radio/TV channel, and hence the talk of fast-tracking African integration is for some of them a lip service.

Production of the AUC Newsletter and other publications must be strengthened with an editorial board as none exists at present to enhance continuity of production in soft and hard copies and for the mass distribution not only of copies in the English version as it is the case at present but also in Kiswahili, French and Arabic being other languages this research has strongly ascertained their relevance along with the English language as the most widely preferred in Africa.

The AUC has to build stakeholders confidence through factual branding of the Commission and its allied institutions using professional advertisers and marketers and through interpersonal communication of which face-to-face, folk music (songs) and theatre have been found through our research to be the most appropriate and effective channels to fast-track African integration.

The African Union must hire communication professionals and experts of the highest caliber as part of the core personnel of the DCI in order to provide its global audiences with timely, accurate and complete information about AU's policies, programmes, and services. Audiences need to be given facts in order to separate them from fiction and to stop building on rumours bandied around most international organizations and public institutions.



Denying journalists access to accreditation is tantamount to a sophisticated form of censorship. The AUC must therefore, identify legitimate local and international journalists and accord them accreditation so that they properly cover all AU's events.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Box 9: From OAU to AU-What is really new about the AU and its Commission?

From Unity.....	 To Union
- Single source of authority: Assembly of Heads of State and government - Therefore: purely a collaboration of governments of sovereign states - Respect for national sovereignty paramount - No interference in internal affairs - No questioning in public of actions of other governments - No pooling of sovereignty envisaged - Prime objective: collective struggle for national liberation from colonialism & defense of national sovereignty - OAU separate from AEC established by Abuja Treaty-merged in 1994 as 'OAU/AEC'	- Multiple sources of Authority: Assembly of Heads of State and government + judicial (Court) and democratic institutions (Parliament) - Respect for national authority + right to intervene in grave circumstances - Provision to suspend governments coming to power unconstitutionally - Provision for peer review mechanism in NEPAD - Provision of public monitoring of delivery in CSSDCA - Prime objective: enable Africa to meet challenges of 21st Century & strengthening position of Africa vis-à-vis global economy & international community - AEC and its regional integration programme incorporated in AU
From secretariat	 To Commission
- Authority: Executive (SG gradually acquired power of initiative in later years) - Elected Secretary General and Assistant SGs - Carry out decisions of Heads of State - Purely intergovernmental approach	- Authority: executive + own power of initiative - Elected Commissioners with fully recognized political mandate - Collegial decision making - Specific political tasks of its own - Community approach possible as well as inter-governmental - Custodian of the treaties

Appendix 2

2nd AU Summit, July 2003, Maputo, Vision of the African Union and Mission of the African Union Commission

BOX 8

Since 1999 a series of summits and ministerial meetings were key moments in the establishment of the AU, notably:

Sirte (9.9.99) OAU Special Summit

- Libyan proposal for a federal United States of Africa with a US-Congress Sirte Pan African Parliament as the apex organization
- Declaration on the establishment of the AU

Abuja (May 2000) CSSDCA's 1st African Ministerial meeting

- Called on African leaders to implement the Sirte Declaration and establish the AU, the PAP and accelerate the implementation of the Abuja Treaty establishing the EAC (African Economic Community)

Tripoli (June 2000) Ministerial Conference on the Establishment of the AU

- Clarification of the relationship between OAU, AU, AEC and PAP
- Finalization of draft documents for the Lomé Summit

Lomé (11 July 2000) 36th OAU Summit

- Constitutive Act of the African Union is approved
- CSSDCA Solemn Declaration approved
- Entry into force of the Constitutive Act (26th May 2001) – one month after it was ratified by the 36th Member states

37th Lusaka (July 2001) OAU Summit

- Asked Secretariat to prepare the establishment of the AU and make proposals for this to the Durban Summit
- Year from Lusaka to Durban designated as transition year
- Adopted NEPAD

Durban (July 2002) 38th and last OAU Summit and 1st Summit of the AU

- OAU disbanded and AU established in its place
- First year designated as an interim year to allow the now Interim Commissioners to finalize proposals for the structure and financing of new commission and the election of new Commissioners
- Issued NEPAD Declaration on Democratic, Political, Economic and Corporate Good Governance.

Maputo (July 2003) 2nd AU Summit is expected, among other things, to:

- Elect 10 AU Commissioners for the first 4 years term of office.
- Approve a budget and financing proposals.
- Approve structure of AUC and approve plans for setting up other institutions.
- Adopt a Declaration on integration of NEPAD into African Union.

Appendix 3

Sub-regional wide-cooperation integration entities:

(Stages of Integration of the RECs)

Abuja Treaty Stages	First Stage	Second stage		Third stage		Fourth Stage	Fifth stage	Sixth stage	
	Strengthening Existing REC and creation of new RECs where they do not exist	Coordination and harmonization of activities	Gradual elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers	Free Trade Area	Customs Union	Continental Customs Union	Harmonization of monetary, financial and fiscal policies	Monetary Union	Economic Union
RECs projections	IGAD	IGAD							
	SADC		SADC	SADC	in 2010		in 2015		in 2018
	CEN-SAD			CEN-SAD					
	ECOWAS			ECOWAS	in 2008			in 2009	
	COMESA			COMESA	in 2008		in 2014	in 2018	
	ECCAS			ECCAS	In 2008				
	EAC				EAC		in 2009		

Source: AUC: Questionnaire on Rationalization of RECs

Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) 1989 based in Rabat, Morocco with stage of integration as 'cooperation and coordination' (It is missing in the table because it has not moved from stage one since it was set up).

Appendix 4

Other challenges advanced by RECs are summarized in table three:

<i>Table 3: Reason contributing to the delays in intergration</i>		
	Activity	Respondents (%)
1	Delays at national parliament	56
2	Inadequate human capacity	22
3	States' multiple membership of RECs	22
4	Lack of communication and coordination at the level of member states	22
5	Protocols do not meet national objectives	11

Source: AU Questionnaire on rationalization of (RECs)

Appendix 5

Source: Adapted from AUC questionnaire on how to fast-track the process of integration in Africa

Table 1: How to fast-track the process of integration in Africa

Activity	Respondents (%)
1) Strengthening the authority of the AU Commission over RECs and member states	56
2) Reducing the number of RECs	33
3) Increasing co-operation between AU and RECs	22
4) Developing a mechanism for implementation of decision taken	22

Appendix 6

**Source: Adapted from AUC Questionnaire on rationalization of RECs. April 2007
(Page 20-21)**

<i>Table 2: The AUC's role in the implementation of key protocols</i>	
Activity	Respondents (%)
1) AUC could play a 'catalytical' role in coordinating activities of RECs	67
2) AUC could play an active role in sensitizing member states to implement key decisions and programs in support of intergration	56
3) AUC should impose sanctions on member states that don't meet obligations	44

Appendix 7

QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION IN AFRICAN INTEGRATION

1. Language is said to be the glue that binds society. Do you think the African Union should adopt a single language to this effect?

1	Yes
2	No

2.

	Preferred	Less Preferred	Least Preferred	Never
1 Arabic				
2 English				
3 French				
4 Portuguese				
5 Kiswahili				
6 Spanish				
7 Other				

3. How has the mass media influenced Africa's integration process?

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1 Adequate	
2 Inadequate	
3 Don't Know.	

4. What is the status of communication in the African Union Commission?

1 Directorate	
2 Division	
3 Unit	
4 Other	
5 Don't know	

5. Do you think communication is given its rightful place at the African Union Commission?

1 Yes	
2 No	
3 Don't know	
4 Not sure	
5 Never	

6. Why can't Africa have its own Radio/TV channels? Please tick answers as per order of importance:

1	Continental Radio /TV channels will be monopolized by more powerful member states
2.	Control of communication technologies and hegemony by powerful transnational corporations
3	Challenges posed by foreign media agendas
4	Conflicting languages among people in the five regions of Africa
5	Challenge of deep religious differences

7. How do you rate African Media in popularizing African Union's activities?

1. Active	
2. In active	
3. Uninterested	
4. Informed	
5.Uninformed	

8. Which of the following publications do you read regularly?

1.African Union Newsletter	
2.Africa Report	
3. Africa review	
4. Africa Investor	
5. New African	
6. Focus on Africa	
7. African Business	

9. How many African Union publications do you read in a month?

1. 1-2	
2. 3-4	
3. 5-8	
4. None	

10. Rank your preference of the interpersonal Communication Channels below:

Interpersonal	Preferred	Less Preferred	Least preferred	Never
1 Folksong(music)				
2 Theatre(drama)				
3 Face to face				
4 Talking drum				
5 Peer				
6 Religious leaders				
7 School				

11. Rank your exposure (accessibility) to the following communication tools used by the AU Communication Unit for popularization of the African Union:

Mass Media	Accessible	Less Accessible	Least Accessible	Occasionally Accessible	Never
1 Radio					
2 TV					
3.Press(Newspaper)					
4 Press (Magazine)					
5.Website (Internet)					
6 Mobile phone					
7 Press Release					

12. Which Website do you access regularly while surfing information on African Union?

1 AU Website www.africa-union.org				
2 News Google www.news.google.com				
3 BBC News www.news.bbc.co.uk				
4 CNN www.cnn.com				
5 All Africa www.allafrica.com				
6 Other				

13. Why do you visit African Union Website? (Tick as many as you want)

1	Provides invaluable pan-African perspective
2	Provides an African rather than Western perspective
3	More authoritative than other websites
4	Gives a positive image of the continent
5	Gives excellent African integration coverage
6	Helps me keep track of African events

14. If you visit the AU website do you access the information you are seeking?

1	Yes:
2	No

15. How do you rate the AU Website?

1. Excellent	
2. Good	
3. Average	
4. Poor	
5. Could do better	
6. Other	

16. How did you get to know about the unification of Africa?

1 AU Website	
2 Radio	
3 TV	
4 Print (Press)	
5 Friend	
6 Pastor/Imam	

17. Does the Commission have an efficient communication strategy on the integration process of Africa?

	Most urgently needed	Urgently needed	Least pressing
1 Yes			
2 No			
3 Don't know			
4 Not sure			
5 Never			

18. Has the AU Commission made any efforts at networking the whole continent using available communication resources?

1.	Yes
2.	No
3.	Don't Know
4.	Never

19. Some challenges in the integration of Africa are given below. Rank them using the levels given

The challenge	Pressing	Less pressing	Least pressing
1 Lack of Communication among member states			
2 Lack of political will by member states to unite			
3 Fear of loss of sovereignty by member states			
4 Cultural diversity in Africa			
5 Religious differences			
6 Too many languages in Africa			
7 Tribal/Race factor			
8 Regional conflicts			

20. Below are some of the challenges hindering faster African integration? In your opinion, what should be implemented first?

	Pressing	Less Pressing	Least Pressing
1 Economic integration of Africa			
2 Political integration of Africa			
3 Integration should be done simultaneously			
4 Cultural and social integration			
5 A union government with executive powers in foreign affairs, military command (single army) and a common passport			

Appendix 8

COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION UNIT

The Executive Council approved structure and staff complement

Mandate:

To develop, plan and conduct activities designed to provide information about the AU, and to promote increased awareness about its aims and activities through various information tools and mechanisms.

Core Functions

- i. To serve as the focal point for disseminating information and act as the spokesperson for the Commission;
- ii. To draft news releases, correspondence or other information publications, and assist with the distribution of information materials;
- iii. To manage, formulate and coordinate the development and implementation of outreach as well as advocacy programmes for the Commission;
- iv. To establish and maintain lines of communication with constituencies, NGOs, policy institutions, academia, foundations and associations, as well as identify and coordinate action on opportunities to foster support for the objectives and activities of the organization;
- v. To formulate and advise on promotional strategies for press conferences, meetings and other activities planned for the outreach and advocacy programmes;

- vi. To organize the research and drafting of materials related to issue-oriented campaigns and events;
- vii. To ensure the development and maintenance of the website as well as relevant automated databases;;
- viii. To provide editorial advice, statements, speeches and replies to frequently asked and anticipated questions for use by senior management;
- ix. To serve as focal point for relations with, and support for, departments and programmes on communication and public information strategies and information dissemination;
- x. To coordinate the implementation of the decisions of the meetings of the African Ministers of Information;
- xi. To explore the possibility of establishing and managing a television and radio station for the African Union (an African Union radio, TV and newspaper).

The Executive Council approved structure and staff complement:

- | | |
|--|--------|
| - 1 x Head of Unit | - P5 |
| - 1 x Deputy Head of Unit | - P4 |
| - 1 x Senior Policy Officer
(Information and Communication) | - P3 |
| - 1 x Information Officer | - P2 |
| - 1 x Communication Officer | - P2 |
| - 1 x Administrative Assistant | - GSA5 |
| - 2 x Secretary | - GSA4 |
| - 1 x Radio Technician | - GSA3 |
| - 1 x Audio Visual Technician | - GSA3 |
| - 1 x Cameraman | - GSA3 |
| - 1 x Photographer | - GSA2 |

Total: 12 Staff

ORGANIGRAMME OF THE COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION UNIT

