

Reviewing Southern Africa's Status as a Developmental Region through Governance and Development

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Abstract—This case study discusses how the democratic governance principles and norms impact development in the Southern African Development Community and how institutional and structural reforms require greater participation by society to address the governance challenges encountered in this subregion of Africa. Consequently, the aim of this paper is to examine and assess the relationship between SADC's governance, democratic principles and norms, and development plans and processes. A comparative analysis was conducted using SADC's key democratic achievement connected to policies, processes, and remaining challenges. Subsequently, the key causes of SADC's slow development on the African continent were explored, focusing on the failure to institutionalize liberal democratic governance consistently during postcolonial transition periods, speculating SADC's slow development. The findings suggest that SADC is impacted by democratic principles, norms, and processes, such as local governance, civil society, and decentralization of power. Bearing in mind, Southern Africa's economic frailty, elevated levels of civil unrest and poor service delivery, and SADC authorities require a strong sub-regional governance strategy supported by robust national programs to determine and overcome the factors hindering the institutionalization of democratic principles in SADC and promote strengthened institutional capacity. The unambiguous progression toward the consolidation of democracy, within the SADC, has impacted the governance and development successes of the region, resulting in democratic values and practices remaining shallowly rooted, and slow progress toward open and transparent governance.

Keywords—Civil participation, Democracy, Governance, Patrimonial politics, Regimens, Southern African development community.

I. INTRODUCTION

Since the independence of most African countries in the 1960s, Africa has been plagued by tyrannical leadership and weak governance which resulted in underdevelopment and instability that persists almost a decade later (Ibrahim and Cheri, 2013; Abdulyakeen, 2023; Mlambo et al., 2024). Consequently, the swift development of Africa remains compromised. The aim of this paper is to examine and assess the relationship between SADC's governance, democratic principles and norms, development plans, and processes. The paper seeks to validate the view of the importance of strengthened leadership and the governance of states as the source of progressive development.

Within the SADC context, there are different countries representing diverse contexts and histories and at different levels of democratic maturity, economic development, as well as territorial stability. Breytanbach (2002), Matlosa

(2004), and Fombad (2023) suggest that SADC member states such as South Africa, Botswana, and Mauritius are on the democratic path. Given this, Botswana and South Africa are believed to be democratic countries with reliable and fair elections. Given SADC's progress toward a developmental region, Monyane (2009) suggests that Lesotho, formerly a Constitutional monarchy, more specifically in 2003 and 2008, elections in Lesotho did not make any significant development in the consolidation of democracy.

As Allison (2015) points out in ISS Today (Institute for Security Studies), his analysis "Lesotho's electoral system can be considered democratic, but it must be questioned whether it is the best system for this fragile state," many people believe a free and fair electoral process automatically means a country is democratic, but there are multiple factors to consider. Some argue that Zimbabwe is not really a democracy in practice because elections

have been consistently won by the ruling party ZANU-PF, who have been accused of using unfair methods to stay in power; freedom of speech is restricted and opposition is not tolerated; the government controls the mass media, which is censored, and opposition party workers are harassed and disrupted in their meetings (Makaye and Dube, 2014), Institute of Security Studies, 2023. Zimbabwe, Lesotho, and Angola show that certain governments lack truly democratic administrations and have regressed economically with little human progress.

In validating the rationale of the study, Gumede (2018) confirms that South Africa's ultimate goal was to become a democratic development state, as evidenced in the political frameworks and policies developed. In light of this, Landsberg (2007) suggests that SADC lacked collective commitment and consensual agreements. In addition, Adebajo and Landsberg (2003:171) consider security bias and disagreements between regional members as barriers to regional collaboration. This is exemplified in SADC by volatile insecurity such as ethnic conflicts, lack of democratic processes in Zimbabwe and Angola, and a lack of peace in Mozambique. On their part, van de Walle (2003:3) and Baregu (2003:18-19) both highlight the historical legacy of a lack of commitment to implementing policies that are collectively agreed upon. A lack of civil participation in SADC's current democratization processes is related to aspects such as patrimonial politics, African elitism, and a rigid colonial state of affairs perpetuated by African elitists.

In the end, this enhances the status of the authoritarian state. Accordingly, Söderbaum (2004) questions whether decision-making has become a rite of state practice that deludes state actors. The argument still holds true today, given increased poverty and social discontent in the SADC region, alleged corruption by state elites, resource conflicts, and erupting instabilities. There is a growing discontent between the civil voice and decision-making processes, which lack elements such as debate, consultation, and the public voice of states. Similarly, Landsberg (2013) questions the existence of the social contract, which symbolizes a mutual understanding and agreement between a society and its government highlighting that in these systems and processes, social engagement has been stifled, preventing mediation and resolution of issues from their inception. Thus, one may wonder whether citizens have become mere façades in governance (Soderbaum, 2004). The SADC region has seen innumerable advances, even during the COVID-19 pandemic, to increase the advancement of political institutions and development states.

Despite the fact that certain countries, such as Mozambique, remain vulnerable to conflicts and wars affecting their development process, positive developments in debt relief, civil society efforts left a positive mark on progress, and periods of peace sustained by the region have contributed to this success. Retrospectively, states like the DRC were embroiled in conflict a few years ago, but the SADC collective efforts have made these insecurities disappear thus suggesting that this terrain has advanced and progressed.

The case study identifies the context, background, and depth of the situation within these sub-settings as SADC member states adopted a regional development framework. Inherently, under colonization, and the post-colonial period, African states were politically turbulent; they managed competition issues and confrontation as opposed to consultation and consensus. This serves as a valuable study for other African sub-regional groupings. A development management model that is inclusive of peace and security aspects is much needed in SADC to prevent underdevelopment, manage peace and development, and to ensure advancement of the integration process. However, SADC can also learn lessons from other sub-regional groupings; as a result, other sub-regional groupings can attain consultation and consensus models used in SADC, while still maintaining national interests. This calls for a strong case study. The research will be undertaken under security regionalism which entails security communities within SADC.

This study aims to examine governance with a view to contributing significantly to the existing literature on international relations. As such, SADC will be used as a case study to determine the factors hampering the institutionalization of democratic principles in Africa. The study also aims to explore and contribute significantly to the existing literature on international relations by discussing governance. Thus, the examination of this sub-regional institution will focus on its successes, challenges, and failures. This study seeks to answer the following key research questions: Has SADC succeeded in democratizing security institutions? In terms of promoting democracy and developing a developmental state within SADC, what results have been achieved so far?

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This qualitative study compared the trends in SADC's regional governance policy, noteworthy milestones, and SADC's subregional governance and development hindrances. The data collection methods in this study involved critically evaluating key governance strategies and noteworthy impediments impacting the advancement of SADC's governance obtaining data from other sources. For the comparative analysis, correlation analysis was conducted. The correlation analysis assessed the weaknesses of the interdependence between the variables used in the study.

An exploratory literature review examined the definitions, theories, perspectives, principles, methods, and research findings related to governance and the SADC regional economic communities development and impediments that have garnered attention. As a systematic review, this study adhered to the recommended reporting items for systematic reviews, with the data collected and presented in qualitative formats. Articles written by renowned scholars in the region were selected.

Review articles and article comments were used to diversify the study's sources and increase objectivity. Papers that alluded to a crucial component of the SADC's

governance and development issues were not included. Furthermore, only papers published in the English language were considered. The selected papers were then evaluated to ensure that they met the criteria and key focus of the study. The researcher carefully reviewed each manuscript per the study's research questions and hypothesis.

Both primary and secondary sources were used for secondary research. The primary sources of data in this study were (a) *The South African Development Community website*; (b) Strategic Plan of the Commission of the African 2004–2007; (c) the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, 2010; and (d) *The state of African cities 2010: Governance, inequality and urban land markets*.

This study utilized books, online sources, and documents containing descriptive articles and analysis as secondary data sources. Articles were sourced from specialized governance and security journals such as the *Cambridge University Press*, *The Third World Security Predicament*, *Institute for Security Studies Papers*, *Handbook on Local and Regional Governance*, *African Security Review*, *Journal of Democracy*, *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, and *Third World Quarterly*.

Moreover, Aeby (2018), Fombad (2023), Matlosa (2003), Matlosa et al. (2007), Omede et al. (2016), and Weiss (2000) are among the significant authors whose works address the governance of the SADC. These researchers are all published authors in double-blind, peer-reviewed journals, or respected academics. Analyzing the SADC's governance and modifying the current model in light of the results. The works of Adedeji (2007), Gavin Cawthra and Van Nieuwkerk (2004), Cheru (2018), Gumede (2018), Hwedi (2001), Landsberg (2007), Mbuende (2012), Naudé (2013), Nmehielle (2004), and Omede et al. are some of the significant literature that also addresses the SADC's development trajectory.

III. RESULTS

A. Theoretical Approach: New Regionalism

As a result of the transition from old regionalism to “new regionalism” between 1950 and 1970, a “new regionalized world order” (Soja 1985: 75-190) was established. In their article, Hettne and Soderbaum (2002: 36) note that the old regionalism was characterized by Cold War structures, whereas the new regionalism has been correlated with the global transformation. The old regionalized world order that existed between 1950 and 1970 has changed in terms of both content and context. The “new regionalized world order” is distinct from the previous regionalism in that it involves a range of state and non-state players in the process of changing the global order, whereas the previous order, which was based on state power, no longer holds sway.

According to Hettne and Soderbaum (2002: 36), the old paradigm of regionalism resulted from Cold War structures, whereas the new paradigm is a result of globalization. The shift from a bipolar Cold War structure to a multipolar structure has been dubbed the new wave of regionalism. As a

result of the decline of American hegemony, open regionalism has led to the establishment of a political economy based on the European Union (EU), the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA), and the Asian-Pacific (ASEAN), all of which have established a capitalist system based on liberalized markets.

As a result of the collapse of the Westphalian nation-state system, transnationalism has flourished on the political, social, and economic levels. This interaction between the government and the actors led to the internationalization of trade, technology, finance, production, and the New International Division of Labour on a large scale. As a result of this transformation, the concept of “Third Worldism” and the attitudes between economies and political systems changed.

According to Soderbaum and Hettne (2002: 37), a new wave of regionalism emerged in the 1990s due to an increase in relations between Africa and the West and is described as a multifaceted and multidimensional phenomenon that encompasses a wide range of issues, such as globalization, security, economics, political regimens, heterogeneity, and social aspects (AU Report, 2007).

Positively affecting the nation states are external opportunities such as trade, capital flows, technology, knowledge, and manpower made possible by a new regionalism. In their 2002 paper, Hettne and Soderbaum argue that the new wave of regionalism has resulted in a shift from a regimen centered to a collective security system, as evidenced by the establishment of various mechanisms and protocols at the continental, regional, and sub-regional levels (Siridopolous, 2007). The analysis throughout this study is predicated on the security framework's evolution. It is important to note that unlike the Cold War, the new regionalism is a spontaneous process originating from within the region in response to the challenges it faces. Inter-regional relations that emphasize the fact that one state's behavior affects the behavior of the others as a result of global order and security are an integral part of this new regionalism; this becomes a major agenda item.

B. Background on SADC

SADC is an intergovernmental organization headquartered in Gaborone, Botswana. The subregional community promotes socioeconomic cooperation and integration among its fifteen member states, fosters political security, and supplements the African Union as a method for achieving economic growth. As a result of gaining independence later than other African nations, SADC states have maintained a stable peace, are not subject to political unrest, and do not face serious human security challenges (Saunders et al., 2012; Taylor, 2016). The state and the people have advanced as a result of the management of competition issues, consultation, and consensus, as opposed to competition (Landsberg, 2007).

The SADC region, in contrast to other sub-regions on the African continent, continues to demonstrate its hegemonic power (Olorunnibo and Gumede, 2017), commits to promoting liberal democracy within the region, as it is

believed that democracy can guarantee a better life for all citizens (Omede et al., 2016). Given this, it is evident that in Africa, competing regimens, patriarchal politics, and insecurity have impacted the rate of development on the African continent.

The human security challenges (health, education, poverty, inequality, and food) demonstrate that despite their historical differences, the similarities between SADC member states are complementary and pervasive (Malebang, 2012; Aeby, 2018). For this reason, social discipline becomes a crucial element of development. In contrast, autocratic states are frequently unstable as a result of poor governance, corruption, and political instability (Maravall, 1994; Szeftel, 2000). This has been repeatedly demonstrated in SADC nations such as Zimbabwe, Lesotho, and the DRC (Kadima, 1999; Breytenbach, 2002). Consequently, South Africa, Mozambique, and Swaziland have been embroiled in conflict in recent years as a result of social discontent (South Africa), insurgency (Mozambique), and human rights abuses and protests (Swaziland) (Swaziland). Expanding on this line of reasoning, greater development can be achieved by addressing political challenges as opposed to economic ones, as scholars assert. According to Hambleton (2023), political leadership is essential to the maintenance of an advanced development state.

In light of this, Adedeji (2007) asserts that a holistic approach to a democratic development strategy is required; this can only be achieved through stable peace. Unlike Zimbabwe, Angola, and Lesotho, South Africa, Botswana, and Mauritius are considered democratic states (Naudé, 2013; Hwedi, 2001). In democratic SADC states, civil liberties are protected, mass participation is encouraged, and a constitution guarantees the rule of law. The theory asserts that regimens in states prioritize political institutions and political processes over entrepreneurial societal forces.

For SADC to advance its developmental state status, the chosen path should be unique to the region and the African experience; it should emphasize the particularities of the African region as opposed to universal aspects, which in many cases remain connected to the concept of western democracy. Because the African region cannot be compared to any other region, the status of SADC's development must be understood in relation to its own unique context and path. Adedeji (2007) notes that the centrality of human security and development for the region and the populace remains crucial for expanding these nations' market share in the global economy.

Ayoob (1995) argues that developing states are plagued by domestic security issues. According to Hull and Derblom (2009), the legacy of liberation struggles and political dynamics guide SADC policy and action, resulting in an incomplete regional security community. After the end of the Cold War, emerging security threats are primarily military, political, economic, social, and environmental, according to Buzan (1991). Mentan (2014) and Clover and Eriksen (2009) note that non-traditional security threats in Africa are interconnected; consequently, they advocate for a security-focused development state. Given the failure of liberal

democracy, Ake (cited in Matlosa, 2004) argues that the entire political ideology practiced in Africa must be rethought and refocused on institutionalizing social democracy for the people.

Matlosa (2005) notes that SADC lacks effective liberal democratic norms and stresses the importance of creating Afro-centric states which are able to institutionalize development and social democracy, to tackle emerging human security threats. The challenges associated with the unequal distribution of resources have not been effectively addressed by liberal democracy. This is evident in South Africa, where the gap between the poor masses and the wealthy elite is widening. In retrospect, the Structural Adjustment Programmes prevented progress and development alongside the legacies of colonization connected to weak democratic and political institutions that hindered the peace and development process in Africa. According to Matlosa et al. (2007), structural adjustment programs worked well in Western states but failed miserably in African states, undermining their legitimacy. This was aggravated by civil society-related challenges such as inequality, minority elitist regimens, and slow socio-economic development.

Matlosa (2007) notes that before the implementation of structural adjustment programs, the state was solely responsible for development. However, the latter authorities lacked a firm commitment to development efforts. African states believed that increased investment in the continent would result in economic growth and, consequently, greater development. This belief was altered by the institutionalization of structural adjustment programs.

According to Weiss (2000), there is a close relationship between governance, policymaking, and development. Historically, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have emphasized economic growth at the expense of social security and development. As part of its commitment to global governance and the welfare of global citizens (Weiss, 2000), the World Bank Development Reports have recently assessed the living conditions of individuals. According to Matlosa (2003), African deficiencies in governance contribute to conflicts, insecurity, and poor development in Africa. Bond (2003) concludes that both the World Bank and the IMF's postcolonial programs created a dependence on the West and a demand for inexpensive labor and resources. Upon their inception, many Africans opposed the structural adjustment programs. Social dissatisfaction, brewing conflicts, civil uprisings, and, ultimately, social dissatisfaction caused African governments to lose confidence over time. To maintain power and control, states implemented authoritarian measures.

The structural adjustment programs led to market fundamentalism at the expense of African states and people development (Matlosa et al., 2007). Due to the inefficacy of these programs, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) refrained from implementing them. African development and growth were hampered by structural adjustment programs, which worked against African states and reversed the development process. The stewardship of these programs ultimately benefited the developed world. The

lack of effective institutional and policy reforms exacerbated the disadvantages of African states. SADC member states such as Angola, Zimbabwe, and Lesotho have exhibited this phenomenon (English and Mule, 1996; Darrow, 2003; Cheru, 2018).

In Africa, power inequalities between rich industrial nations and developing nations persist (Dannreuther, 2007: 139). These inequalities are a legacy of northern imposition. This is evidenced by the dependence of African institutions like the New Partnerships for Africa's Development (NEPAD) on donors and other external influences; these power imbalances prevent Africans from controlling their own destinies (Owusu, 2003; Taylor, 2014). In light of the paper, global inequality between industrialized nations and developing nations is inherent to African political and economic structures and processes. This concept is reinforced by global governance policies and laws such as international law, non-interference, and state sovereignty (Moltchanova, 2001; Archibugi, 2004).

C. The Objectives of the SADC

A key objective of SADC is to promote a framework and structure for economic integration within the subregional grouping, thereby ensuring the development of the region and its inhabitants. SADC has fulfilled its mission and promoted sustainable equitable economic growth and socioeconomic development to position the region as a competitive and effective player in international affairs through the use of efficient productive systems, improved cooperation and integration, good governance, and enduring peace and security (Malan, 1998). Therefore, development and economic growth are SADC's top priorities.

According to Isaksen and Tjnneland, the following factors form the foundation of SADC's Common Agenda: (2001:1):

- Increasing economic growth, decreasing poverty, and promoting development by means of regional integration.
- Preserving peace, democracy, and stability.
- Establishing and promoting common political values and institutions that are democratic, legitimate, and effective.
- Strengthening ties between the people of the region; 5. Bringing together public and private resources on a regional and international level for the development of the region.
- As stated previously, the treaty reaffirms the SADC's commitment and move to deepen regional integration to promote economic development and improve working and living conditions for the subregional population.

D. Good Governance: For Whom, by Whom and by What Means

Historically, governance was initially used for business relationships. In other words, governance was not previously viewed in terms of government and legal authority. The term governance is defined by The Economist (Weiss, 2000) as an act, manner, office, or power of governing governments. The Commission on Global Governance defines governance in terms of individuals, institutions, public and private sectors, common affairs, managing, interest and managing conflicting interests, as well as in terms of what can be accommodated

and the kind of action that can be taken to prevent the occurrence of certain things.

Soderbaum (2004) notes that governance entails "by who, for who, and for the purpose of who?" Internationally, the political economy is based on structure, history, power, and transformation. The concept of governance entails ensuring justice and the well-being of the people. However, it is important to note that governance is more than governments; it is less than socio-political and politico-economic processes. The concept of governance entails systems of rule, control and continuity, sustainability, and legitimacy.

The fine line that separates governance for citizens from governance for elitists is one of the main obstacles to establishing regional governance. In a non-discriminatory way, governance should benefit the common men and women living in the state. The rule of elitists is ineffective and untrustworthy. Three categories of governance are distinguished by Soderbaum (2004): Regional shadow government, sovereignty-boasting governance, and neoliberal regional governance. Thus, state-centeredness and national interests are important to good administration.

In light of the above, governance concepts must be broadened beyond formal public governance to include multi-stakeholder engagement, formal, informal, and public-private partnerships (PPPs). Governance can be categorized into public governance which focuses on an identifiable population, private governance which focuses on a specific group, formal governance which is based on legalities, and informal governance which is based on mutual understandings (Soderbaum, 2004). In short, governance is constructed by specific stakeholders for specific purposes. Weiss (2000) confirms that a good number of academics hold the view that governance is related to structures and processes which are created by human actors to protect and transform existing structures. Hence, social, political, and economic actors carry out regional governance. In contrast, national, subregional, and international governance occurs through global governance (Soderbaum, 2004). Increased contact and the development of a global village – which undermines legitimacy and sovereignty – are the results of globalization, implying that the ideas of global governance and good governance are interchangeable. These are the main reasons why research on good governance has gained prominence recently.

At the state level, global governance is related to economic and social development, particularly in the developing world. The international level is related to liberal theories (Weiss, 2000). The World Bank defines governance in terms of the use of power and resources within a state through political regimens; the authority of economic and social resources; and capacity for policy implementation.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (1997: 2-3) defines governance as an exercise of political, social, economic, and administrative authority through which groups express their needs, civil liberties, and obligations. The Organisation for Economic Development and Co-operation (OECD) defines the concept of governance as the political authority, the exercise of control over resources for social

and economic development, the building infrastructures and relationships between rulers and citizens, and the instituting of governance in institutional processes of society (Weiss, 2000).

Young (Weiss, 2000) argues that social practice has been used to improve the social, political, and economic life of citizens without fragmenting institutions.

E. The Connection between Governance and Development

Although human development indicators suggest equal access to opportunities, sustainable development indicators demonstrate growing global inequalities. For example, internet use is higher in wealthier states. Nevertheless, globalization has accelerated political, economic, and social interaction (Weiss, 2000).

The Commission on Global Governance defines governance in terms of institutions, individuals, and regimens which manage common affairs or interests and accommodate actions geared toward compliance and suitability for individuals (Weiss, 2000). Hence, governance is the process of relationship building between the state and its citizens at the local, regional, and international levels. The ingredients for good governance entail the representation and efficiency of a non-market system. Furthermore, the concept of governance has been associated with bilateral and multi-lateral financing and it is for this reason that political democratization supports economic liberalization.

The World Bank identifies good governance in the World Bank Report (1997) based on political issues, public sector management, contracts, and costs. Boas (Weiss, 2000) notes that institutions such as the World Bank operationalized "bad governance" based on power, disregard for human rights, corruption, and lack of accountability by governments. Conversely, good governance ensures the exercise of civil liberties, equality, justice, representation, and civil participation in decision-making (Weiss, 2000). International institutions such as the United Nations (UN) initiated catalytic efforts which do not compromise local, regional, and international governance.

Soderbaum (2004) defines good governance in terms of the minimal involvement of government insofar as the empowerment of citizens, public resource mobility, and initiatives for poverty reduction. Welfare and the development of status become central to this paradigm. Government structures often excluded citizens from participation and cooperation with the private sector instead. This has been demonstrated in Southern Africa by the institution of the Saldanha Steel, the Mozal Aluminium Smelter, and the Maputo Iron and Steel project. The privatization process benefits multinational; hence, the rich get richer at the expense of the poor. Governance should ordinarily protect the interests and well-being of their citizens has become the worst oppressors of their own people. This has been demonstrated in Zimbabwe by the food crisis which impacts negatively on the masses (Soderbaum, 2004) and considerable inequalities within Southern Africa.

F. The Rise of African Nationalistic Initiatives: A Roadmap for Change

The liberal perspective recognizes the importance of democracy for Africa's stability and security. On the contrary, authoritarian regimens have had negative effects on development, leading to instability, underdevelopment, and insecurity on the African continent. In post-colonial Africa, tyrannical regimens have been exemplified by one-party authoritarian states that have been plagued by conflict, instability, and developmental regression (Matlosa et al., 2007). This is largely due to the institutionalization of one-party political systems within states, the absence of multiparty electoral systems, the lack of media freedom, and the absence of civil participation. Given that these elements are crucial for the survival of democracy.

Notably, tyrannical regimens are characterized by an increase in the ruling elite's control over power and authority, which reduces civil society participation. The loss of civil voice, the absence of social engagement, and the dissolution of the social contract result in violent conflicts and protests in response to state inactions or actions that restrict citizen participation. Scholars and leaders of the United Nations have repeatedly stated that development is impossible without peace, which is synonymous with democracy. In light of this, former United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon stated that inequality is the primary cause of regional instability and that development cannot occur without regional stability.

G. Key Initiatives by Africans for Africa: Policy and Process

The goal of the 1980 Lagos Plan of Action was to expedite the advancement of democracy and development. The Plan's goal was to integrate Africa's economies and politics. (1990) (Kouassi, 2007, Mukisa and Thompson, 1995). Given this, the Abuja Treaty has not demonstrated and realized its full potential on the African continent due to structural deficiencies within states, disempowering regimens, and international imposition (Taylor, 2006).

Among the mechanisms employed to promote regional integration in the region are the New Partnerships for African Development Program (NEPAD) and the African Peer Review Mechanism were established with the intention of repositioning Africa to focus on peace and security (Nmehielle, 2004; Odeh and Mailafia, 2013). A number of key elements of the NEPAD program are relevant and require immediate attention, with a particular emphasis on leadership and governance. As part of the APRM, the level of governance and democracy in African states is evaluated (Union African, 2004).

Therefore, Landsberg (2007) addresses the claim that African leaders and people have demonstrated their commitment to shape their own future through good governance, poverty eradication, development, progress, peace, and security, as well as by promoting peace and security within their own nations.

In the wake of the African Renaissance, the international community exhibited indifference toward war-torn African

nations at a time when indifference permeated the continent (Porto, 2016). In 2002, African leaders established the African Union to address the inability of its predecessor, the OAU, to resolve conflicts (Packer and Rukare, 2002; Edo and Olanrewaju, 2012; Ayoob, 2002).

NEPAD is a regional integration initiative founded on a number of guiding principles, including good governance, democracy consolidation, peace, stability, and security; effective economic policy formulation and implementation; collaborative partnerships; national ownership; and leadership (SADC website 2014). For a security community to exist, the aforementioned factors continue to be crucial, as demonstrated by the present study. Even though progress has been made, it is still necessary to increase adaptability to changing domestic and regional challenges to maintain competitiveness. If we are to achieve progressive development changes, African leaders must demonstrate a higher level of collective action and commitment, as opposed to merely having progressive development goals (De Waal, 2002).

According to Landsberg (2006:91), the APRM seeks to aid African leaders and their governments in assessing their level of democracy and governance. The APRM highlights the connection between democratic governance and stability as well as between peace and security. In fact, it maintains that neither stability nor harmony can be achieved in the absence of peace and security. This is due to the fact that democratic governance has significant effects on human security. Conflict clearly threatens democratic gains. However, the APRM is restricted to a smaller number of nations with diverse cultures, social structures, religions, and dynamics (Cilliers 2004). It is one of the APRM's strengths that it holds governments accountable. To address the socioeconomic challenges of African states, the APRM must be effectively implemented (Cilliers 2004).

The purpose of the APRM is to promote policies, principles, and practices that promote economic growth and political stability. In practice, the APRM will ensure the management of sub-regional and regional security. However, security cooperation among the major subregional groupings in Africa remains inadequate. This is a result of ineffective structures and inadequate implementation mechanisms, whose results must be made more effective and efficient. Primarily, a pattern of intervention within security communities, initiated by the commitment of individual states, must be established, despite the fact that this may be difficult to achieve (Cawthra and Van Nieuwkerk, 2004).

According to Van Wyk (2007:29), the APRM is aligned with the goals of NEPAD, consults with states, and compiles a self-assessment report. This applies to regional institutions such as the Pan-African Parliament, the African Commission on Human and People's Rights, and the African Union's Economic, Social, and Cultural Council. Nonetheless, this mechanism lacked the necessary social engagement that would have ensured the institutionalization of security cooperation at the local level.

H. Principal Impediments to the SADC Region's Development

Weak civic engagement and social participation

According to Landsberg (2007), governance issues on the African continent remain a significant obstacle. All subregional organizations have acknowledged the significance of civil society in achieving their goals. Through the election of leaders, citizens are able to participate in government. Despite this, African states do not involve civil society in decision-making because state actors do not consult or engage with one another (Matlosa, 2008).

Deficient structures and weak processes

The elite and civil society are frequently disconnected from the poor, despite the fact that their representation is crucial. In this argument, we assert that civil society groups and organizations must advocate against weak, undemocratic governments that impede development by posing traditional and non-traditional security threats. States are frequently the worst oppressors of their own people, who become terrified when they are stripped of their power and citizenship. Zimbabwe and Lesotho have shown this by intimidating their citizens, stifling the media, and suppressing the opposition.

It is essential not only to improve relations between the government and civil society but also to ensure the stability and growth of society as a whole and the economy. Consequently, community-based organizations, which make up the vast majority of the civil society base, must be included in the campaign's success-critical efforts. As a result of bolstering civic engagement, the liberal democratic component will be influenced by free and fair electoral processes, objective media, lobbying, advocacy, and civic engagement alongside decision-making, thereby enhancing its role as a watchdog within society. In states like Swaziland, where relations between the monarchy and civil society continue to deteriorate, the primary argument against autocracy has been demonstrated. Due to the absence of political actors in the state, socioeconomic issues persist because marginalized and impoverished individuals lack a voice. Due to the type of regimen in SADC, many governance structures lack democratic norms, and all parties must collaborate in a substantial manner.

Angola is rich in diamonds and oil, but it is one of the world's poorest nations due to its political instability. For development to be fully effective, democracy and democratic government must be established through a peace process.

Without a doubt, civil society can reverse the situation's deterioration by mobilizing the masses. Through the democratization of this organization's systems and procedures, the SADC can achieve civil participation and representation of the populace. Consequently, implementation will be effective and efficient. The Mbeki administration, for instance, demonstrated the inclusion of women in parliament, resulting in greater representation and equality for women (Landsberg, 2007). Zimbabwe is one of the many nations in the world that is at war with its own people and at odds with the international community. According to this version of the story, the state is currently engaged in a war against

imperialism commonly known as the Third Chimurenga. It is defined as a re-conquest of white colonial conquest in which the national question is resolved by the third Chimurenga's white settler colonial conquest. Clearly, this contradicts the principle that governments should serve the best interests of the people.

Ineffective utilization of the international community

Group 20 states played a prominent role in global governance. This was demonstrated in the 2008 recession. Initially, this group was called group 7 and comprised governments of industrialized nations. Today, the group has 20 members. Meetings on the purpose of the G20 remain of great significance. The G20 explores systems and structures within the political economy (Kahler, 2013).

In light of this, the G20 is a legitimate global economic governance structure. Greater cooperation with institutions such as the G-20 can impact more in economic governance structures. This is due to the fact that its member states account for 90% of the global gross national product, 80% of world trade, and two-thirds of the world's population come from these states (Vestergaard, 2011).

Weak governance and institutional challenges: Political institutions

Landsberg (2007) presumes that SADC states demonstrate a façade of democracy, which is rooted in weak governance and institutional challenges. This has been demonstrated in the lack of collective efforts in decisions and their commitment to executing decisions made. This ultimately impacts human security threats such as poverty and inequality. In light of this, the SADC region remains plagued by poverty challenges and the growing inequality gap. The latter remains a grave concern as social discontent is on the increase and often results in uprising and violence as witnessed in other African states, creating instability. This highlights the link between instability and regression in development. Landsberg (2007) presumes that strong political institutions ensure credibility and legitimacy.

Political institutions and structural deficiencies

Credibility and legitimacy are demonstrated in the efficacy of systems, processes, and engagement within society. Ultimately, this ensures participation, democracy, peace, and development. The SADC region is no longer destabilized by the apartheid regimen or the Cold War challenges, although legacies of the past have translated into challenges. New security challenges in SADC include weak governance, human security threats, and development challenges which impact on stability within the region. The assumption is based on the shift in regimen type from autocracy and violence to democracy and a stable peace (Landsberg, 2007). This has been demonstrated in South Africa and Botswana. The major stumbling block within SADC has been a lack of commitment.

The lack of total commitment to NEPAD and the APRM, the roadmap and vision for Africa's future, continues to be a major cause for concern. Civil society must drive the process of states' full participation in these crucial initiatives. Saunders et al. (2012), in addition to Landsberg (2012), criticize SADC states for failing to demonstrate meaningful

power and for lacking political authority in establishing a regional security agenda.

Despite this, SADC has made significant progress in terms of political cooperation and functional cooperation, although human security and development remain persistent challenges. Poor decision-making, lack of policy implementation, fragmentation, and dependence on international donors necessitate a reconceptualization of the SADC's structure and processes, according to Landsberg (2012).

However, according to Mbuende (2012), this organization has been able to maintain peace despite the escalating internal disagreements and conflicts. This is one of SADC's greatest strengths as a regional community and the reason it can be considered a no-war community.

Saunders et al. (2012) express concern that the majority of plans and decisions made collectively by the SADC states have not been executed collectively, as was the case in the DRC conflicts, where three SADC members intervened, and in the Lesotho conflicts.

I. Governance within the SADC Member States

Although these states are different, they all adhere to a common neoliberal belief system. Even though they demonstrate their commitment to the model on paper, in practice, this turns out to be a fallacy for some. This prevents significant development, stability, and progress within the continent.

Soderbaum (2004) suggests that strong national governance impacts positively on regional governance. This has been demonstrated by the fact that the creation of the Southern African Special Development Initiatives has increased investments, regional integration, and the flourishing of markets. This forms part of the neoliberal regional governance in Southern Africa.

However, these programs are weakly implemented; they are informal and adjustable to the private sector. This exclusivity enhances the private sector as well as PPPs. However, evidence suggests a negative impact on the masses, as only the wealthy benefit financially. What is more, the public is not involved in decision-making and public participation platforms remain with the middle class.

The relevance of Soderbaum's theory – by who, for who, for what reason?

- To note that a state is weak does not necessarily imply that its governance is weak.
- This is because governance involves national actors from both private and public sectors, some of whom are stronger than others.
- African regional governance should eradicate threats that prevent development in addition to promoting integration in global markets.
- This "open regionalism" impacts member states of such regional institutions as SADC.

IV. CONCLUSION

In light of the necessity for institutional and structural transformation to enable governance that is more inclusive of

civil society, this study examined the effects of democratic governance norms and principles on development in the SADC. The findings suggest that governance may be greatly impacted by the interaction between SADC's democratic norms and principles, development objectives, and policies. In addition to ensuring that everyone has the chance to participate and have a voice in how they will be governed, strengthened democratic governance with transparent, accountable, and responsive institutions and processes that serve the needs and preferences of the public also suggests that SADC's governance has anticipated economic advancements, even though those have been gradual throughout the region. The governance and growth trajectory of the SADC can keep up with or surpass that of several subregional organizations on the continent. Weak political institutions and structural flaws, poor civic engagement and social participation, inadequate structures and weak procedures, and the inefficient use of the international community are among problems that the subregion has to overcome. To prevent and reverse the emergence of weak democratic institutions, which seriously jeopardizes the country's hopes for growth, peace, and security, as well as good governance, action must be taken. Today's SADC faces several challenges that call for coordinated subregional responses. Although there are various processes, how they are implemented mostly depends on the states and resources that are available. The guidelines and procedures might offer guidance, but national governments will still have the primary responsibility of eliminating structural weaknesses.

A. Recommendations

Africa's weak leadership and governance within states, as well as its dissatisfaction with civil society, are among the obstacles the SADC faces in terms of its developmental status. To prevent crises in governance and accountability, initiatives on multiple levels of capacity building are required, as well as greater access to information and transparency in the governance process.

Regional integration is interdependent on political will and capacity. As a concept, development necessitates commitment, and there is overlap between economic and social development. The impact of failed policies on development remains a source of concern. Administrative structures and state-centered approaches must be prioritized.

A legitimately powerful government necessitates robust civil society networks, a functional, expanding economy, bolstered liberal processes and systems, and public participation platforms. Weiss (2000) urges states to produce progressive welfare, although with the aid of the international community.

State capacity must be built locally and internationally as a starting point. Both internal and external stakeholders, such as the United Nations, the African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and other agents, must ensure that the current peace and development are not jeopardized. The ruling elite must commit to pro-poor development and democratization to achieve sustained peace and development.

Second, the importance of leadership and citizen responsibility remains. The principles of responsibility and accountability hold leaders accountable to citizens for their actions and inactions. Therefore, the APRM and NEPAD must be taken more seriously, and states must honor their commitments.

Respect for people's rights in transforming the world into a zone of peace, respect for human rights, and democratization are essential for the continent of Africa's development.

The implementation of global governance structures is necessary; however, it is crucial to recognize that the future of each individual depends on that of humanity as a whole. It is therefore everyone's duty to ensure the well-being of others.

Weiss (2000) argues that states must reconsider shared values, norms, and structures because, in principle, no constitution grants the state exclusive authority. Perhaps African liberal norms will be more widely accepted within the region. Moreover, sovereignty no longer resides solely with the state; states are expected to share authority with other actors within and without their territory (Weiss, 2000).

Governance is an ever-changing system and structure. Institutions such as the AU and UN continue to play a crucial role in ensuring progressive global governance. There is a need for a public discourse that investigates the social discourse of political issues. There must be a mental shift from adversarial politics to multi-stakeholder dialogue to find common ground, achieve greater unity, and learn to listen to the perspectives of others.

To ensure participation, transparency, and accountability, the study recommends the establishment of consultation mechanisms and levels of engagement between the state and civil society. Conflicts and wars prevent the attainment of development and democracy; peace and the constructive resolution of wars are crucial.

Consequently, conflict and security must be managed constructively by means of early warning systems, conflict resolution efforts that prevent recurrences, and conflict transformation aimed at achieving peace. The paper concludes by advocating for the creation of a network of states with advanced developmental capabilities. This can be accomplished through the promotion of democratic governance, human development, and the establishment of a lasting peace, which are all on the agendas of the NEPAD and APRM.

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