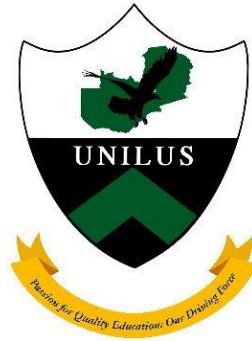


THE UNIVERSITY OF LUSAKA



School of Post Graduate Studies

**ZAMBIA'S MEMBERSHIP IN REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS: IMPACT ON FOREIGN
POLICY AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION EFFORTS**

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Master of Arts
Degree in Politics and International Relations

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DECLARATION

I, Nadi Chafwa Nyirenda, affirm that I am the author of this document and that I have not submitted it, in whole or in part, for a Master's Degree before. All ideas in this work are original to me, and where ideas have been borrowed or acquired from others, credit has been provided through citation and reference.

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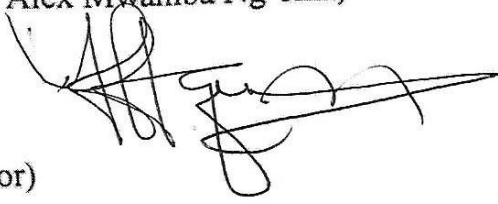
11 January 2024

APPROVAL

I hereby certify that this thesis entitled "ZAMBIA'S MEMBERSHIP IN REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS: IMPACT ON FOREIGN POLICY AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION EFFORTS" has been submitted with my approval.

Name: Dr. Alex Mwamba Ng'oma,

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Alex Mwamba Ng'oma', written over a horizontal line.

(Supervisor)

DEDICATION

This dissertation is devoted to my spouse and children.

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With an emphasis on how Zambia's membership in regional organisations affects foreign policy and attempts at regional integration, I sincerely thank everyone who assisted me in this research.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AfCFTA	-	African Continental Free Trade Area
AfDB	-	The African Development Bank
AIIB	-	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
ASEAN	-	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AU	-	African Union
COMESA	-	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
ECOWAS	-	Economic Community of West African States
EU	-	European Union
FDI	-	Foreign Direct Investment
FTA	-	The Free Trade Area
GATT	-	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
ICGLR	-	International Conference on the Great Lakes Region
IIRSA	-	Initiative for the Integration of the Regional Infrastructure of South America
NCDs	-	Non-communicable Communities diseases
RECs	-	Regional Economic
SADC	-	Southern African Development Community
UNAMID	-	United Nations African Union Mission in Darfur
UNECA	-	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
USA	-	United States of America
WTO	-	World Trade Organisation

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship between Zambia's regional organization memberships, foreign policy, and regional integration efforts. The goal is to assess how membership in these organisations has influenced Zambia's foreign policy decisions and approach to regional integration projects. The project employed a qualitative case study research design. The analysis included a comprehensive review of literature on Zambia's foreign policy, membership in regional organisations, and initiatives at regional integration. In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted with important officials, diplomats, and experts. The study's conclusions showed that Zambia's attempts to integrate regionally and make foreign policy have been significantly impacted by its membership in regional organisations.

First off, Zambia has been able to actively participate in regional diplomatic negotiations, allowing the country to advocate for its national interests at a regional level. Furthermore, this membership has facilitated the development of foreign policy plans that align with regional goals and priorities. As a result, Zambia has increased its influence in the region and successfully supported regional integration efforts, particularly in areas such as trade, infrastructure development, and peace and security. (Parliament. National Assembly, 2020). However, the report also pointed up some restrictions and difficulties with Zambia's participation in regional organisations.

These include the various degrees of commitment that member nations have to regional integration, the varied and occasionally conflicting interests of member states, and the intricate and frequently laborious decision-making procedures found in regional organisations (Vandome, 2023). This study emphasises how Zambia's participation in regional organisations has a substantial influence on its foreign policy choices and attempts to integrate into the area. It emphasises how crucial it is for Zambia to actively participate in regional initiatives and how persistent efforts are required to improve regional cooperation and integration across the African continent

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction to the Chapter

Regional integration is a process by which neighbouring countries, usually geographically connected, deepen their cooperation and interdependence in various areas (Kang 2016). This cooperation aims to create benefits for all participating countries, fostering peace, stability, and economic growth. The goal of regional integration is to achieve mutual benefits by enhancing cooperation and collaboration among member states. This can take various forms, ranging from economic agreements and trade blocs to political and cultural cooperation.

The Southern African nation of Zambia has been a major force in regional organisations, actively looking for ways to collaborate and strengthen efforts at regional integration. The African Union (AU), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) are among the regional organisations in which Zambia is a prominent member. It holds prominent positions like chairing SADC in 2021 and advocating for regional agenda issues. Zambia is involved in regional infrastructure projects, such as transportation and energy initiatives, that aim to improve connectivity and promote economic development across borders. Regional infrastructure development is crucial for fostering integration and cooperation. Analysing Zambia's status and potential as a regional member requires an understanding of how its membership in these regional organisations affects its foreign policy and the undercurrents of regional incorporation.

Zambia's foreign policy navigates a multifaceted world, and regional bodies like the AU, COMESA, ICGLR, and SADC serve as architects, shaping its direction and amplifying its voice. The AU provides a platform for Zambia to showcase its commitment to peace and security, contributing troops to African Union missions, such as in Darfur and Somali, and shaping continental governance norms, bolstering its image as a responsible member of the international community (EU, 2021). COMESA acts as a market architect, facilitating trade and investment, attracting crucial investments, supporting infrastructure development, expanding Zambia's reach and fostering regional connectivity. The ICGLR tackles shared security threats, promotes sustainable resource management, and strengthens disaster preparedness, safeguarding Zambia's stability and resilience in a volatile region. Finally,

SADC builds a foundation for political and economic cooperation, creating a stable regional environment and granting Zambia access to a free trade area, boosting its economic growth and competitiveness. However, navigating overlapping mandates, resource constraints, and balancing national interests with regional commitments requires careful diplomacy. By actively engaging in these regional bodies, Zambia can harness its potential to enhance its foreign policy, secure regional stability, and drive sustainable economic development. This intricate tapestry of regional influence shapes Zambia's foreign policy, offering both opportunities and challenges that demand strategic engagement for continued success.

This study's objective is to look at how Zambia's active involvement in regional organisations affects its foreign policy priorities in multiple ways and what that means for efforts at regional integration. By examining Zambia's participation in regional entities such as the AU, a continental organisation comprising 55 member states with a mission to foster unity and collaboration among African nations for socio-economic development and continental integration; COMESA, a regional economic community encompassing 22 member states dedicated to advancing economic integration and cooperation; the ICGLR which emerged in the early 2000s as a response to the ongoing conflicts in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo comprising 12 member states and 7 co-opted states with a dialogue mechanism to address regional conflicts in the Great Lakes region; and SADC, a regional intergovernmental organisation and trading bloc in Southern Africa with 16 member states aiming to promote economic development, peace, and stability. SADC focuses on various aspects such as regional cooperation, integration, addressing political and security challenges, and facilitating economic development and collaboration among member states, specifically in areas like infrastructure development, trade facilitation, agriculture, health, and education. Furthermore, the SADC seeks to enhance political stability and prevent conflicts in the region through diplomatic approaches and conflict resolution mechanisms. This exploration provides insights into how Zambia's membership influences its policies, aspirations, and objectives for regional integration, with a particular emphasis on sustainable development and poverty alleviation in the region.

Examining Zambia's foreign policy strategy within these regional organisations can provide insight into the nation's strategic ambitions, collaborative agendas, and possible disagreements regarding the aims of regional integration. This study also evaluates the effects that Zambia's involvement in these

platforms has had on its capacity to formulate regional policies, pursue diplomatic decision-making, and advance its national interests.

Therefore, this study can add to the scanty literature on African nations' foreign policy and regional integration initiatives, using Zambia as a case study. It seeks to offer understandings that are transferable to other countries dealing with comparable opportunities and problems. Comprehending the possible advantages and drawbacks of membership in regional organisations enhances academic discussions on African regionalism and provides useful suggestions to decision-makers looking to implement effective regional integration plans.

1.2 Background of the Study

Brecher, (1972) asserts that “The study of foreign policy is under-developed”. This observation is mostly accurate for Africa, where analysis has concentrated on the role of presidents and the ideology of states in the international system. Like many other developing countries, the making of foreign policy is usually the preserve of the head of state and the ruling party to which Zambia is no exception. In the international system, several actors influence a country’s foreign policy system. These actors range from the presidency, and foreign affairs to institutions such as a range of ministries, parastatal organisations, foreign missions, and local offices of multinational corporations and international organisations (Shaw, 1976). However, the dynamics on Zambia’s foreign policy have since changed, albeit the preserve remains in the head of state. The primary actors in Zambia's international politics are the President, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, and other ministries like Finance, Mines, or Trade.

Since independence, Zambia’s foreign policy has been informed by four factors: its security and geopolitical position; the personality of its leadership; ideology, particularly on independence and sovereignty; and the desire for economic development, balanced between solidarity with its neighbours and its need for external investment (Vandome, 2023). Undeniably Zambia’s international positions have been driven in part by the demands and opportunities as a function of its geographical location, the structure of regional politics as well as the ideological orientation of the governing parties. Zambia’s traditional foreign policy ethos is rooted in its post-independence non-alignment and ‘positive neutrality’, which allows the country to proactively work with a diverse range of partners

and avoid dependence on any single foreign power. As an expression of its desire for self-sufficiency, economic independence and mutual economic cooperation with other countries, Zambia played a prominent role in the foundation of regional organisations, including SADCC in 1980, which later became the Southern African Development Community. In 1981, Zambia co-founded a larger economic partnership – the Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern Africa, later renamed COMESA, with a secretariat in Lusaka. These blocs are important for Zambia’s regional trade and integration efforts.

Following elections in 1991, new political leaders faced the challenge of reconciling the post-colonial legacy of an outward-looking foreign policy with the imperative of promoting domestic economic development. Zambia’s First Foreign Policy document was adopted in January, 1996. As already alluded to, Zambia’s foreign policy formation is highly centralized, empowering the country’s president to shape foreign relations, international partnerships and Zambia’s position within global geopolitical discourse. Under the United Party for National Development (UPND) government, Zambia’s foreign policy is focused primarily on economic cooperation, trade and inward investment. Under the UPND, the government’s principal foreign policy objectives are anchored on the peaceful resolution of conflict in Africa, and the use of multilateral bodies to ensure that developing countries’ voices are heard on international issues (UPND, 2021). In that vein, there has been a shift from political diplomacy and more engagement in economic diplomacy (National Security Report, 2020). Going further, the promotion of economic diplomacy was espoused and under this Strategy, the Government has undertaken to identify and utilise strategic Zambian Missions abroad as the front end for advancing economic diplomacy (7NDP, 2021). Partnership agreements with neighbouring countries have also been a central part of Zambia’s regional economic diplomacy, such as the April 2022, memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to facilitate the development of value chains in the electric battery and clean energy sector as well as to strengthen collaboration between Zambia and the DRC.

According to Chirwa and Odhiambo (2017), the Zambian government recognises that foreign aid, commerce, and investment all contribute to economic progress. South African supermarket management has been heavily involved in international trade negotiations, which is indicative of this (Bernstein, 2012). In these negotiations, the influence of South African representatives frequently

outweighs Zambia's foreign trade contingent (Bernstein, 2012). This demonstrates how the government understands the potential financial gains from these kinds of initiatives.

Domestic concerns are also very important in determining Zambia's foreign policy. The government understands that tackling home-grown issues like government spending and the development of human capital is necessary for long-term economic growth (Chirwa & Odhiambo, 2017). Zambia's Second Republican President, Frederick J.T. Chiluba, argued that Zambia's economic diplomacy should take into account internal issues (Ndambwa & Siwale, 2022). This method acknowledges the interaction between the goals of foreign and domestic policy.

In recent years, Zambia's relations with other countries have changed. In response to changing global dynamics, the nation has changed the way it approaches international relations (Vandome, 2023). Under former President Edgar Lungu, Zambia's international relations leaned heavily towards China whilst ties with the West, were not that prominent. With President Hichilema's election, Zambia adopted a more balanced and diversified approach, evident in increased high-level visits, economic agreements, and engagement on shared values like democracy and human rights. This change may be affected by reasons such as shifting geopolitical landscapes and the need to react to evolving problems and opportunities.

Specific relationships with other countries also shape Zambia's foreign policy. For example, the country has had a long-standing relationship with China, which has been a significant investor in Zambia's economy (Chiputa, 2021). The growing presence of Chinese investments has prompted the establishment of institutions like the Citizens Economic Empowerment Commission, aimed at ensuring ownership and economic benefits for Zambians (Kragelund, 2012). This represents the government's approach to the criticism of foreign economic influence.

Economic diplomacy, domestic difficulties, international relations, and special relationships with other countries all contribute to determining Zambia's strategy. The government recognizes the importance of engaging in international trade negotiations, addressing domestic challenges, adapting to changing global dynamics, and managing specific bilateral relationships. By addressing these

elements, Zambia attempts to manage the complexities of the international arena, meet domestic goals, and promote economic growth.

Membership in regional organisations significantly impacts foreign policy and regional integration. When a country becomes a member of a regional organisation, it often influences its foreign policy towards other countries (Castro and Ravena, 2021). One example of this is Brazil, whose foreign policy towards its neighbours in Latin America has been influenced by its membership in the regional organisation Initiative for the Integration of the Regional Infrastructure of South America (IIRSA). The Brazilian Amazon region became a focus for the formulation of highly concentrated sectoral strategies, demonstrating the significance of regional integration for foreign policy (Castro and Ravena, 2021).

Regional integration also has ramifications for foreign direct investment (FDI). Avoiding regional integration can inhibit the transnational activities of non-member nations (Tanaka & Arita, 2016). However, regional investment liberalization may result in a decline in multinational operations in non-integrating countries and a rise in FDI flows in integrating nations (Uttama, 2021). This implies that participation in regional organisations might encourage economic integration and draw in foreign investment.

However, several variables may work against membership's effects on foreign policy and regional integration. The regional integration strategy is hampered by Kenya's and Tanzania's foreign policies, which do not specifically address regionalism (Wakhungu, 2021). These nations' capacity to favorably impact the integration process is further undermined by the establishment of foreign policy pillars that lack a regional perspective and public participation (Wakhungu, 2021).

Additionally, the idea of belonging to a regional organisation entails dealing with normative concepts like democracy and human rights in addition to punitive tactics like sanctions (Schembera, 2016). This implies that membership in regional organisations can affect a country's adherence to democratic principles and human rights standards.

Membership in regional organisations has a multifaceted impact on foreign policy and regional integration. It can shape a country's foreign policy towards other regional actors, attract foreign investment, and influence adherence to normative principles. However, the effectiveness of membership in promoting regional integration and foreign policy objectives depends on factors such as the focus of foreign policies, citizen participation, and the alignment of regional organisations with democratic and human rights standards.

Zambia's foreign policy and efforts to promote regional integration are greatly influenced by its membership in regional organisations. A study on the advantages and takeaways from Zambia's wide distribution campaign of insecticide-treated nets was carried out by Masaninga et al. (2018). Despite its focus on malaria control, this study offers valuable insights into the advantages of executing regional strategies and campaigns. By looking at the advantages and lessons gained from Zambia's membership in Regional Organisations, we can gain a better understanding of its influence on foreign policy and regional integration initiatives.

Poteete and Ocpom (2004) investigated the function of institutions in the management of forests as well as the connection between group size, heterogeneity, and collective behaviour. Although this study does not explicitly focus on Zambia, it provides insights into the importance of collective action and institutional success in regional integration efforts. Understanding the role of collective action and institutions can help analyse the effectiveness of Zambia's membership in regional organisations in promoting regional integration.

Andrieu et al. (2017) investigated the prioritisation of investments for climate-smart agriculture in Mali. While this study focuses on Mali, it provides insights into the process of prioritising investments and the role of regional donors. Understanding the prioritisation of investments and the involvement of regional organisations can provide insights into Zambia's efforts in promoting regional integration through climate-smart agriculture.

Mulenga et al. (2015) evaluated Zambian healthcare professionals' ability to diagnose human African trypanosomiasis. Although this study focuses on healthcare capacity, it highlights the importance of regional collaboration and membership in addressing health challenges. Understanding the capacity-

building initiatives and health collaborations within regional organisations can provide insights into Zambia's foreign policy priorities in the health sector.

Markelova and Mwangi (2010) investigated collaborative efforts to improve market access among smallholder farmers in Africa. The research emphasizes the significance of collective action in boosting productivity, increasing income, and fostering overall economic growth. Analysing the function of cooperative efforts and market accessibility in regional associations might provide a significant understanding of Zambia's endeavours to foster regional unification and economic growth. Various aspects of Zambia's participation in regional organisations are illuminated by studies on the benefits and lessons learnt, collective actions, priorities for investments, capacity building, and market access. By considering these factors, a comprehensive understanding of the impact of Zambia's membership in regional organisations on its foreign policy and regional integration efforts can be gained.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Zambia's active participation in regional organizations presents a complex interplay between its foreign policy priorities and regional integration initiatives, demanding a comprehensive analysis to discern its multifaceted impacts (Mkandawire, 2012). While Zambia has been proactive in engaging with regional bodies like the AU, COMESA, ICGLR, and SADC (African Governance Report, 2019), the precise implications of this involvement on its foreign policy formulation and regional integration efforts remain inadequately understood.

The evolving dynamics of Zambia's foreign policy, driven by factors such as economic diplomacy, domestic exigencies, international relations, and bilateral relationships, are significantly influenced by its membership in these regional organizations. (Parliament. National Assembly, 2020). However, the extent to which membership in these bodies shapes Zambia's diplomatic decisions, economic strategies, and regional cooperation initiatives remains unclear. Moreover, while regional integration is purported to bring about economic benefits and enhance foreign policy cohesion, challenges such as overlapping mandates, resource constraints, and diverging national interests within regional frameworks necessitate a nuanced examination ((Kragelund, 2012)).

Existing literature offers insights into the potential advantages and drawbacks of Zambia's participation in regional organizations, yet a comprehensive understanding of its impact on foreign policy formulation and regional integration remains elusive (Söderbaum, 2015). Critical gaps persist in comprehending how Zambia's membership in these bodies influences its strategic ambitions, collaborative agendas, and policy outcomes. Additionally, while studies on collective action, investment prioritization, capacity-building, and market access shed light on various dimensions of regional engagement, their implications for Zambia's specific context and regional integration efforts require further exploration (Markelova and Mwangi 2010).

Therefore, there is an imperative need to conduct a comprehensive study to unpack the intricate relationship between Zambia's active involvement in regional organizations, its foreign policy priorities, and its endeavours towards regional integration (Vandome, 2023). By addressing these research gaps, this study aims to provide valuable insights that can inform policymaking, enhance academic discourse on African regionalism, and offer practical recommendations for promoting sustainable development and poverty alleviation in the region (Nzomo and Getachew, 2021).

1.4 Research Objectives

- a. To examine how Zambia's membership in regional organisations has influenced her foreign policy objectives and priorities.
- b. To assess how Zambia's participation in regional organisations has contributed to promoting regional integration within Southern Africa.
- c. To find out the challenges and opportunities that arise from Zambia's membership in regional organisations and how they affect the country's foreign policy and regional integration efforts.

1.5 Research Questions

- a. How has Zambia's membership in regional organisations influenced its foreign policy objectives and priorities?
- b. To what extent has Zambia's participation in regional organisations promoted regional integration within Southern Africa?

- c. What challenges and opportunities arise from Zambia's membership in regional organisations, and how do they affect the country's foreign policy and regional integration efforts?

1.6 The Significance of the Study

The conclusions of this examination will enhance scholarly research and offer significant perspectives to decision-makers, promoting a deeper understanding of how regional participation affects both national and regional goals. The study revealed that Zambia's membership in regional organisations has significantly influenced its foreign policy, leading to a stronger emphasis on regional cooperation and integration. Findings suggest that membership has opened trade, investment, and multilateral collaboration opportunities. However, the research also uncovered challenges faced by Zambia in reconciling its national interests with regional objectives, mainly concerning economic disparities, political differences, and conflicting regional agendas.

A comprehensive understanding of the impact of Zambia's membership in regional organisations on its foreign policy and regional integration efforts provides valuable insights for policymakers, diplomats, and scholars interested in regional dynamics in Africa. By identifying successes and challenges, this study contributes to developing strategies that enhance the country's participation in regional organisations and promote effective regional integration.

1.7 The Organisation of the Study

The five chapters of this dissertation are separated. The study's history and introduction are in the first chapter. It contains the study's importance, goals, problem statement, and research questions. The study's literature is reviewed and examined in Chapter 2. The technique is covered in Chapter 3. The research findings are analyzed and discussed in the fourth chapter. The recommendations and conclusion are in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The Chapter is organised in three parts as follows Global, Continent, and domestic literature. The literature covers membership of Regional Organisation and Foreign Policy; Country Participation in Regional Organisations; Challenges and Opportunities and Membership in Regional Organisations.

2.2 Global Perspective

Membership in regional organisations significantly impacts a country's foreign policy objectives and priorities. These intergovernmental associations provide a platform for nations to collaborate, establish common goals, and address regional challenges. This literature review explores the influence of regional organisation membership on a country's foreign policy objectives and priorities.

2.2.1 The Impact of Regional Membership on Foreign Policy and Integration: Insights from the European Experience

Membership in regional organizations significantly impacts foreign policy dynamics and regional integration efforts. Manners (2002) critically examines the concept of "Normative Power Europe" and its contradictions. While the primary emphasis is on the European Union (EU), this research provides valuable perspectives on the normative dimensions of EU foreign policy and the challenges associated with asserting normative authority. The EU is a distinct supranational organization that fosters closer economic and political ties among its members, aiming for lasting peace, stability, and prosperity. There are 27 member countries in the EU. Understanding the contradictions and challenges of normative power can shed light on the impact of membership in regional organizations on European foreign policy.

Coker and Mounier-Jack (2006) cover the readiness of the Asia-Pacific region for pandemic influenza. This study emphasizes the value of regional cooperation in solving health emergencies. Gaining knowledge about how regional organizations foster readiness and collaboration can help one better understand how participation affects Zambia's foreign policy and attempts at regional integration.

Schimmelfennig et al. (2015) analyze the EU as an organization of separated incorporation. This study explores the variation in centralization and territorial extension levels across policy areas. Understanding the interdependence and differentiation within regional organizations can contribute to enhanced comprehension of the impact on foreign policy in Zambia.

Moravcsik (2006) presents a liberal inter-governmentalist approach to understanding partialities and power in the European Community. This study emphasizes the role of national preferences in shaping foreign policy outcomes. Understanding the decision-making processes and power dynamics within regional organizations can provide insights into foreign policy.

Bourne (2003) deliberates on the influence of European integration on regional power. This study explores the opportunities for regional empowerment within the context of European integration. Understanding the potential for regional influence and the role of supranational institutions can shed light on the impact of membership in regional organizations on foreign policy and regional integration efforts in Zambia.

This survey of the literature provides an overview of the connection between European foreign policy and membership in regional organizations. Studies on normative power, influenza preparedness, differentiated integration, liberal inter-governmentalism, and regional empowerment highlight numerous facets of this relationship. Taking these variables into account can contribute to a complete understanding of how participation in regional organizations affects Zambia's efforts at regional integration and foreign policy decision-making processes.

Velichkov (2021) argues that the EU's approach to Central Asia creates an imbalance in foreign policy capabilities, favoring the EU. European Union's membership in regional organizations implies that its capacity to take a consistent foreign policy approach is affected.

2.2.2 Regional Organizations: Shaping Foreign Policy in Asia

A move toward regional leadership in East Asia is China's creation of the AIIB (Raharyo, 2018). This demonstrates how pursuing regional leadership and influencing foreign policy goals can be accomplished through membership in regional organisations.

China's economic dominance in Southeast Asia is intended to be counterbalanced by the United States' pivot to Asia policy (Mohd et al., 2022). This illustrates how participation in regional organisations can influence foreign policy and preserve the region's power balance.

Canada's foreign policy in Asia has seen an increasing role of non-central governments, indicating the evolving dynamics of regional organisations and their impact on foreign policy (Labrecque and Harrison, 2018). This suggests that membership in regional organisations can influence the involvement of different actors in shaping foreign policy.

Russia's pivot to Asia has reorientated its foreign policy towards Asia-Pacific (Huyen and Quyet, 2022). This highlights how membership in regional organisations can shape a country's foreign policy priorities and relationships with other countries.

Over the past twenty years, Australia's engagement with Asia has been influenced by regional dynamics and the proliferation of preferential trade agreements (Capling, 2008). This suggests that membership in regional organisations can impact a country's foreign policy objectives and approach to regional relations.

In Asia, the shaping of foreign policy is substantially influenced by participation in regional organisations. Bound by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) pursuit of regional stability and economic integration, member states tailor their bilateral relations and trade agreements to fit the broader vision. It can influence a country's capacity for unified foreign policy, pursuit of regional leadership, balancing of power, involvement of different actors, reorientation of priorities, and approach to regional relations. Understanding the impact of membership in regional organisations is crucial for analysing and predicting foreign policy dynamics in Zambia.

2.2.3 Exploring Diverse Approaches to Regional Integration in Europe and Asia

Regional integration is crucial for economic development, political stability, and social cohesion among neighbouring countries. It involves countries working together on specific issues, resulting in shared benefits. This literature review examines the positive impact of country participation in

regional organisations on regional integration, highlighting how it boosts economic growth, enhances political stability, and facilitates social integration, ultimately leading to broader regional cooperation and prosperity. Examples from various regions are analysed to illustrate this impact.

Many studies have been conducted on national involvement in regional organisations and integration initiatives in European nations. The European Union (EU) has been a focal point. Mannin (2018) provides a comprehensive overview of EU, highlighting its part in regional incorporation and the challenges it faces. The article emphasises the importance of understanding the EU's history, bodies, and plans to grasp the complexities of country participation in regional organisations.

König and Ohr (2013) talk about the various attempts that European nations have made to integrate economically within the EU. They contend that a comprehensive study that takes into account the variability across different areas of economic integration is necessary. This demonstrates the variety of national initiatives and capacities in taking part in the European integration process.

Volz (2018) compares the East Asian experience with regional financial integration in Europe. To promote regional fiscal incorporation, the member nations of the ASEAN have undertaken various initiatives. This comparative study sheds light on the parallels and divergences in regional integration initiatives.

Rüland (2013) provides an alternative perspective on the drive for regional integration in Indonesia by investigating the roles of local actors and foreign policymaking. The article challenges the notion that regional organisations emulate the European integration model through mimetic behaviour and social learning. Rather, it highlights how domestic players have shaped regionalism.

The reactions of Greece and Norway to efforts to establish a uniform maritime strategy in the 1960s and 1970s are examined by Ikonomidou and Tsakas (2019). The study highlights the practicality of reviewing the business sector from the periphery to understand European integration. This perspective sheds light on the dynamics of country participation in regional organisations from a historical context.

2.2.4 Examining the Duality of Regional Integration: Challenges and Opportunities in Europe

Birg (2006) analyses the integration of smaller European equity markets and identifies distinctive groups of countries based on their integration score performance. This research provides insights into the varying degrees of integration among European countries and the factors influencing their integration efforts.

Stie and Trondal (2020) introduce the study of Nordic cooperation, which is relevant to the broader literature on European integration. This literature highlights the importance of understanding regional cooperation efforts within specific sub-regions of Europe, such as the Nordic countries.

The literature on country participation in regional organisations and integration efforts in European countries provides a comprehensive understanding of the complexities and challenges involved. The studies highlighted the diversity of efforts, the role of domestic actors, and the need for comparative analysis to gain insights into regional integration processes.

Membership in regional organisations is essential to international relations and has become increasingly significant in the modern globalised world. This literature review section explores the challenges and opportunities associated with belonging to regional organisations. By analysing various scholarly sources, we can examine the impact of regional memberships on countries, understand the obstacles they face, and assess the potential benefits they can gain.

According to Daniel and Richard (2018), participating in the EU poses some difficulties for its member states. The loss of sovereignty is one of the major issues since national laws can be superseded by EU decisions and rules. This can lead to tensions between member states and their institutions. Additionally, EU's decision-making processes can be complex and time-consuming, thus, making it problematic for member states to achieve their goals. Critics of the EU's enlargement argue that it could dilute individual member states' power and make effective governance of such a diverse group of countries increasingly challenging. Despite challenges, membership in the EU also offers numerous opportunities for member states. The EU offers a forum for member states to work together on shared concerns like commerce, security, and environmental preservation. It offers access to a large single market, facilitating economic growth and trade among member states. Moreover, the EU

provides financial support through various funding programs, which can help member states develop their infrastructure, education systems, and economies.

Mannin (2018) draws attention to the difficulties faced by European integration as well as the chances it offers member states for increased trade and political collaboration. He gives a succinct yet insightful summary of the EU and how it affects its member nations. In his paper "European Integration: Opportunities and Challenges for Member States," Mannin (2018) explores the possible advantages and challenges of European amalgamation. An economic and political union, the European Union (EU) is made up of 27 nations, founded to promote economic growth, peace, and stability among its members (European Union, n.d.).

The difficulties that these states have with European integration are highlighted by Mannin (2018). The erosion of national sovereignty is one of the major issues. The EU's growing influence can complicate individual member states' decision-making in areas like trade, immigration, and budgets. Member nations may become tense and disagreeable over this.

However, Mannin (2018) also highlights the advantages that member states stand to gain from European integration. A primary advantage is the augmentation of commerce and financial collaboration. Within its boundaries, people, capital, and goods are free to travel around since the EU functions as a single market. As a result, trade and investment among the member nations have been facilitated, spurring economic expansion and job creation.

Furthermore, European integration has also fostered political cooperation among member states. The EU has established various institutions and mechanisms to promote dialogue and decision-making among member states. This has made it possible to create uniform laws and policies in sectors including consumer protection, the environment, and agriculture. By working together, member states can address shared challenges more effectively and have a stronger voice on the global stage. European integration presents both challenges and opportunities for member states. While losing national sovereignty can be a concern, the benefits of increased trade and political cooperation cannot be overlooked. Promoting peace, stability and monetary prosperity within its Member States has been a key role played by the EU. However, it is essential for member states to continuously evaluate and

adapt to the changing dynamics of European integration to ensure that it remains beneficial for all parties involved.

Research indicates that participation in European regional organisations offers member states both benefits and challenges. The literature analysis emphasizes how crucial it is to comprehend how regional organisations operate, as well as the difficulties associated with population growth, public support, and the intricacies of regional dynamics. But there are also gaps in the research that need to be filled, such as the examination of other regional organisations in Europe, the economic effects of membership, and the function of regional organisations in tackling shared issues.

2.3 The African Continent Perspective

2.3.1 Regional Dynamics and Foreign Policy: Insights from African Nations

African nations' foreign policies are greatly influenced by their membership in regional organisations. According to Ogunnubi (2016), Nigeria is recognized as a regional hegemony in Africa. Ogunnubi (2016) examines Nigeria's "hegemonic" status and its impact on regional foreign policy. This study sheds light on regional power dynamics and how they disturb the formulation of foreign policy. Ogunnubi (2017) dives deep into the concept of *soft power*, considering it a crucial element of South Africa's four-pronged foreign strategy. This study emphasizes how crucial non-coercive methods are in determining the goals and consequences of foreign policy. Hendricks and Majozi (2021) look at how and why South Africa's standing locally and internationally has evolved with its foreign policy. This research gives a comprehensive assessment of South Africa's policies in external policy, and illuminates the reasons for these decisions.

Foreign policy is impacted by regional integration initiatives carried out by regional groups. Mlambo and Ogunnubi (2018) talk on South Africa's attempts to integrate into SADC and pose issues with coalition building vs regional supremacy. The complexity of regional integration and how it affects foreign policy priorities are brought to light by this study.

Furthermore, South Africa's external policy is directed by the ideals of reforming global governance and seeking legitimacy in international institutions such as the UN Security Council. Efstathopoulos

(2016) examines South Africa's diplomacy reform and pursuit of equitable membership in global governance structures. This research sheds light on South Africa's motivations in foreign policy activism.

Last but not least, South Africa's external policy strategy is impacted by its relationship with Zimbabwe. In light of state-building and regional dynamics, Siwisa (2020) examines how South Africa's external policy stance on Zimbabwe has changed. This study highlights the importance of a realistic Foreign Policy Strategy for dealing with Regional Issues.

2.3.2 Unveiling the Complexities: African Regional Integration and Foreign Policy Dynamics

Researchers probing into African foreign policy and regional memberships offer deep insights into regional power dynamics, soft power utilization, integration effects, legitimacy pursuits, and challenge management. These studies contribute to a comprehensive understanding of how membership in regional organisations shapes foreign policy decisions in African countries.

Numerous difficulties and limitations in the subject are brought to light by the literature on African countries' integration efforts and their participation in regional organisations. Mlambo and Mlambo (2018) highlight the significant obstacles that Southern Africa faces, which impede further integration and are exacerbated by internal economic difficulties among member nations. Trade, economic integration, and regional collaboration are some of these problems. In a similar vein, Mlambo (2018) explores the opportunities and difficulties of Southern Africa's regional integration, illuminating the nuances and obstacles to successful integration. Focusing on the situation of Eastern Africa, Nzomo and Getachew (2021) contend that regional integration initiatives in Africa as a whole face serious obstacles from limited nationalistic considerations and a zero-sum game attitude. To address these issues, they highlight the necessity of energy integration and sustainable growth.

Hailu (2015) also discusses the potential and challenges of regional economic integration in Africa, highlighting the need for successful implementation and the backdrop of regional integration initiatives. By analyzing the historical background and the variables that have impacted the success or failure of integration initiatives, Mistry (2000) offers a more comprehensive viewpoint on Africa's

track record of regional cooperation and integration. To achieve regional cooperation, the writer emphasizes the significance of independence and economic integration.

Wakwaya (2015) focuses on landlocked African countries, using Ethiopia as a case study. The author suggests that to make the region's integration efforts succeed, it is necessary to narrow in on policy oratory and real implementation. This supports the claim put forth by several writers, such as Alemayehu and Haile (Wakwaya, 2015), that the key to overcoming the difficulties associated with regional integration is its successful execution.

The literature review reveals significant challenges to country participation in regional organisations and African integration efforts. These challenges include trade, economic integration, internal economic challenges, narrow nationalistic concerns, and the gap between political rhetoric and implementation. The literature also emphasises the importance of sustainable development, energy integration, and effective implementation in overcoming these challenges. The complexities of African regional integration call for further research to fill critical knowledge gaps and refine our understanding.

2.3.3 Navigating the Landscape: Challenges and Opportunities in African Regional Organizations

Membership in African regional organizations presents both challenges and opportunities for the continent. One of the key challenges these organizations face is slow economic growth and capital flight (Collier & Gunning, 1999), highlighting the underperformance of African economies. It is important to address the factors contributing to this slow growth and develop strategies to promote economic growth and attract investment.

Another difficulty is the occurrence of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in sub-Saharan Africa. There is growing concern that the burden of cardiovascular disease, fueled by rising risk factors such as smoking and poor diets, will continue to rise and put pressure on sub-Saharan African health systems, according to Gouda et al., (2019). This difficulty highlights how crucial regional collaboration is in combating NCDs and strengthening healthcare infrastructure. It is essential to

address the burden of NCDs through regional collaboration and the implementation of plans to improve healthcare systems and encourage preventive and control measures.

Regional integration in Africa also faces challenges related to internal economic issues within member states. Mlambo and Mlambo (2018) argue that internal economic challenges hinder the quest for deeper regional integration in Africa. Understanding these challenges and finding solutions to address them is crucial for the success of regional organizations.

Additionally, infrastructure, customs systems, and technical capacity challenges hinder the seamless operation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). Resolving these issues is necessary to maximize the potential advantages of the AfCFTA.

Despite these challenges, membership in regional organizations in Africa also presents opportunities. One such opportunity is the potential for consolidating research on cancer control through partnerships and diplomacy (Frech et al., 2018). Collaboration in addressing cancer control challenges has been emphasized in Latin America, and similar opportunities exist for African regional organizations to work together and tackle common health challenges.

Another opportunity lies in the energy sector and sustainable development. Nzomo and Getachew (2021) argue that regional energy integration, particularly through the use of geothermal energy, can contribute to sustainable development in Eastern Africa. Exploring these opportunities and harnessing the potential of renewable energy sources can benefit the entire region.

Existing literature has shown that membership in African regional organizations comes with both challenges and opportunities. The challenges include slow economic growth, the burden of non-communicable diseases, internal economic issues, and infrastructure gaps. However, there are also opportunities for collaboration in areas such as cancer research and control, the energy sector, and sustainable development. Addressing the research gaps on the challenges faced by various African regional organizations is crucial for developing effective strategies to support their success and advance regional integration.

2.4 Domestic Perspective

Zambia's participation in regional organizations poses a range of challenges and opportunities for the country. One of the key challenges that Zambia faces within these organizations is the uneven distribution of benefits among Regional Economic Communities (RECs) (Melo & Tsikata, 2014). This challenge underscores the need to address the political and geographical factors that hinder the equitable allocation of advantages within regional organizations. Further research is required to gain a deeper understanding of Zambia's specific challenges in this regard.

Moreover, Zambia must enhance cancer research and control through collaboration and diplomacy (Frech et al., 2018). Cooperation among regional organizations can help overcome the barriers to cancer control and improve Zambian cancer patients' access to high-quality medical care. To fully comprehend the unique opportunities and challenges that Zambia faces in this area, additional research is necessary.

In addition to health-related challenges, Zambia also has opportunities within regional organizations. For instance, there is a demand for climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies in Zambia (Hewitson & Crane, 2006). Regional organizations can serve as platforms for knowledge exchange and collaboration in addressing environmental changes and their impact on agriculture, water resources, and other sectors in Zambia. Further research is needed to explore the potential opportunities for Zambia in this context.

Furthermore, it is crucial to address the distribution of trace gases and aerosols in Zambia and its surrounding regions (Sinha, 2003). Understanding the sources and impacts of air pollution can inform policy-making and mitigation measures within regional organizations. Research on the specific challenges and opportunities related to air pollution in Zambia is therefore indispensable.

Overall, Zambia's membership in regional organizations presents both challenges and opportunities. The challenges include non-communicable diseases, unequal distribution of benefits, and the need to enhance cancer research and control. However, there are also opportunities for collaboration in areas such as climate change adaptation, air pollution control, and healthcare improvement. Future research

endeavors should prioritize gaining a nuanced understanding of the contextual challenges that Zambia faces within regional groupings, to develop effective strategies for overcoming them.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

In the current geopolitical environment, the dynamic interaction between foreign policy and regional integration initiatives has grown increasingly important. Countries actively participate in regional integration programmes while navigating difficult international connections. Three theories were analysed to comprehend the reciprocal relationship between a state's engagement in regional integration efforts and its foreign policy decisions: the Realism Theory, the Constructivist Theory, and the Liberal-Functionalist Theory.

2.5.1 The Liberal-Functionalist Theory

The liberal-functionalist theory, as expounded by Moravcsik (1997), underscores the significance of state-society relations in influencing state behaviour within the global political arena. This theory highlights that nations' action in international politics is fundamentally influenced by their relationship with the domestic and transnational social contexts in which they are embedded. It argues that societal actors' interests and preferences, both private and public, have a big impact on how the state operates and makes decisions.

Wagner (2017) also addresses liberalism as a foreign policy, international relations, and European integration theory. It puts forth a "bottom-up view," highlighting the idea that the power, underlying identities, and interests of people and groups—both inside and outside the governmental apparatus—determine public policy. Therefore, the liberal-functionalist theory emphasizes the influence of societal preferences, identities, and power dynamics on state behaviour, foreign policy, and regional integration efforts.

This theory argues that regional integration is driven by the desire to achieve economic growth and prosperity through increased trade and cooperation. It emphasizes the importance of economic interdependence and collaboration in achieving mutual benefits among member states.

The Liberal-Functionalist Theory, also known as liberal neo-functionalism, has several strengths. It offers a more complex understanding of the dynamics of integration by highlighting the part played by transnational actors and networks in the process of regional integration. This approach has been particularly useful in explaining the influence of non-state actors and the impact of multinational relations on the integration process. Additionally, liberal neo-functionalism has been applied to analyze the role of international organisations and their influence on regional integration, highlighting its relevance in contemporary studies of global governance. However, the theory also has weaknesses. It has been criticized for its limited ability to account for the role of national governments and their sovereignty in the integration process, suggesting potential gaps in its explanatory power. Furthermore, the emphasis on transnational actors and networks may overlook the significance of state-centric dynamics in shaping regional integration, indicating a potential limitation in its analytical scope.

In summary, the Liberal-Functionalist Theory offers a valuable framework for understanding the role of transnational actors and networks in regional integration. However, it may have limitations in accounting for the influence of national governments and state-centric dynamics in the integration process.

2.5.2 Constructivist Theory

Constructivist theory, particularly in the realm of international relations, has garnered attention for its strengths and weaknesses. The theory emphasizes the part of social constructs, norms, and identities in shaping state behaviour and international outcomes (Sørensen et al., 2021). It offers a nuanced understanding of how ideas and identities influence state actions, providing a valuable framework for analysing international relations beyond material factors. However, constructivist theory also faces criticisms and challenges. Some argue that it may struggle to provide clear predictions and explanations for state behaviour, particularly in comparison to more traditional theories such as realism and liberalism (Sørensen et al., 2021). Additionally, there are debates about the extent to which social constructivism can be effectively applied in various contexts, including its applicability in understanding international political economy (Jackson et al., 2018). Furthermore, there are discussions about the need for a balanced view of social constructivism, particularly in understanding

emotions and cross-cultural adaptation, indicating ongoing debates about the theory's scope and limitations (Watanabe et al., 2019).

Conclusively, constructivist theory provides significant understanding of how social conceptions and identities influence international relations. While it has strengths in providing a nuanced understanding of state behaviour and enhancing pedagogical approaches, ongoing debates and challenges exist regarding its predictive power and applicability in diverse contexts.

2.6.3 Realism Theory

Realism theory in international relations is a significant paradigm that emphasizes the importance of power, security, and the state as the primary actors in world politics (Coogan & Mearsheimer, 2002). This theory, particularly offensive realism, as proposed by Mearsheimer, asserts that states are primarily concerned with their survival and are therefore inclined to maximize their power (Coogan & Mearsheimer, 2002).

Realism also critiques modernity and emphasizes a sceptical epistemology, which sets it apart from other international relations theories (Rösch, 2016). Besides, it is asserted that realism explains the forces that governments are subject to and is a theory of international politics as well as foreign policy (D'Anieri, 2019). Furthermore, classical realism is experiencing a resurgence in the study of international relations (Schuett, 2010). Nonetheless, realism has faced criticism due to its limited emphasis on power dynamics, as well as its inability to sufficiently consider the intricacies of both domestic politics and international relations (Putnam 1988). Another aspect that questions the rational actor assumption within realist international relations theory is the unclear nature of rationality in state actions, a point that lacks clarity in classical realism, neorealism, and neoclassical realism, (Schmidt and Wight 2023).

Realism's emphasis on power and state-centric perspectives has been both its strength and weakness. Although it offers a clear grasp of state action and international politics, it has come under fire for ignoring non-state players and transnational issues and oversimplifying processes of complicated international relations. Additionally, the assumption of rationality in state behaviour, which is not

essential to realism, raises questions about the theory's ability to fully explain state actions (Schmidt & Wight, 2023).

In summary, realism theory in international relations, particularly offensive realism, has made significant contributions to understanding state behaviour and international politics. However, its narrow focus and assumptions about state behaviour have also been subject to criticism, highlighting the need for a more comprehensive approach to understanding international relations.

2.7 Application of the Realism Theory to the Current study

The study investigated the influence of Zambia's membership in regional organizations on its foreign policy and regional integration initiatives, using realism theory as its theoretical framework. Realism theory places significant emphasis on the role of national interests and state power in shaping foreign policy decisions. It suggests that states are primarily driven by self-preservation and security concerns, and they seek to pursue their interests through alliances and cooperation when it is beneficial for them. When examining Zambia's membership in regional organizations, realism theory suggests that the country's foreign policy choices are driven by the need to ensure security and advance national interests. Zambia's participation in regional organizations such as COMESA and SADC can be seen as an effort to strengthen regional security and influence.

Moreover, realism theory argues that Zambia's involvement in these regional organizations is motivated by its desire to promote political and economic interests. Active engagement in regional trade agreements and collaborative initiatives can help Zambia expand its market access and take advantage of economic opportunities.

Realism theory also suggests that Zambia's participation in regional organizations may be influenced by the behaviour of other states in the region. The theory highlights power dynamics and interstate competition as factors that shape a nation's foreign policy choices. Zambia may seek to strengthen alliances and cooperation within regional organizations to counter potential security threats posed by neighbouring countries.

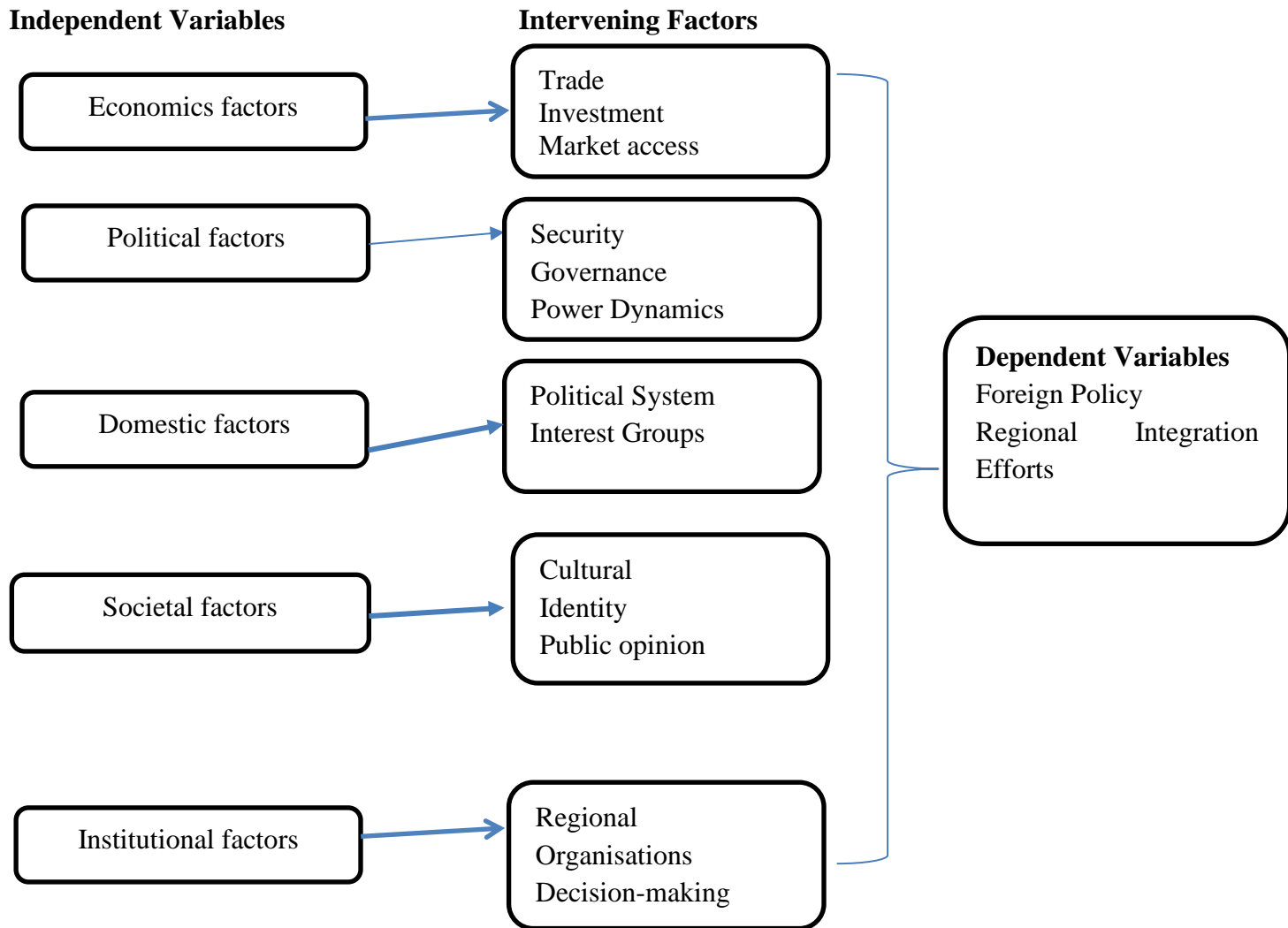
With regard to regional integration efforts, realism theory suggests that Zambia's involvement in regional organizations is driven more by economic and security interests than a genuine commitment to regional integration. Realism emphasizes the importance of state sovereignty and power, implying that states prioritize their own interests over collective action.

In conclusion, by applying realism theory to analyse Zambia's affiliations with regional organizations and their impact on its foreign policy and regional integration efforts, valuable insights can be gained regarding Zambia's motivations and behaviour in relation to alliance formation and regional cooperation. By considering the influence of power dynamics and national interests, realism theory can help us understand Zambia's strategic decisions and priorities regarding its participation in regional organizations.

2.8 Conceptual Framework

Realism, as a political theory, centers on state power dynamics and the pursuit of national interests. Applied to regional integration, it offers a comprehensive framework encompassing economic, political, social, and environmental aspects. Emphasizing collaboration, shared responsibility, and recognizing interconnectedness, it guides sustainable and inclusive regional development. The interplay between foreign policy and regional integration is evident, where economic well-being and security drive foreign policy decisions. Trade, as a key factor, ensures access to markets and resources, fostering favorable agreements. In the study on Zambia's regional organisation membership, the conceptual framework identifies key variables and intervening factors, providing a basis for analyzing the relationship between membership, foreign policy, and regional integration as presented in the conceptual framework in Figure 1. This approach allows meaningful conclusions regarding the dynamics at play.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework: Impact of Membership in Regional Organisations on Foreign Policy and Integration Efforts



CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The study looks into how Zambia's participation in regional organisations affects her attempts to integrate regionally and her foreign policy. The procedures for gathering, analyzing, and interpreting data to meet the study goals are described in this research methodology. In this study, a thorough research methodology was used, where the review of the literature was conducted, primary and secondary sources were analysed, experts and policymakers were interviewed, and qualitative data analysis methods were used. This chapter shall cover the design of research activities, study areas, populations, sampling strategy, sample sizes, and procedures for data collection and examination.

3.2 Qualitative Research Approach

Qualitative research is a method of inquiry used in various academic fields to explore and understand complex-cultural social and human problems by collecting data in the participant's situation. Researchers interpret the reality constructed by the people under study using an ontology and epistemology approach. This methodology differs from quantitative research methods (Cresswell and Cresswell, 2018). The study used a qualitative approach and constructionism/interpretive paradigm to understand the impact of Zambia's membership in regional organisations on her foreign policy and regional integration efforts. Through interviews and document review, the study gained a broader understanding of the impact of Zambia's membership in regional organisations on her foreign policy and regional integration efforts, which was crucial in answering research questions.

3.3 Case Study Research Design

Qualitative case study research was used. This case study investigates the impact of Zambia's membership in regional bodies on the country's external policy and regional incorporation efforts. By analysing the country's involvement in key regional bodies, like SADC, COMESA, and the AU, this study pursues to understand the degree to which Zambia's engagement with these organisations has influenced its foreign policy decision-making and promoted regional integration.

3.4 Study Population

A target population is a collection of cases or elements, such as people, things, or events that fit particular requirements and are meant to be used to generalize study findings. This group's unique feature sets it apart from others and makes data collection possible (Johnson & Larry, 2004; McMillan & Schumacher, 2001; Best & Kahn, 2006). The people and organisations involved in Zambia's foreign policy execution and decision-making processes made up the majority of the study population for a study on the country's membership in regional organisations and how it affects regional integration and foreign policy. The study population of 25 personnel from various as follows:

- a. Five (5) Policymakers, diplomats, and representatives from pertinent government ministries and agencies in charge of external policy.
- b. Five (5) Regional organisations and their representatives: This group consists of representatives and specialized agencies and commissions from regional organisations.
- c. Five (5) Organisations that are part of civil society include non-governmental groups, think tanks, educational establishments, and research centers that concentrate on international relations, foreign policy, and regional integration.
- d. Five (5) Business community: Representatives from the private sector, including multinational corporations, local businesses, and industry associations interested in regional integration and foreign policy matters.
- e. Five (5) Academics and experts: Individuals with expertise in international relations, regional integration, political science, and economics who can provide valuable insights and analysis on the topic.

The study also benefited from including a diverse sample that reflected different perspectives and experiences, such as politicians, journalists, community leaders, and ordinary citizens, to capture a comprehensive view of the impact of Zambia's membership in regional organisations on foreign policy and regional integration.

3.5 Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample for this study involved individuals and organisations involved in Zambia's foreign policy and regional integration efforts. It included government officials, diplomats, members of regional organisations, think tanks and research institutions, academics, and experts in the field. Additionally, citizens and businesses affected by Zambia's membership in regional organisations were included in the sample. A convenient sample of 25 subjects was selected from personnel within Zambia.

A combination of purposive and random sampling techniques was used in this study. Purposive sampling involved selecting individuals and organisations directly impacting Zambia's foreign policy and regional integration. This ensured that the sample represented key stakeholders who provided valuable insights into the topic. For example, it included government officials responsible for foreign affairs and regional integration, representatives of regional organisations such as international relations, and regional integration experts.

Simple random sampling was adopted to include a variety of perspectives and experiences from a broader population affected by Zambia's membership in regional organisations. This involved selecting citizens and businesses randomly from different regions of Zambia and assessing their views on the impact of regional organisations on the country's foreign policy and regional integration efforts. For example, random sampling involved selecting citizens from randomly chosen businesses from different industry sectors.

Table 1: Sample Profile

SER	SAMPLE	NUMBER
01	Government officials	05
02	Regional organisations and their representatives	05
03	Civil society organisations	05
03	Business community	05
04	Academics and experts	05
	Total	25

3.6 Data Collection

This research utilised qualitative methods, primarily document analysis, and semi-structured interviews. The study gathered relevant primary and secondary data sources, including official documents, policy papers, and reports from regional organisations, and conducted interviews with key stakeholders such as government officials, diplomats, and experts in regional integration and foreign policy.

The study employed a longitudinal approach, analysing Zambia's membership in regional organisations over a specific period, e.g., the last two decades. This methodology has allowed a detailed assessment of the cumulative effect of membership on foreign policy, as well as Regional Integration.

3.7 Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was used to examine the data and find key themes and trends that appeared in the data that was gathered. The research explored how Zambia's membership in regional organisations has shaped its foreign policy priorities, influenced its decision-making process, and impacted regional integration efforts. The analysis considered the challenges faced by Zambia in navigating regional organisations and the benefits it has gained from active participation.

To conduct this thematic data analysis, interviews, and a systematic literature review were performed, analysed peer-reviewed articles, policy papers, government documents, and reports from international organisations. The data collected was then organised thematically to identify key themes related to the impact of Zambia's regional organisation membership on foreign policy and regional integration efforts.

The researcher created a coding framework or thematic classification system that helped organise and analyse the data. The research identified themes relevant to the objectives and created codes representing these themes. For instance, emerging themes included economic integration, political cooperation, security, trade, foreign policy coordination, and regional decision-making. The themes

highlighted the crucial role of regional organisations in shaping Zambia's engagement with other African states and its pursuit of regional integration and development.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

When conducting a study on Zambia's membership in regional organisations and its impact on foreign policy and regional integration efforts, several ethical considerations were addressed:

- a. **Informed Consent:** The study made sure that all participants, including citizens and public servants, knew the full aim, advantages, and dangers of participating in the research.
- b. **Privacy and Confidentiality:** The researcher ensured the confidentiality of participants' responses and protected their personal information.
- c. **Impartiality and Objectivity:** The researcher maintained a neutral and unbiased approach throughout the study and ensured that the research findings were communicated objectively, without any political or ideological bias.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION & ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The important conclusions drawn from in-depth document analysis and semi-structured interviews are covered in this chapter. The research aimed to address the following research questions: How has Zambia's membership in regional organisations influenced its foreign policy objectives and priorities? To what extent has Zambia's participation in regional organisations promoted regional integration within Southern Africa? What challenges and opportunities arise from Zambia's membership in regional organisations, and how do they affect the country's foreign policy and regional integration efforts?

4.2 Description of Research Participants

4.2.1 Gender of Respondents

The gender of the participants is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 2: Gender of Respondents

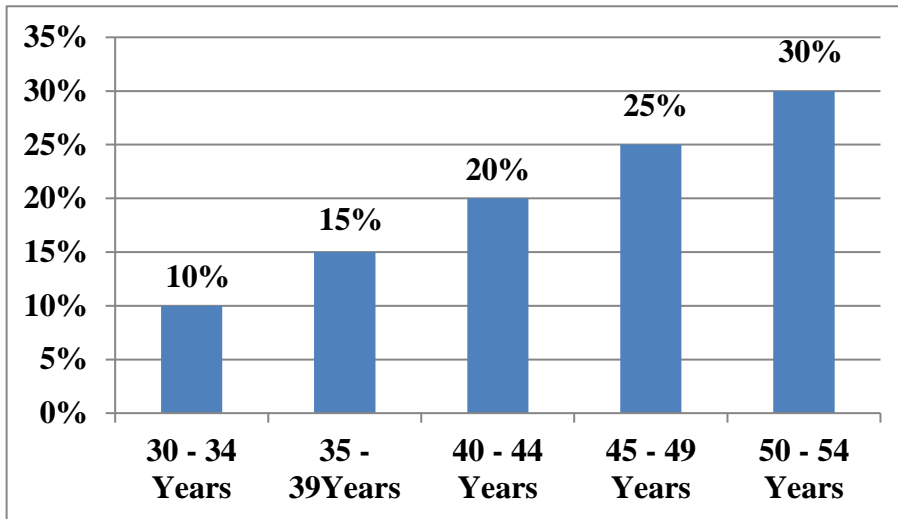
SER	SAMPLE	FREQUENCY	MALE	FEMALE
01	Government officials	05	03	02
02	Regional organisations and their representatives	05	02	03
03	Civil society organisations	05	04	01
03	Business community	05	03	02
04	Academics and experts	05	04	01
	Total	25	16	09

Source: Field Data (2023)

4.2.2 Age of Respondents

Figure 2 below presents the age of the respondents.

Figure 2: Age of Respondents

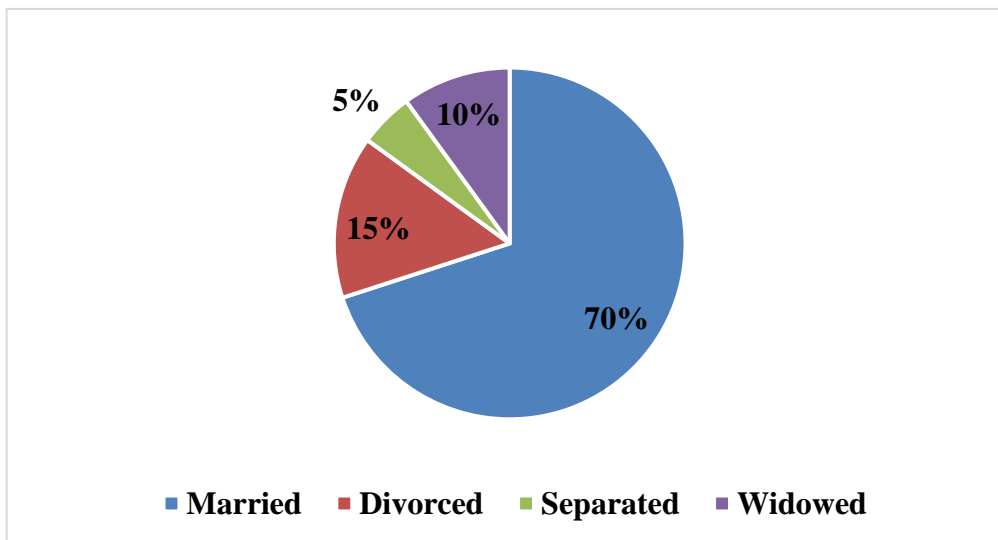


Source: Field Data (2023)

4.2.3 Marital Status

The respondents' marital status is as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Marital Status of the Respondents

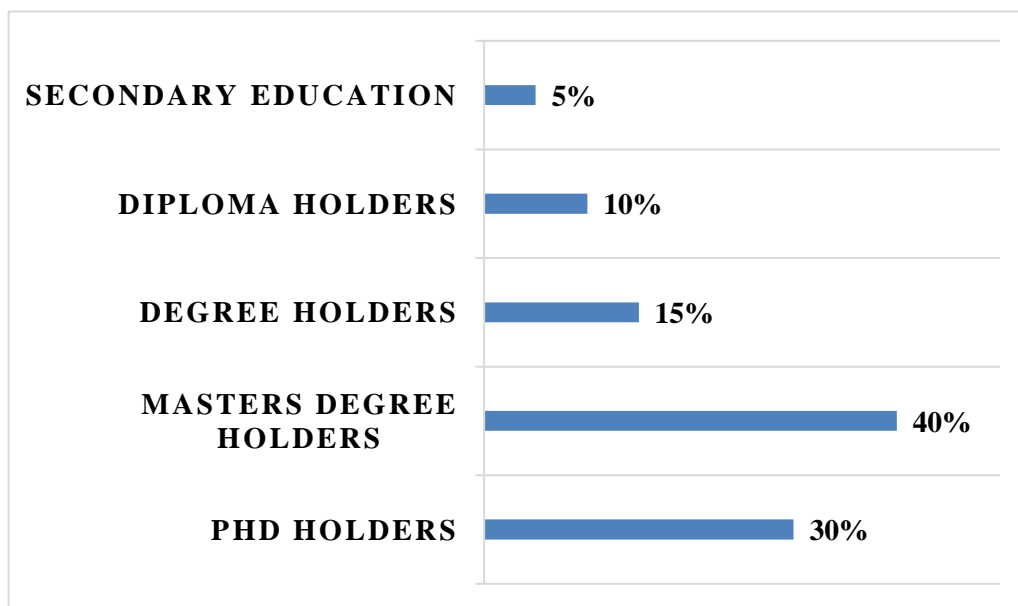


Source: Field Data (2023)

4.6.4 Respondents' Highest Level of Education

The study revealed that most of those interviewed had attained master's degree education accounting for 40%, PhD holders 30%, degree holders 15%, diploma holders 10%, and secondary school certificate holders 5%.

Figure 4: Education Level of Respondents



Source: Field Data (2023)

4.3 How has Zambia's membership in regional organisations influenced its foreign policy objectives and priorities?

The first research question of the study focused on the influence of Zambia's membership in regional organisations on her foreign policy objectives and priorities. This section presents and discusses the research findings on this research question.

4.3.1 Zambia's Current Membership to Regional Organisations

Zambia is an active member of several regional organisations in Africa. Here is an overview of its current membership and involvement in regional organisations:

- a. African Union (AU): Zambia has been an active member of the AU since its formation in 2002. It actively participates in AU activities and events and works towards the organisation's objectives, promoting African peace, security, and development.
- b. Southern African Development Community: Established in 1980, Zambia is a founding member of SADC. The country actively participates in SADC meetings, summits, and various programs. It contributes to the regional integration efforts, especially in trade, infrastructure development, and peace and security.
- c. Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa: Zambia is an active member of COMESA, a Regional Economic Community that promotes trade and economic integration among member states. Zambia actively participates in COMESA's programs, including the Free Trade Area and regional infrastructure development and industrialisation initiatives.
- d. East African Community (EAC): Although not geographically located in East Africa, Zambia has been engaged in various activities of the EAC. It participates in discussions and programs related to trade, infrastructure development, and regional integration with the EAC member countries.
- e. African Development Bank (AfDB): Zambia is a regional member of the AfDB and actively collaborates with the bank to access financial assistance for development projects. The country benefits from various programs and initiatives the AfDB provides to support economic growth, poverty reduction, and infrastructure development.
- f. United Nations Economic Commission for Africa: Zambia is a member of UNECA, which focuses on promoting economic and social development in Africa. The country actively participates in UNECA's meetings, conferences, and research initiatives to address regional development challenges and promote sustainable growth.

Zambia's commitment to regional cooperation, integration, and collective development initiatives in Africa is demonstrated by its membership in and involvement with several regional organisations.

Zambia seeks to advance socioeconomic development, peace, and stability both inside its boundaries and in the broader regional environment by actively participating.

4.3.2 Reasons for Zambia's Membership in Regional Organisations

The landlocked nation of Zambia, located in Southern Africa, has long recognized the importance of regional integration and cooperation. It has taken an active stance in participating in COMESA and SADC, which are part of its Regional Economic Community. This section covers the primary justifications for Zambia's involvement in these regional organizations.

One of the respondents had this to say on the reasons for Zambia joining Regional Organisations;

I think Zambia joins regional organisations for political, economic reasons in pursuance of the country's interest (Study Participant, 2024).

Zambia's membership in regional organizations can be attributed to several reasons. Firstly, regional integration has proven beneficial for Zambia, particularly through its participation in COMESA. Research indicates that Zambia has derived advantages from COMESA programs, such as the development of infrastructure at shared border posts with neighboring countries (Jambo & Sundjo, 2021). This suggests that membership in regional organizations offers opportunities for economic development and collaboration. Such memberships bring about numerous benefits for countries like Zambia, including the promotion of economic growth, the enhancement of political stability, the facilitation of regional integration, and the encouragement of cooperation among member nations. By joining these organizations, Zambia demonstrates its commitment to regional cooperation and its eagerness to capitalize on the opportunities they provide.

a. Economic Development

One of the primary reasons for Zambia's participation in regional organizations is to promote economic development. Organizations like COMESA and SADC provide a larger market for Zambian goods and services, which boosts export potential. COMESA, for example, offers preferential trade agreements, such as the Free Trade Area, which eliminates trade barriers among member states. As a result, Zambia gains access to a wider market, which helps its industries grow.

Regional organizations also provide opportunities for economic cooperation and development initiatives. Through platforms like SADC's Regional Infrastructure Development Master Plan, Zambia can attract investment for infrastructure development. This approach helps address infrastructure deficiencies and improves regional connectivity, trade facilitation, and tourism.

Zambia's involvement in the region has been influenced by its relationship with China. Concerns about economic dominance by foreign powers have been raised due to Chinese investments in Zambia. In response, Zambia has established organizations to support local ownership and economic empowerment, such as the Citizens Economic Empowerment Commission (Kragelund, 2012). This suggests that addressing economic challenges and ensuring a fairer allocation of resources may be the driving force behind Zambia's membership in regional organizations.

b. Environmental Factors

Environmental factors like droughts and climate variability influence Zambia's membership in regional organisations. Southern Africa, including Zambia, has experienced spatial and temporal variability in rainfall patterns, which can have significant socio-economic impacts (Richard et al., 2001). Regional organisations can provide platforms for collaboration and resource-sharing to address common environmental challenges.

c. Political Stability

Another significant reason for Zambia's membership in regional organisations is to foster political stability. These organisations act as platforms for dialogue, peacekeeping, and conflict resolution, which is crucial for maintaining regional stability. By actively participating in regional initiatives, Zambia can promote peace and security. For example, Zambia played a role in resolving conflicts in neighbouring states, like mediating in the Democratic Republic of Congo peace process.

Moreover, regional organisations ensure that member states adhere to democratic principles and good governance practices. Regional actors monitor and support Zambia's electoral processes through

mechanisms like the SADC Electoral Observation Missions. This strengthens democratic institutions and ensures transparent and credible elections, contributing to political stability.

d. Regional Integration

A desire for regional integration is the main motivation behind Zambia's membership in regional organizations. These organizations provide platforms for policy harmonization, regional cooperation, and cultural exchanges. Zambia acknowledges that regional integration is vital for achieving sustainable development, poverty reduction, and social cohesion.

By participating in regional integration initiatives, Zambia can benefit from the freedom to trade goods, services, and people. This strengthens cross-border trade, attracts investment, and promotes tourism. The removal of trade barriers and the adoption of common standards ensure a more efficient and competitive business environment. Additionally, regional organizations facilitate collaboration in education, health, and technology, leading to knowledge sharing and the development of human capital.

Various factors, such as foreign policy objectives, economic development, political stability, environmental considerations, and regional integration, drive Zambia's membership in regional organizations. By joining platforms like COMESA and SADC, Zambia aims to enhance trade opportunities, attract investment, promote peace and security, and encourage cultural exchange. These organizations play a crucial role in promoting regional cooperation and integration, and Zambia's active participation demonstrates its commitment to capitalizing on the benefits of regional collaboration. Through its membership, Zambia aims to leverage regional mechanisms, policies, and initiatives to address its developmental challenges and contribute to the overall progress of Southern Africa.

4.3.3 Membership in Regional Organisations: Influence on Zambia's Foreign Policy

The impact of Zambia's membership in regional organizations on its foreign policy and efforts towards regional integration is worth noting. Zambia's foreign policy is influenced both domestically by the

ruling party and the president (Ndambwa & Siwale, 2022). While the president plays a significant role in shaping Zambia's foreign policy, the views of the ruling party also hold weight in policy decisions. According to Ndambwa & Siwale (2022), external factors, such as the initiatives of regional organizations like the African Union (AU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), have a greater influence on Zambia's foreign policy.

One of the respondents had this to say on the influence on Zambia's foreign policy;

I think regional organisations can shape Zambia's foreign policy agenda by prioritizing specific issues relevant to it. The focus on peace and security in Africa influences Zambia's own focus on regional security issues, as evidenced by its historical involvement in peacekeeping missions in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Angola. (Study Participant, 2024).

Zambia's foreign policy framework is shaped by various actors, including industry and government institutions, as well as local and international interests. The interactions between these actors determine Zambia's foreign policy objectives and trajectory (Shaw, 1976). Over time, Zambia's regional strategy has undergone significant changes since the end of the Kaunda administration, indicating a shift in goals and strategies (Ndambwa & Siwale, 2022). This implies that Zambia's foreign policy objectives and the dynamic nature of regional politics impact the country's membership in regional organizations.

Regional organizations play a vital role in shaping Zambia's foreign policy by providing a platform for cooperation and integration with other countries (Shaw, 1976). Zambia recognizes the importance of regional integration in achieving its foreign policy objectives. Through its membership in regional organizations, such as SADC, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), and the AU, Zambia has been able to positively influence its foreign policy goals. This has allowed the nation to assert itself on the international and regional stage and advocate for its interests.

Zambia's membership in SADC has proven to be crucial for its foreign policy objectives. Established in 1980, SADC aims to promote regional cooperation and integration among its member states. Zambia's engagement with SADC has facilitated its pursuit of economic development and regional

stability, fostering closer ties with neighboring countries. For example, through its participation in SADC, Zambia has contributed to the development of vital infrastructure projects like the Kazungula Bridge, linking Zambia to Botswana. This has led to reduced trade barriers and stimulated economic growth. Additionally, SADC provides a platform for dialogue among member states, enabling Zambia to address regional security concerns, such as cross-border crime or conflicts, through collective action and collaboration. Furthermore, Zambia's membership in COMESA plays a significant role in shaping its foreign policy objectives. COMESA, founded in 1994, aims to establish a substantial economic integration area by promoting trade, investment, and industrialization among member states. For Zambia, being a member of COMESA has provided valuable opportunities for market expansion, attracting foreign direct investment, and fostering economic diversification. Through the facilitation of the Continental Free Trade Agreement by COMESA, Zambia has strengthened its trade relations with other members such as Egypt, Kenya, and Zimbabwe. This integration within COMESA has enabled Zambia to leverage its natural resources and agricultural products, ultimately benefiting its economy and foreign policy interests.

In addition, Zambia's membership in the AU has influenced its foreign policy objectives by providing a platform for African unity and collective action. Established in 2002, the AU aims to promote peace, security, and socio-economic development on the African continent. Zambia's participation in the AU has allowed it to shape the African agenda, particularly regarding peacekeeping and conflict resolution. For instance, Zambia has actively supported regional peace interventions, including deploying troops to participate in AU and United Nations-led missions, such as the United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID). Through these peacekeeping efforts, Zambia has demonstrated its commitment to regional stability and bolstered its reputation as a responsible global partner.

To address concerns about foreign domination in the economy, particularly regarding Chinese investments, Zambia has enacted nationalist initiatives, such as the Citizens Economic Empowerment Commission (Kragelund, 2012). Domestic factors are also crucial in determining Zambia's foreign policy. The significance of internal affairs as components of economic diplomacy was emphasized in the country's foreign policy under President Chiluba (Ndambwa & Siwale, 2022). This emphasizes the importance of considering domestic sources while formulating an international strategy.

Zambia's membership in regional organizations such as SADC, COMESA, and the AU has positively influenced its foreign policy objectives in multiple ways. These organizations have provided platforms for economic integration, regional cooperation, and collective action, allowing Zambia to advance its regional and global interests. Through these memberships, Zambia has realized tangible benefits, including enhanced trade opportunities, infrastructure development, and active involvement in peacekeeping missions. As Zambia continues to actively participate in these regional organizations, it will further shape its foreign policy objectives and strengthen its position within the international community. Through its membership in various regional organizations, Zambia has undergone noteworthy changes in its foreign policy stance. These shifts have become especially apparent in its diplomatic engagements, economic partnerships, and endeavors toward regional integration. Through active participation in regional forums, Zambia has effectively leveraged regional cooperation to affirm its interests, enhance its economic connections, and advance sustainable development within the Southern African region.

a. Zambia's Membership in Regional Organisations: Negative Influence on her Foreign policy goals.

Zambia has demonstrated a strong commitment to participating in and leading numerous regional organizations, including the COMESA and the SADC. Although these organizations play a crucial role in fostering regional cooperation, Zambia's foreign policy goals have not always been in line with their influence.

Zambia's participation in regional organizations has sometimes diverted its economic resources from achieving its foreign policy objectives. For instance, the country's membership in COMESA and the associated free trade commitments pressured the government to liberalize its market, potentially limiting its ability to protect domestic industries. This diversion of resources towards regional integration has occasionally hindered Zambia's pursuit of fruitful foreign policy options beyond its borders.

The influence of Zambia's membership in regional organizations on its foreign policy objectives and priorities has been a topic of interest in existing literature, reflecting the country's dedication to regional cooperation and its implications on broader diplomatic strategies.

The literature highlights the multiple reasons behind Zambia's involvement with COMESA and SADC. Economic development emerges as a central motivation, with scholars noting the advantages of regional integration in promoting trade opportunities, attracting investment, and fostering economic growth (Jambo & Sundjo, 2021). For instance, Zambia's participation in COMESA's Free Trade Area is highlighted as instrumental in expanding market access and facilitating industrial development (Kragelund, 2012).

Furthermore, the literature emphasizes the role of regional organizations in addressing political stability and security concerns. By providing platforms for dialogue, peacekeeping, and conflict resolution, entities like SADC contribute to maintaining regional stability (Ndambwa & Siwale, 2022). Zambia's involvement in regional peace processes, including mediation efforts in neighboring states, underscores its commitment to fostering political stability through regional cooperation.

Environmental factors also shape Zambia's regional engagement, with scholars highlighting the importance of platforms for collaboration in addressing common environmental challenges (Richard et al., 2001). This aligns with Zambia's recognition of the significance of regional initiatives in mitigating the socio-economic impacts of environmental phenomena such as droughts and climate variability.

Moreover, the literature underscores the impact of regional integration on Zambia's foreign policy framework. Regional organizations serve as conduits for promoting African unity, peacekeeping efforts, and socio-economic development on the continent (Shaw, 1976). Zambia's participation in the AU and SADC not only facilitates regional cooperation but also enables the country to shape the African agenda and contribute to collective efforts towards peace and security (Ndambwa & Siwale, 2022).

However, alongside the benefits, scholars also acknowledge potential challenges associated with Zambia's membership in regional organizations. Concerns about economic domination by foreign powers, particularly Chinese investments, have prompted nationalist initiatives aimed at ensuring local ownership and economic empowerment (Kragelund, 2012). Additionally, Zambia's regional commitments have at times constrained its autonomy in foreign policy matters, raising questions about the balance between regional cooperation and national interests (Ndambwa & Siwale, 2022).

4.4 To what extent has Zambia's participation in regional organisations promoted regional integration within Southern Africa?

The second research question focused on the extent Zambia's participation in regional organisations has promoted regional integration within Southern Africa. This section presents and discusses the research findings on this research question.

4.4.1 How Zambia Has Facilitated Regional Integration Efforts

Zambia has actively participated in a diverse array of regional organizations, such as SADC and COMESA, over the years. Its involvement in these organizations has been fundamental in advancing economic development and collaboration, promoting regional integration, and resolving disputes across the continent. Through its proactive diplomacy, active participation in decision-making processes, and steadfast dedication to the objectives of these organizations, Zambia has played a vital role. Moreover, Zambia holds a significant position in regional trade and infrastructure development due to its strategic geographical location and abundant natural resources.

On the question of the extent of how Zambia facilitated regional integration efforts one of the study participant had this to say;

Given its central location, Zambia has facilitated trade by allowing movements of goods and services in its territory...Currently, Zimbabwe is going through economic challenges and is surviving through Zambia by getting its essentials. Kenya wants to fight food shortages by importing maize from Zambia. Zambia has been advocating for one stop border posts (Study Participant, 2024).

Within COMESA and SADC, Zambia has been actively engaged in initiatives for regional integration. The primary objective of these regional trade blocs is to facilitate economic integration and collaboration among member nations. Kamau's (2010) study provides empirical evidence on the impact of regional integration on economic growth within the COMESA, East African Community (EAC), and SADC trade blocs. The findings indicate that trade and economic integration, whether pursued individually or collectively, have a positive and substantial effect on growth. These results suggest that Zambia's participation in these regional integration programs may contribute to its economic growth.

Ebaidalla and Yahia (2014) compare the performance of trade integration within the ASEAN with that of intra-COMESA trade integration. The report underlines the importance of fostering regional cooperation among COMESA countries to enhance trade integration. To strengthen Zambia's commercial ties with other COMESA members, the report concludes with policy recommendations for enhancing regional cooperation within the organization.

Zambia's strategic geographical location and abundant natural resources position it as a crucial player in regional trade. As a member of COMESA, which seeks to promote economic integration, Zambia actively facilitates intra-regional trade. For instance, Zambia participated in establishing the COMESA Free Trade Area, which aimed to reduce trade barriers and promote the flow of goods and services within the area. This has not only benefitted Zambia's economy but has also fostered economic growth among member states.

The findings of Kamau's study are in line with Adika's (2020) discussion of the challenges and prospects for achieving economic progress within COMESA. The paper underscores the geographical proximity of COMESA member countries to the SADC region. This implies that Zambia, as a member of both COMESA and SADC, can leverage its geographic location to strengthen regional integration efforts and support economic growth. These references exemplify Zambia's commitment to regional integration initiatives within COMESA and SADC. By actively participating in these trade blocs, Zambia can reap the benefits of increased trade opportunities, economic growth, and cooperation with neighbouring countries. In addition to its economic integration efforts, Zambia has actively pursued regional political cooperation through its involvement in SADC. By participating in various SADC

summits, Zambia has made significant contributions to regional discussions and decisions regarding security, governance, and conflict resolution. A notable example of Zambia's influence in SADC is its instrumental role in mediating the political crisis in Zimbabwe in 2008. The then-President of Zambia, Levy Mwanawasa, played a key role in facilitating a peaceful resolution between Zimbabwean political parties, which demonstrated Zambia's commitment to regional stability and conflict resolution.

Zambia, as a member of SADC, has been highly proactive in promoting regional political collaboration. This finding is consistent with the research conducted by Kaspar et al. (2015), who specifically examined the role of regional integration in advancing peace and security in Southern Africa. This citation underscores Zambia's efforts in advancing regional peace and security while directly addressing the topic of political collaboration. It highlights the collective endeavours of Zambia and other SADC members to enhance political cooperation and stability. Zambia's commitment to regional political cooperation within SADC is evident through its active engagement in addressing these concerns.

Zambia's active involvement in regional organizations such as the SADC and the COMESA has been pivotal in fostering regional integration efforts. Within these organizations, Zambia has actively participated in initiatives aimed at promoting economic development, collaboration, and dispute resolution across the continent. By actively engaging in decision-making processes and remaining dedicated to the objectives of these organizations, Zambia has played a crucial role in advancing regional integration. It suggests that trade and economic integration, pursued individually or collectively, have a positive and substantial effect on growth, thus implying that Zambia's participation in these regional integration programs may contribute to its economic growth.

Similarly, the comparison by Ebaidalla and Yahia (2014) between trade integration within the ASEAN and intra-COMESA trade integration emphasizes the importance of fostering regional cooperation among COMESA countries to enhance trade integration. Zambia's engagement extends beyond economic integration. Its active participation in SADC, as observed in various summits, has significantly contributed to regional discussions and decisions regarding security, governance, and conflict resolution. This aligns with the findings of Kaspar et al. (2015) who highlight the role of

regional integration in promoting peace and security in Southern Africa. A notable example of Zambia's influence is its instrumental role in mediating the 2008 Zimbabwean political crisis, demonstrating its commitment to regional stability and conflict resolution.

4.5 What challenges and opportunities arise from Zambia's membership in regional organisations, and how do they affect the country's foreign policy and regional integration efforts?

This research question focused on the challenges and opportunities that arise from Zambia's membership in regional organisations, and how they affect the country's foreign policy and regional integration efforts. This section presents and discusses the research findings on this research question.

4.5.1 Challenges Hindering Zambia's Contribution to Regional Integration

As a landlocked country, Zambia faces a unique set of challenges that hinder its full potential for contributing to regional integration. Zambia faces several challenges that hinder its contribution to regional integration.

On the question of the challenges hindering Zambia's contribution to regional integration one of the study participant had this to say;

Political instability in some of its neighbouring countries poses a security challenge and resources will never be enough to meet regional requirements (Study Participant, 2024).

a. Geographical Factors

Zambia's landlocked position, surrounded by eight neighbouring countries, poses a vital challenge to regional incorporation. The absence of direct access to ports limits its ability to participate fully in regional trade and transportation networks. Long and expensive transit routes increase costs, delays, and trade inefficiencies. For instance, Zambia relies heavily on Dar es Salaam port in Tanzania, which is far from its borders, resulting in logistical obstacles and increased transport costs.

b. Inadequate Infrastructure

Insufficient infrastructure hampers Zambia's regional integration efforts, particularly in the transport and energy sectors. Dilapidated roads, limited railway connectivity, and underdeveloped energy grids hinder the efficient movement of goods and services within and beyond Zambia's borders. For example, inadequate road networks make it difficult to transport goods to neighbouring countries promptly. Moreover, energy deficits lead to lower production capacities and unreliable power supply, impeding industrial development.

Makondo et al. (2014) argue that one of the significant challenges is the difficulty in accessing markets and poor road infrastructure. This hampers the efficient movement of goods and services, limiting Zambia's ability to participate fully in regional trade. Additionally, shifting market prices and high costs of farming inputs pose challenges for Zambian farmers. These factors make it difficult for them to compete in regional markets and take advantage of regional integration initiatives.

c. Economic Dependencies

Zambia's heavy reliance on the export of critical commodities, such as copper and cobalt, creates economic dependencies that hinder its contribution to regional integration. Overreliance on a few industries makes the country vulnerable to external market fluctuations, reducing its capacity to diversify and cooperate with regional partners effectively. Limited economic diversification challenges Zambia to contribute meaningfully to regional value chains and promote inclusive growth across sectors.

d. Political Interests

Political factors also serve as obstacles to regional integration in Zambia. Political instability, governance issues, and varying domestic policies among regional partners create uncertainties, undermining collaborative efforts for integration. Divergent political interests may also hinder policy harmonisation and impede the effective implementation of regional protocols and agreements, thereby delaying integration progress.

e. Implementation of e-Government

In Zambia, e-government implementation presents another difficulty. Little evidence indicates that attempts are being taken to address these obstacles, despite the vital importance of aspects like money, infrastructure, human capital, change management, leadership, and environmental issues (Weerakkody et al., 2007). As digital connectivity and effective government services are essential for smooth cross-border transactions and collaboration, Zambia's ability to engage effectively in regional integration initiatives can benefit from progress made in the deployment of e-government.

f. Agriculture and Conservation Goals

There is a need to reconcile agriculture and conservation goals in Zambia. While there has been a shift towards integrating poverty alleviation goals, there are still challenges in achieving a balance between agricultural development and the conservation of natural resources (Sayer et al., 2013). This impacts Zambia's ability to contribute to regional integration, as sustainable agricultural practices and environmental conservation are essential components of regional cooperation. Concerning the policy implementation, Zambia has good conditions for adopting an integrated land management approach towards natural resources (O'Connor et al., 2021). Despite the efforts, there remain obstacles in clarifying rights and responsibilities, enhancing stakeholder capacity as well as building a transparency change logic that is universally resonant at different levels of society (O'Connor et al., 2021). To overcome these challenges and take advantage of the landscape approach which is key for regional integration, policy performance can be improved and adequate management of natural resources promoted.

g. Regional Health Initiatives

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented significant challenges for Zambia, such as limited resources, misrepresentation, myths, and vaccine hesitancy, all of which have hindered the country's response to the pandemic (Mudenda et al., 2022). These challenges have the potential to affect Zambia's ability to effectively cooperate with neighboring countries in managing public health emergencies and implementing regional health initiatives.

Zambia faces a range of obstacles that impede its contribution to regional integration. These obstacles include issues related to market accessibility, insufficient road infrastructure, a slow rollout of e-government services, the need to balance conservation and agricultural interests, challenges in policy implementation, and the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak. Addressing these challenges is vital for Zambia to fully engage in regional integration efforts and reap the benefits of increased regional cooperation.

Overcoming the barriers to Zambia's contribution to regional integration necessitates a comprehensive approach. This approach should involve addressing geographical disadvantages and making investments in infrastructure development, particularly in the transport and energy sectors, to enhance connectivity and facilitate trade. Encouraging economic diversification and reducing dependencies on specific commodities will enhance Zambia's resilience to external shocks. Furthermore, fostering political stability, strengthening governance mechanisms, and promoting harmonized policies will create a conducive environment for regional integration efforts. By tackling these challenges, Zambia can actively participate and make substantial contributions to the development and success of regional integration in Southern Africa.

4.5.2 Opportunities for Zambia's Membership in Regional Organisations

The promotion of regional integration and the advancement of Zambia's foreign policy goals are two significant benefits derived from its membership in regional organizations. Active participation in these organizations allows Zambia to enhance its reputation on the international stage, strengthen relations with neighboring countries, foster peace and stability within the region, and expedite economic growth. Given its advantageous location in Southern Africa, Zambia possesses abundant opportunities for regional cooperation and integration. Membership in these organizations provides Zambia with a platform to pursue its foreign policy objectives, promote regional integration, and address common challenges. These organizations offer platforms for regional integration and cooperation, which can facilitate Zambia's multifaceted growth.

On the question of the opportunities for Zambia's membership in regional organisations, one participant had this to say;

Zambia, given its historical engagement in regional initiatives aimed at addressing conflict and instability, acknowledges the pivotal role played by regional organizations in advancing regional peace and security. These aspects are fundamental for her to attract foreign investment and cultivate economic development. (Study Participant, 2024).

One of the primary opportunities lies in the stimulation of regional trade and economic integration. Through its affiliation with COMESA and SADC, Zambia can engage in regional trade agreements, expanding access to markets and reducing trade barriers (Liu et al., 2021). This, in turn, can spur job creation, attract foreign investment, and bolster economic growth. Moreover, regional organizations provide a forum for discussions and cooperation on economic matters, aiding Zambia in aligning its economic plans with regional goals and industry standards.

Furthermore, regional organizations can provide support to Zambia in addressing shared challenges and fostering regional stability. Notably, the SADC and the AU play crucial roles in conflict resolution and peacekeeping efforts within the region (Mudenda et al., 2022). Active participation in these organizations enables Zambia to contribute to regional peace and security, which are indispensable for sustainable development. Zambia's membership in regional organizations also enhances its standing in the global arena. Through active engagement in decision-making processes within these organizations, Zambia can influence regional policies and play a part in developing collective positions on regional and international issues. Such proactive involvement bestows credibility and influence, enabling Zambia to shape the regional narrative and strengthen its voice on global platforms.

Moreover, membership in regional organizations affords Zambia opportunities for collaboration in sectors such as agriculture, health, and infrastructure development. For example, SADC has initiatives in place to promote agricultural development and ensure food security in the region (Kalusopa, 2005). By partaking in these initiatives, Zambia can harness knowledge sharing, technical assistance, and funding opportunities to enhance its agricultural sector. In the health sector, regional organizations such as SADC and the AU can facilitate collaboration in disease surveillance, prevention, and control (Pringle et al., 2019). This holds particular importance for diseases like malaria and COVID-19, which necessitate cross-border cooperation. By engaging with other member states, Zambia can strengthen its healthcare systems, improve access to healthcare services, and enhance efforts in disease control.

Moreover, regional organizations provide platforms for political discourse and cooperation. Zambia's membership in the AU allows it to actively participate in discussions and decision-making processes regarding continental affairs, such as peace, security, governance, and human rights. This engagement enhances Zambia's influence and voice in regional and international affairs, presenting opportunities for trade, economic integration, and collaboration in various sectors, addressing common challenges, and promoting regional stability. Through strategic involvement in these organizations, Zambia can leverage regional cooperation to achieve its development goals and contribute to the overall progress of the region.

Membership in regional organizations also enables Zambia to strengthen its relationships with neighboring countries. By fostering collaboration and cooperation, Zambia can build trust and deepen diplomatic ties, resulting in enhanced political, economic, and security partnerships. These strengthened partnerships contribute to increased regional stability and peace, as well as the resolution of inter-state conflicts through dialogue and mediation.

Participation in regional organizations further allows Zambia to actively engage in conflict prevention, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding efforts. Through leveraging its diplomatic capabilities and contributing to regional security initiatives, Zambia plays a significant role in conflict resolution and the promotion of regional stability. This not only benefits Zambia but also strengthens the overall security framework of the region, attracting investment and fostering economic growth.

Furthermore, Zambia's membership in regional organizations facilitates regional economic integration, opening doors for trade and investment opportunities. By establishing initiatives such as a free trade area, Zambia can attract foreign direct investment, enhance its export capabilities, and access regional markets. This economic integration reduces trade barriers, promotes economic diversification, and supports sustainable development in both Zambia and the wider region.

Overall, the challenges and opportunities arising from Zambia's membership in regional organizations are intricately linked to the existing academic literature on topics such as regional integration, foreign policy, and development studies. Zambia's landlocked status and inadequate infrastructure present considerable challenges to its regional integration endeavors. Previous research, exemplified by

Makondo et al. (2014), underscores the influence of geographical factors on market accessibility and transportation efficiency. The reliance on distant ports and the condition of road networks contribute to trade inefficiencies, impeding Zambia's full participation in regional trade networks. Addressing these challenges corresponds with existing literature advocating for infrastructure development as a prerequisite for enhancing regional connectivity and facilitating trade. The heavy reliance on commodity exports, particularly copper and cobalt, underscores Zambia's vulnerability to fluctuations in the external market. This economic dependency, as highlighted in the study, limits Zambia's ability to diversify its economy and fully engage in regional value chains. Literature on economic diversification and sustainable development emphasizes the importance of striking a balance between economic objectives and environmental conservation, a challenge Zambia faces in its pursuit of regional integration.

Political instability and governance issues pose obstacles to regional integration in Zambia. The study pinpoints divergent political interests and the harmonization of policies as key challenges. This aligns with existing research on the interplay between politics, governance, and regional cooperation, emphasizing the role of stable governance structures in facilitating integration.

The COVID-19 pandemic underscores the significance of regional health initiatives and cooperation. The study highlights challenges such as resource constraints and vaccine hesitancy, which impede Zambia's response to the pandemic. This resonates with literature on global health governance and regional collaboration in disease control. Addressing health challenges within the regional context is crucial for strengthening healthcare systems and promoting resilience to future crises.

Despite these challenges, Zambia's membership in regional organizations presents numerous opportunities for economic cooperation, peacebuilding, and political engagement. Literature on regional trade agreements, peacekeeping efforts, and economic integration supports the study's findings on the potential benefits of regional engagement. The examples cited, such as Zambia's involvement in the SADC mediation efforts in Zimbabwe, highlight the practical implications of regional cooperation for peace and stability.

Being a member of regional organizations provides Zambia with platforms for collaboration in various sectors, including agriculture, infrastructure, and healthcare. The study emphasizes knowledge sharing and technical assistance, which aligns with existing literature on the role of regional bodies in promoting sectoral development. By leveraging regional partnerships, Zambia can address common challenges and harness resources for sustainable development.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Conclusion

The study on Zambia's membership in regional organizations and its impact on foreign policy and regional integration efforts has important implications. Zambia's active participation in these organizations shapes its foreign policy agenda, provides a platform for diplomatic dialogue, promotes national interests, and contributes to regional decision-making.

Joining regional organizations has increased Zambia's diplomatic influence and visibility internationally. It allows the country to have a stronger voice and participate in initiatives for cooperation, peace, and economic integration. Membership has also facilitated Zambia's efforts toward regional integration by opening up economic collaboration, trade liberalization, and investment opportunities. The country has been able to participate in regional development projects, infrastructure initiatives, and cross-border cooperation, strengthening regional integration efforts in Southern Africa.

Zambia's membership allows it to address regional challenges collectively, such as security threats, cross-border crime, and environmental issues. Working with other member states enables Zambia to leverage collective resources and expertise. However, membership in regional organizations also presents challenges. While Zambia benefits from increased diplomatic influence, it must allocate resources and uphold membership obligations, which can strain its foreign policy capabilities and limit autonomous initiatives.

Despite Zambia's active participation, barriers to seamless integration remain, including divergent national interests, economic disparities, and political differences among member states. Continued dialogue and negotiation are necessary to find consensus and promote inclusive regional integration.

In conclusion, the study demonstrates that Zambia's membership in regional organizations has positively impacted its foreign policy agenda and regional integration efforts. It provides a platform for diplomatic engagement, enhances international influence, and facilitates collaboration toward common goals. Ongoing efforts are required to address challenges and achieve deeper regional integration in Southern Africa.

5.2 Recommendations

5.2.1 Strengthening Economic Diversification

To bolster Zambia's impact on regional organisations, the country should prioritise economic diversification efforts. Currently, Zambia heavily relies on copper mining as its main source of revenue, making it vulnerable to price fluctuations and market uncertainties. By diversifying its economy through promoting areas in agriculture, tourism, and industries, Zambia can offer more to regional organisations in terms of economic growth, trade opportunities, and job creation. Tanzania serves as an inspiring example of how a diversified economy can boost a nation's weight in regional organisations, as its agricultural and tourism sectors significantly contribute to its influence within the East African Community (EAC).

5.2.2 Promoting Stable Governance

To increase its influence within regional organisations, Zambia needs to prioritise stable governance. Ensuring political stability, a robust rule of law, and strong institutions will enhance the country's credibility and attractiveness as a reliable partner. Establishing transparent and accountable governance practices will not only strengthen Zambia's standing within regional organisations but also foster domestic development and attract foreign investment. Rwanda's remarkable progress in governance reforms has resulted in its significant influence in the African Union (AU), enabling it to shape regional policies and initiatives.

5.2.3 Fostering Regional Collaboration

Effective regional collaboration plays a vital role in enhancing Zambia's influence within regional organisations. By actively partnering with neighboring countries and actively engaging in regional programs and initiatives, Zambia can strengthen its voice and impact on decision-making processes. This collaboration can focus on numerous sectors, such as infrastructure development, energy cooperation, and cross-border trade facilitation. The success of joint projects, like the Kazungula Bridge connecting Zambia and Botswana, is a prime example of regional collaboration that strengthens Zambia's position within SADC and COMESA.

5.3.4 Investing in Human Capital Development

Zambia should make investing in the development of human capital a top priority if it wants to strengthen its position and influence in regional organisations. Improving healthcare, education, and career training will provide Zambians with the know-how and capacities needed to effectively participate in regional projects. In addition, encouraging gender parity and women's involvement in decision-making will open doors and broaden viewpoints in regional organisations. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has seen Ghana's influence grow as a result of its investments in healthcare and education, highlighting the significance of human capital development for regional leadership.

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APPENDIX A: RESEARCH INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Zambia's Membership to Regional Organisations: Impact on Foreign Policy and Regional Integration Efforts

Introduction

My name is Nadi Chafwa Nyirenda and I am currently working towards a Masters in Politics and International Relations at the University of Lusaka. As part of the requirements, I am conducting a study on Zambia's Membership to Regional Organisation: Impact on Foreign Policy and Regional Integration Efforts. The responses to this survey will be kept anonymous and only used for academic purposes. No identities of specific people will be disclosed in any reports to guarantee confidentiality. Thank you for your participation.

For any queries, please contact me on chafwa@gmail.com

Section 1: Personal Background

1. What is your sex?
Male
Female
2. What is your marital status?
Single
Married
Widowed
Divorce
3. What is the level of your education?
Secondary
College
University
Other (specify).....
4. What is your age group?
30-34 years
35-39 years
40-44 years
45- 49 years
50- 54 years

5. Please provide a brief introduction of yourself and your role in relation to foreign policy and regional integration in Zambia.

.....

6. How long have you been involved in this field?

.....

Section 2: Zambia's Membership to Regional Organisations

7. Can you provide an overview of Zambia's current membership and involvement in regional organisations?

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8. What are the main reasons for Zambia's membership in these regional organisations?

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9. How have these memberships influenced Zambia's foreign policy decisions?

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10. In your opinion, what are the major benefits and challenges of Zambia's membership to regional organisations?

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11. How do you perceive the level of commitment and engagement of Zambia within these organisations?

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12. Have there been any instances or examples where Zambia's membership in regional organisations positively influenced its foreign policy objectives?

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13. Conversely, have there been any instances where Zambia's membership in regional organisations negatively impacted its foreign policy objectives?

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14. Can you explain the role and influence of Zambia within these regional organisations?

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Section 3: Regional Integration Efforts

15. How have Zambia's memberships to regional organisations facilitated regional integration efforts?

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16. What specific measures or initiatives has Zambia taken to contribute to regional integration within these organisations?

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17. Have there been any challenges or obstacles hindering Zambia's contribution to regional integration?

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18. How do other member states perceive Zambia's involvement in regional integration efforts?

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19. What are the major successes achieved by Zambia in regional integration so far?

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20. Can you provide examples of specific areas or sectors where Zambia has benefited from regional integration efforts?

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Section 4: Future Prospects and Recommendations

21. What are the future prospects and goals for Zambia's membership in regional organisations in terms of foreign policy and regional integration?

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22. What improvements or changes do you believe are necessary for Zambia to increase its impact and influence within these organisations?

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23. How can Zambia enhance its role in regional integration efforts and achieve long-term sustainable benefits?

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24. Do you have any other comments or insights regarding this topic?

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Appendix B: Similarity Report

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