Chapter 6

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS
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In a world where economic partnership and integration is increasingly being used as a means of fostering economic growth and increasing the livelihood of citizens, African leaders are using the EU as inspiration to pursue their own goals of an integrated African continent. However, this vision of a united African continent is being overshadowed by the increasing number of regional economic integrated institutions which are currently seen as stepping stones to that greater African unity goal. Although integration in the African continent is not a new concept, the formation of the EU gave African leaders, in the different regions of the continent the strength, to embark on strategies to create a more integrated regional community in order to increase trade and boost political and socio-economic development. In the same line, some of these leaders, in partnership with international donor organisations, have also taken up the challenge to adopt good governance practices as this is considered to be a prerequisite in achieving sustainable development and improving the living standards of its citizens. The importance and relationship of these two issues (economic integration and good governance) in achieving economic growth and development therefore was at the forefront of this research.

The purpose of this study therefore, was to examine the interplay between economic integration and the internal governance of member states by using Cameroon’s membership of CEMAC as a case study. The conclusions presented in this chapter are based on the results from the theoretical and case study analysis. With countries pulling together to boost their development and economic growth, economic integration has increasingly gained focus in the political agenda of many countries across the world.
The Republic of Cameroon like many other African nations is a member of several regional economically integrated institutions such as the Communauté Économique et Monétaire de l’Afrique Centrale. With a very interesting history and economic profile, Cameroon holds a significantly dominant position in the CEMAC institution and within the region. Following the ratification of the CEMAC Treaty in the late 1990s, national sovereignty was greatly been diminished as member states have opted to hand over supreme authority to the CEMAC institution thus rendering its laws superior to national laws. According to the direct applicability clause in the CEMAC convention, policies and decisions taken by the institution under the CEMAC Treaty should be immediately implemented by member states, thereby giving the CEMAC body a significant level of influence over its member states.

Furthermore, CEMAC policies have more influence on the Rule of Law in Cameroon partly because of the direct applicability clause and mainly because of the need for these member states to work together in increasing the attractiveness of the region to foreign direct investors. Additionally, because the CEMAC Treaty is superior to national laws of member states, any policies which are signed under this Treaty is bound to have a high level of influence on the Rule of Law of its member states and as such, Cameroon has changed some of its old laws and adopted new ones to suit CEMAC’s objectives.

Even though CEMAC also has a certain level of influence on both the political stability and control of corruption indicators in Cameroon, this influence is not as great as it is on the rule of law indicator. As much as Cameroon has adjusted some of its laws to ensure, inter alia, transparency, accountability, and stability, the country’s individual pursuit for more direct investment, trade, economic growth, the improvement of the living standards of its citizens, and an improvement of its business climate and reputation in the international
community has led to Biya’s administration embarking on projects to combat corruption and ensure a stable political environment.

Based on the arguments presented in this study, CEMAC member states have given the organisation a significant amount of power which if used efficiently, can lead to a very stable and economically integrated region. Although this research has proven (based on existing literature) that being a member of CEMAC influences Cameroon’s internal governance, using quantitative analysis to examine the relationship between economic integration and the internal governance of member states may produce different results. In addition, as shown in this research, the history of the CEMAC zone and the adoption of a single CFA Franc currency also play a significant influence on the organisation and more importantly on member states, and as such, results may differ across different countries and regions within and beyond the African continent.

Furthermore, there are a wide range of challenges impeding the complete integration of the CEMAC zone and analysing these challenges and their impact on governance may produce different outcomes. The CEMAC Treaty is very impressive on paper without any significant consequence for non-compliance, as such, using its superior power to apply more stringent punishments against non-compliance and / or violations of the Treaty could have more influence on member states. Additionally, this study mainly focused on the control of corruption, political stability, and the rule of law indicators of good governance. Therefore, further study on the impact of economic integration on government effectiveness, voice and accountability, and regulatory quality may have similar or different results. In addition, using different theories such as inter-governmentalism and / or supra-nationalism may be more or less effective in explaining the dynamics between and economically integrated institution such as CEMAC and its impact on the internal governance of member states.
This study helps in shedding more light on the interplay between economic integration and the internal governance of member states, especially in the African context. The case study used in the research is also of a unique nature because of its shared colonial history and use of a single currency with its neighbouring countries, therefore, policy makers in other economically integrated institutions can profit from CEMAC’s macro-economic and fiscal policies (on paper) by creating similar policies and convergence criteria in order to boost integration in their various regions. Additionally if implemented properly, the CEMAC organisation can be used as a template for the integration of the African continent, and the use of a single currency within the region can also be used as framework for the creation of other single currencies across regions in the African continent, as well as the establishment of a single African currency and the creation of a common African market.

CEMAC administrators, policy makers and decision makers can further gain from this study as it gives them more insight into the current political and socio-economic performance of the region, challenges which need to be addressed, and policies which need to be reformed, adopted, and/or strictly implemented in order to achieve the goal of a more integrated free-trade region. The study also helps in understanding the real extent to which the CEMAC organisation influences its member states and the degree to which policies taken within the organisation individually and collectively affects the internal governance of member states.

It is no secret that good governance is directly proportional to per capita growth, however, although the CEMAC institution seeks to harmonise monetary and economic policies of its member states, and increase the economic growth of the region and the livelihood of its population, its lack of focus on good governance practices serves as a major challenge to these goals. Unlike other institutions in the African continent, the CEMAC mandate is not very focused on the subject of good governance of its member states, as such,
using its supranational power to adopt a more stringent and hands-on approach to the implementation of good governance practices across the region may have a different outcome on the internal governance of its member states. In addition, this research gives an insight into the dynamics of economic integration and good governance, the importance of each of the concepts and how they can both, if effectively addressed, lead to an increase in political and socio-economic development, which remains a challenging goal for many African societies.