

# Ethnicity and the formation of the East African Federation: the social aspect in Ugandan context

Direct Research Journal of Social Science and Educational Studies (DRJSSES) Vol.2 (1), pp. 1-16, January 2015

Available online at [directresearchpublisher.org/drjses](http://directresearchpublisher.org/drjses)

ISSN 2449-0806 ©2015 Direct Research Journals Publisher

## Research Paper

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### ABSTRACT

The study examined the influence of ethnicity on the formation of the East African Federation; putting emphasis on the social aspect in Uganda. The study utilised a Descriptive cross-sectional survey design, and on the basis of purposive, and random sampling techniques, 385 respondents were selected who included Social workers, Businessmen and Women, Distinguished Citizens, Members of Parliament, Cabinet Ministers, Leaders of Political Parties in Uganda, Cabinet Ministers, and Rural people who revealed information through the study Questionnaires and

Interview guides. The findings reveal that the East African Federation cannot attain social unity of its citizens, because of the different ethnic backgrounds of people in the region and also the idea is a persuasion by Political Leaders based on technocratic expertise and not ideological grounds. The study concluded that the rigid divide in methodological application of cultural and rational accounts among Ugandan, and East African Ethnic groups will greatly influence the realization of a fruitful East African Federation.

**Key words:** Ethnicity, Federation, social unity, Uganda, and East Africa.

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Accepted 3 January, 2015

### INTRODUCTION

East Africa is an easterly region of the African continent. It covers 1,670,000 square kilometers, Mangach, (2011). The Indian Ocean on its Eastern side forms a natural boundary. To the West, it borders Zaire, Rwanda and Burundi, and to the North on the Somali Republic and Ethiopia. In the South, Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique are its boundaries, Baregu, (2005). East Africa is a multicultural region with diverse ethnic composition, and is comprised of Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Burundi. Of recent, Southern Sudan and Somalia have expressed interest in joining the East African Federation. These states have struggled to unite into one political, social and economic unit, however their contrasting cultural, ethnic and historical background; arising from their colonial experience, socio-political and economic environment has made the idea of a federation a challenging one. In spite of the seeming novel and beneficial nature of the East African Federation, its process and realization has taken a painful slow pace.

This study examined the different factors which have influenced the speed-formation of the East African Federation; citing ethnicity as a salient feature to the social federation in East Africa.

### BACKGROUND

The integration of East Africa began with economic unity in 1895 with the construction of the Uganda railway, and then proceeded with the creation of the East African common market in 1900 and a customs arrangement between Uganda and Kenya on one side, (then British East Africa) and Tanganyika (then German East Africa) on the other, (Kasajja, 2006). This saw an increasing measure to integrate and interlink the three states. This was followed by the introduction of a common currency, a joint income tax board, a joint economic council and over forty different institutions of research, social service,

education, defence and communications. These were established to explore the possibilities of the East Africa federation in 1924, 1927 and 1931, and this proved to be the golden age of co-operation, (Kasaija, 2006). In spite of the above good measure right at its inception, the East African federation had its intrinsic and extrinsic factors which diminished its future operation. For example in the field of education, there existed no uniform policies, or systems among the East African societies of the region to create the awareness, prepare and interlink their socio-economic and political unity Kayunga, (2005).

However, this was not the case with the colonial system, for example in the political sector in Uganda, it was the colonial state with its policy of divide and rule which allowed Buganda to nurture the behaviour of conservatism by largely maintaining her identity, (Karugire, 1980). This was also the case between Tanganyika and Zanzibar, and in Kenya between the Kikuyu and the Nilotes, or non Bantu tribes. Throughout history, individual tribal groups aimed at recognition of their identity and position within the protectorate government. Their kingdoms, or societies, institutions and norms became the primary form of identity and the issue of Uganda –ness, Kenya-ness, Tanzania –ness, or even the East African Federation was, or is secondary. For the case of Uganda, it is not surprising that when the colonial government issued the idea to federate East Africa, it was rejected by all kingdoms, but Buganda's response was strongest and the Kabaka responded by asking for Buganda's independence from Uganda, leading to his deportation on 30<sup>th</sup> November, 1953, a crisis that altered the prospects of the formation of the East Africa Federation, (Karugire, 1980).

In 1961, the idea of the East African Federation was further considered with the formation of the East Africa Common Services Organization (EACSO), and the three states met to discuss the establishment of a federation. The already established common market, a Central Legislative Assembly and Executive made the idea of a federation achievable superficially. However, there were other unanswerable questions, for example, the site for the federal capital, who was to head the federation, there were also disagreements on the division of state and federal power, land, citizenship and borrowing powers. At this time, there was internal cohesion in East Africa which the colonialist had laid way back, centered on ethnicity and ethnic prejudice in managing state affairs, most especially in Uganda and Tanzania. In the field of education, colonial education had divided Africans along religious lines, as you hardly found a protestant African in a catholic school, a Christian African in a Moslem school, or either. Politically, Buganda and the Central government were fighting for political power and ownership. Uganda People's Congress party president, Dr. Apollo Milton Obote was no more enthusiastic than Kabaka Sir Edward Muteesa II when he asserted, that it

was futile to try to think outside Uganda before solving internal problems, Mamdani, (1996 and 1964). Where as in 1964, Tanganyika and Zanzibar united as an independent state and this smaller union opened the eyes of this region as a whole to the difficulties involved in such a venture, as Tanzania's socialism destroyed the bond of relationship which had been forged over the last years to establish the federation. Today, the current Presidents of East African states embarked on uniting their states in a federation but similar challenges still face the fruitful realisation of the East African Federation.

## **ETHNICITY AND SOCIAL UNITY/ FEDERATION IN EAST AFRICA**

Ethnicity is one of the informal institutions around which personal relationships are potentially built, there by affecting identity, trust, cooperation, conflict, political mobilisation, legitimacy and political authority, (Lemarchand, 1972; Young, 1976; Rothchild, 1999; Collier and Bates, (2008). Ethnicity is a philosophy that segregates people along tribal lines in politics, social and economic spheres. The definition of ethnicity has been a centre of conflict especially between the Euro – centric and Afro- centric scholars, however, for the purpose of this research; ethnicity is conceptualized as the employment or mobilization of ethnic identity and difference to gain advantage in situations of competition, conflict or cooperation, (Osaghae, 1995). At individual level, ethnicity is a social psychological process which gives an individual a sense of belonging and identity, and this sense of belonging in social structure is evidenced in the struggle to unify East Africa.

In a state like Uganda, we often think of the history of nations as a linear and continuous narrative, whose development is coherent and somehow univocal. For this research, nations are understood as subjects in similar fashion to how we define individuals and personal history. This is constituted on the basis of a retrospective illusion. Substantial uniformity, in spite of being a myth in Uganda and East Africa, with the exception of Tanzania, generates real effects on collective and personal life. Uganda's social-ethnic conflicts generate internal multiplicity obliterated for the illusion of a unitary nation, especially when differences among groups provide it with a mirror of image. The attempts by the state authorities to neutralize ethnic differences using nation and federal governments under the guide of modernization, while neglecting cultural identity, are a consequence of this process. Balibar and Wallerstein, (2002) applies the term "fictive ethnicity" to the community instituted by the nation-states like Uganda and East Africa. He acknowledges that, as social-formations are nationalized, their diversity is ethnicised as a unit. Different social groups are thus represented in the past, present and

future as if they formed a natural community, with shared identity of origins, culture and interests which transcend individuals and social conditions. Thus, fictive ethnicity would recognize pre-existing unity in a state like Uganda if it is measured against its historical mission in the service of the nation. Common ethnicity is thus an imaginary mechanism to base on, in unifying and maintaining a community that we call a nation and this is the essence of this research.

Balibar and Wallerstein (2002), asserts that by constituting the people as fictively ethnicised and unified against the background of a universalistic – representation and which thus divides up the whole of humanity between different ethnic groups corresponding potentially to so many nations, national ideology does much more than justifying the strategies employed by the state to control populations. It inscribes their demands in advance in a sense of belonging in a double sense of the term – what it is that makes one belong to oneself, and also what makes one belong to other fellow human beings. Thus, the neutralization of belonging and the sublimation of the ideal nation are two aspects of the same process, thus the definition of what makes one belong to another, is a contemporary issue in societies that try to unite under a federation.

Cohen (1972) contends that ethnicity is an ubiquitous presence. That even a brief glance through titles of books and monographs over the past years indicate a steadily accelerating and application of the terms of ethnicity, and culture. New journals have appeared using the terms in their titles and special programs of ethnic studies are showing up in university catalogs. Almost any cultural – social unit, or any term describing particular structures of continuing social relations can be referred to as ethnic and this can be seen in a proliferation of little dealing with ethnic groups, ethnic integration, or consciousness. Cohen believes that this is simply old wine in new bottles. Whereas he may be right, Nagel, (1994), disagrees with him on account that identity and culture are two of the basic building blocks of ethnicity. Through the construction of identity and culture, individuals and groups attempt to address the problematic of ethnic boundaries and meaning. Therefore, ethnicity is best understood as a dynamic, constantly involving property of both individual identity and group organization. The construction of both ethnic identity and culture is the result of structure and agency. Thus, for this research in a federation of such ethnic groups as they define themselves through their actions and designations, their antagonist political authorities and social and economic interests and boundaries are erected, dividing some populations while unifying others.

Geertz (1972) defends the role of culture in man's choices and actions; therefore, ethnicity is a function of culture. It is these man's choices and actions that influence the political, social and economic activities that

result into conflicts; harming the East African Federation. Martin (1995) in his study also makes a philosophical examination of the concept of identity and its application as an instrument in achieving political goals. That groups use narratives of identity to produce change in society, and it is this force of identity in society which spills off ethnic socio – political conflicts in the region, thus hindering idea of the East African Federation. These socio forces determine the trends and pace of socio-political unity in the federation. Although the argument may be true, to Cohen, (1972) however, argues that common language and culture do not automatically make a common identity, they instead provide a frame work within which such identity can be forged, given other historical experiences. They form a set of common perceptions of the way the world works. In this study however, Cohen's argument does not necessarily lead to socio – political unity; citing an example from Angolan attempted national federation, or unity, most groups had as part of common culture the experience and expectation of political fragmentation and inter- group rivalry, because one group shared or share a language and culture with another, but socio – political unity, or even neutrality did not follow, neither did the community assume what it should.

In shaping social unity and awareness, language is an ingredient factor. Complex societies like Uganda are conglomerates of linguistically differentiated populations where a superimposition of mutually incompatible languages for the dominant and the dominated has occurred (Balibar and Wallerstein, 2002). Ugandans speak more than sixty languages, and as a country, there is not a recognised native national language, thus the linkage between ethnic tribes is wide. How do you expect these people to unite into the East African social integration if they are not united within one state fast? Thus, social differences between groups are expressed as different ways of speaking the national idiom and relating to its common code.

To solve this problem the East African community body agreed that Swahili should be a unifying language for East Africa. For the case of Uganda the language is biased by especially, the middle class. It is so common in the army, but not in other populations, thus the East African social unity predicted as a collective personality, as well as the individual self is constructed through the acceptance of common norms, genealogy, social codes and shared ideals.

However, for this research, the linguistic construction of identity is an open process. Unlike unity being formed on the basis of a linguistic community, in the case of ethnicity in East Africa, especially Uganda there is no practice that is common to all individuals who form a state. The nation of ethnicity creates an internal fracture, thus involving one of the paradoxes of fictive ethnicity, and national unity absorbs difference through internal

processes of inclusion and exclusion.

Whereas the language community can only create equality between individuals by simultaneously naturalizing the social inequality of linguistic practices, the race community dissolves social inequalities in an even more ambivalent similarity: it ethnicises the social difference which is an expression of irreconcilable antagonism by lending it the form of a division between the genuinely and the falsely nationals, (Balibar and Wallerstein, 2002).

Ethnicity has been perceived to be a cause rather than a symptom of social disorder. Violent manifestations of ethnicity have defined it in negative terms which have consequently distorted the nature of a possible discourse. The issue of ethnicity however, does need to be considered and not merely dismissed as a form of irrational and false consciousness, especially in Uganda and later in the East African federation. Lonsdale (1995) makes a distinction between political tribalism and moral ethnicity, warning that, tribalism is not only about power, manipulation and boundary making, but that it also has a moral content which guides people's perceptions of their group involvement in a wider arena of politics, economics and cultural identity. Thus, while thinking of federations, like that of East Africa; ethnicity deserves to be treated as a phenomenon more complex than either primordial identify, or the flamboyant garb of self interest (Carr, 1995), while thinking about the East African federation, ethnic identity should be something fluid rather than static. The question of whether the histories of various ethnic groups, however, small, or big are accurate, or merely mythical is misleading, thus the background, or possible invention of ethnic identity is dangerous and has to be dealt with in its contemporary sphere of implicit relevance.

The antagonism in Uganda and East Africa's social unity is viewed as a conflict between primordial versus civil ties. Uganda's government and the governments of the East African states in general have depended on established social classes for development, yet there are no recognizable and operatable social classes, worse still, different interests tend to operate along regional or territorial lines under the name ethnicity, Martin, (1995). The belief is that, class interests will take over from ethnic identity. However, this has not been the case in Uganda and East Africa in general. Tanzania is the best example of this stance.

The Tanzanian government attempted to create a social unity that would – overshadow ethnic identity. Tanzania like other East African states, is a multi-ethnic state within its borders as the statistics show the ethnic breakdown to be; Nyamwesi type – 19%, interlacustrine Bantu type – 14%, northeast coastal – 11%, central cluster – 11%, rift cluster – 10%, Rufiji cluster – 9% and Nyakyusa – 6% (Carr, 1995). The government maintained a tight control on civil society, both as part of

its socialist ideology, and as an attempt to create national identity. However, the personnel within the government structures could not override their attachments to ethnic groups.

Likewise in Uganda, despite attempts by the government to eradicate ethnic identity and affiliation, the opposite effect has coherently occurred. Every Ugandan regime since 1962 has been accused of practicing ethnicity of varying intensities at different times of their tenure of office. It has also created a high degree of self consciousness that Ugandans have become allusive, or evasive when talking about ethnicity and are therefore reluctant to ask crucial questions for fear of being accused of practicing ethno-centric tendencies, or sectarianism. Thus, for the East African federation to take root, the architecture of the programme must take into account ethnic issues before the federation is formed. If not catered for, Lewis predicts a possible outcome of such federations as follows; "... as long as the overall security and well being of the individual are not provided for by the state, independently of his tribal affiliation, he will be encouraged to rely upon traditional tribal principles of cooperation." Therefore, the social-unity – imbalances in Uganda and East Africa in general are as a result of ethnic differences, unlike ideological ones, is that the feelings which they generate are not amendable to rational argument and persuasion, (Nwabueze, 1992). The main threat therefore to national unity is the fear of domination by one group over the others. Thus, the possible way of forging social unity in Uganda and East Africa in general, should be an arrangement whereby each ethnic group, however small is entitled to the same treatment as any other group, however, larger. This will form a basis for a federal form of government and will strengthen the social ties in the region.

For this argument, Mazrui (1972) calls for an approach that allows room for being specifically African and not merely dependent on western models. He argues that Africa needs a process of social engineering to instigate nation-building, with the four imperatives; emphasizing what is African, nationalizing what is tribal, idealizing what is indigenous, and indigenizing what is foreign. However, federations in Africa, especially East Africa need not to be synonymous with the import of westernization, or the attempt to erase ethnic consciousness. It has already been tried and proved tragic. Much as federalism has the potential and mechanisms to incorporate ethnic diversities, it can also threaten tribal and national profile. With resources becoming scarcer every day, the intensity of ethnic feeling is only going to increase, and ignoring ethnic profiles within the east African states could become increasingly dangerous. Also Kaplan (1994), sounds a warning about what he perceives to be the immanent disintegration of the nation state. He believes that the rise of tribal and regional domains is the unchecked spread of

diseases and the growing pervasiveness of war. The ideological nation-state conflicts have moved to finally cultural conflict, thus, while in the East African federation, the classification grid of nation-states is likely to be replaced by a jagged-glass pattern of city states, shanty states, nebulous and anarchic regionalism with the struggles of different tribal / ethnic groups.

Ethnicity is on the increase as so do globalization. Unfortunately, the East African states, especially Uganda are less capable of preventing ethnicity being mobilized politically, socially and economically. Thus, ethnic identity may have lost its innocence in the eyes of the world, but to dismiss the nation of "difference" as being intrinsically benevolent is extremely dangerous. Carr (1995), confirms that it was the mishandling and exploitation of ethnicity which caused the genocide in Rwanda, one of the states that form the East African community. So, has this mishandling and exploitation stopped? Are there measures and mechanism to deal with the problems of ethnicity in East Africa? This research will try to answer these questions. Thus, ethnicity is not going to merely disappear by being ignored in Uganda and in the East African federation, instead the increased numbers; groups of ethnic people are likely to revitalize their ethnic identity in a bid for region's decreasing resources. This is likely to fuel future conflicts that will need to be addressed right from the grass-root-level. These conflicts which are existing and still emerging have / will lead to war in protest that the ethnic problem is far from being solved in the East African federation.

One element that destructs social unity in multicultural states like Uganda, and East Africa in general is the phenomenon of ethnicity and conflict of competing loyalties. In Uganda, ethnic loyalty has risen above other loyalties. Today, ethnic loyalty may mean a quick promotion in one's status, especially in places of work, Tarimo, (2000). This is because the process of decision-making and the kind of common good that we are committed are heavily dependent on the persons and groups which claim one's loyalty, Hellenbads, (1979); loyalty can be influenced in a state, or a formed federation, like that of East Africa by interest group, cultural group, religious group, or self-interest desires which use others as a ladder to acquire popularity, power, wealth and influence over state issues.

Consequently, more conflicts in public life can be fruitfully looked at as conflicts between these concrete commitments to various groups. The consequence of this is offered by Abner (1981), who reveals that ethnic organizations – camouflage or deny their existence in public and its members will adopt a low profile and attempt to fade into the general social landscape. At the same time, however, its members must know about one another and should be able to recognize one another as co-members in order to coordinate their activities in the interests of the group and to avail themselves of the

privileges of membership. In other words, they have to be visible to one another, but also invisible as a group in public. These ethnic tendencies t national level are barbaric in nature and not increasingly accepted, but enforced. This is likely to be the same when such states like those of East Africa federate.

In social unity of the state, or region, ethnicity affects directly, or indirectly our understanding of common good. Although ethnic sentiments may undercut the nationalistic approach, they may also be a force that enhances any sense of nationhood and common good (Henry, 1980). Despite the rhetoric of national unity, or East African federation, the typical Africa understands of common good, solidarity and community remains limited to the circles of particular ethnic groups. This situation implies that important issues such as how to form a nation, or federation of East African based on traditional values and political consensus were not addressed sufficiently after independence. Leaders of independent East African state have remained stuck in the political ideology of freedom, not observing that, this is a temporary ideology.

Tarimo (2000) argues that the involvement of an ethnic group in a bigger group like a state should be understood from the perspective that enables each ethnic group to develop deliberate powers and a sense of purpose in search for the common good. In this context, access to a multiplicity of groups promotes a diversity of experiences and interests, and enables each group to participate fully in the common structure laid down by consensus. The idea of political consensus can articulate new perspectives and preferences which will eventually enter into the balancing process, dissolving political conflicts and creating local institutions that guarantee fairness.

The approach gives priority to innovation and change that articulates new perspectives and preferences that eventually seep into the balancing process, affecting the shape of interest groups. Pluralism protects rights of individuals, groups and promotes cohesion and consensus base don consent. A balance of interests achieved by the free bargaining of groups in society creates a comprehensive conception of the coon good and is thus a more equitable way of dealing with competition among ethnic groups and ensuring equal opportunity for all. Such an understanding, in turn, will enhance cooperation between different groups within the society.

Therefore, the task of the East African independent leaders, seeking to federate, should be collectively to envision and formulate a new concept of the common good based on ethnic identities, political consensus and people's consent. To develop such a vision, ethnic differences must be catered for, but not denied, as for the case of Uganda, and the projected East African federation. There is need to orient such identities towards an overlapping consensus which fosters the common good, that is to say, social unity, thus, by developing a

more profound unity that underlines ethnic differences. It is not unity that imposes the sameness, but a unity that demands equality, freedom, participation, and creativity in the interest of moral good (Haverwas, 1974).

This way of proceeding is important in East Africa because our understanding of a common good or social unity is still – frequently limited to the framework of the ethnic well being. That is why most city-dwellers, as observed by Goran (1983), are sensitive to the needs and interests centered on their village of origin and ethnic group. Place of birth and ethnicity are seen as having influence over cities, towns and states despite the fact that cities are the seat of power and wealth. The understanding of a common good is within the same framework. Let me give two examples to illustrate this argument. In Uganda, President Museveni used state funds to construct a multi-billion science university in his home region, Mbarara, and other government projects. Also the late president Apollo Milton Obote used state funds to construct his party's headquarters' building-block (Uganda House) for the concept of common good that the East African states intend to pursue in a federation.

While forging unity in Uganda, and East Africa the real challenge would have been how to integrate ethnicity into social relationships, but not how to eradicate it under the guise of modernity through federations. Thus any project which involves the mobilization of people, like the East African federation, must first take into account the cultural contexts in which individuals live rather than those in which someone may think they ought to be living (Tarimo, 2000). Thus, while thinking about the East African federation and its progress and success, we must start with what people in the region are and from where they are.

The East African leaders, especially President Museveni of Uganda believe that the idea of socio-political organization based on ethnicity is a primitive model, by suggesting the East African federation is to progress, East Africa must therefore first eradicate ethnicity. This has led to the belief that ethnicity can disappear as the process of urbanization and modernity gains momentum. They conceive the existence of ethnic loyalties and infirmities as some sort of a primordial carryover, a traditional or atavistic residue, to be cured, or erased with the match of modernity, (Mamdani, 1996). Ethnicity is also perceived as a barrier to political integration and impediment to attaining a sense of nationhood, progress and unity. I disagree with this view and contend that when people of different origins come together, whether in a federation, their ethnic identity and loyalty remains substantially unchanged (O'Connor, 1983). Thus, ethnicity which the projected East African federation expects to reduce will simply exacerbate it.

Ethnicity should be approached in a positive way especially when dealing with nation-states in federations. Ethnic identity cannot be suppressed by a state or

federation. Ethnicity should be destroyed, but what should be destroyed instead, should be the practice of manipulating it. This can foster a sense of social unity among citizens. The practice of manipulating ethnicity by East African leaders has been the root cause of internal problems connected with human rights and social justice (Rodrigo, 1991) but ethnicity is handled properly, can be a positive ingredient that guarantees the realization of the idea of social unity, participation, commitment in the East African federation.

The East African federation must perceive ethnicity as a process that involves negotiating identity within groups while maintaining ethnic differences. In most cases, ethnicity is manifested as a form of resistance against the oppressive structure of state, related to the crisis of citizenship, lack of political consensus, the struggle to survive, socio-political and economic insecurity, and the lack of an agreed-upon concept of common good, or social unity. Thus, the failure to recognize the power of ethnic identity will continue to create social disunity and differences and exacerbate the situation of civil unrest in the perceived federation. The problem of East Africa has been incomplete structural integration. We have failed to modify strong ethnic identification in favour of more national ones, while at the same time, not undermining the rights of ethnic identities, (Kwesigirwa, 1996).

The fact is that, ethnic consciousness becomes very harmful when abused; however, ethnicity can be a great asset in nation building, especially when acting as a moral retaining influence upon, and a means of security for its members. If such concept is adopted, it will help the masses to clearly distinguish between that which belongs to the ethnic group, and that which belongs to the nation, (Koul, 2000).

The significance of ethnicity cannot diminish with the formation of a federation in East Africa. It should also be noted that family, clan and ethnic group are still the essential structures of social relationships in African societies, (Lamb, 1984). One's identity is ethnic not national, because ethnicity is a natural phenomenon, the leaders of independent East African states especially Uganda have failed to convince their people nationhood offers more benefit than ethnicity. The relationship between an ethnic group and the state with respect to the common good has proved difficult in practice by the leaders of East African states. Thus, ethnicity of this nature has created loss of national culture, however, if ethnic identity is positively appropriated, it can become a national value, together with the weaknesses and strength of that ethnic group, therefore, ethnicity should be viewed as a means of cultural support, which creates social unity.

One aspect of uniting people of different origins into a socially recognized unit is stereotyping. Henri (1986), a social psychologist came up with the social identity theory. He argued against the paradigm of realistic group

conflict theory, according to which intergroup conflicts are grounded in accurate perceptions of underlying conflicts of interests. He instead demonstrated the autonomous significance of categorization, using minimal group experiments, revealed a robust – tendency towards in-group bias; the tendency to favour members of one's own category even in the absence of any inter group conflict, or hostility, indeed even when the 'groups' or categories were constructed along purely arbitrary lines for example, through random experimental assignment of subjects to artificial categories of "reds" and "blues". In other words, the mere perception of belonging to two distinct groups; that is social categorization per-se is sufficient to trigger intergroup discrimination, favouring the in-group (Rogers et al., 2004).

Thus, basing on the above theory, in Uganda and East African federation, the theory has subsequently shown that something more than mere categorization is likely to be at work in the production of in-group bias. The combination of a "group schema" with additional information to be the cognitive mechanism that will produce in-group bias is likely to be the situation in the East African federation characterized by social categorization, competition and collectivity.

A second aspect of social categorization in multicultural societies like Uganda, and East Africa in general, is the tendency of categorization to produce "accentuation effects." People tend to exaggerate both the similarity of objects within a category and the differences between objects in different categories (Hoggi and Abrams, 1988). When categories at hand are categories of human kinds, the overestimation of inter-category differences and of intra-category homogeneity facilitates the reification of groups. Ethnic classification depersonalizes individuals by transforming them from unique persons to exemplars of named groups. This shows that ethnic groups in power tend to judge other ethnic groups that tend to be a threat to their survival in power, especially those deemed influential in state affairs. A case in point is that of the National Resistance Movement Party in power (Uganda), against the Buganda government. Baganda are one of the most influential tribe in the history and politics of Uganda because of their strategic location. These perceptions of unity and coherence of social categories or groups can help to explain the resilience of groupist representations in the social set up of East African federation.

This research offers resources for avoiding such groupism and gives tenacious hold on our social imagination. Ethnic groupings should be treated as collective cultural identifications, widely shared ways of seeing, thinking, pursuing social experience and interpreting the social world. The research will address the social and mental processes that sustain the vision of social unity of the East African federation.

Rather than taking ethnic groups as basic unities of

analysis, the research will shift analytical attention to group making and grouping activities such as classification, categorization and identification, for their role in social development of multicultural societies of Uganda, and East Africa in general. By their very nature, categorization, identification and classification are as a result of ethnicity in a federation, but the groups created do not exist independently of the myriad acts of classification, categorization, and identification, but are epistemological realities (Rogers et al., 2004).

The cognitive approaches reveal that the above phenomenon is not to spouse a radical subjectivism or psychologism but helps to connect our analyses of what goes on in people's heads with our analyses of what goes on in public. Sperber (1985) gives an example of an epidemiological perspective on the distribution and diffusion of representations within a population. He argues that representations are of two kinds; public representations and mental representations. Representations of either kind may be idiosyncratic, or they may be more or less widely shared.

Some ethnic representations are easier to think than others. Hirschfield and Gil-white (1996), have argued that representations of the social multicultural societies in terms of intrinsic kinds may be easy to think because of our cognitive architecture. Representations that are easier to think in multiethnic states or federations are more easily communicated, transmitted and remembered and as a result, more widely shared than others. When more or less similar versions of a representation are widely shared, we may speak of a cultural representation. Whereas their argument is right for this research, it will help to explain in part why they tend to be widely shared and powerfully entrenched cultural representations in a state like Uganda, or federation, like the projected East African federation, and their impact on social unity.

The research argues that ethnicity and nation or federations are not things in the world, but ways of seeing the world. They are ways of understanding and identifying oneself, making sense of one's problems and predicaments, identifying one's interests and orienting one's actions. They are ways of recognizing, identifying and classifying other people, of construing sameness and difference, and of coding and making sense of their actions. They are templates for representing and organizing social knowledge, frames for articulating social comparisons and explanations, and filters to shape what is noticed, or unnoticed, relevant or irrelevant remembered or forgotten. This can be dangerous and outrageous in the frame of the East African federation and can have a significant on social unity of East African people.

Cognitive perspectives suggest other avenues for treating ethnicity and nation, or federation together as one integrated domain rather than several distinct domains of study. The processes of classification and

categorization, formal and informal that divide “us” from “them”; the forms of social closer that depend on categorizing and excluding certain potential competitors as “outsiders”; the categories and frames in terms of which social comparison and social explanation are organized; the schema, scripts and cultural models that allow one to perceive, experience or interpret situations and sequences of action in standardized ethnic terms; the cognitive biases in the retrieval and processing information that lead us to evaluate evidence in selective ways that tend to confirm prior expectations and strengthen stereotypes, are coded as belonging to distinct domain of ethnicity and nationalism which leads to ethnic sub-nationalism in a state, or federation.

Katembu, (2008) advanced Swahili as a unifying factor in the East African cooperation. The vantage point, that it sees a common language over time, as tending to create loyalty, assimilation and cooperation among diverse groups (Mulokozi, 2002). He cites an example too in minimizing post genocide era between Tutsi and Hutu across both Rwanda and Burundi. In promoting Kiswahili, the East African community believes that it would lead to social unity among the divergent East African ethnic groups. Indeed this may be right, but may face strong resistance in some societies especially in Uganda; one should note that one’s identity in multicultural societies is ethnic and national. Thus, speaking a national language does not make people forget their native, or cultures that ascribe and distinguish them from other groups. I will give two examples to explain this state of affair, for the case of Uganda; English as a forged national language has been adopted since even the days of colonialism, but ethnic sub-nation has remained the biggest factor of Uganda’s social disunity, even Swahili spoken among the Kenyans has not united them for the national cause. In the 2007 national elections, the Kenyans fought each other along ethnic lines; the Bantu dominated Kikuyu against the Nilotes, protesting over election results. This clearly illustrates that even a forged national language may unite people casually but not real. Thus, the expected ideal of Swahili alone may fall short in promoting social cooperation and unity among East Africans.

Many Ugandans deceive themselves by thinking that Uganda is one, particularly the politicians, the clergy in their rhetoric, and the educated few; this is wrong, am sorry to say that the presence of unity is very artificial and superficial in the sense that, it ends outside this chamber. Baganda look at westerners and Banyarwanda in their territory as invaders, Bunyoro look at Bafuruki as invaders, and the list is endless. Since 1893, the British government has tried to unite Uganda into one country, but Ugandans are historically different in their backgrounds, beliefs, customs, norms, and traditions, and do not show themselves any sign of willingness to unite. Thus, their unity is artificial and is described as a “British invention of the country.”

This situation applies to all members of the East African states. The problems of building united and strong nation, and then the East African federation have been caused by the activities of some political leaders who see themselves first as representative of their ethnic groups in power to develop their regions first before other parts of the country, so that by the time of actual East African federation, their groups are dominant in matters concerning national life. Shedrack (2009) asserts that the resurgence and proliferation of ethnic organizations with a pronounced political agenda which pursue their various demands are all pointers to the fact that the unity of such countries or federations are at stake. Thus, this situation cannot provide room for social unity, or development.

The East African federation seeks to embrace nationalism as a force for unity; however, the social theory has approached nationalism most as a political ideology structuring the relations of power and conflicts. The proponents of the East African federation especially the President of the republic of Uganda; Museveni, have emphasized politics and the state and treat nationalism mainly as a feature of the modern era. However, nationalism in this research that the proponents of East African federation predict to unite East Africans, instead, stresses its more contributions to the production of culture (Ernest, 1983).

Thus nationalism in multi-ethnic states provides the basis for identity prior to any specific political mobilization (Smith, 1986). A related point with regard to East African federation is that nationalism ought not to be approached only through its most extreme – manifestations, but also grasped in its more banal forms; a variety of ceremonial events, like traditional ceremonies of different groups within a state, states, or federations. All these contribute not only to specific group loyalties, but to the reproduction of the general that the world is organized in terms of nations and national identities. Thus the East African social federation to be meaningful must design social policies based on the above model.

Human beings have always lived in groups. The nature of these groups has, however varied considerably. They range from families and small bands through clans and other larger kin organizations to villages, kingdoms and empires; they include religions and cultures, occupational groups and castes, nations to the extent that it knits all humanity into a single group (Calhoun, 1997).

In most of these cases, the self-understanding of members is crucial to the existence of the group; a kingdom, religion, or a caste is both an objective collection of people and pattern of social organization and a subjective way in which people understand how they belong together and should interact. This would have been clearly true of the nation like Uganda and then the East African federation. Without the subjective component of self-understanding, a nation could not exist and so the East African federation.



The most basic meaning and realization of the East African federation is the use of this way of categorizing human populations, both as a way of looking at the East Africa as a whole and as a way of establishing group identity from within. In addition, nationalism in the social context usually refers not just to using the category of nation to conceptualize social groups, but also to holding that national identities and groups are of basic importance. This will help East Africa to come together in a federation while maintaining their moral obligations to the federation as a whole, perhaps even to kill on its behalf, or die for it in a war (Calhoun, 1997).

Strauss (1996) comes up with the negotiated order theory at the society organizational level – in multiethnic societies as one way of achieving social unity. Negotiated order is based on the assumption that virtually all social order is negotiated order. To accomplish the task in social settings, people chiefly negotiate with each other. Through ongoing processes of negotiation, social actors alternately create, maintain transform and are constrained by social structures.

The negotiated order-perspective provides a means to understand the processes involved in both structural change and stability and to identify the social structures and conditions that shape those processes. It also permits researchers to address one of the central concerns in sociology – the link between individuals and society; by specifying how social actors respond to and changed social structure, whether they act on their own behalf, or as organizational representatives. Strauss believes that these negotiations occur whenever acting units encounter ambiguity, when they define organizational routines differently, when they differed in their approach to problems or even when they create exceptions or loopholes for previously established rules and policies.

For the case of East Africa, these patterns will become part of a stable structure or organization background that guides future negotiations. The perspectives thus, will encourage East African federation architectures to incorporate historical data in their analyses by investigating how structural conditions arose in the past and observing how those conditions influence present negotiations.

Fearon, and Laitin (1996) assert that the social construction of ethnicity has little, or no bearing on the likelihood of ethnic violence. However, for this research an alternative – interpretation of the process invoked by social construction locates the action at the level of supra-individual things like discursive formations, or symbolic, or cultural systems that have their logic or agency; Foucault, (1972) in his analysis believes that individuals are pawns, or products of discourses that exist and move independently of the actions of any particular individual. For example, one might argue that a general modern discourse of social-ethnic relations or

unity is a crucial underlying factor in explaining ethnic violence, and inter-social cultural conflicts in East Africa.

Kapferer (1988) makes suggestions along these lines, connecting ethnic violence to modern colonialism. However, as with the case of economic modernization, colonialism and its attendant discourses are ubiquitous in Uganda and East Africa, but violence is not. At best, the modern discourse of ethnic-social relations might be seen as a necessary condition for politicized ethnic federation and thus ethnic war leading to the breakdown of the formulated East African federation.

Another example is the proposition that the social construction of group identities – necessarily involves differentiating one's self or one's group from another, and that therefore, identity construction necessarily entails the potential for a violent, antagonistic relationship with the other. Although this proposition seems to undercut the central constructivist claim, that identities can be constructed in non-antagonistic ways, it is still a constructivist type argument, that internal logic of discourses drive identity construction (Ferejoh, 1991). The proposition is that one can analyse and discern the logic of the discourse, or symbolic system that constructs individuals and groups, and make predictions from this as to the likelihood of range of practices, including violence. Clear examples of this are; that of the Buganda riots of 2009, when the king of Buganda was barred from visiting Bugerere are of his kingdom provinces by the National Resistance Government of Uganda, and the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. These metaphors give us an understanding of the social contradictions to the laws of nature, that an extraordinarily reserved and peaceful society could be capable of a sudden outburst of unimaginable ferocity (Fearon and Laitin, 2003). One would wonder how safe will it be in the East African federation?

Fearon and Laitin, (2003) quote Fredrick (1969) as arguing that ethnicity is defined not by the cultural characteristics thought to distinguish them from others. In East Africa, particularly Uganda, a persistent intuition of social disunity is that social identities are produced and reproduced through everyday actions of ordinary folk that is on the ground. Individuals think of themselves in terms of a particular set of social categories, which lead them to act in ways that collectively confirm, reinforce, and propagate these identities (Fearon and Laitin, 1996).

Sowell (1994), in a more culturalist approach emphasizes the impossibility of approaching cultural uniformity, even under totalitarian conditions. Cultural practices for Sowell in less of celebrating uniformity among members of a group than organizing differences between groups. His argument implies that when boundaries are under threat, for example, when a sub-group organizes to assert its difference from a larger group in which it had been apart, those who identified with the inclusive group are likely to oppose separation, even to the extent of

threatening violent repercussions. Thus, for Sowell, battles over whether groups on the boundaries are the same as those in the core, or culturally different from them is a normal cultural practice.

However, Sowell's argument falls short in explaining why ethnic societies with normal cultural practices of cultural discrimination fail to unite in a federation, like that of the East Africa I content that, Sowell's normal cultural practices are the source of ethnic identity and discrimination, which bars, multicultural social unity in a federation. Kapferer (1988) sustains the argument in favour of cultural discourse as a powerful and unchanging social force. Thus, for the East African federation to achieve social unity of its members, the rigid divide in methodological application of cultural and rational accounts must be bridged. The strategic theories linking individuals to ethnic violence and the discursive theories linking discourses to violent behaviors are all constructivist in the sense that they posit the content and boundaries of ethnic groups as produced and reproduced by specific social processes. The specification of what these processes are, the delineation of the precise mechanisms by which they lead to ethnically based violence, and the testing of these specifications within the predicted East African federation has remained a challenge in the region.

## METHODOLOGY

The study used a Descriptive cross-sectional survey design, which enabled the study to utilize both qualitative and quantitative approaches. A cross-section research design is a type of design used to study large population, or area where the researcher conducts a survey to obtain information about the opinion, attitudes, preferences, practices and concerns of a cross section of a group of people, and the uses the results to extrapolate to the entire population, (Amin, 2005; Creswell 2003; Gray and Atkinson, 1996).

The study population was East Africa with 141.8 million, and the target population was Uganda which has an approximate population of 34.5 million people, (World Population Report; 2013). The study was carried out in Kampala, Masaka, Mutukula, Nimule, Malaba and Katuna. This was so, because these are major cities of the region where ethnic concentration is highest and literacy levels, and the focus of the study was put on politicians, social workers, businessmen and distinguished citizens in the region like Members of Parliament, and cabinet ministers, leaders of political parties and rural people like the Local council Chairmen / chair persons of border areas, and from Krejcie and Morgan, (1970) study, 385 respondents were sampled, using purposive, random and Convenience sampling techniques; using questionnaires, and interview guides.

## RESULTS

The responses of the subjects were coded and entered into statistical package for Social Science Program (SPSS), and for analysis, the findings were presented descriptively using frequency tables, graphs and percentages, and interpretations and drawing of inferences was done depending on the number of occurrences of each item. Also respondents from the interview were coded and thematically presented to incorporate the meaning into a theme that corresponds to the context of the study.

In addition, data got from interview guides, and focused group discussions were presented and analysed by coding in lieu of the study objective as follows.

### Ethnicity and social unity of East Africa within the Ugandan context

The findings and perceptions of respondents were in response to the research question; how has ethnicity influenced the formation of the East African social unity? To test this research question, ten items were used and the responses were classified as agree, strongly agree, not sure, disagree and strongly disagree. The respondents' results are presented in frequency counts and percentages in the (Table 1).

The findings in (Table 1) illustrate the perceptions of respondents towards different items on the formation of the East African social unity. In item one when the respondents were asked whether its possible for the people of Uganda to forget their affiliated cultural languages and embrace Swahili as a major means of communication, 180 (66.7%) respondents disagreed while 64 (23.7%) respondents agreed. This implies that ethnicity is a function of culture and it will be the man's choices and actions that will lead to the failure of the East African social unity. In culture, a group's language is apparent for communication than a foreign, thus a group's language creates a concept of identity and its application as an instrument in achieving social influence cannot be left out. The results were backed by the respondents on the interview as they replied as follows:

A female Member of Parliament in central region replied; "Baganda are the most influential tribe with their language in the region to be sincere. Do you think you can convince the Baganda to abandon their Luganda for Swahili? I doubt! Those who have been around know that Swahili was a language used for robbers, it cannot certainly be the main regional language, it will be there by law but in Uganda am sure it will completely be ignored."(Interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2012)

Another female respondent argued that;

**Table 1.** Responses on Ethnicity and Social unity.

ITEM	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Standard deviation
It is very possible that the people of Uganda will forget their affiliated cultural languages and adapt to Swahili as a major medium of communication. Why?	88 (32.6%)	92 (34.1%)	26 (9.6%)	42 (15.6%)	22 (8.1%)	2.33	1.295
It is very possible for Uganda to adopt a common education system with member states with the same curriculum when they join the federation. If yes, how?	23 (8.5%)	49 (18.1%)	44 (16.3%)	110 (40.7%)	44 (16.3%)	3.38	1.201
The cultural differences of the people of Uganda will not overlap the objectives of the East African Federation when they join the federation.	30 (11.3%)	61 (22.9%)	57 (21.4%)	94 (35.3%)	24 (9.0%)	3.08	1.181
All cultural leaders in Uganda and their groups are working towards the success of the East African Federation.	70 (26.6%)	69 (26.2%)	62 (23.6%)	48 (18.3%)	14 (5.3%)	2.49	1.213
While in the federation, people will forget their cultural differences and work towards the success of the East African Federation.	69 (25.6%)	98 (36.3%)	38 (14.1%)	53 (19.6%)	12 (4.4%)	2.41	1.191
The cultures of the people of Uganda are liberal that can easily be assimilated to suit the East African Federation interests.	64 (24.1%)	79 (29.7%)	60 (22.6%)	47 (17.7%)	16 (6.0%)	2.52	1.204
People of Uganda that seek to join the East African Federation are united within their state.	79 (29.5%)	85 (31.7%)	43 (16.0%)	46 (17.2%)	15 (5.6%)	2.38	1.228
The people of Uganda know the importance of joining their states into a federation and are aware of the federation progress culturally.	63 (23.6%)	81 (30.3%)	58 (21.7%)	50 (18.7%)	15 (5.6%)	2.52	1.199
The cultural leaders in Uganda have been catered for in a federation and thus know their role and position when they join the federation.	63 (23.3%)	72 (26.7%)	82 (30.4%)	37 (13.7%)	16 (5.9%)	2.52	1.162
The education system of the Uganda caters for the preparation of its people for the East African federation.	70 (26.1%)	66 (24.6%)	34 (12.7%)	64 (23.9%)	34 (12.7%)	2.72	1.403

"I wonder why people are bothered with the language at the expense of actual unity! You cannot impose a language on people but it can be adopted by the needs. So, let us unite and the most influential language will take its course, but am sure according to my experience, that Luganda will surface."(Interviewed on 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2012).

While another 87 year old illiterate villager after a one hour interrogation in northern region said; "You are the nicest student I have ever known. No other so-called educationist has ever cared to know my thoughts on so many things, yet my experience can help. We do not want the East African Federation of Museveni type; it will

continue to divide our cultures instead of uniting us.(Interviewed on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2012).

While item five, when respondents were asked whether they can forget their cultural differences and work towards the success of the East African Federation, one respondent from a centralized tribe in western region replied;

"I do not want to think about any other place in East Africa, because I love Ankole and would rather die than live somewhere else than Mbarara. This federation they want us to embrace is a misfortune to our cultures. Where shall we keep our animals? In Mombasa, Dodoma, or Mbuya (a town on the outskirts of Kampala) where my relatives stay?" (Interviewed on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2012).

The implication here is that, respondents exhibit one common trait, they can move easily imagine destroying the self then making the effort of project it beyond the familiar world into a strange. This emphasizes that ethnicity and social unity relations are a psychological trait which rears whenever a constructive personality is found, even when the personality belongs to elite group, in a fair social-economic circumstances, the incapacity to take questions casually to project "impersonally" into the situations of their traditional societies they define, is marked in the social setting where traditions are the rule.

In item six when the respondents were asked whether their cultures are liberal that can easily be

assimilated to suit the East African Federation interests, 143 (53.8%) disagreed while 63 (23.7%) agreed. This implies that, much as the cultures of people in Uganda and East Africa is general are related, the fact is that they are not the same and cannot be compatible to another. These cultural differences will be a roadblock to the formation of the East African social unity.

This view was also supported by the respondents on the interview guide when they were asked the same item, one male respondents in southern region replied;

“Maawe!! How can a mukonzo be the same to Bamba? How can a Muhima be equal to a Muiru? Can Baganda reconcile with Banyoro? Look at the tribal conflicts in Tororo District today. Can these our intelligent so called leaders spearheading the East African federation answer these questions? If not, the federation will collapse again, we even do not want it, because we are not the same and not equal, and we cannot be. We must live in a class society.”

Another respondent replied;  
“I wish they first carry out a referendum on this matter! We have continued to waste time and tax payers’ money under the guide of the East African Federation. Sincerely speaking, can we forget our traditions? That is a big no and a big lie.” (Interviewed on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2012)

However, there was a contradiction in the respondents’ views and perceptions when asked in item three whether the religious differences of the people in Uganda would not overlap the objectives of the federation, 118 (44.35) agreed while 91 (34.2%) disagreed. This implies that culture is more important to defend than foreign religions. Despite the fact that most Ugandans are affiliated to different foreign religions, they do not regard them as a stumbling block to unity, although it may be otherwise – as the 34.2% respondents believe. The value of this argument was expressed by the respondents in the interview guide. One female Member of Parliament from southern region said;

“We can all be in a federation- irrespective of our religious differences, if at all we were of the same origin, but the way I see in Uganda, we may be a stumbling block to the East African federation. If we are not united within ourselves, then how can we be united in East African/ the federation is a joke!”(Interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2012).

Another male respondent in Eastern Uganda stated the case for constrictor very concisely;  
“I do not like the idea, although it’s a good one, but rushed, because our leaders have a hidden agenda. Look, what do you expect and think of the person

attacked by jiggers and are a problem to him. Can he be part of a fully developmental so called East African federation? So unless we settle scores at the grassroots by providing services, the idea will be successful.”(Interviewed on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2012).

While a 39-year old horse wagon driver echoed these sentiments on the question;  
“Am not so much of a politician but I am a concerned citizen I have seen here how tribalism coupled with religious differences destroying Uganda, and now what about the federation? Perhaps we even do not know much about it, we only know one thing, East African federation and nothing beyond.”(Interviewed on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2012).

Another cultural leaders in central region asked whether his people would accept the East African Federation, replied, “Its possible, but it must interest the whole region. It is good to have a region’s central unity with no national boarder barriers, except traditional ones because the tradition ones define our identity and this can adjust the taxes according to social justice that these people impose my subjects. (Interviewed on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2012).

And another royal supplemented,

“It is better to base the East African Federation on tradition doctrines, and government to do things private enterprise cannot do in order to have safety from aggression, and create friendlier relations with people of all different tribes, because no one single person has ever applied to God to access his/her tribe. So why do you mistreat them? It is the reason why their federation will be a lost cause.”(Interviewed on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2012).

These attitudes are found mainly among the older and youthful citizens but here against, the responses were selected to show that high empathy is essentially a personal characteristic that occurs among groups that are sociologically diversified. To this, an educated youth is equally pained of the East African social unity for the reasons; “Most of the leaders in East African (presidents) do not even know of our existence, and some who know think we are living in the days of our ancestors. They say we (Baganda) are conservative, but that civilization. This is the basis of society development, look at unity kingdom, Germany is now restoring kingship, Holland, the list is endless. So, the common sensitivity to public attitudes of our political leaders about the East African Federation in the region, including use of modernism as a standard of judgment must stop.”(Interviewed on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2012)

Preference for this argument is a modern nation limited even in the most centralized areas like central region

(Kampala) to a relatively small segment of the population. A valuable set of experiments has shown from the Ugandan view, that the East African federation cannot attain social unity of their citizens and thus the idea of the East African social unity is a condition of persuasion by political leaders. The idea is constructive but it is exacerbated by the traditional beliefs and top politicians among Ugandans. The implication here is that if these societies politically join into a federation, the multi social interaction is likely to cause more ethnic divisions and hatred among groups, and the end result will be collapse of the East African Federation since each groups' culture will want to topple another while in the federation.

## DISCUSSION

The research findings revealed that the East African social unity can be achieved in some few aspects and not in others. The case in point is that of language where respondents; 66.7% did not believe that the people of Uganda can forget their affiliated languages and adopt to Swahili as a major medium of communication, while 23.7% were certain. This clearly shows that social unity of East Africa is nearly impossible. This view was shared by Balibar and Wallerstein (2002) who acknowledges that societies like Uganda are conglomerates of linguistically differentiated populations where a superimposition of mutually incompatible languages for the dominant and the dominated has occurred, thus social differences between ethnic groups are expressed in different ways of speaking the national idiom and relating to its common code.

Furthermore, the findings continue to confirm that the elements of social unity like language are a function of ethnic culture and these man's choices and actions will have a bearing on the formation of the East African social unity. In addition, the results from the respondents revealed that the cultures of the people of Uganda are complex to non-members and hard to forget by ethnic members. Thus, the element of social unity in the region may prove difficult. This argument is supported by Lonsdale, (1995) when he highlighted that political tribalism leads to moral ethnicity. Thus, tribalism is not only about power, manipulation and boundary making, but it also has a moral content which guides people's perceptions on their ethnic group involvement in the arena of state politics, economics and cultural identity.

When thinking about federations, like that of East Africa, ethnicity deserves to be treated as a phenomenon more complex than primordial identity, and the flamboyant garb of self interest. The question of neglecting smaller ethnic groups and embracing the "enlightened groups" is misleading, thus, the background or possible invention of ethnic identity is dangerous when trying to federate and has to be dealt with in its

contemporary sphere of implicit relevance.

The findings of the study also reveal that cultural leaders and their followers are not working or supportive of the East African social unity. The statistics of the research findings reveal that 52.8% respondents agreed with the argument, while 23.6% were certain. This implies that the cultural aspect of the peoples of Uganda is not catered for in the federation, or, not well sensitized, thus, the clear procedures of the federation are only known to the architectures of the programme. The argument here is well stipulated by Carr (1995), "... as long as the overall security and well being of the individuals are not provided for by the state, independently of his tribal affiliation, he will be and continues to rely upon traditional tribal principles of cooperation."

The findings also reveal that despite the fact that people are living together in Uganda, their cultural differences still exist and work against the success of the East African social unity. This was supported by the respondents as 52.8% (139) supported the view, while only 23.6% (64) respondents objected it. It was further revealed that the people of Uganda cannot forget their cultural difference while in the federation, hence impacting on the East African social unity. The research statistics show that 53.8% (143) respondents were in agreement with this view while 24.0% respondents disagreed.

This view was also supported by Carr (1995) when he gave an illustration on Tanzania which attempted to crate social unity to overshadow ethnic identity. With all efforts made, the personnel within the government structures could not override their attachments to ethnic groups. In addition, Nwabueze (1992) also argued that the social unity imbalances in Uganda and East Africa in general were a product of ethnicity differences and the feelings generated from ethnicity are not amenable to rational argument and persuasion.

The study also discovered that the main threat to national or social unity in Uganda and East Africa is the fear of domination by one group over the rest. To solve this Mazrui, (1972) calls for an approach that allows room for being specifically African, and not merely dependant on western models, while thinking about the prospect of the East African federation. In other words, ethnic identity may have lost its innocence in the eyes of the world, or Ugandans but to dismiss the nation of difference as being intrinsically benevolent is extremely dangerous. Thus, the ethnic problem is far from being solved in the East African federation.

In relation to the above, the research findings also reveal that the people of Uganda who seek to federate in the East African social unity are not themselves united within their state. For this, 61.2% (164) respondents supported this view, while 22.8% (61) respondents disregarded it. This is dependent on ethnicity as Tarimo (2002) observes that the main destructor of social unity in

multicultural states is the phenomenon of ethnicity and conflict of competing loyalties. In Uganda, ethnic loyalty has risen above other loyalties and is interpreted today as quick promotion in one's status. Abner (1981) concludes that these moral conflicts in the state are looked at as conflicts between these concrete commitments to various groups and the end result is social discrimination and chaos.

In addition, the findings also reveal that ethnicity is affecting directly or indirectly our understanding of common good. This view concurred with Shue (1980), when he asserted that despite of the rhetoric of national unity, or the East African social unity, the typical understanding of common good, solidarity and community remains limited to the circles of particular ethnic groups. This implies that important issues, such as how to form a formidable nation based on traditional values and political consensus in Uganda are not well addressed. A balance of interests achieved by the free bargaining of groups in society creates a comprehensive conception of common good and is thus a more equitable way of dealing with social competition among ethnic groups and ensuring equal opportunity for all, hence enhancement of cooperation between different groups within Uganda, and East Africa.

The understanding of a common good and social unity in Uganda is still frequently limited to the framework of the ethnic well being. Goran (1981) is in agreement with this view when he asserted that place of birth and ethnicity are seen as having influence over cities, towns and states. Thus, the understanding of a common good in Uganda is within the same framework. For the realization of social unity in Uganda in relation to the East African federation, the real challenge would have been how to integrate ethnicity into social relationships, but not how to eradicate it under the pretext of modernity through the East African federation.

The research study also discovered that the majority of the people of Uganda do not understand the importance of their nation into the East African federation. The research statistics reveal that 53.9% (144) respondents supported this view, while 24.3% (65) were in disagreement. The study also revealed that the cultural leaders in Uganda are not aware of their roles and position while in the East African federation. For this argument, 49.0% (135) respondents agreed with this view, while 19.6% (53) respondents disagreed. While the architectures of the East African federation underrate ethnicity to this level. Lamb, (1984), believes that the significance of ethnicity cannot diminish with the formation of a federation in East Africa. He emphasizes a family clan and ethnic group as the essential structures of social relationships in African societies.

The misinterpretation of culture and ethnicity in the federation is likely to suit Sperber (1985) cognitive approach. He believes that such situations translate into

to perspectives; public representation and mental representation. These two may be idiosyncratic in the state, or federation. In addition, the research findings confirm that ethnicity or federation are ways of seeing the world, understanding and identifying one's self interests, making sense of one's problems and predicaments and orienting one's actions. More so, they are ways of recognizing, identifying and classifying other people, of construing sameness and difference and of coding and making sense of their actions. They are also templates for representing and organizing social knowledge, frames for articulating social comparisons and explanations and filter the shape, what is noticed and unnoticed, relevant and irrelevant, remembered and forgotten. For the case of Uganda, and East Africa, such prospects of the Federation if adopted will have an impact on the social unity of the people of Uganda and East Africa in general.

Ajrouch (2002) believes that the social ties that exist within an ethnic group are highlighted through the perceptions of people and examine to discern the process of acculturation and negotiating of ethnic identity. These conditions produce a unique intersection where place, age and culture converge. They elaborate on factors that frame their identity through accounts of their social relations. This also confirms Cohen's theory that groups with shared cultural systems and heritage have an added value of being able to describe the commonalities between systems of group identity in both tribal and modern societies. In a political Federation, these traits cannot be left out, the benefit and interests of groups will appear to be more apparent than the actual meaning of a federation, and once the benefit and interest is not defined and accommodated, a merge of these ethnic groups into a social unit will appear watery. Thus, he study concluded that the rigid divide in the methodological application of cultural and rational accounts among Ugandan ethnic groups, the strategic policies linking individuals to ethnic violence and violent ethnic behavior, reflect specific social processes in Ugandan society. The specification of what these processes are, the precise mechanisms by which they lead to ethnically based violence, and to the testing of these specifications within the predicted East African Federation will pose a great challenge to the realization of a fruitful East African social unity of its members.

## CONCLUSION

The findings reveal that apart from English language and the government emphasis to place the education system of Uganda does not reflect, or prepare Ugandan citizens for the East African federation prospects. For this, 50.7% (136) respondents were certain. While 36.6% (98) respondents believed otherwise. The findings disagreed with Mulokozi (2002), study who stressed the study and

speaking of Swahili as useful in forging unity. The study establishes that one's identity in multicultural states like Uganda is ethnic and not national, thus the speaking of a national, or regional recognized language does not make people forget their native, or cultures that ascribe and distinguish them from other ethnic groups.

The ethnic phenomenon in Uganda and East Africa has remained a challenge in the region. The attempts made by political actors have so far proved difficult for the people to realize social unity. The study has clearly demonstrated that, the social approach particularly cultural approach has emphasized the impossibility of approaching cultural uniformity in Uganda, in relation to the East African federation.

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