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## Integration of Cape Verde in the ECOWAS Subregion: Challenges and Viability

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# Walden University

College of Health Sciences and Public Policy

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2022

Abstract

Integration of Cape Verde in the ECOWAS Subregion: Challenges and Viability

by

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Proposal Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Public Policy-Law and Policy

Walden University

August 2022

## Abstract

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was created on May 28<sup>th</sup>, 1975, with the intent of fostering the economic growth of its 15 member-states. In the process of implementing its policies and institutions, the ECOWAS faced decisive challenges, including internal conflicts, asymmetries, migrations and mobility. The purpose of this study was to assess the impact these factors have on the integration of the Republic of Cape Verde, which is the smallest member-state, and formulate conclusions and recommendations that would help the organization to find a path to success. Through the lenses of the dependency theory, this research involved applying the qualitative methodology and a case study approach to conduct a thorough literature review and collecting data that allowed for a deep analysis of the phenomenon. This study involved an in-depth review of the evolution of current policies of the ECOWAS, gains of the organization in terms of peacemaking and peacekeeping, and the need for clarity on matters related to migration, trade, and asymmetries. This study will lead to social change by providing insights into the factors that affect the full integration of Cape Verde into the ECOWAS region.

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## Dedication

I would like to dedicate this work to my wife Domingas and children Joshua, Silvestre Jr and Keysa Medina for their patience and my absence when I spent all those hours often late at night, digging into the challenges of this endeavor. I love you all and did this for you. Also, to my mother, father, brothers, and sisters who always believed in me as someone who would push education into another level in our family.

To all the others who were there cheering me along the way, your motivation really made a difference in my academic and overall life. This achievement will have a strong impact on social change, and you will be part of it.

So, a big thank you to all of you, I will be here to carry the water back to you.

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In God I trust

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## Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

### **Introduction**

The integration of the Republic of Cape Verde in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is a phenomenon that is worthy of an analysis and assessment. A 10 Islands archipelago off the West Coast of Africa, Cape Verde became a nation on July 5th, 1975, when it was proclaimed an independent country from Portugal. ECOWAS, a 15-member regional organization, was created months earlier, on May 28th, 1975, by the treaty of Lagos with the “mandate of promoting economic integration in all fields of activity of the constituting countries” (ECOWAS, 2016, p.1). Much has been done to accomplish this goal, but internal conflicts, asymmetry, governmental instability, and other challenges have precluded ECOWAS from fulfilling its mission and Cape Verde is a peculiar case.

Due to its geographical location and historic relations, the Republic of Cape Verde joined the ECOWAS in 1976 (ECOWAS, 2016, p.1), but as a small insular country it stands in a unique position in relation to this organization. Its physical separation from the mainland makes it difficult and expensive to import and export its potential products to and from the remaining member-states (Em debate, 2017). Besides the fact that Cape Verde does not have the products that are potentially in demand in the region (see Appendix A). Furthermore, Cape Verde’s cultural and historical proximity to Europe places it in an equidistant position from Africa and Europe in geostrategic terms (Madeira et al, 2016, p.2). With 4033 square kilometers and 540,000 inhabitants (Country meters, 2019), it is interesting to know how the demographic and size factors contribute to the integration of the archipelago of Cape Verde in the ECOWAS region and subsequently in Africa.

This study was intended to address factors that affect the integration of Cape Verde in the ECOWAS region from a historic perspective and analyze the challenges this region has faced since the days of independence. An extensive review was conducted on existing data, government reports, academic literature, and other valid sources that fitted the purpose of this study. A qualitative case study was conducted with participants who were current or former government officials, Parliamentarians, and NGOs' stakeholders who provided quality responses to the inquiry.

The political instability that is observed in the West Africa region must be addressed together with the inherent saga of corruption that has affected a substantive portion of the Sub-Saharan Africa. According to Nurudeen et al (2015) "Years of political instability have contributed to the high rate of corruption and underdevelopment in ECOWAS countries. Researchers have confirmed that corruption increases with political instability" (p. 55). Instability and corruption destroy physical capital and displaces human capital, as populations flee from their locations to find better opportunities elsewhere.

This displacement of people under the Free Movement of People Act of 1979 puts pressure on the receiving member-states when "West Africa is not yet ready for the free movement of people at its current stage of development" (Bolarinua, 2015, p.166). These hardships make it difficult for development and prosperity to occur, and the myriad of additional legislative impediments makes it hard for people to travel, do business, and reside in other member-states despite stipulations of the Free Movement Act.

Insularity and asymmetry are other aspects that affect Cape Verde's integration, particularly considering that the primary goal and purpose of ECOWAS is to promote trade

and economic growth. When separated from the mainland, transportation of goods becomes a challenge because it requires air and maritime shipping rather than ground transportation, as is the case with the other fourteen member-states.

This study provides a great contribution to understanding the inherent factors that makes Cape Verde an exceptional case of integration in the ECOWAS region, with focus on asymmetry, insularity, and migration perspectives.

This chapter introduces the research study, establishes the background, defines the problem and the purpose of the study, and introduces the questions. It also establishes the conceptual background and the nature of the study, and a list of key terms used in the literary research.

### **Background**

Many scholars and theorists have addressed the integration process in many regions of the world, including Africa and the ECOWAS region. The European Union model of regionalization is seen as the template that many theorists have attempted to adapt to other realities around the globe with more or less success as suggested by Börzel & Risse (2019), depending on the depth and broadness of each case (Vedres & Nordlund, 2018). The main failure in applying the European model lays in the fact that most often it relies on the modernization theories that are hardly applicable to developing countries. In the European case, due to the homogeneity of the levels of development, the standardization of regulations to facilitate the integration process was much easier. As Vedres & Nordlund (2018) noted:

With the removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers liberating the movement of goods, capital, and services, coupled with the prescribed institutional and regulatory



harmonization, flows increased greatly between the economies of the older European core and the new East European member states. (p. 170)

Authors such as Börzel & Risse (2019) have compared the European model to other realities and concluded that because of the specific historic context in which the integration took place in Europe, it could hardly be replicated in other regions of the world.

In the ECOWAS case, many concepts and theories have been proposed as alternative propositions to the regional integration process, and all of them are valuable contributions to the integration phenomenon. As it has been seen, the main obstacle to regional integration in the ECOWAS region has been the political instability and conflicts that have backwinded the development and cohesion in the region.

Maiangwa (2015) addressed the ECOWAS' struggles to solve internal conflicts on their own rather than relying on the United Nations' security Council to intervene in the region and Nigeria's capacity and initiative as the main potency in the region.

Nurudeen et al., (2015) used the Granger casualty test and the multivariate cointegration methods to assess the impact of corruption and political instability on economic development in the ECOWAS region and concluded that political instability actually stimulates development in the short term, but these two factors combined turn into corruption overtime. The frequent internal political turmoil that has been experimented in the ECOWAS region has often required the intervention of regional forces led by Nigeria, the African Union and the United Nations.

Bamidele et al. (2018) verified the effectiveness the African Union's (AU) Constitutional Act as a mean of deterrence to political instability within the ECOWAS region.

The authors compared the internal conflicts within the ECOWAS to the ones observed in the Arab Spring and reached the conclusion that the African Union and its regional organizations must revamp their tactics so they may remain relevant and not be replaced by the people and other emerging players.

Sule (2018) reinforces this notion by pointing out that although the ECOWAS has existed for 45 years, its regional integration plan is still at experimental stage, struggling with issues involving integration, free trade, and circulation due to endogenous obstacles that persist such as lack of accessibility, implementation of training for border officers, and travelling costs. There is a deficit of educational initiatives both for border officers and citizenry. This author provides a wealth of data to illustrate the situation within the ECOWAS region from the regional integration perspective.

Therefore, for an island country like Cabo Verde where natural resources are insignificant and is dependent to a significant extent on foreign aid, the Functionalist Theory and a holistic view argue for the country to be integrated into the ECOWAS community in order to share common interests. Dissonance among national interests can emerge as some groups clamor for national sovereignty (Nurudeen et al., 2015, p. 44).

Kurecic (2017) provides an appropriate perspective on what small states must do to maximize their opportunities in this multi-polar world. This author proposes that small states must foster solid regional cooperation, but in a manner that does not compromise their stand with other countries around the world.

One of the characteristics of small states' actions in the international arena is balancing and "playing on both cards simultaneously" or switching sides, that is, using the rivalries and

competition of the great powers or disputes as their comparative advantage in “extracting” a concrete financial help, resources, or certain concessions from large and mutually competitive states. (Kurecic, 2017, p.343). Leite Rodrigues et al., (2018) said since Cape Verde lacks natural resources, faces continuous and prolonged periods of drought, in addition to depending on foreign investment and aid to finance its budget, the archipelago must consider its strategic monetary cooperation and proximity to Europe.

This study involved addressing a literary gap of understanding the integration process in the ECOWAS region from the Cape Verdean perspective. It involves understanding the extent to which Cape Verdean stakeholders are engaged in furthering the archipelago’s integration in the ECOWAS.

### **Problem Statement**

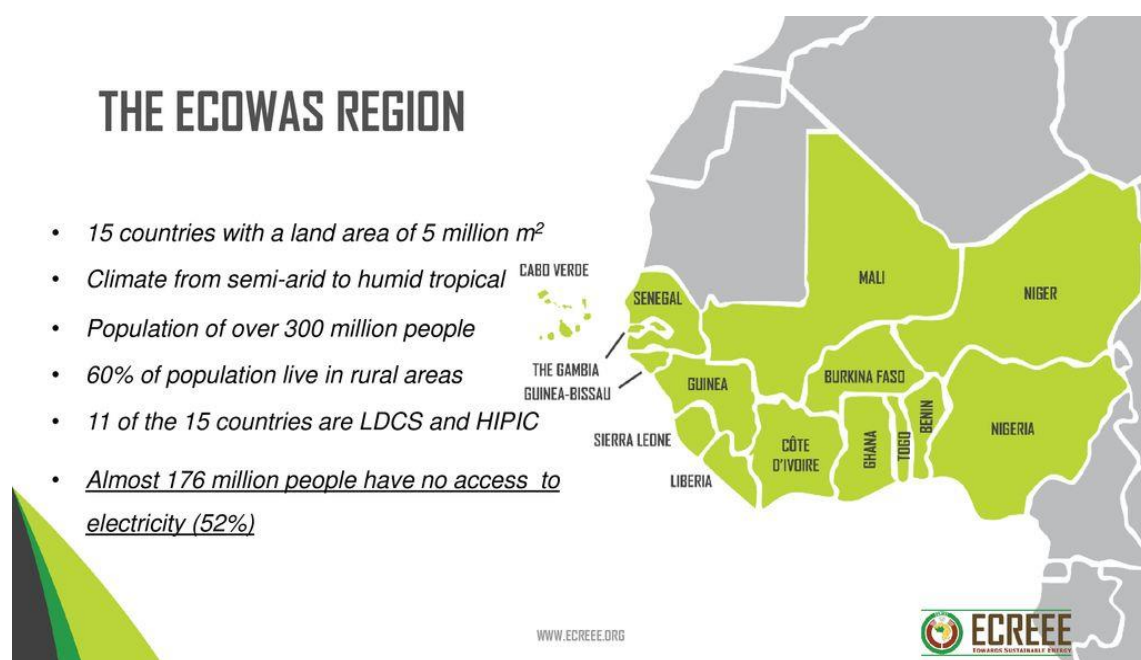
The liberation movement of in the Sub-Saharan region in the 1960s and 1970s led to an era in which emerging states had to address their future in terms of stability and development. Indeed, “Botswana was the only Sub-Saharan economy that sustained growth over three, indeed four, decades since its independence, which was in 1966” (Kurecic, 2017, p. 340). In many instances, political instability and corruption resulted in many nations as they sought to consolidate their sovereignty and social structures (Sule, 2018).

Much research has been dedicated to understanding the regional integration process in the African continent, with special attention to the ECOWAS region. African Union and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) along with the additional institutions have done a lot. The present study contributes to further knowledge of the factors that positively and negatively affect the regional integration of the Republic of Cape Verde in the ECOWAS

region, including asymmetry and internal conflicts. Migration from Cape Verde to the ECOWAS region or (reverse migration) is almost nonexistent apart from about 35,000 Cape Verdean residents in Senegal and Guinea Bissau, according to the National Institute of Statistics (INE, 2019), a fact that precedes the creation of the ECOWAS. It is also important to know how reduced migration from Cape Verde to the ECOWAS region affects the integration process.

### Figure 1

#### *Population and Geography of the ECOWAS Region*



Therefore, this study was an opportunity to assess sources involving Cape Verde integration perspectives. The uniqueness of Cape Verde in terms of its political and social stability places the islands in a strategic position in the ECOWAS region, and this study involved addressing this potential.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this qualitative study was to determine factors that affect Cape Verde's integration in the ECOWAS region and efforts that Cape Verdean stakeholders have implemented to create closer relationships in the region.

Conflicts, asymmetries, migration, corruption, and scarcity of resources play significant roles in the integration process, and this study involved determining the depth of these challenges.

Cape Verde's uniqueness related to its territorial and population smallness, insularity and limitation of natural resources, and cyclical drought places it in a vulnerable position in terms of its relationship with the continental Africa and the ECOWAS region in particular. Kurecic (2017) said small states must maximize their development potential by keeping all channels open rather than committing too deeply into one single forum. As Nurudeen et al., (2015, p. 46) said, Cape Verde has no history of internal conflicts to compare to regional norms.

### **Research Questions and Hypotheses**

Research questions provide a clear and aligned context of what is being researched (Patton, 2012), and provides a guide on what the object of the study was (Maxwell, 2013). In qualitative research, open-ended questions allow for a spontaneous result. According to Burkholder et. Al. (2016), "In a qualitative case study, the questions may address a description of the case and the themes that emerge from studying it" and based on the intent of this study and looking at the current literary knowledge, I used the following research questions:

*RQ1:* How do insularity and asymmetry affect Cape Verde's membership in the ECOWAS?

*RQ2:* Does cultural diversity influence Cape Verde's stance in the ECOWAS region?

*RQ3:* How important is Cape Verde's integration in the ECOWAS region?

The data collection and analysis informed the answers to these questions and provided evidences to formulate the conclusions and recommendations deemed appropriate to address these issues.

### **Theoretical Framework for the Study**

The theoretical foundation for this study was the dependency theory that was introduced by Raul Prebisch, as proposed in its contemporary form by Sliz and & Szczepaisk. The dependency theory was proposed by Raul Prebisch in the late 1950s to explain the reality of economic stagnation in underdeveloped countries, as well as strategies they must adopt to accelerate their economic growth. Prebisch proposed that when Latin America and other states are conditioned to producing raw materials to feed industries of core countries whose manufactured products are sold back to Latin America, their economic growth is limited. Such conditions are still observed in the Southern hemisphere, but mostly in Africa (Dennis & Ahmed, 2017). That is the main economic obstacle that ECOWAS states face, with meagre infrastructure and limited transformation industry.

In addition to the dependency theory, I used the small states integration theory to understand and explain strategies that small insular states such as Cape Verde must adopt to thrive. As Kurecic (2017) said, "a small state's choice of model depends on its regional position, its neighbors, and the predominant type of relations that it has with them, and of

course of its own capabilities” (p. 323). This applies to Cape Verde as a small insular state that must simultaneously take advantage of economic opportunities, but at the same time keep in mind its limitations and weaknesses.

Kurecic (2017) argues that “African states are marked more by internal problems than by threats of their own survival from the neighboring states. Nigeria is a state towards which small states of Western Africa can bandwagon, seeking help and protection if needed” (p. 338). Cape Verde must remain equidistant from the ECOWAS as it has other important commitments with the EU, the Lusophone Community (CPLP), African Portuguese speaking countries (PALOP), and Africa, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) states, besides special partnerships with the United States and China and other bilateral relations. A small state like Cape Verde must be pragmatic in the way its foreign policies are designed and implemented.

Therefore, dependency and small states integration theories serve the purpose of this research study and are a match for a theoretical foundation to explain Cape Verde’s dependency in the ECOWAS region, the African Union, and the world. An analysis of these theories and their applicability to this study are presented in Chapter 2.

### **Conceptual Framework**

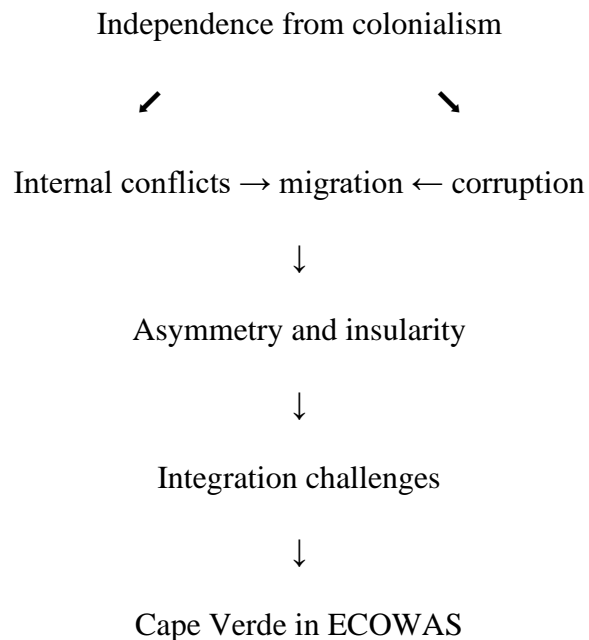
Cape Verde is a small and insular state that has some difficulties in terms of its stand in ECOWAS institutional forums, and this study emphasized the uniqueness of Cape Verde’s relationship with other ECOWAS member-states. As Kurecic (2017) said, in this multi-polar era small states must keep as much leverage as possible (p. 323). Integration theory provides a foundation that aligns with the reality of ECOWAS scenario and the intent of this research, with the dependency theory as the main theoretical foundation. Because there

is not much literature involving the impact of insularity and asymmetry on Cabo Verde's membership in the ECOWAS region, this research fills the gap and contributes to a better understanding of this phenomenon. A small state's integration model depends on its regional position, its neighbors, and the effectiveness in implementing adequate policies.

The theories, literary data and the key concepts constituted the conceptual framework of this study and together with the collected data, provided answers to the questions of this research study and the foundation for the conclusions and recommendations. Literary data was tested using the proposed theories and compared with the data that was collected through qualitative research case study after the proposal was approved.

**Table 1.**

*Cape Verde Integration Challenges in the ECOWAS Region*





### **Nature of the Study**

This study involved using a qualitative case study design with semi-structured data collection. This served the purpose of this study because it provided the proper pathway to analyze current literature, apply proposed theories, collect and analyze data in order to find answers to proposed research questions. Case studies are usually conducted using the qualitative design and helped to analyze factors that affect integration of Cape Verde in the ECOWAS region. As Creswell (2013) explains:

Writing a methods section for a proposal for qualitative research partly requires educating readers as to the intent of qualitative research, mentioning specific designs, carefully reflecting on the role the researcher plays in the study, drawing from an ever-expanding list of types of data sources, using specific protocols for recording data, analyzing the information through multiple steps of analysis, and mentioning approaches for documenting the accuracy or validity of the data collected. ( p.232).

The qualitative approach oriented the analysis of factors and variables that are relevant in terms of Cape Verde integration in the ECOWAS region and was used as a framework for data collection and analysis. Data were collected using semi-constructed interviews with questions that helped to determine how stakeholders are or are not engaged in full integration of Cape Verde in the ECOWAS region due to obstacles.

### **Definitions of Terms**

*Barlavento:* Group of six northern islands in the Republic of Cape Verde

*Batuque:* Rhythm at  $\frac{3}{4}$  tempo beat accompanied by clapping and dancing

*Funana*: Fast paced, rhythmic dance music from Cape Verde

*Morabeza*: Reputation of friendliness and hospitality

*Morna*: Soft paced, melancholic Cape Verdean music

*Sotavento*: Group of four southern islands of the Republic of Cape Verde

### **Assumptions**

For the purpose of this study, it is assumed that the ECOWAS counterparts believe that the Cape Verdean government is not interested in full integration because, there is no permanent representation of the Cape Verde government at ECOWAS headquarters in Abuja, which has been reversed recently with the opening of an embassy in the city.

In 2017, it was Cape Verde's turn to propose the next ECOWAS commission president, but due to arrears in financial contributions and poor diplomatic influence, the appointment was passed to the next country alphabetically, the Ivory Coast. It was assumed that asymmetry accounts for this indifference of the organization since Cape Verde has never assumed a relevant role in the organization's leadership, other than as commissioner.

### **Scope and Delimitations**

This study was delimited to integration in the ECOWAS region from the Cape Verdean perspective. I focused on assessment of viability this archipelago nation in the ECOWAS forum, and its ability to participate in the decision-making process within the region and its structures.

This study focused on the internal conflicts within member-states, the asymmetries and the insularity that affect Cape Verde. The delimitation of the scope helps to guide the

studies towards the issues that must be addressed and helps to keep the focus of the study within the proposed framework.

The population for this study was the Cape Verde Islands, more specifically stakeholders who are acquainted with issues related to regional integration.

### **Limitations**

Scarcity of specific data related to this study is an issue that was compensated via data collection through a comprehensive list of questions and an expert-based group of participants from. The literary data available did not provide much of specific information from the Cape Verdean counterpart related to ECOWAS.

### **Potential Contributions of the Study**

This study has the potential to clarify important aspects of the integration process in the ECOWAS region by addressing three fundamental challenges: internal conflicts, migration and asymmetry from the perspectives of people in Cape Verde. This study builds on the works of Rocha, Madeira and Lopes et al. by contributing to understanding factors that affect the integration process in the ECOWAS region in general, with focus on the case of Cape Verde. This study will lead to knowledge related to limitations that small states face during regional integration, as they have to maximize their exposure to increase the limited leverage when facing hegemonic powers in the ECOWAS region.

### **Summary**

Chapter 1 included background information about this study, contextual background of the phenomenon, and research questions. I also addressed theoretical frameworks and methodology that guided data collection and analysis processes.

Chapter 2 includes a literature review, theoretical foundations, search terms, and literature research strategies.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### **Introduction**

The ECOWAS was created in 1975 as one of the eight RECs acknowledged by the AU, with the intent of stimulating and regulating trade among member-states and fostering their economic growth (AU, 2019). Much has been done to accomplish this goal, but internal conflicts and governmental instability have precluded the ECOWAS from fulfilling its mission.

The Republic of Cape Verde belongs to the ECOWAS region due to historic similarities and its geographical location but stands in a unique position in relation to this organization due to insularity and cultural proximity to Europe and the Western hemisphere.

Considering the blatant asymmetry that exists in the ECOWAS region and limitations in terms of population and size, I addressed how these characteristics affect the relationship between the archipelago and the region. ECOWAS has been a driving force in the region, solving conflicts and delivering projects and solutions involving agriculture, education, health, and communications. With stronger cohesion and cooperation, these contributions could be accelerated, leading to overall development in the region.

Endogenous development also calls for mobilization of citizens and creation of cooperatives, which require major economic and political structural changes.

Social justice is the ultimate purpose of models and policies that are implemented primarily by the member-state, fostered by mutual engagement of governments through a resolved commitment to regional cooperation.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to determine factors involving full integration of Cape Verde in the ECOWAS region and identify adjustments that must be implemented to facilitate this process. I analyzed how Cape Verde's governmental leadership and other endogenous stakeholders view the importance of full regional integration in the ECOWAS in contrast to perceptions of other remaining member-states (Benin, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo), and their assessment of Cape Verde's efforts involving full integration in the region.

I addressed to what extent the smallness and insularity of Cape Verde play a role in its regional integration process. The qualitative method was used to assess the validity of various related theories and evaluate their significance. Asymmetry is a significant factor in the integration process. The 10-island archipelago has some unique characteristics involving its small size, ethnic and cultural miscegenation due to its proximity to Europe and the Americas, and an oceanic physical barrier with Africa, a factor that limits the country's ability to fulfill the main purpose of the ECOWAS organization, which is free trade. Cape Verde is ranked as a credible ECOWAS state by Amnesty international and other international institutions (IIs). Cape Verde also has the highest per capita GDP. The steady and comprehensive growth that this nation has experienced is recognized by the international community and development partners.

Cape Verde could use its good standing within the region to promote democratization and good governance within the ECOWAS organization. It receives proportionally a

substantial share of ECOWAS migrants despite its insularity due to the Free Movement of Persons, Residence and Establishment Act of May 1979. As Bolarinua 2015 notes:

To date, however, even with the adoption of the four supplementary protocols, the objective of complete freedom of movement in the sub-region has not yet been realized though the ECOWAS region is undoubtedly more advanced than any other regional grouping in Africa. It must however be reiterated that the first of the three phases foreseen by the Protocol visa-free entry for up to 90 days has been completely implemented by all ECOWAS countries. (p. 162).

The Republic of Cape Verde is a player in the political and social stability endeavor within the ECOWAS region and this study assessed to what extent total integration would be positive in terms of regional cohesion.

### **Background**

The challenges that member-states face during their integration in the ECOWAS region are multifaceted and therefore complex. Asymmetry among member-states, regional conflicts, corruption, migration challenges, and lack of resources are main challenges.

Many theorists have proposed concepts related to the efficacy of ECOWAS and its integration process in the Sub-Sahara African region. Dennis and Ahmed (2017) said, “the activities of Nigeria and Ghana in West African regional political integration process through the mechanism of ECOWAS has brought positive changes to the region quest to ensure the establishment of democratic culture in ECOWAS member states” (p. 70). Political stability enjoyed by these two states has allowed them to invoke ECOWAS protocol to intervene in regional conflicts and stabilize legitimate governments. Hegemony of Nigeria and Ghana as

stabilizers is decisive in terms of shaping of the organization and its decision-making process. As the superpower in the region, Nigeria is not only the host of the ECOWAS organization but also the biggest contributor to the ECOWAS budget.

As Nurudeen et al, (2015) said, political instability and corruption stimulate development in the short term but result in more corruption and stagnation over time (p. 55). The ECOWAS region has been affected by these conditions, and the AU has intervened multiple times led by Nigerian forces to promote stability and peace.

Bamidele and Ayodele (2016) tested the effectiveness of the AU Constitutional Act as an instrument which deters political instability within the ECOWAS region. They compared the regional conflicts to the Arab Spring cases and conclude that The AU and regional organizations must revamp their approaches to remain relevant and not be subsided by the people and other emerging actors.

Bolarinua (2015) studied the migration phenomenon within the ECOWAS region, categorizing the different kinds of movement of people, their causes and effects. The author makes a detailed assessment of the impact of migration within the ECOWAS region and its effect on integration and concluded:

It is also obvious that West Africa is not yet ready for the free movement of people at its current stage of development. The Protocol is far more idealistic than realistic. It is also revealed that there is a linkage between the free movement of people and regional integration. (p. 166)

I concluded that ECOWAS member-states must implement a comprehensive package of measures so that the Free Movement Act of 1979 may take effect. All these findings align



with the regional integration theory proposed by Kurecic (2017), who suggested strategies that small states must adopt to thrive within their region, in this multi-polar, superpower era.

Kurecic provides an in-depth review of contemporary economic diplomacy, with emphasis on small states' strategy, established the foundation for ideas on how small states can maintain a close relationship within their regions while fostering a solid relationship with other countries around the world. While the World Trade Organization suggests that tariff exemption stimulates regional trade in detriment to global open market, the reality in the ECOWAS suggests the opposite. Thus, "While the WTO is founded on the premise that lower tariff levels should lead to economic growth and increases in trade volume, this has not proven to be true for Africa" (Barnekow & Kulkarni, 2017, p.115). The simple explanation is that the volume of export/import trade is so insignificant that tariff exemption has a minimum effect. Incidentally, "Less than 1 percent of Nigeria's imports come from ECOWAS countries, among which Ghana accounts for over 55 percent and Ivory Coast another 27 percent of the total sum" (World Bank, 2014, p. 1). These facts are relevant because Nigeria represents two thirds of the ECOWAS market.

### **Literature Search Strategy**

I performed a preliminary search of key terms to assess theories and relevant concepts related to regional integration, with dependency theory and the effects of asymmetry on small states in the regional context on the forefront. This strategy helped to refine the questions and purpose of this study. Despite the substantial amount of literary data available, it became clear that there is an evident gap in the literary knowledge related to small states regional

integration, particularly related to Sub-Saharan Africa. This strategy resulted in solid assumptions, grounded on theories that have been tested and recognized beyond this century.

### **Literature Review Related to Key Concepts**

Literary materials for this research were collected from various databases, mainly accessed from the Walden University Library, which allows a concise, quick peer-reviewed results. Databases such as EBSCOHost, SAGE Journals, ProQuest, Google Scholar, and World Bank and IMF databases were used, along with Cape Verde's government webpages and databases such as Boletim Oficial, the Parliament web page, the National TV TCV and Universidade de Cabo Verde provided valuable data. ECOWAS and AU webpages also provided some institutional data.

Search terms were: *ECOWAS, regional integration, internal conflicts, ECOWAS asymmetry, ECOWAS migration, dependency & theory, small states & integration, Cape Verde, insularity, migration, qualitative research, research methods, theoretical framework, case study, and qualitative research.*

By repeating the search cycles and narrowing down by adding concise bullions, the search results were narrowed down to the specific object of the study.

### **Theoretical Foundation**

The main theoretical foundation proposed for this study was grounded upon the dependency theory, as presented in its contemporary form by Sliz & Szczepaisk (2015). These authors made an extensive review of the evolutionary path that dependency theory took since it was first proposed in the 1950's by Raul Prebisch and developed by Immanuel Wallerstein

in his work later in the 1970's (Wallerstein, 1974). The Dependency Theory was developed as an alternative explanation of the disparity in development patterns of countries around the world, in contrast to the Modernization theories that dominated the social development school of thought up to the end of WWII. According to the modernization theory proposed by Emely Durkheim at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, all societies could experiment development although the timing may vary (Sliz & Szczepaisk, 2015, p. 361). According to Zambaraki (2018), "the top-down approach advocated by modernization theorists, with its state-centric ideology, has only exacerbated existing differences within and between countries. Moreover, modernization theory, advocated by scholars like Sachs, has not led to poverty alleviation, let alone poverty eradication" (p. 20). Zambakari's conclusion is prevalent among contemporary scholars.

### **Origin and Source of the Theory**

Dependency theory emerged from the need to find an alternative idea that would explain the development gap between North and South and provide a pathway for the underdeveloped countries to find a model that would provide a blueprint for development. This theory resulted from the efforts of South American researchers but quickly experimented a universalization as they provided a concise framework of the differences between the North and the South, explaining the inherent reasons why the underdeveloped states are geographically distinct and predictable. Although Immanuel Wallerstein and Alain Touraine are credited with developing the dependency theory to the detailed version that is so popular, there is no doubt that it originated from the South America by Raul Prebisch and other theorists (Sliz & Szczepaisk, 2015, p. 369). According to dependency theorists, economic,

political and cultural dependency account for the asymmetric gap between the North and South, the developed and the underdeveloped states.

Before the dependency theory, modernization theories initiated by Emile Durkheim dominated the school of social sciences in relation to development. Indeed, “In Durkheim’s opinion, all societies, without exception, are subject to an evolutionary transformation from a society based on mechanical solidarity to one based on organic solidarity. Only the tempo of the transformation of each could be different” (Sliz & Szczepaisk, 2015, p. 361). As the leading theory for this study, dependency provided a contextual background on the economic development from the industrial revolution era to present, as proposed by Raul Prebisch in the 50’s as an updating alternative to the modernization theories that were popular before WWII, when theories were formulated not based on empirical evidence based on science but rather on assumptions that often relayed on mystic beliefs. In Sliz & Szczepaisk (2015) assumption, “It was the Protestant idea that dominated the minds of people of the North. God still constituted the source of the grace necessary for salvation, but the ‘system of dependence’ had changed” (p. 363).

The dependency theory has survived the test of time because its applicability encompasses the various aspects of social sciences.

### **Theoretical Propositions and Major Hypotheses**

The main contribution of the dependency theory to the school of thought is that it provides a Southern perspective on development, a refreshing proposition since up to then, theories of social science were originated exclusively from the North, more specifically from Europe and North America (Sliz & Szczepaisk, 2017, p.363). They continue saying, “This

Durkheim's idea not only entered the sociological canon but has occupied an important place among conceptions of social change and development" (p. 361). Dependency theory proposes that instead of relying on other theories that have eventually succeeded in Europe and elsewhere (namely in North America and Japan), underdeveloped countries from Africa, Asia and South America should rely primarily on their internal strength to accomplish their economic development, and to rely on regional cooperation and integration as the primary external source of development. So, the main premise of the dependency theory is that there is no universal model of development that can be applicable everywhere in the world with similar results (Sliz & Szczepaisk, 2017, p.372). This means that each circumstance of underdevelopment requires its own solution, under the umbrella of dependency, such as the Swaraj, which was developed by Ghandi in India. According to Ghandi, political independence is meaningless if it did not carry with it the cultural, educational, economic and all forms of independency that ultimately results in absolute independency. Sliz and Szczepaisk (2017) said:

It is entirely independent from foreign control and entirely independent economically. Swaraj is not solely independence, but a healthy and noble independence. If the aim of swaraj were not to raise and improve our culture, it would have no value. Swaraj is a state in which the good of not even the lowest of India's sons is overlooked. Swaraj means for me the liberation of the poorest among us. (p. 373)

Critics of the Dependency theory such as Ulrich Beck, Anthony Giddens, and Scott Lash have proposed the concept of reflexive modernization or radicalization of modernity, as an alternative theoretical proposition for those random cases of economic development success

that take place on uncharted territories. They argue therefore that anytime there is development anywhere, it is a reflex of development elsewhere (Sliz & Szczepaisk, 2017, p.376). This is reminiscent of the modernization theory which assumes that any development has always something to do with previous development (Sliz & Szczepaisk, 2017, p. 365). Reflexive modernity is a thesis that is still on the making.

The essence of dependency theory is therefore that the Southern developing countries must rely on each other as peers in the development process. Collective regional reliance allows developing states to liberate themselves from the North and foster their endogenous economic growth. Sliz and Szczepaisk (2017) added:

The strength of the South is the result of mutual agreements of the cartel type, concluded by producers and exporters of the most important raw materials and general economic cooperation between those countries themselves. If such cooperation does not occur, then there will be no prospect of transforming the South from dependence on external factors into the domination of internal factors. (p. 374)

The collection and analysis of data provided an insight on the validity of the dependency theory and the literary data of this research study.

### **Analysis of Theory**

The dependency theory has been applied in many contexts and regions of the world, as an attempted theoretical framework designed to explain the hurdles that underdeveloped and developing countries face in their struggles towards development and modernization. Mason (2017) for instance applied the dependency theory to assess and explain the current trend of China's increasing influence on trade in Sub-Saharan Africa as an alternative to the traditional

North-South economic flow. As noted, “China has propped its economic ties with as many African states as possible in order to secure access to their natural resources, a big emerging market and diplomatic influence in the international forum” (Mason, 2017, p. 87). Mason questioned up to what extent dependency theory can be applied with its current definition to the current state of affairs in the trade and economy world. He noted that dependency is taking a new meaning as Sub-Saharan African states have adopted a neo-patrimonial model of governance, like other states such as Ukraine, Indonesia and other Latin America countries, broadening their economic cooperation options (Mason, 2017, p. 86). Mason proposed that African states must keep broadening their economic base by fostering trade and diplomatic ties with non-traditional actors. Also, “The Egyptian economist Samir Amin notably remarked that of all regions in the world, Africa remains the most vulnerable part of the global system and by this logic, it is condemned to perpetual exploitation” (Zambakari, 2018). As globalization allows for more potencies to emerge, Africa must avoid the self-imposed dependency such as the one Zimbabwe attempted and failed to implement bilateral balance with China, and the oscillating model that Angola tried with China and the International Financial Institutions (IMF). Mason recommends that Sub-Saharan states must therefore broaden their economic ties but niche their anchors on their respective sub-regional peers (Mason, 2017, p. 91, 93). Mason (2017) is a great contribution to the understanding of the contemporary application of the dependency theory both in terms of regional integration and the international forum.

According to Vedres and Nordlund (2018), the dependency theory was applied to analyze the integration process in the European Union (EU), with focus on the standardization

of regulations and the removal of institutional barriers to facilitate the economic integration process. This component was considered to be the core challenge to the integration within the EU zone and measures were put in place to eliminate preferentiality barriers of nationality, language and culture so that trade flow could be based on quality, space and cost (Vedres & Nordlund, 2018, p. 170). According to these authors, aggregate indicators suggest that these measures have resulted in increasing flows both at the bilateral and the regional levels, especially in the Eastern countries with the removal of tariffs. Vedres and Nordlund (2018) said:

With the removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers liberating the movement of goods, capital, and services, coupled with the prescribed institutional and regulatory harmonization, flows increased greatly between the economies of the older European core and the new East European member states. (p. 170)

However, according to the same authors, this increase in the economic growth on economic index, employment and profits has not reflected on better wages, welfare on production costs.

Börzel and Risse (2019) said given the specific historical context in which the project of European integration emerged, it is indeed not obvious that grand theories of European integration have much to say about the creation of regional institutions in other parts of the world, where states are not necessarily advanced industrial democracies (Börzel & Risse, 2019). They argued that intergovernmentalism is a theory that can be applicable in the liberal context where governments and democratic institutions are in ‘cruise control’ rather than in places where asymmetries and political instability are predominant, beside the development



factor. Economic interdependency is not unique to industrialized states, but it thrives better where states are committed to trade liberation and this explains why regionalism is less prevalent in Africa and South America (Börzel & Risse, 2019). They concluded that although dependency theory helps to formulate the framework for regional integration in Europe, it does not necessarily apply to other regions of the world.

**Rationale of this theory.**

The dependency theory was appropriate for the needs of this study because it provided the adequate foundation upon which all the other propositions and variables could be integrated. It is a theory with a solid background, applicability and is the most appropriate to understanding regional integration in the South hemisphere. Proposed by Raul Prebisch, a South American theorist, dependency theory became popular because it provided a local alternative to regional development that is originated locally rather than from the traditional theorists who dominated the school of social sciences before the WWII (Sliz & Szczepaisk, 2015, p. 369). Dependency is the most adequate theory for this study because it provides a pathway for the underdeveloped countries to rely on their regional counterparts rather than depending on the mostly Northern developed states for trading and development (Sliz & Szczepaisk, 2015, p. 374). The African Regional Economic Communities (RECs) were created around the idea that the cooperation in an open border trading environment would generate the necessary dynamics to catapult the region and ultimately the entire continent into development and modernization. Dependency theory fits perfectly in this model of economic development, and it was appropriate for this study.

The dependency theory provides the adequate foundation for the present study because it aligns with the theoretical premises of regional integration in the ECOWAS region, paving the way for a solid theoretical framework. Dependency theory was developed precisely as a theory that explains why some states (typically from the Southern hemisphere), struggled to set pace with the North in economic growth, and propose an alternative pathway for their development.

The dependency theory provided a solid theoretical foundation for this study and an explanation of how the regional integration process is a valid option for the Sub-Saharan region.

Understanding the endogenous factors that impact the integration of Cape Verde in the ECOWAS required a framework that equates the various aspects that affect such phenomenon, such as asymmetry, insularity, migration, regional conflicts and instability, and compared them to the ideals of the ECOWAS and the AU framework, underpinned by a solid theory. According to Albert et al. (2008), a theory is a structured, methodical connection of a set of issues that represent a whole concept. The dependency theory provided the appropriate foundation for this study. This theoretical formula allowed for a broad analysis of the concepts in terms of their weigh in the integration process. There variables were chosen under the confident assumption that they represent the core of issues that ECOWAS has been dealing with due to their prominence in the integration process. The dependency theory was adopted as the axel of this study due to its contemporary validity and applicability to the integration phenomenon in the ECOWAS sub-region. As noted by Sliz & Szczepaisk (2015), “Dependency theories emerged from the dialogue of Latin American researchers, but shortly

underwent a special kind of universalization. They were brought to bear on the totality of relations between rich and poor countries” (p. 369). The strength of the dependency theory resides on the fact that its applicability is not confined to a worldwide scenario but can also explain the asymmetry and hegemony in the regional context, such as the AU or ECOWAS cases.

### **Literature Review of Key Variables and Concepts**

#### **OAU/AU and the RECs Framework**

When the Organization of African Unity (OAU) was created in 1963, its main and immediate purpose was to promote peace and stability particularly in the African Sub-Saharan region (Lizak, 2016). The heads of the 32 African independent States met in Addis Ababa and signed a Charter creating the OAU, envisioning an African continent united and able to control its destiny (AU, 2019). This initiative paved the way for a continent that was solidary, capable of solving its internal issues and providing support for the remaining territories that were still struggling to achieve independence.

The newly emerging states in this post-colonial era were struggling with multiple internal conflicts and the consolidation of peace in the continent was of capital importance. Initially, the AU was formed to deal with issues related to non-interference in domestic affairs and respect for national sovereignty, but the constant instability and internal conflicts rearranged the organization’s agenda. The OAU eventually evolved into African Union (AU) which was formally launched in July 2002 in Durban, South Africa with the approval of the Constitutive Act of the African Union and slowly became a solid continental institution able

to solve conflicts and promoting a peaceful pathway to freedom and development for all member-states.

This strategic change shifted the focus of the organization from decolonization and independence to economic cooperation and integration. The ultimate goal was to provide a platform upon which Africa could establish itself as an autonomous continent, able to find African solutions to African challenges.

### **The AU and the Eight RECs**

The creation of the African Economic Community (AEC) by the Abuja Treaty of 1991 established a new framework for the relationship between the African Union and the eight Regional Economic Communities (RECs): Arab Maghreb Union (UMA), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Community of Sahel–Saharan States (CEN–SAD), East African Community (EAC), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Southern African Development Community (SADC), according to African Union (2019). The evolution of the RECs took different paths and timeline in their formation; as figure 2 indicates, the intra-regional trade has been on the flat mode for the most part, with SADC representing a slight upper trend out of the eight regions. In the case of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), it was first established by the 1975 Treaty, which mandated an economic integration in all fields of activity (African Union, 2019). Although the original focus was economic integration, ECOWAS' landmarks have been much more related to peace building and keeping through peacekeeping operations (Bamidale & Ayodele, 2018). From its inception, African Union

stipulated in Article 30 of the Constitutive Act that any government that takes unconstitutional power in any member-state would not be allowed to participate in any of African Union activities (Reynold, 2019). Out of the eight Economic Regions, ECOWAS has been the one with most intra-states trade despite the multiple internal conflicts (Santos, Almeida, Sanches, & Duarte, 2018).

According to Lisak (2016), AU's efforts to establish and maintain peace goes back to 1964, a year after the creation of the Organization of African Unity, when the President of Mali Modibo Keita and the Emperor of Ethiopia Haile Selassie oversaw the negotiations between Morocco and Algeria over the Tindouf Region. Through ECOWAS, the African Union has been able to monitor the democratic elections, peace and stability in the West Africa region with great impact (Bamidele & Ayodele, 2016). According to the same authors, countries such as Sierra Leone, Togo, Mali, Guinea-Conakry, Niger, Guinea Bissau and Burkina Faso have been threatened with sanctions from the AU and the ECOWAS when unconstitutional seizing of power occurred, and this deterrent notice has sped up the return to the rule of law.

Drug trafficking has been an emerging factor along the peripheric states of the ECOWAS region along the upper Atlantic corridor, as drug lords from south America procure alternative routes to Europe (Mayangua, 2015). ECOWAS leadership have been struggling to find the appropriate path to reverse this trend before it becomes too late.

## Literature Review

### Key Concepts Related to Cape Verde Integration in the ECOWAS Region

In an era when image and attractiveness are crucial assets in economic and overall development, regional integration becomes a testing ground, particularly for smaller states (Barnekow & Kulkarni, 2017, p. 116). These authors acknowledge that most studies attribute low flow of trade among Sub-Saharan states but explain that this is due to the fact that most of the analysis are performed in a broader, international context.

Regional trading offers multiple advantages, including the opportunity to improve the integration through multilateral bonding, reducing conflicts and fostering mutual economic opportunities (Barnekow & Kulkarni, 2017, p. 116). While these benefits are not the primary goal of regional integration, they certainly contribute to regional cohesion and ultimately, the common welfare.

Regional trading in the ECOWAS region faces many challenges, including poor transportation infrastructure, insularity such as the case of Cape Verde and asymmetry. However, the lack of the products that are in demand in the region is the primary reason. While trade barriers have been reduced or even eliminated in some cases, the availability and incentive to export and import is scarce (Barnekow & Kulkarni, 2017, p. 116). The fact that the production and transformation industry is still scarce in the region, there is hardly a surplus that can be made available for export. According to Barkenow and Kulkarni (2017), besides the political and governmental instability, inadequate transportation, flatness of prices and lack of variation in products that consist primarily of minerals and food makes the regional markets a flat proposition.

The administrative and political format that ECOWAS adopted is very pragmatic in terms of securing as much representation and participation as possible by the smaller states. For instance, out of the 115 seats that the ECOWAS Parliament has, Nigeria has only 35 seats even though it has more than half of the overall ECOWAS population (Dennis & Ahmed, 2017), although this legislative body's decisions are advisory in nature rather than effective. According to the same authors, Nigeria, the hegemon member-state along with Ghana have been decisive in deploying military forces for peacekeeping operations throughout the region. This fact enough underscores the political and military supremacy that these two Anglophone-states exert over the ECOWAS.

Since its establishment in 1975, ECOWAS's framework has been upgraded many times in order to adjust to the contemporary challenges, such as the signing of the Cotonou Revised Treaty of July 1993 that established the various executive organs with decision making capabilities, including the Authority of Heads of State and Government; the Council of Ministers, the Executive Secretariat, ECOWAS Parliament, the Fund for Cooperation Compensation and Development, the Economic and Social Council; the Court of Justice and the Specialized Technical Commissions (Dennis & Ahmed, 2017). This new structure enabled the institution to conduct its mission in an effective way and paved the way for a broad intervention within the region. Meeting yearly, the Authority of Heads of State and Government became the ultimate decision-making entity, setting up goals and evaluating the performance of the organs and the way they carry out their missions. Equally important is the Office of the Chairman, elected every year by the Heads of State through the one member one vote procedure to ensure that all members have equal opportunity (Dennis & Sanusi, 2017).

According to the same authors, despite this prevision, it has been manifest that the decision trend has been evidenced by a bloc division between the Anglophone former colonies and the Francophone ones, where the two former Portuguese colonies (Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde) are not even mentioned. Dennis and Ahmed (2017) said:

Despite this arrangement, there was still division along colonial ties among ECOWAS member states, leading to two major blocs within the organization which are the Anglophone bloc made of up English speaking countries colonized by Great Britain, and the Francophone bloc comprises of French speaking countries colonized by France. (p. 6)

In 46 years of membership, Cape Verde has not been able to make its presence noticed at the ECOWAS leadership level other than appointing a commissioner, being unable to assume leadership at the Secretary of the Commission or head of states chairperson levels.

### **ECOWAS Responses to Instability and Internal Conflicts**

The Mutual Defense Assistance signed in Freetown in 1981 allowed the creation of an Allied Armed Force of the Community, the ECOMOG, backed by the Article 58 of the ECOWAS Charter, the United Nation's Charter and the Universal declaration of Human Rights (Dennis & Ahmed, 2017). According to Lizak (2016, p. 77), since OAU's intervention in solving the Morocco-Argelia conflict over the Tindouf region in 1964, it was agreed that an OAU military force would observe a demilitarized zone between the two states, and this gave the United Nations the confidence to attribute peace-keeping responsibilities to the Organization of African Union. ECOMOG's deployment can be done in the forms of



intervention, peacekeeping and peace enforcement. The first attempt to use a Pan-African military force to solve conflicts was tested in the Chad conflict after Nigerian diplomats achieved an agreement of the parties involved through the Transitional Government of National Unity, which would be monitored by an OAU military force originated from some member-states, but this intent was a failure due to many factors including lack of experience and logistical means (Lizak, 2016, p. 78). Thus, ECOWAS established itself not only as an economy driver but also as a peacekeeper with a regional security system and became the first regional alliance to participate in a peacekeeping effort together with the United Nations, under the Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter and in 1997 took the front seat by reconducting a dully elected government back to power in Sierra Leone. With the ECOMOG forces, ECOWAS was able to contribute to peace processes in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, (1990, 1997, 1998), and back in Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire in 2003 (Dennis& Sanusi, 2017). Considering the overall instable conditions that mired most of the ECOWAS and the other economic regions, it makes sense that peace and internal stability was an immediate priority.

Other subsequent political interventions by ECOWAS in which Nigeria and Ghana played prominent role are the Cote d'Ivoire fallout from the presidential election (2010), Mali military coup (2012), Guinea military coup (2007), Guinea Bissau military coup (1998), Niger constitutional crisis (2009), Togo constitutional crisis (2004), and Burkina Faso constitutional crisis (2014). The climax of Nigeria and Ghana's role in ECOWAS political intervention is the amicable settlement of the recent Gambia's political crisis without military confrontation (Dennis & Ahmed, 2017). Through the Cairo Declaration of 1993, the conflict Mechanism for

Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa was established as a mean to detect early signs of potential conflicts, enabling the African Union and its regional organizations the ability to take early measures to manage conflicts (Lizak, 2016, p. 81). According to this author, the first attempt to deploy a peacekeeping operation by the Organization of African Unity took place even before the Cairo Declaration when the Neutral Military Observer Group (NMOG) was established for Rwanda while regional and extra-regional states engaged in peace talks.

Nigeria's leadership has been crucial in the stabilization of governments in the ECOWAS region and along with Ghana has provided a pathway to regional integration and a beacon to the other member-states. "Nevertheless, the creation of the forces of mutual action in the countries of the South is an unusually difficult phenomenon, because it requires overcoming not only economic backwardness, but also certain elements of tradition" (Sliz & Szczepaisk, 2017, p. 374). The ECOWAS Protocols have contributed to overcoming political crisis' in the region, despite frequent resistance from the Francophone states (Dennis & Sanusi, 2017). As argued by these authors, Nigeria and Ghana have made it evident that the appropriate atmosphere for meaningful economic growth can only be achieved by political stability within the region. This can only be achieved through the establishment of solid democratic institutions that reflect the aspirations of the West African people. Sliz and Szczepaisk (2017) said:

In the economic sphere, it is necessary to change the form of ownership of the means and factors of production: land, water, and infrastructure. Democratization and the decentralization of powers are also indispensable. Many countries of the South should

begin with real guarantees of basic human rights, eliminating tortures and repressions.  
(p. 374)

Poor governance, insecurity, conflicts, poverty and economic disparities among and within countries of the region are providing many opportunities for trans-national organized crime, as is evidenced in the widespread illicit trafficking in drugs, persons, money, arms, and natural resources. (Lopes et al, 2018). In the particular case of the Cape Verde Islands, conflicts and corruption are tales that come from the mainland since this territory is reputedly peaceful since there have been no accounts of armed or political instability and the country is counted as one of the most peaceful and transparent in Africa. “Of the 15 countries in the ECOWAS region, only Cape Verde is among the top 50 in the Transparency International ranking in the past few years” (Nurudeen et al., 2015, p. 46). Therefore, Cape Verde is an attractive destination for ECOWAS migrants, despite the fact that the 4033 square kilometers territory poses some limitations on accommodating a substantial number of migrants. Barkenow and Kulkarni (2018) sums it up unambiguously by concluding that in the case of African countries, we can point out that mis-organization in policy sphere, low emphasis on manufacturing, increasing political instability, mismanagement of existing resources, inapt educational structure and vast corruption as few of the major problems in the area. (Barkenow and Kulkarni, 2018 p. 115). Despite agreements such as the Free Movement, travelers and traders still face unexpected obstacles at the borders. Reportedly, “Traders often report that free trade commitments are not honored, and unofficial payments are demanded at the border. Even where procedures are followed correctly, delays at the border can impose substantial costs on trading firms” (World Bank, 2014, p. 34) These obstacles are aggravated by

transportations, particularly in the case of Cape Verde, when cargoes are taken from mainland to Europe and then back to the Islands, because ships from Europe follow a one-way route to and from Africa.

The cause and effect of these challenges paint a clear picture of the current state of affairs in the ECOWAS region in terms of regional integration. In fact “It is a matter (...) of access to potable water, of the struggle against hunger and malnutrition, the provision of medical care, the fight against illiteracy, the provision of housing, food production, and the use of natural sources of energy” (Sliz & Szczepaisk, 2017, p. 374). By satisfying the basic needs of the people, the member-states convince the other neighboring states that they are ready for a border easement.

### **Cape Verde Trade and Migration Challenges within the ECOWAS Region**

The integration of Cape Verde within the ECOWAS region has been a challenge not only due to the natural barriers such as the fact that this country is an archipelago, but the lack of trade infrastructures such as regional transportation and the structural barriers such as the lack of harmony of the trade policies, particularly the inexistence of a “customs union and a common market through the abolition of obstacles to the free movement of goods, people, services, and capital due to the fragility of its institutional and legal structures” (Coutinho & Canto, 2018, p. 37). The Free Movement of Persons Protocol adopted in 1979, conferring community citizenship to all citizens of the region, with the right to reside, do business and invest in any activity was a great step towards integration but bureaucratic hurdles persist until today (Coutinho & Canto, 2018, p. 38). According to these authors, intraregional migration has placed great expectations on the peoples of the region, but although the states have agreed

in principle to enact its tenets, in practice migrants face challenges when trying to move across the border. State-member governments perceive intra-migration to constitute a threat to their national interests and border officials are not prepared to welcome them that easily.

Bolarinwa (2015) explains:

Aware of the uneven implementation of its protocols on free movement, ECOWAS is stepping up its workshops, seminars and trainings for immigration officials, civil society and the private sector. It has trained teams of immigration officials and citizens on the right to free movement in a bid to reduce police harassment along the Lagos–Cotonou–Lomé–Accra–Abidjan–Ouagadougou– Bamako–Conakry migration corridor. (p. 153)

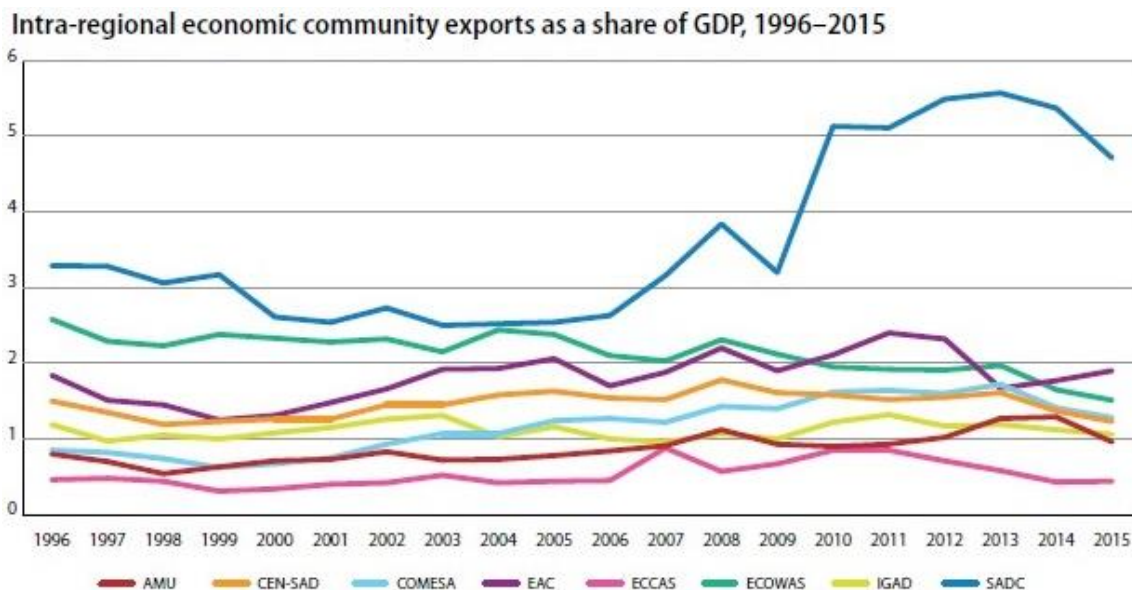
This culture of self- preservation is reminiscent of the early colonial era when the territorial delimitations were formed. However, in a crowded neighboring states scenario, economic cooperation is a paramount principle and “Collective self-reliance is the only method for countries to liberate themselves from ties with the countries of the North and make use in the development process of factors inherent in the local community, region, society, and continent” (Sliz & Szczepaisk, 2017, p. 374). Overcoming the instinctive prompts of border protection is a high priority for the member-states. Notably, mobility were controlled by the imposition of borders by the colonial powers, setting foundations for the modern nation states. Despite the ideological alignment that is predominant in the west Africa region, the member-states of the ECOWAS tend to prioritize their internal demands in detriment to regional integration, at least for the time being. Bolarinwa (2015) expands on this matter:

In spite of ratifying the Protocol that ushered in the free movement of persons in the sub-region that had been impeded by the colonial powers, several border checks continue to exist. This has resulted in severe harassment and extortion of money from travellers by security personnel at numerous checkpoints. Free movement is also hampered by different official languages at border posts. (p. 163)

Besides, mobility has been characterized by certain factors, such as the fact that migrants tend to migrate to neighboring states, or the ones they have historic or family relations with or countries that have political and economic stability. Notably “In Côte d'Ivoire, for instance, about 55.8 percent of ECOWAS migrants come from Burkina Faso and 63.2 percent of those living in Cabo Verde come from Guinea-Bissau” (Coutinho & Canto, 2019, p. 39). Governments feel the pressures from constituents when a large number of migrants from a specific neighboring state compete for their employment and housing opportunities and some states have implemented measures to counter such influx; in Ghana for instance, Section 18 of the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre Act, (act 478 of 1994) reserve certain enterprises for nationals only and in Mali, foreigners cannot perform any public service (p.40). this protectionist practice is in effect throughout the region in some fashion or another.

## **Figure 2**

*Intraregional Trade Trends in the ECOWAS Region and Other RECS*



In this context, as smallest ECOWAS state both in size and population, Cape Verde is a preferred case study in terms of migrant influx. Cape Verdean government has been walking the fine line of assimilating the ECOWAS framework of free movement of persons and at the same time implementing the internal mechanisms to protect their national interest vis a vis the smallness and consequent sensitiveness of their economy. This research confirms that “Several studies (Rocha 2009; Gomes 2010; Canto, 2016) have shown that the people of the ECOWAS region are treated differently by Cabo Verdean authorities compared to other foreigners/European immigrants, and when they arrive at the border, they undergo several bureaucratic tests with often exaggerated demands” (Coutinho & Canto, 2019, p. 40). Reports suggest that border officials go way beyond the Standard Operation Procedure established by the article 3rd of the decree and regulation #11/99 allowing a maximum of 90 days to stay, along with a valid international certificate of vaccination, a return ticket that is confirmed, proof of means (1000 Euros) of subsistence while in the country, subject to a fine of ten

thousand escudos, if the ECOWAS citizen overstays term limits (Coutinho & Canto, 2019, p. 43). All these measures were in place to limit the impact of migration on the Cape Verdean fragile social structures.

The recent move by the Cape Verdean government to exempt European Union's citizens from needing a visa to enter the country was a sudden move that caught some by surprise, including the former Prime Minister José Maria Neves, who managed to establish a special partnership with the European Union years before, and the President of the Chamber of Tourism and also former Prime Minister, Gualberto do Rosario who was for the visa exemption before turning against it (Coutinho & Canto, 2019, p.42). It is remarkable that even a country that has more citizens living in the diaspora has mechanisms to prevent massive intake of migrants.

Most of these ECOWAS migrants are free market traders bring their products (mostly artifacts and clothes) to sell in the local markets over the Islands, an insignificant contribution to the trade growth in the region. It is remarkable that "It has been estimated that due to concessions made during the Uruguay Round of trade negotiations (namely, signing the GATT/WTO as a single binding agreement), Africa loses some US\$3 billion annually" (Barnekow & Kulkarni, 2017 p.115). Despite significant trade liberalization initiatives in Africa, its contribution to world exports has been declining. Only a growth in the manufacture industry along with infrastructural reforms could catapult ECOWAS towards a meaningful economic growth and integration. The fact that African countries, particularly the Sub-Saharan states do far more business with Europe and other developed countries has a decisive impact on the local economy. An aggravating factor is that, "Unlike other regions that have



open regional and global trade arrangements, Africa's trade flows have tended to be predominantly with the industrialized northern countries of Europe, North America, and more recently China" (Tuluy, 2017). Intra-regional trade in ECOWAS has averaged 15% in the last 5 years while in EU it is 45-50%, same in the NAFTA region and in Asia, 59-62% (Tuluy, 2017, P. 336). Data indicate throughout the last 20 years, the internal trade within the ECOWAS region has not surpassed 20% of the annual import/export of the member-states (Figure 2). All this economic bareness results in social stability that tests the governments' ability to respond to the demands of the constituents who since their national independence have been rooting for a better day.

### **Cape Verde and Regional Asymmetry Challenges**

Asymmetry is a central issue in the struggles that the ECOWAS member-states have endured in their efforts for a full integration, and Cape Verde is a paradigm. Protected by its insularity but affected by the colossal asymmetry that exists in the ECOWAS sub-region (Dennis & Ahmed, 2017), Cape Verde has enjoyed a lasting peace and political stability but is still seeking to find its space and a path for a full integration in the ECOWAS region. As Kurecic (2017) has observed, small states must keep all doors open, but regional integration must be the launching pad. It is notable that "In the political sphere, dependent development appears in the asymmetry of pressures and influences. The governments of central countries, after a period of wielding direct power over the peripheries, still exert more or less clear pressure on them, imposing or sanctioning" (Sliz & Szczepaisk, 2015, p. 370). The dependency theory is valid to explain the importance of regional cooperation and integration rather than a utopic paradigm that is hardly applicable everywhere.

Some regions are faced with a rising influence of the regional players (Nigeria in Western Africa, South Africa in Southern Africa, Australia in Melanesia, and New Zealand in Polynesia), although their influence is primarily a result of the absence of competitors and a lack of a strategic interest of the dominant and the contender states. (Sliz & Szczepaisk, 2015, p. 370, p. 342). The pattern is evident in the different regions of the world.

The migration phenomenon is an important variable in the integration process in the ECOWAS region and it is directly related to the asymmetry challenges. According to Adepoju et al., (2010), the movement of people in the ECOWAS region is multifaceted, with different causes and effects in the different member-states. “Migrants include temporary cross-border workers, seasonal migrants, clandestine workers, professionals and refugees; female traders, farm laborers, unskilled workers and nomads especially paid little attention to arbitrary national borders” (Bolarinwa, 2015, p.156). There is also a distinction in the origin of the migrants, their route of transit and destination. Human trafficking is also an emerging phenomenon. Adepoju et al., (2010) suggest that the movement of people is caused primarily by poor governance, corruption, and other forms of political instability. It is recommendable that “In foreign policy, the state must strive for at least the partial elimination of debts and access to the markets of industrialized countries and support economic cooperation between countries of the South” (Sliz & Szczepaisk, 2017, P. 375). It is also clear that there are some domino effects of those factors since conflicts lead to corruption, migrations, and more poverty, with asymmetry and insularity as the natural barriers that insulate Cape Verde from all this ordeal.

The asymmetry component is relevant in the migration debate because some states obviously have more ability to absorb a substantial number of migrants than others considering their size and amounts of resources, and states with internal conflicts tend to prompt their citizens to migrate.

**Table 2**

*Free Movement Agreement in the ECOWAS by Country*

Country	Status of ratification of ECOWAS Free Movement Protocols					Specific actions taken				Reference to ECOWAS nationals in national law
	1979 Protocol	1985 Suppl. Protocol	1986 Suppl. Protocol	1989 Suppl. Protocol	1990 Suppl. Protocol	Abolition of visa & entry requirements for stays up to 90 days	ECOWAS travel certificate	ECOWAS passport		
Benin	✓	✓	-	-	✓	✓	-	✓	-	• Specific residence permit for ECOWAS nationals, rights attached are not defined.
Burkina Faso	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-	• No. no specific residence/stay permit is in place. However, in practice they do not have to apply for the common stay permit (plus family members can join and enjoy full access to the labour market).
Cape Verde	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	• Negotiation of the relevant ECOWAS protocols may occur as Cape Verde argues that their specific situation requires regulation of admission.
Côte d'Ivoire	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	• Not requested to obtain a residence permit (only identification document is needed).
The Gambia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-	• Yes, specific residence permit for ECOWAS nationals.
Ghana	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	• Explicit reference to the absence of visa requirements.
Guinea	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	• No specific status is defined.
Guinea-Bissau	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	-	• No.
Liberia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	• No. (The draft National Policy on Migration provides for an amendment of the immigration law).
Mali	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	• No. but administrative practices respect the right to enter and establish.
Niger	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	• No.
Nigeria	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	• No. but administrative practices grant ECOWAS nationals an ECOWAS Residence Card, valid for 5 years and renewable. (The draft National Migration Policy envisions a review of the immigration law).
Senegal	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	-	• No.
Sierra Leone	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	• No (drafting a new immigration legislation is considered).
Togo	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	-	• No.

Source: ECOWAS, Awumbila et al., country chapters<sup>72</sup>

<sup>72</sup> Column 2-6: Economic Community Of West African States, *Annex to the 2012 Annual Report, Integration and Political Stability in West Africa*, Abuja, [http://events.ecowas.int/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/2012-Annual-Report\\_Annexes\\_English\\_final.pdf](http://events.ecowas.int/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/2012-Annual-Report_Annexes_English_final.pdf) (accessed 28 June 2014), 2012; Column 7-10: Awumbila et al., 2014, op. cit., pp. 65, 67; column 11: information taken from country chapters.

Assessing the asymmetry factor in the ECOWAS integration process, Dennis and Ahmed (2017) said the hegemonic power of the Anglophone states (Nigeria and Ghana) plays a decisive role in the shaping and operation of the ECOWAS institutions in the region, considering that Nigeria alone contributes with most of the ECOWAS annual budget.

Cape Verde finds itself between Africa and Europe. Considering the impact that asymmetry and migration have on a small economy like the Cape Verde Islands, it is important to consider that “The small and island nation states that have managed significant achievements have done so through cautious use of their limited physical resource base and long-term, sustained investment in their peoples, building distinct strategies on that base” (Anderson, 2017, p. 3). Despite the sparsity of resources, the Cape Verde Islands has managed to establish a remarkable educational system which has resulted in qualified human resources capable of responding to the economic growth demands, hinged primarily on tourism. However, the volume of business with ECOWAS has not resulted in a diplomatic or Consular representation in Lagos, the headquarter of the organization as “Cape Verde, the only ECOWAS Member State without ambassadorial presence in Nigeria and a permanent representative to the ECOWAS Commission, has undertaken to open an Embassy in Abuja, the federal capital of Nigeria, soon” (ECOWAS, 2017, P. 1). This announcement was released after the visit of the President of the ECOWAS Commission President to Cape Verde in February 2017. In this occasion, connectivity of the Islands to the mainland through shipping was also announced (Governo.cv, 2017, p.1), but both plans are still under development four years later. Under the ECOWAS Constitutional Act, member-states are expected to contribute to the organization’s budget with 0,5% of their customs revenue, and this clause is quite a challenge.

Just before the COVID-19 pandemic, Cape Verde had the ambitious plan of privatizing 51% of its national airline to Iceland Air, with the goal of establishing a hub in the Sal Island and add many more flights to Europe, Africa and the Americas. Vice PM and Minister of

Finances Olavo Correia delivered a copy of the privatization contract to the Cape Verdean Parliament of March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019, in an effort to satisfy the opposition's demand for more details on the transaction (Parliament.cv, 2019, p.1). When the current government took over 3 years earlier, the Cabo Verde Airlines was facing liquidation with a \$3,5 million loss every month but now it constitutes a trampoline for the integration to the ECOWAS since it is the only airline on the West coast of Africa with certification to fly almost everywhere. This scenario has been severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Therefore, this study applied the dependency theory in its contemporary form as presented by Sliz & Szczepaisk (2015) and the small states integration as proposed by Kurecic (2017). This study has provided a historic context of the liberation movement in the Sub-Saharan Africa and the turn of events that led to the instability and stagnation in the economic development despite the efforts of the African Union and the RECs such as ECOWAS. This ample analysis will contribute to a solid foundation to build a solid research strategy, guided by the dependency and other theories.

### **Summary and Conclusions**

The topics discussed in this literature review provided an insight into the major themes that establish the foundation for understanding the background and the preeminent factors that have impacted Cape Verde's approach in the integration process into the ECOWAS. The creation of the African Union and the Regional Communities, the strategy to deal with internal conflicts, the asymmetries, the Economic insularity and the migration phenomenon compose the core of the Cape Verde's engagement in the integration process.

The collected literary data made it clear that scholars and other researchers have proposed a great wealth of knowledge on this pertinent topic and have laid out the road map to understanding the integration challenges in the West Africa region. They paint a clear picture of the efforts that have been employed in the building of a new paradigm of development in the Sub-Saharan Africa region, although many specific details are still due. As Sliz & Szezepaisk (2017) affirmed, “Endogenous development also calls for the mobilization of citizens and the creation of cooperatives, which requires major structural changes, particularly in the economic and political sphere” (p. 375). In many instances, the urge for natural resources has divided populations between tribal lines and that type of hardship is difficult to overcome.

There is a substantial gap of knowledge on the way conflicts affect mobility and integration among the member-states, but this gap is much more evident in the case of Cape Verde, the only ECOWAS insular state with unique territorial and demographic specificities that deserve a close assessment, and that is an intent of this dissertation study. It is well established that the OAU’s initiative to create the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) with the goal of establishing the African Economic Community in due time (African Union, 2019) was a decisive endeavor.

The eight Economic Regions that were created have contributed to the overall economic growth among the member-states and have promoted peaceful and stable governments. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was created in 1975 and became operational by 1977, with the goal of fostering economic integration in the region (Barnekow & Kulkarni, 2017). ECOWAS is composed of 15 countries: Benin, Burkina

Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo (ECOWAS, 2016). ECOWAS is by all measures a large market with 394 million people (countrymeters.info, 2019), however, each member-state does in average 65% of its trade with an extra-regional country, usually the former European colonizer. As explained, "These exports are dominated by Nigeria and Ivory Coast that carry between them, 87% of these transactions. Nigeria provides 77% of regional exports and Côte d'Ivoire 10% (...) Ghana and Senegal are placed third and fourth with 4% and 2% respectively" (ECOWAS, 2016, p.1). Not only is it large but it also contains remarkably diverse economies, from Nigeria and Cote d'Ivoire, two of the largest economies in Africa, to Liberia, which has only recently become politically stable and is not yet a member of the WTO. Member-states also speak a variety of different languages, predominantly French, English and Portuguese.

The present research study provides a comprehensive and extensive analysis of the integration of Cape Verde in the ECOWAS region, with focus on the concepts that have direct impact, such as internal conflicts, asymmetry, migration and insularity. The dependency theory is the main theoretical foundation for this study, through a qualitative study case design. The data collection will provide additional facts that will confirm or upgrade what is the contemporary assumptions of this matter. This study will fill the existing knowledge gap related to the factors that impact the integration process in the ECOWAS region with focus on the Cape Verde Islands.

Chapter 3 includes strategies and the methodological framework for data collection and analysis. I address recruitment of participants with a focus on experts who had

firsthand knowledge of the ECOWAS regional integration process from the Cape Verdean perspective.



## Chapter 3: Research Methodology

### **Purpose of the Study**

The goal of this study was to study factors that impact integration of the Republic of Cape Verde in the ECOWAS region by understanding commitment of Cape Verdean government leadership, the private sector, and citizenry's perception of the importance of full integration in this region. This chapter includes an in-depth analysis of theories involved in this study, role of the researcher, methodology, and validity of the research process. This qualitative research involved using the dependency theory and the case study approach. Data collection is involved participants who had knowledge of the decision-making process including current and former leaders both the Cape Verdean and ECOWAS region and was conducted in Cape Verde Islands. The goal was to determine to what extent stakeholders are committed to the integration process.

### **Research Design and Rationale**

The research design for this study was a qualitative case study inquiry as developed by Creswell. This method is appropriate for this study because it allows the researcher the flexibility of determining boundaries and scope of the research, in-depth data collection via audiovisual observations, and document analysis. Out of three case study options (single instrument, case study and the intrinsic case study), the case study was most appropriate for this study. According to Nachmias & Nachmias (2008), "determine if the study approach is appropriate to the research problem" (p. 74). It provides flexibility in terms of designing the questionnaire, data collection, and analysis.

This chapter includes the research design and rationale and a detailed description of how data was collected and analyzed. Issues of trustworthiness and validity were also addressed.

### **Research Questions**

*RQ1:* How do insularity and asymmetry affect Cape Verde's membership in the ECOWAS?

*RQ2:* Does cultural diversity influence Cape Verde's stance in the ECOWAS region?

*RQ3:* How important is Cape Verde's integration in the ECOWAS region?

The object of this study was the integration of the Republic of Cape Verde in the ECOWAS region. My focus was on analysis and testing of main concepts, namely regional conflicts, migration, corruption, and asymmetries. I used a qualitative case study design with semi-structured data collection. This allowed necessary flexibility to accommodate demands of complex research with unique characteristics.

### **Role of the Researcher**

My role as the researcher was to formulate the appropriate theoretical framework and ensure a coherent selection of participants, and ensure they understood the purpose of this study and felt free to provide responses to questions. Proper collection, handling, and analysis of data was done using ethical guidelines of the Internal Review Board (IRB), so that conclusions could be valid. Since I was familiar with the culture and politics of Cape Verde, I was able to recruit participants in a balanced manner to obtain a sample of a Cape Verdean perspective involving ECOWAS membership and integration.

As a former member of the Cape Verdean Parliament, musician, and entrepreneur, I was acquainted with the culture, policy-making processes, and mindsets of stakeholders involved in this research, so I was able to take measures that ensured a balanced approach to data collection and avoid any bias. To achieve this, participants included adult people from different political ideologies, geographical regions (Sotavento and Barlavento). Also, academic researchers both in Cape Verde and the diaspora such as Portugal and the USA engaged in the inquiry to expand the scope of results. My role as an observer required an impartial approach to data collection.

### **Methodology**

I had a plan to recruit participants from various governmental and civil society organizations who were both active duty as well as former officials who played a role in negotiations and/or executive positions closely related to the ECOWAS integration process. This included former prime ministers, foreign affairs officials, members of the Cape Verdean Parliament who have overlapping seats on the ECOWAS Parliament, the Chambers of Commerce, border officials, and representatives of associations of migrants from the ECOWAS region. Most interviews were conducted in Praia and Mindelo the second largest city and metropolitan center of the northern islands.

Multiple sources are often used to collect and analyze data in qualitative studies and sample size is not the only determining factor although saturation is desirable (Creswell, 2013, p. 89), but is not a requirement for the purpose of this study. The questionnaire was the main instrument in data collection.

### **Identification of the Population**

The population was composed of stakeholders who were current or have performed roles involving regional integration in the ECOWAS region. Government cabinet members, parliamentarians with jurisdiction in the ECOWAS Parliament, border and immigration officials, trade regulatory leaders, and academics were invited to respond to the questionnaire. Qualitative inquiry involves focusing on a relatively small group in terms of depth compared to breadth of the sample (Patton, 2002). In this study, 28 participants were involved.

### **Justification of the Sampling Strategy**

The sampling strategy for this study was based on qualitative expert sampling approach, also known as a panel of experts. This sampling option was suitable for this study because it involves in-depth analysis of the concepts rather than a broad but superficial approach. Because I intended to generate recommendations for stakeholders due to scarcity of data involving this subject, sampling focused on a group of people that had objective knowledge of the integration process in the ECOWAS region.

Participants were invited due to their hands-on expertise on the subject either because they have conducted academic peer-reviewed studies, have served in an official position causally related to the regional integration process, or have developed a front-line, hands-on career in diplomacy, border control, teaching or other related fields.

### **Instrumentation**

Participants were contacted initially via email, phone calls and text messages, to assess their availability, schedule and location since most of the data collection is intended to occur

preferably on the field, or by telephone if needed. Qualitative Case Study interview was used as a methodology, and digital recording instruments were used to store and process data.

Although new to social sciences, qualitative Case Study interview has been used widely by anthropologists and sociologists to obtain sample data from their interviewees (Kvale, & Brinkmand, 2008), and according to Rubin and Rubin (2005), researchers have been able to “learn about the world; extend our intellectual and emotional reach; and roused and satisfied our intellectual curiosity” (p. vii). Due to advancement of audio and video recording devices that began in the 50’s, today there is an array of devices that make interview recording a viable method of data collection, under the Case Study tradition. In this study, a digital audio device was used because of its reliability, and easy access to the data entries. But the main rationale in choosing this device is that out of the 28 participants, some might not feel comfortable to identify themselves due to their current or past professional role.

In this qualitative case study research, I as the researcher constituted one of the instruments that will form the interview process. The very fact that the researcher plays a role in the formulation of the question, according to the research topic and goals (Creswell, 2013). The researcher also senses the content of the answers and often add some follow-up questions (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Considering the decisive role of the researcher in data collection, ethical posture is paramount.

Aside the researcher, I will use an interview guide as a second instrument, which helps to maintain the focus and goals of the study. It also helps to probe the participants and helps to align the participants’ responses with the questions and goals of the research (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). After reviewing the purpose of the study, the main theory and the content

of the literature review, I formulated the question in a moderate fashion and considered the overall background of the participants. As recommended by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), I will keep and use the guide and the electronic gadgets with the due care to ensure the validity of the study.

The Interview Protocol Refinement (IPR) was of an enormous value in this study “by enhancing the reliability of interview protocols, researchers can increase the quality of data they obtain from research interviews” (Castillo-Montoya, 2016, p. 811). IPR secures alignment of the research questions, literature data, the purpose and the interview questions.

As customary in qualitative research case study, I gathered the data from multiple sources, including documents, field notes, official reports and interviews (Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2016). Respondents included government current and former Cape Verdean officials, Parliamentarians who have participated in the ECOWAS Parliament in Abuja, or other official decision-making forums, stakeholders from the Private and non-profit sectors who play a role in the trade or import/export field, law enforcement officers that deal regularly with cross-border migrants on a regular basis. Invitation was sent out to 45 potential participants so that sufficient participants may be secured (at least 25). The first phase was based on the questionnaire format and the secondary phase was one-to-one interview. Additional data collection was expanded to consulting government and other private sector databases.

### **Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection**

The recruitment of participants was done by mail, email, flyer and snowball technique (Creswell, 2013), addressed to potential respondents based on their familiarity with the integration process to the ECOWAS. As explained before, the population focus was the Cape

Verde Islands since the purpose is to gauge the Cape Verdean perspective on ECOWAS integration process. A future study could focus on a broader perception from the other member-states on Cape Verde integration, but the scope and focus of this study is in the Cape Verdean perspective. So, experts from the Cape Verde Islands were recruited in the two north/south regions, Europe (namely Portugal) and the United States. Academics and general population were included in a minor scale. Recruitment was satisfied when 25 participants were committed to the study along with some semi-structured interviews with key intervenient. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, the confidentiality and the informed consent requirements. It was made clear that they are free to participate, that there are no monetary or other compensations (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009), that they can withdraw from the study anytime, and that the findings will be made public and will contribute to a better understanding of the relationship between Cape Verde and the ECOWAS. A thorough transparency of the research process contributed to its validity and integrity of the findings.

### **Data Analysis Plan**

Data that results from the questionnaire interviews constituted the primary data for this study and was complemented with the notes, official reports, and other documents. All this data was organized, stored and analyzed according to their categories and themes, because questions for the interviews were based on the topics of the study. The triangulation of all this data strengthened the validity, reliability and the replicability of the study. Additionally, the data was stored and accessed in a secure manner.

After gathering all the data, it was processed through NVivo, which is a Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software that is often used in qualitative data analysis. According to Creswell (2013) CAQDAS is a great instrument to analyze non-numerical data. NVivo was advantageous because it supports rich text, digital photos, audio files and social media data. Data was organized prioritizing the general themes and then the secondary themes that eventually emerged as anticipated by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009). The goal was to withdraw inferences on the perception of the Cape Verdean stakeholders on the integration of Cape Verde in the ECOWAS region. It was anticipated that the main discrepancy in the data results would be between respondents originated from the public sector versus the ones originated from the private sector and the NGOs. Reconciliation was done on the basis of proportionality and comparison with secondary data. The transferability of this study was secured by following the protocols and instruments that are appropriate for this kind of research.

#### **Trustworthiness, Credibility, Transferability, Dependability, and Confirmability**

Validity and consequent credibility are fundamental characteristic of a research study. As observed by Bekhet and Zauszniewski (2012), a robust triangulation process must be done to maximize the results of the collected data. I ensured that the purpose of the study, the questions, the main theory and the collected data were aligned. As a measure of internal validity, the triangulation of data results must be aligned with the overall research design, and the main external concern of replicability was addressed by broadening the geographical recruiting field and ensuring the accuracy of the research design as advised by Creswell (2013) and Yin (2016). The description of the methodology and all instruments used in the



data collection provided a pathway through which transferability can be obtained by other researchers (Collins & Cooper, 2014). Future researchers will be able to replicate this study by following the same process that was used here. As noted by Carcacy (2009), “The important issue in qualitative research is achieving a congruence of understanding between the informant and the researcher (...) and in ensuring the research is credible. This involves demonstrating that the research design accurately identified and described the phenomenon under investigation” (p. 14).

The alignment among the different components of the research study is a fundamental factor and it has been safeguarded by a coherent choice of the methodology, theories, the variables, the research questions and assumptions that are involved in this study.

The confirmability of a study is described as the level of objectivity and correctness that it reflects (Abend, 2008; Houghton et al., 2013). The main threat to this principle would be inaccuracy of the answers and facts portrayed by the respondents and in this study that risk was reduced from the recruiting stage as dependable candidates were recruited to participate out of a broad range of options. Despite my acquaintance with Cape Verdean politics, access to stakeholders that are well versed in the country’s foreign affairs was conditioned due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but contributed to a balanced, forthcoming response to this study.

### **Transferability**

The trustworthiness of a research must grant its transferability to areas beyond the boundary of the study (Guba, 1981, p. 198), and its main threat involves the possibility of a participant not providing a realistic reply to the interview questions. To prevent this from happening, the purposeful sampling strategy must be implemented in the data collection stage

(Yen, 2013). That is why the case study approach with the semi-structured and face-to-face interview was elected for this research as it allows for a close scrutiny of the respondents and their non-verbal language. It is particularly important to future researchers and readers in general to have a clear clue on how the study was conducted, the processes involved and the framework that served as the platform.

### **Dependability**

In qualitative research, dependability refers to the ability that the research questions to yield the same results each time one study is conducted. This is achieved in this research by using the case study protocol questions, the accuracy of the data collection process and the alignment of the different components that area involved in this study in order to achieve validity.

### **Ethical Procedures**

In qualitative Case Study, the research design, the participants and the collected data must be treated with the utmost respect not only for the validity of the results but for the overall ethical posture that is expected from any activity that involves any living things (Schensul et al., 1999). Trust between the researcher and the participants is of essence (Creswell, 2013) and an IRB approval is required to engage in any data collection activity and each participant must read and sign a consent agreement. Respondents can interrupt their participation at any time without any explanation or repercussion and a replacement must be put in place. That is why the invitations to potential participants must be much greater than the intended figure.

## **Treatment of Data**

Data collection took place at a time and location proposed by the participant, considering confidentiality and anonymity, and the constraints caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Some interviews were done face-to-face and when requested it was done by phone or similar means. Carcary, (2009) noted:

Koch (2006) suggests that a study's trustworthiness may be established if a reader is able to audit the events, influences and actions of the researcher, while Akkerman et al (2006) suggest that audit trails represent a means of assuring quality in qualitative studies (p. 15).

The data was preserved with the utmost care both in the collection process and analysis. As the researcher, I am the one who had access to the whole data, saved it properly and kept a copy in a safe place.

## **Summary**

This chapter established a roadmap on the research design, the recruitment of participants, data collection and the ethical precautions that must be implemented to enhance the validity of the results. It laid out a plan for the case study strategy and the way data was to be treated and processed. The IRB authorization enabled this researcher to conduct the data collection in a valid and responsible manner.

The first three chapters of this study demonstrated the objective of this study, theoretical framework, and the data collection process. Chapter 4 includes results of data collection and what they mean.

## Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this study was to assess the integration of Cape Verde in the ECOWAS region and identify the level of commitment of decision-makers during this process. This chapter includes data collection results and data analysis process guided by research questions and the theoretical framework. Issues related to credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability are also addressed.

The research questions were:

*RQ1:* How do insularity and asymmetry affect Cape Verde's membership in the ECOWAS?

*RQ2:* Does cultural diversity influence Cape Verde's stance in the ECOWAS region?

*RQ3:* How important is Cape Verde's integration in the ECOWAS region?

### **Organizational Factors**

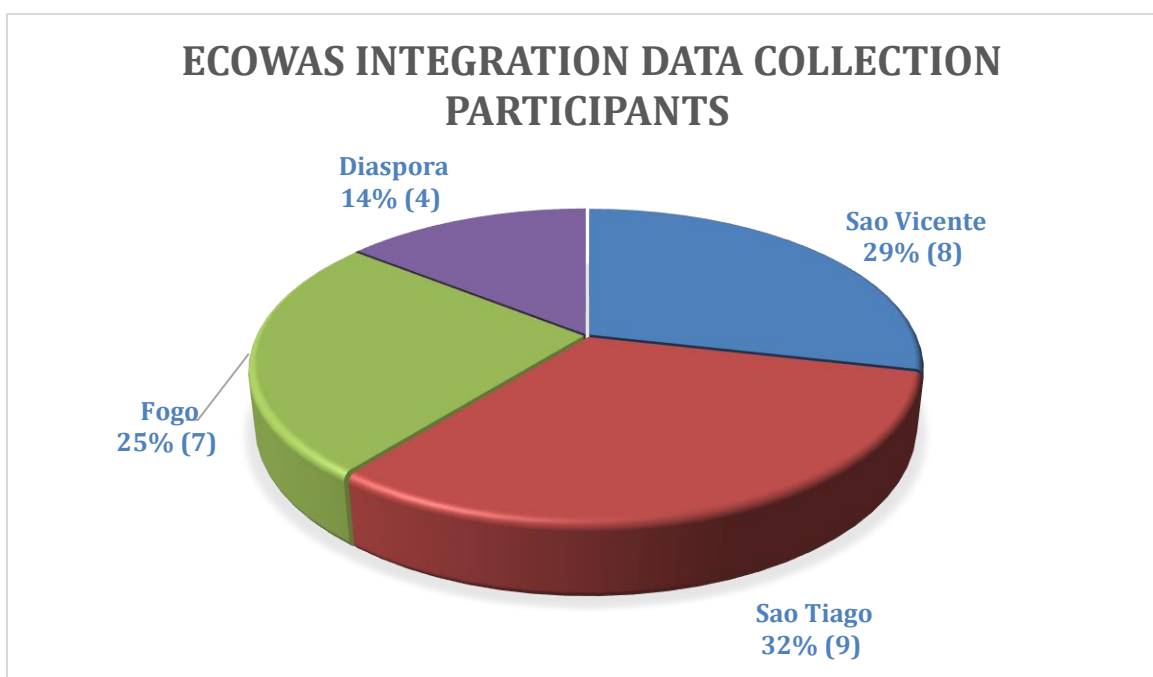
The data collection process was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, making it a challenge to contact and follow up with participants to deliver and return questionnaires and process results. Most research was conducted online, but overall purpose and data collection strategies were maintained. The COVID-19 pandemic made it difficult to contact potential participants and was a relevant hindrance during the data collection process. Due to the pandemic, most governmental and public officials worked remotely, and their focus was to mobilize resources to help control the pandemic. In this context, it was inopportune to access data through direct contact and even remotely in some cases.

### Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Participants were recruited from the population. I aimed to provide a balanced sample of experts and members of society so that results reflected public opinion on this subject.

**Figure 3**

*Data collection participants*



In all, forty-five individuals were invited to participate in the study, of which 28 responded to the questionnaire. Of this group, thirty were professionals who were currently holding positions related to the integration process in the ECOWAS region, and fifteen were people who had everyday interactions with ECOWAS-related subjects involving trading, education, and culture.

Data collection was focused on three islands that are major points of interaction (Santiago, São Vicente, and Fogo), representing a substantial sample of the population of

Cape Verde. Four participants originated from the Cape Verdean diaspora. As the most populated island and host of the country's capital Praia, Santiago is the most cosmopolitan of the 10 islands. Most of the population of São Vicente is concentrated in Mindelo, representing an urban population that is well informed, with significantly higher education rates and more academic institutions. The questionnaire was developed over a 4-month period, and additional database research took a period of 6 months. Database research was performed mostly online by consulting local libraries and other archives that offered material. I focused on the Cape Verdean point of view regarding the country's membership in the ECOWAS; some migrants from the region provided valuable insights regarding their experiences with border and trade issues.

The questionnaire (see Appendix A) was the main instrument in this study and was designed using the qualitative method. The conceptual framework case study questionnaire aligned properly with the purpose, theoretical ground, and overall strategy for this research study. The Data from the questionnaire were transcribed and stored in NVivo, which facilitated processing and formation of categories and themes that emerged.

### **Unusual Circumstances Encountered During Data Collection**

The COVID-19 pandemic had an impact on the design and length of data collection and processing, but the overall outcome was achieved. My original plan was to deliver questionnaires to participants in person, but confinement and restrictions in terms of transportation (both locally and on the islands) made it difficult to do so in some cases. Therefore, two intermediaries were recruited on two different islands to facilitate delivery of questionnaires to potential participants. These intermediaries were two volunteer secondary

teachers who helped deliver and collect questionnaires to potential participants in Fogo and São Vicente. I did not include personal information on the questionnaire, and this helped to secure their privacy and facilitate their participation. Some of the questionnaires were returned in sealed envelopes and others by electronic means for processing and analysis.

### **Inductive Formation of Categories and Themes**

The broadness of the queries that were included in the questionnaire resulted in a variety of responses, requiring an extensive data analysis to form the categories and themes necessary to interpret the outcome of this study. Beside the questionnaire, former and current ranking government members provided insights on the institutional mindset that oriented the executive's policies in relation to the ECOWAS.

The inductive assumptions of the study were built around the three themes that emerged from the literature review, molded by the dependency theory, and interpreted through the lenses of the qualitative methodology. ECOWAS response to conflicts, trade and migration challenges in the community and regional asymmetries served as the triangular search field for the purpose of this research.

A preliminary assessment of the data suggested that the staggering opinions represent the very core of the domestic views of the country's membership to the ECOWAS. The process of coding the categories and themes resulted in a broad array of entries both on the dichotomous and the open-ended questions. Out of the ten questions of the questionnaire, three could be answered with a yes or no answer, but most of the respondents expanded on their explanations, suggesting that there is a passion on this matter. Even more so, the answers

to these three entries did not lead to a prediction of how participants stand in relation to the other topics of the questionnaire.

After all the data was collected and stored, the entries were transcribed and organized from questionnaire manually into one single document that I could proof-read and verify their alignment with the other research components such as the questions, theoretical framework, literary review, and the overall purpose of the study. Based on these elements, I created nine colored codes for the 9 questions of the questionnaire (the tenth question was an overview inquiry), and attributed three (1, 2 & 3) numeric entries for the answers which allowed to form themes for the dichotomous (1 or 2) and number three for the opened end questions which created another set of variables on its own.

This approach allowed to have a preliminary sense of the results and consider any adjustments on the data analysis instruments to accommodate the needs of the data analysis process. The first nine questions in the questionnaire corresponded to three for each research question. The first of the nine questions was designed to prospect the participants' overall view and level of interest in relation to the ECOWAS.

### **Credibility, Transferability, Dependability, and Confirmability**

As it has been stated, the data collection portion of this research was highly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in the sense that it became difficult to contact people and turn their attention into this research. As the quarantine and other measures were implemented it was a challenge for the researcher to communicate, travel and recruit participants. It was particularly not easy to contact government officials knowing that they had a pandemic to mitigate and lives to save. So, the diligences to collect the data were highly impacted, because



even the libraries in Cape Verde were shut down for a considerable period of time. Despite these difficulties, the premises of the study were not compromised considering the nature of the subject.

### **Credibility**

This study was conducted according to the guidelines that were laid out on chapter three and according to the highest standards of academic research. To conduct this research, the data collection methodology was approved by the IRB. A Doctoral Researcher's certification was also obtained from the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI). This CITI certification provides an ethical foundation including how data must be obtained and the need to preserve the integrity of the participants. These instruments were fundamental as the researcher must follow all the research protocols to preserve the validity of the results. All these procedural measures (along with the limitations the COVID-19 pandemic) affected the length and breadth of this study, but its purpose and goals have been fully met and preserved.

### **Transferability**

This study followed the most rigid research protocols, therefore the transferability of its methods and findings can be replicated with accuracy. In qualitative research, transferability is secured by a solid research design and a transparent methodology (Collins & Cooper, 2014). By providing description of the instruments used, the researcher provides a footprint that others can follow to achieve the same results (Collins & Cooper, 2014). The researcher has the responsibility of easing any attempt to verify if the study was done according to the standards and protocol was applied with the utmost seriousness.

**Dependability**

The accuracy of the data collection results is essential to the trustworthiness of a research study. In this case, the timelessness of the Cape Verdean public opinion on this subject is evident by the generational homogeneity of the results. The effect of Africanism is very present in the mindset and although the way this integration should occur is discussed, its importance is unquestionable in the view of the respondents. In qualitative studies, the depth of analysis is more decisive than breadth but as Yen (2016) suggests, the data collection still must be as broad as possible to capture a valid sample from the participants. The way the questionnaire was designed with multiple questions per topic also gives depth to the inquiry and promotes the confirmability of the study.

The scarcity of dissonant opinions from the respondents is another indicator that these results can be replicated without much variation. So, it is a firm conviction that the researcher in this study has captured a reliable description of the reality of Cape Verde integration in the ECOWAS sub-region. The broadness of the recruiting process and its geographical broadness ensure that the results are not influenced by any potential bias of the author, and this fact reinforces the validity of the study.

**Confirmability**

Objectivity is an essential component of a research study (Abend, 2008), and ensures the confirmability of the research study findings. The alignment of the various components and the accuracy of data collection instruments and process are crucial to the confirmability of the study. It refers to the neutrality and accuracy of the data (Casey et al, 2013), and this is

achieved by laying out a path that other researchers can follow to confirm the validity of the findings of a given research study.

### **Data Analysis**

was: How does insularity and asymmetry affect Cape Verde's membership to the ECOWAS? The three following questions were included in the questionnaire:

1. How do you describe the current reality in the ECOWAS?
2. How does the fact that Cape Verde is a small and insular country affect its trading potential in the ECOWAS?
3. Would a policy change help to mitigate the asymmetries in the ECOWAS?

### **RQ1**

Predictably, the open-ended nature of this first question prompted a wide range of responses, indicating that most participants had a good grasp and interest when it relates to regional integration, and some had doubts on the direction things are going. Others had a conditional approval, but most believed that it is going on the right path and offered suggestion on how things could improve. On question two, most respondents pointed out the fact that Cape Verde traders did not have much to export to the region and the scarcity of maritime transport considering that air freight is expensive. Question three prompted a variety of responses across the board, ranging from a fierce defense of a protectionist regional trade policy and development to a nationalist protection of the small domestic market that is being invaded by regional traders and even more so, by the Chinese merchants. Some respondents argued that the support that China has offered to Cape Verde since the days of struggle for independence with military aid and continuous aid to build the government infrastructures

including the national stadium, the Parliament, and government buildings, as well as other yearly aids have granted the Chinese wholesalers and retailers a customs tax exemption that far exceeds the ones that are offered to traders from the ECOWAS region. Others consider the presence of Chinese vendors an important regulator of the Cape Verdean and regional market since it provides a regularity and variety of products that would not be otherwise so affordable. The collected data suggest that the ECOWAS traders face a similar ambiguity, even though they are mostly ambulant retailers, not prepared to compete with their Chinese or domestic counterparts. Another detail worth of note from the collected data is that government officials both current and former have a formed opinion that Cape Verde should not attach itself too much to the ECOWAS because that would limit the country's ability to have a leverage with Europe and the Americas. This view is aligned with what Kurecic (2017) proposed, that small states must keep their options open above all because the world is in constant change and after the current globalization era, new power players will emerge and shuffle the international power arena. However, respondents from the general population would not object to an open trade as long they are able to access the vast market that is within the region. This trend suggests a theme that for many reasons, the people are open to establish connections with their counterparts but struggle with the way their government handles the integration dossier.

## **RQ2**

Questions 4, 5, and 6 were included in the questionnaire:

4. What are the main integration challenges in the ECOWAS?
5. How do you evaluate the free movement of people in the ECOWAS region?

6. How can Cape Verde use its reputation of good governance and stability as an asset in the regional integration?

Question four provided respondents an opportunity to manifest their views on the relevant issues that influence the integration process in the ECOWAS region, considering that trade is the focus of the ECOWAS Treaty. Responses made it clear that culture and other social aspects affect the human relations at a more or lesser degree. The data analysis revealed that there is a mixed feeling when it comes to cultural identity and Africanism among the participants. While some respondents are for a full continental union akin to the EU, others feel that Cape Verde is one of the stable democratic states in Africa with a special proximity to Europe, and it is risky to put “all your eggs in one basket”. Between these two views, there is an array of concerns such as size, migration, language barriers, and other categories of vulnerability and incompatibilities. Overall, the respondents consider asymmetry, seclusion, and conflicts as the main obstacles to a full integration in the ECOWAS region.

Question five prompted a distinct return from the institutional respondents when compared to the organizational or the public. The data suggests that officials are optimistic and see an open border as feasible, if some restrictions and conditions are put in place while the private sector and NGOs respondents have distinct views on their interaction with the ECOWAS migrant community. Under the Free Movement of People Act of 1979, which is one of the pillars of the community, member-states are committed to creating the conditions for an open border for the ECOWAS citizens, and some respondents agree with Bolarinua (2015), according to whom “West Africa is not yet ready for the free movement of people at its current stage of development” (Bolarinua, 2015). In the words of a secondary school

teacher “it is premature and there is no reciprocal advantages” to an open border and the collected data indicates that the respondents consider it too early for an open border.

Question 6 of the inquiry formulary prompted an optimistic appraisal from the participants, most assuming that Cape Verde’s reputation of a stable democracy and development can be an asset to the region in peace-keeping efforts, education and ultimately, development. Respondents are proud of the fact that Cape Verde enjoys the stability of a solid democratic state and believe that the ECOWAS region could benefit from this fact.

### **RQ3**

To help answer this question, the following questions were added to the questionnaire:

7. Are there any disadvantages for Cape Verde in being a member of the ECOWAS? If yes, which?
8. How has Cape Verde benefited from being a member of the ECOWAS?
9. Does or should the fact that Cape Verde has affiliation with other organizations such as CPLP, PALOP and special partnership with the European Union affect its membership to the ECOWAS?

RQ3 intended to determine the level of commitment Cape Verde allocates to the integration in the ECOWAS. At first sight, the archipelago enjoys a brotherly communion with the Sub-Saharan Africa aspirations of freedom and development since the days of struggle for independence. As described in chapter three, the ECOWAS region has faced multiple ordeals in the post-independence era, with civil unrest, poverty and corruption leading the *modus vivendi* of its people and this is an issue that the respondents consider to be of capital importance.

Answers to question seven suggest that Cape Verdeans are solidary with their counterparts of the region and are willing to carry some of the social burdens that ECOWAS people have endured.

So, looking at the results for the question seven, the impression is that Cape Verdeans have a clear consciousness of their reality. That is, while the north (Europe) may seem attractive for trade, their umbilical cord is clearly African by nature. Some respondents even revisit the option that the territory could remain an autonomous region of Portugal, like the Azores, Madeira or like the Canary Islands (Spain). However, the respondents' thirst for freedom spoke much louder than economic prosperity.

Responses to question eight suggest that the stronger tie that Cape Verde has with the ECOWAS is related to culture, sports, and genetics. In the words of one respondent who works for a major airline abroad, "Cape Verde does not have much to put on the table" therefore the benefits from ECOWAS membership is also scarce.

For all these reasons, in the mind of the respondents it makes sense that Cape Verde has an irreversible connection with the ECOWAS member-states but must strive to consolidate such union and find ways to take more advantage of it. Respondents consider the emerging accessibility of the national small market to Chinese and North African traders as a serious competition to the CEDEAO market, but in contrast, the products that these merchants bring are different than the ones the ECOWAS market exports.

Question nine contrasts the membership of Cape Verde to ECOWAS with its belonging to the Lusophony and the special partnership with the European Union and other states. It was almost unanimous across respondents that Cape Verde should promote stable

relationships with non-ECOWAS states as long there is no incompatibility. A dissenting respondent considers that Cape Verde joined the ECOWAS as a “fishing expedition”, not knowing for sure what the outcome would be. Most respondents accept that Cape Verde had to be an ECOWAS member for geographic proximity and solidarity.

The tenth and conclusive question of the survey was: What should be Cape Verde’s strategy in its integration in the ECOWAS? The final open-ended question was designed to allow the participants to express their views on what the country and the government should do (if anything), to strengthen its integration to the ECOWAS or eventually shift the strategy towards a more convenient approach. As in many instances, this question returned a distinct variance between what the technocrats believe and what the academics and participants believe. This suggests that because government officials have spent time around the table with their ECOWAS counterparts, they see a viable path to a full integration into the community. The general public in contrast, overwhelmed by the struggles of employment, housing, education and other challenges do not necessarily see any advantage in opening the doors to migrants and foreign traders.

As Appendix B indicates, respondents have pragmatism, leverage and low profile as the three ingredients that should be relied upon in dealing with the ECOWAS membership. An estimated 67% do firmly believe in the ECOWAS integration, 13% are not so optimistic and the remaining 20% are ambiguous or indifferent about this matter.

Processing all the data from the questionnaire through the lenses of the dependency theory, respondents consider that the establishment of the ECOWAS region has provided a framework that fosters peace, development, proximity of its people and a promising future.



### **Discrepancies of Nonconforming Data**

As it has been mentioned, some questions returned some significant discrepancies typically characterized by the group of people that are related to the government institutions as compared to the ones that belong to NGOs and other stakeholders. Considering that the main goal of the ECOWAS is to foster endogenous economic growth, the fact that Cape Verde has too small to export or import from the region is an obvious setback that some respondents brought to discussion. However, the institutional discourse is that things are getting better, that the near future will bring new opportunities. This generalized opinion reflects the optimism of the Cape Verdean people, as illustrated by one of the respondents: “Cape Verde must rise its leverage in the ECOWAS by developing a viable industry and offer the services that the region needs” and mitigate the effects of asymmetry.

Question four of the questionnaire returned most of variables with distinct views. The vast majority agreed that there are integration challenges, beside the ones that the literature review exposed such as migration, political instability and asymmetry, other isolated variables emerged related to immigration and refugee institutional policies, equality on access to ECOWAS positions, supremacy of the Anglophone member-states, and dependency on external stakeholders.

Question five also provided an array of insights on the free movement issue, led by the fact that there is much more movement into Cape Verde than the opposite. Other than some traders and shoppers who take advantage of the direct flights from Praia to Dakar and some travelers that go to Bissau for business and family matters, Cape Verdean travelers to the remaining member-states are basically diplomats and scarcely some businesspeople. This lack

of reciprocity explains the enhancing barriers that Cape Verdean authorities and Parliament have implemented to ensure that ECOWAS migrants have a place to stay and means to provide for their basic needs, as discussed in chapter two. Data shows that to travel from Cape Verde to some of the ECOWAS states, one must take a connection flight in Europe.

### **Summary of Results**

The responses to the questionnaire provided positive feedback on the perception that leads the public opinion on the integration process in the ECOWAS sub-region. It became clear that the Cape Verdean stakeholders value the belonging to the ECOWAS and the only issue is the way that integration should take place and up to what point. On question one, about the way insularity and asymmetry affect Cape Verde's membership to the ECOWAS, the prominent response is that Cape Verde's ability to do business with the ECOWAS is highly impacted by the scarcity of transportation and the government is looking into the best options to mitigate this obstacle and implement a maritime cluster as well an aerial frequent connection with the main ECOWAS capitals, a plan that was under way when the COVID-19 pandemic hit the whole world in 2020. These transportation upgrades would move not only the domestic products but would represent a strategic trading connection with the whole world.

On question two of this research, the way cultural diversity influences integration in the ECOWAS, the conclusion is that the disparity among the three linguistic clusters, Anglophone, Francophone and Lusophone is notable, with the first one dominating and the last one following with the middle one moderating. As noted by Dennis & Ahmed (2017), "The sharp ideological differences between the Anglophone countries and their Francophone

counterparts created a rift in the regional integration process with no recognized official leader in the region” (p. 68). Guinea Bissau and Cape Verde have too little leverage on the decision-making process and as a small insular state, Cape Verde must preserve its identity.

Overall, respondents responded positively regarding the importance of Cape Verde’s membership to the ECOWAS. Nevertheless, the strategy, intensity and enthusiasm differ. While the public officials and institutions carry the torch for a stronger connection, the NGOs and general public have a diverse viewpoint on what must be done and how the country should move about on this matter. On the disadvantages, some see the free trade as unfair since Cape Verde hardly does any export to ECOWAS. On the benefits, for the same reasons that Cape Verde must preserve its identity, belonging to a regional organization provides a platform where the needs and aspirations can be assessed.

This study provided an opportunity to assess the Cape Verdean perspective on the importance of membership to the ECOWAS. It contributes to clarify the reality of the West Africa sub-region, the free movement of people and trade in the ECOWAS region.

Chapter 5 includes implications of findings of this study and interpretations of information from the literature review presented in Chapter 2. I also address credibility and limitations of this study and implications for future studies.

## Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The objective of this study was to evaluate the process of integration of Cape Verde in the ECOWAS region and gauge the level of commitment and resources that stakeholders are committing to this purpose. This qualitative research was conducted using a case study model with a questionnaire as the main instrument. The three research questions involved the impact that asymmetry, insularity, culture, and policies have on the integration and the affirmation process in the ECOWAS region. It provided insights regarding advantages and costs as well as information about future strategies.

### **Summary of Findings**

Analysis of collected data indicates that Cape Verdean institutions and people have a positive view of membership and integration in the ECOWAS, although perspectives about how it should occur vary (see Appendix A). Insularity, asymmetry, culture, and policies are determining factors that must be equated to maximize integration of Cape Verde in the ECOWAS.

Findings indicate that insularity has a dual impact on Cape Verde's integration in the ECOWAS region. It protects the islands from challenges but precludes Cape Verde from sharing a level field where trade and free movement would occur with seamless flow and continuity. This study made it clear that transportation and access to the ECOWAS market is a much bigger challenge to Cape Verdean stakeholders than their counterparts because each of the other member states have 13 other member states to do business with, while Cape Verde has difficulty reaching out to and from the continental portion of West Africa. This means any

attempt to sell or buy in the region becomes a burden for Cape Verde, because top products that are on demand in the region are not originated in Cape Verde.

Similarly, asymmetry has a double effect considering Cape Verde is the smallest member-state, aggravated by the insularity factor. Anglophone and Francophone states have much more influence in the region, and insularity protects Cape Verde from the impacts of continental challenges. With its almost three hundred million people, Nigeria is by far the biggest and most influential ECOWAS member-state, and together with Ghana exert a positive influence on conflict management and the design of ECOWAS institutions, of which Nigeria is the main host. As recommended by Kurecic (2017), a small insular state like Cape Verde must keep all of its doors open to the world for all the reasons, above all because the world is in a constant change and the main players are shifting positions the whole time.

Research question two: Does cultural diversity influence Cape Verde's stance in the ECOWAS? Data results indicate that Cape Verdean culture has deep roots in West African traditions, with shared backgrounds involving music, food, and apparel. Respondents' answers to the three questions related to RQ2 involved Morabeza, which is characteristic to people of these islands who tend to be friendly to strangers. Participants questioned the fact that west Africans are nicknamed Manjacos, which is an ethnic name of Guinea Bissau, but viewed it as friendly nomenclature.

Responses to RQ3 implied that the importance of belonging to Africa and the ECOWAS are not fully comprehended and explained by respondents. This study reinforces the idea that whatever strategy Cape Verde adopts in its foreign policy, it must always include a strong relationship with its regional counterparts.

Cape Verdeans enjoy West African music such as Deka, and artists like Salif Keita, Mory Kanté, and Tabanka Jazz. Traditional rhythms and drumming from Africa are present in radios and clubs in Cape Verde. This cultural proximity is reciprocal as Cape Verdean musicians such as Cesária Évora are very appreciated out there. Cape Verde's national sports teams and clubs participate in regional and African competitions regularly and contribute to consolidate relations between countries. Above all, the Cape Verdean ethnicity has a strong African origin. According to Cape Verde (2022):

Traditional forms of music include *funana*, which is played on an accordion and an iron bar that serves as a rhythm instrument. *Batuque* is performed by a circle of women who beat out rhythms on plastic sacks held between their legs. Both types of music are very African-influenced and are particular to the island of Santiago. Another traditional form of music is the *morna* which is a slower, more Portuguese-influenced ballad. Each type of music has a specific dance that goes with it. (p.1)

Ethnicity and culture are two aspects that form the Cape Verdean identity, accentuated by the variety of influences and origins more intensely in the islands than in the continental ECOWAS region.

Cape Verde can maximize connections with its vast diaspora to foster its economic potential as a mid-Atlantic harbor that can lead to the development of West Africa in the post-COVID era. Its history and culture are strong indicators that more could be done. This potential can be achieved if right policies are adopted both by the ECOWAS and Cape Verdean stakeholders. Asymmetry and insularity are challenges that can be overcome via

modern technology and economic activity that promotes assiduous flow of physical interaction among all member-states.

In terms of changes to mindsets and perceptions of the importance of positive integration and cooperation due to the pandemic, the economic impact of the COVID-19 epidemic placed substantial pressure on the government in terms of internal constraints and its international impact. The COVAX vaccine initiative was effective in terms of overcoming the pandemic and is an example on how regional cooperation and trading has a positive impact.

According to Beaubien (2021), COVAX is:

A joint venture between the World Health Organization, the Center for Epidemic Preparedness and Innovation CEPI, Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and UNICEF, the United Nations' children's fund. It was set up in April of 2020. The idea behind the program is that COVAX would pre-purchase huge quantities of vaccines from the major manufacturers. (p.1)

COVAX member countries along with private organizations including Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, World Bank and UNICEF paid for certain quantities of COVID vaccines that were distributed proportionately among less prosperous countries.

Beside asymmetry and insularity, the movement of people between Cape Verde and the ECOWAS region is also affected by other commitments that the country has with other organizational forums such as the CPLP. Cape Verde is seeking to remove the barriers with Europe and the CPLP and a full open border with ECOWAS represents incompatibilities.

The CPLP has been looking at the possibility of free movement of people among member-states, but each one of them belong to other communities (Portugal EU, Brazil

Mercosur, Angola SADC, Cape Verde and Guinea Bissau ECOWAS), which makes it a complex issue for governments and peoples to choose what best fits their needs. In Chapter 3, I discussed that the Cape Verdean government decided to exempt EU citizens from acquiring a visa prior to traveling to Cape Verde. This decision could lead to reciprocity from the EU, but it is unlikely because of Cape Verde's connections with the ECOWAS. Within the ECOWAS, the three languages that are spoken (French in 8 countries, English in 5, and Portuguese 2 respectively) constitute a decisive factor, along with size and economic power. The ECOWAS power is disputed between Francophone and Anglophone groups, with the Lusophone minority (Cape Verde and Guinea Bissau) as spectators. Cape Verde has other options that compete with what the ECOWAS has to offer. Cape Verde has a vast diaspora that contributes significantly by its economic, educational, and cultural formation of public opinion. This multiculturalism is a decisive factor for Cape Verde.

Cape Verde enjoys a reputation of peace, other than the symbolic revolts such as Engenhos (1822), Achada Falcão (1841), and Ribeirão Manuel (1910), (Perreira, 2010, p. 39), and some minor resistance that the Portuguese colonist regime endured in these Islands and the fact that they installed their political prison camp there. Cape Verde enjoyed a pacific transition to independence in 1975 and a positive transition to democracy in 1991. This peace is due to absence of natural resources to generate conflicts, physical separation from the African continent, and a miscegenated population. Regardless, these attributes galvanize the Cape Verdean people and give them the assurance that tomorrow will be better than yesterday.



### **Impact of Study Findings on Existing Literature**

This study provides a contemporary analysis of the conditions in the ECOWAS region with focus on the integration of the Cape Verde Islands as an insular small state. The findings expand the existing knowledge of this reality and provide a comprehensive insight on the Cape Verdean stakeholders' position on the economic prospective of the sub-region and the strategies that must be adopted by the endogenous institutions and government to maximize the gains to the membership in the ECOWAS. The dependency theory by Raul Prebisch served as the backbone of the theoretical framework, along with the small states' integration theory (Kuracic, 2017). The overall evaluation of the ECOWAS impact in the development of the region concludes that this organization has been a crucial player on the relationship among the states of this sub-region. Despite the setbacks caused by conflicts, asymmetries and lack of resources, ECOWAS has been a driving force on dialogue and implementation of important interventions in the areas of peace keeping and management, infrastructural framework on renewable energy, telecommunication, agriculture and many other areas of human development.

Endogenous researches such as Coutinho & Canto (2018) had developed comprehensive studies on the impact of common open market on Cape Verde and concluded that bureaucratic hurdles needed to be overcome before an effective free trade can be established, and Vedres & Nordlund (2018) stipulated that models such as the European Union model can hardly be replicated elsewhere because the European states had established a homogeneity of reciprocity way before and their similarities made a lot easier to develop a common market and latter, a Union. The Present study expanded on those concepts even

further, delving into the reasons why a common market is so hard to establish in Sub-Saharan Africa, with focus on the exceptional case of Cape Verde and the ECOWAS due to the asymmetries and insularity.

The concept of timing for regional integration in West Africa introduced by Bolarinua (2015) according to whom the West Africa sub-region is not ready yet for a free movement open border, deserved a closer look. In one hand, the persistent asymmetries suggest that some more must be done to level the field among the member-states, but in the other hand, it is a goal that must be pursued with the benevolence and willingness of all parties involved. While it is true that other models such as the EU cannot just be replicated arbitrarily, many steps were taken such as the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), the Schengen Agreement on free movement and the implementation of the Euro, and some elements of this formula can be implemented in the ECOWAS or the African Union. So, there is an obvious, sequential turn of events that best serves a region as the unification process moves forward. The west and central Africa regions have been using the CFA currency since 1945 when the Breton Woods System was created, and France was forced to lower the value of its currency due to devaluation that resulted from the WWII. To prevent such effect from affecting the African colonies, the CFA Franc was created, backed by the French Treasure (Baudouin, 2006). So, eight of the 15 ECOWAS member-states use the CFA Franc as their currency including Guinea-Bissau, as the only non-Francophone state. Cape Verde stands again in a unique position on this matter as for the last two decades ECOWAS has been struggling with the possibility of implementing a new currency, the ECO. It is assumed that “The adoption of a single currency connotes that the countries involved have achieved a substantial degree of

macroeconomic convergence, have ceded their monetary sovereignty to a supranational entity, and have harmonized their monetary policy under that entity” (Okwor, 2021, p. 43). After reaching The Exchange Rate Cooperation Agreement (ERCA) concluded in 1998, Cape Verde got a solid anchor for its currency and gained parity with the Euro, which would be adopted as the European currency just a year later (Lamine, 2006). So, when it comes to common currency in the ECOWAS, it is going to take much more than time as there must be a need for such a currency justified by a shared market and a common purpose. Cape Verde hardly has any products that are sought for in the ECOWAS and in average, ECOWAS member-states do 65% of trade with their former colonizers. The continuous delay on the implementation of an ECOWAS currency (ECO) is a demonstration that there are other things that must occur before an internal currency may become necessary and viable. Therefore, the financial sector is another hurdle that has an increased meaning on Cape Verde’s integration in the ECOWAS.

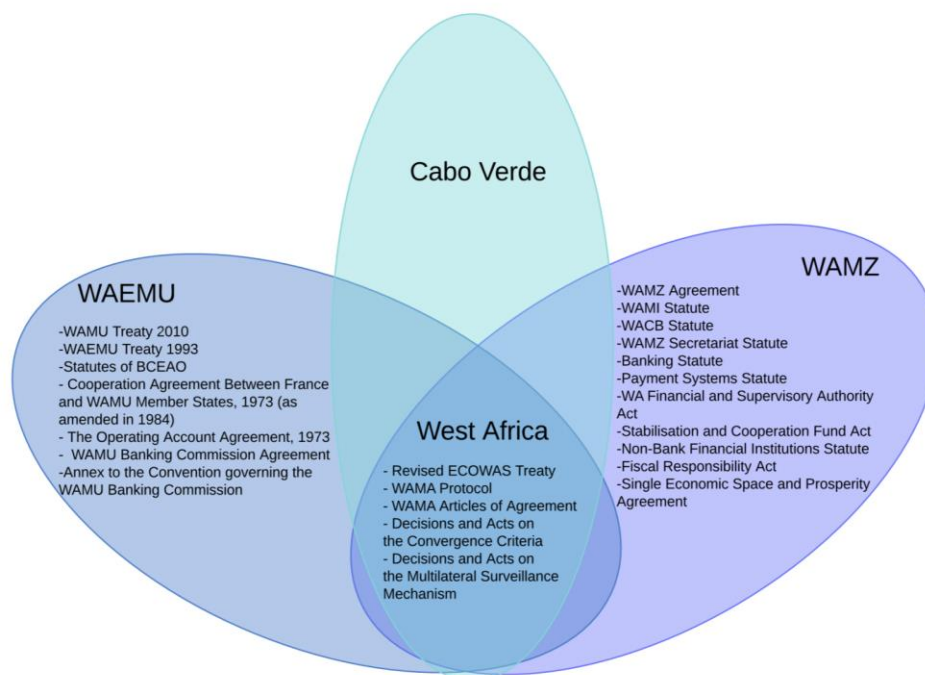
Cape Verde has been able to navigate this matter under the discretion clauses that the Free Movement Act provides (Coutinho & Canto, 2018). The requirements that are imposed on travelers from the ECOWAS region is much more demanding than when they land in Europe and there is an unintentional reason for that. If 1% of Cape Verde’s population migrates to Nigeria, almost no one notices; whereas, if the opposite happens, the population of Cape Verde quintuplicates. Therefore, asymmetry is a major factor in ECOWAS, and Cape Verdeans seem to understand that instinctively. It is estimated that more than one million Cape Verdeans live abroad, which represents double of Cape Verde’s current population. Nevertheless, the 16,491 immigrants of which 35,5% are from the ECOWAS and 41,1% from

other African states (INE, 2014), are welcome in Cape Verde. Most of these immigrants reside in Santiago where they labor in construction, commerce, and arts. Immigrants living in Sal, Boa Vista and São Vicente Islands work mostly in the tourism sector. An increasing number of migrants are venturing from the coast of Africa in improvised boats, some of which perish before reaching the islands.

Another aspect that affects the monetary integration of Cape Verde in the ECOWAS is the monism or dualism that characterize the legal systems of the member-states. In the case of Cape Verde, the dualistic system means that an international treaty guided by international law must be ratified by the national parliament. “Consequently, a treaty or other expression of international law signed or ratified by those countries will not have effect within their national legal systems unless they are formally incorporated into those systems through legislative domestication” (Okwor, 2021, p. 16). Cape Verde’s adherence to the ECOWAS agreements is very selective and adjusted to the particular needs and demands of the country.

#### **Figure 4**

*Diagram of Adhesion of Cape Verde to ECOWAS Financial and Economic Institutions*



The current Prime Minister of Cape Verde and his government has repeatedly reaffirmed the country's commitment to full integration in the ECOWAS. During the 9<sup>th</sup> Legislature that has just ended, the government created the Adjunct Minister for Regional Integration although without a proper budget and staff. Talks for an assiduous maritime connection within the region and a special status for Cape Verde based on its peculiarities are under review and will be implemented in this 10<sup>th</sup> Legislature, for which the government has just been re-elected. The membership fees that are overdue have been a stumble stone and the recent lost opportunity for Cape Verde to nominate a President of the ECOWAS Commission deserved a fierce debate as three individualities announced their availability for such position. The government of Praia vowed to renegotiate the membership fee schedule and argues that as is, Cape Verde pays more per capita fees than the rest of member-states. The advisory nature of the ECOWAS Parliament is another indicator that the regional integration in the ECOWAS

is in its early stages and that forum is an important setting for a small state such as Cape Verde to have their voices heard. Out of all ECOWAS agencies, ECREEE is the only one that is hosted by Cape Verde due to the country's expertise on renewable energy and environmental preservation.

The government of Cape Verde and its institutions have a core belief that their integration in the ECOWAS region is laid upon a solid foundation but realize that in this modern era all doors and windows must be open (Kurecic, 2006) to the world and up to now, the volume of trade and cooperation among the ECOWAS states does not provide a cushion big enough to ensure any kind of exclusivity. Recently, the Alex Saab case tested the commitment and dependability of Cape Verde on the ECOWAS institutions. Saab, a Venezuelan diplomat had been arrested in Cape Verde allegedly under an Interpol mandate when his flight made a refuel stopover on his way to Iran to do some business in favor of the Venezuelan government. While the Cape Verdean Supreme Court has ruled in favor of extradition, the five Justices ECOWAS Court one of which is Cape Verdean determined that Saab is to be released, a norm that has not been attended (Courtecowas, 2021). A last word on the Constitutionality of this matter by the Cape Verdean Constitutional Court has been released, confirming that Alex Saab Moran is to be extradited to the United States where he is to face charges on money laundering in favor of the Venezuelan government. While the Constitution is clear that foreign citizens are not to be deported when they would face death penalty or life in prison at the requesting country (art 37 3.b), the Constitutional Court found other legal dispositions that would grant precedence to such request (Tribunal Constitucional, 2021). Saab's legal team went back to the ECOWAS Court requesting some penalties against

the state of Cape Verde, but the Court returned a verdict that only an ECOWAS member-state has legal ground to request such order. This episode is meaningful because it provided a scenario in which the ECOWAS legal system would be tested and weighted.

A review of these recent events gave this study an updated perspective on the reality of Cape Verde's membership to the ECOWAS and set the ground for a comprehensive analysis of the contemporary literature in a realistic context.

### **Interpretation of Findings**

From the dependency theory perspective, the concept of regional integration fosters the industrialization and development throughout the three sectors of economy at regional level, in contrast with the older modernization theory which proposes a copycat model of development. It makes sense that the best investment for developing countries is a solid academic education along with modern industrialization. In the words of Anderson (2017):

The best practice examples can be seen among those small states which are relatively resource poor, but which have invested heavily in human capacity. Without such long-term domestic commitment, new external alignments will be of limited assistance.

Contrary to several decades of neoliberal ideology, the state cannot remain an outsider in effective development. (p. 361)

The applicability of the dependency theory to the ECOWAS case is a viable proposition both in terms of regional development and independency from external factors. Proposed by Raul Prebisch in the 50's as strategy for development in the South American countries, the dependency theory proposes among other things, development through regional cooperation as a form of self-reliance (Sliz & Szczepaisk, 2015). When ECOWAS was

created in 1975, the purpose was to foster the exchange of expertise and interstate subsidized trade that would eventually translate into an open market with a unified currency. In fact, “The ECOWAS Treaty laid the foundations for the systematic economic integration of West Africa by providing an international legal framework for the four freedoms – the free movement of people, goods, services, and capital” (Okwor, 2021, p. 7). The organization faced multiple challenges such as internal conflicts, corruption, cultural barriers, asymmetries which prevented the organization from focusing on its primary goals. Currently ECOWAS is in a much higher ground and has established the basis for a de facto common market with a unified currency. As of December 2019, ECOWAS Commission was committed to implement the ECO currency in a near future. Unified currency is not necessarily something that Praia is hurried about since the volume of financial and trading transactions does not justify such need for now, versus the solid anchorage that the Cape Verdean escudo enjoys with the Euro plus the fact that each ECOWAS member states do most of their trade outside the community. So, the internal dependency is in a crossroads at the moment and Cape Verde as a small insular state must keep all options open considering the constant shifting that global economy is facing, particularly in this pandemic era.

Although it is not visible that there are economic advantages, Cape Verde is an inherent member of ECOWAS but should seek to acquire a differentiated treatment due to its unique characteristics. As a small insular state, the Non-Alignment movement that was adopted by most members of the Organization of African Unity suited Cape Verde very well as an umbrella that would allow the nation to survive through the cracks of the diplomatic arena. Parallel to the regional free trade, the President of Cape Verde (name?) has signed the



Continental Free Trade agreement that was adopted in 2019 after three years of intense negotiations. The goal of this agreement was to eliminate tariffs on 90% of products and promote endogenous trade. Free market is beneficial to all member-states since intra-regional trade in Africa is around 15% (Tuluy, 2017). Data suggests that an open market could stimulate the economy in the African region in many ways, however infrastructure and production must take place first.

This scenario places Cape Verde in a unique position to increase its economic footprint and contribute to the domestic, regional, and continental economic growth.

As Kuracic (2016) noted, small states must adopt and keep an array of bilateral, regional and multilateral levels of cooperation to maximize their potential in this multi-polar world. The main advantage of that strategy is that the world is in a constant strategic shifting and doors are opening and closing constantly and as an insular small state Cape Verde can adjust its foreign policy to the needs and opportunities of the moment.

Dependency is a recurring challenge throughout the eight Regional Economic Communities (RECs) that compose the African Union platform, more so on the Sub-Saharan region. The need for industrial infrastructure along with a solid transportation and communication system is the central challenge to overcome dependency from the strings that hold these countries from achieving their economic potential. For dependency to be a negative or positive condition it depends on the context. In the ECOWAS case, if the economy does not evolve from the primary sector, the raw products will continue to be shipped to the industrialized countries to be transformed (secondary sector) and returned to be sold (tertiary sector) at a price that the local consumers cannot afford to buy. So, the second sector must be

upgraded so that the tertiary sector may return the margin of profit that offset the deficits. As noted, “Materially and intellectually, Africa has been reduced to an exporter of raw materials and a net importer of manufactured goods” (Zambakari, 2018, p. 17). The ECOWAS region has made an effort to capture the expertise and capabilities of each member-state, but these capabilities must be implemented in a comprehensive manner, with the economic growth at aim. Contrary to what appears to be the case, Cape Verde has a great potential of delivering services that can be very useful to the region, in the transformation sector. This small insular country has a substantial trained workforce available to establish the industrial and trading services that are so in demand in the region. With the Free Movement advantage, the Lusophone Community and the special partnership with the EU, Cape Verde can become a Singapore of West Africa, a trading and shipping hub that could exceed tourism, which is the current main source of revenue.

Dependency therefore is a valid theory not only for the ECOWAS, but a necessity even for the G-8 and other developed countries as they need the global market to sell their products and the international forum to display their might and influences. All nations have their niches of influence to project their potentials and draw the advantages that are expected to be mutual.

From the liberation movement of the 60s to today, the Sub-Saharan Africa has been looking for a pathway to independency in its full splendor rather than that ephemeral flamboyance of political auto determination. This process had to start somewhere and eventually evolved into a movement powerful enough to deliver on the expectations of its people. The African Union (AU formerly OAU) has played a major role in this endeavor and

the eight Sub-regions have performed a decisive role. To Cape Verde, this journey represents an indispensable condition in its affirmation as a viable state. As an archipelagic state in the midst of the Atlantic, Cape Verde must keep as many doors open as possible and the ECOWAS is a big gateway that provides legitimacy and a strategic partnership for the future as recommended by Kurecic (2017). This insularity provides the paradox of being an insulated fortress in one hand and a barrier to cooperation in the other. This explains the peace that these Islands have enjoyed since their discovery by the Portuguese in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Other than some seldom pirate's invasions and some historic revolts, Cape Verde has no history of internal or external conflicts and has taken advantage of this reputation to establish a solid nation, recognized internationally as a model of peace, democracy and good governance.

### **Limitations and Trustworthiness**

Looking at the content of the proposal presented in chapter one of this study, it was acceptable that the prospect of this study was mostly validated by the literature review and the theoretical foundation. The data that was collected reflected the overall assumption that Cape Verde has an intrinsic willingness to participate in the integration within the ECOWAS region even though it has been a lengthy and challenging process. This conclusion is aligned with the assumptions of the proposal and the overall design. The concern with alignment of the different components was a constant in this study, and the result is a document that can contribute to a better understanding of the integration process and challenges in the ECOWAS region.

The main concern of trustworthiness of this study is related to the obstacles posed by the COVID-19 pandemic which made it difficult to meet people face to face, so, some of the participants returned their questionnaire by electronic mail or an intermediary. The fact that most participants were scholars, former or current government officials compensates for any flaw of the process. The participants were free to interrupt their role in this study, according to the recommendations of the IRB.

Overall, this study presents a case that Cape Verde is inherently a de facto member of the ECOWAS in the full sense of the term, although its strategic foreign policy has been shifting towards a broad array of treaties and bilateral agreements with many other states. Next session will address the recommendations that would smooth the road ahead.

The research for this study was conducted according to the parameters that was established in the prospectus, safeguarding the scope that was determined by the proposal. Because the study focused on the integration of Cape Verde in the ECOWAS, the main data collection instrument was the questionnaire used to sample the responses of the participants according to the codes and themes that emerged. It was clear that the vast majority of respondents believed that Cape Verde was an integral member of ECOWAS, but the way the integration is to take place returned a multiplicity of opinions.

### **Recommendations for Further Studies**

The scope of this study was centered on the Cape Verdean perspectives on regional integration, aiming to understand the endogenous point of view and efforts towards regional integration in the ECOWAS. It provided an opportunity to look into other studies, government documents and other available data, and this provided an insight on the status quo in the

ECOWAS region from Cape Verde perspective. So, this study adds a piece to a puzzle that needs many more pieces. Because knowledge is in constant evolution, future studies would contribute to a better understanding of this phenomenon. Particularly, a study that would look into what the stakeholders from the other member-states think about Cape Verde would constitute a great complement to this study. Given the uniqueness of Cape Verde as an insular small state, it would be great to know what citizens of the other states think of these islands and which adjustments the ECOWAS institutions are prepared to do to overcome the physical isolation that Cape Verde endures. Based on the literature review presented on chapter two, another study that would be of great importance is a better understanding of the differences among the three linguistic blocks in the ECOWAS and how it affects the integration process. The Anglophone, Francophone and the Lusophone blocks present distinct cultural and trading habits, a factor that plays a significant role in the integration process. The fact that Nigeria by far finances and hosts most of the ECOWAS institutions is an indicator of how easily the specificities of a small country like Cape Verde can be left behind. Okwor (2021) noted:

The ECOWAS is divided into three linguistic zones, and by extension, three general legal systems, all having origins in colonialism. Whilst it may be simpler to divide the ECOWAS solely along the lines of official language and colonial history into francophone, anglophone, and lusophone West Africa, as is the case in some of the literature; 48 such a division may be misleading within the context of any conversation on post-colonial monetary arrangements in West Africa. (p. 9)

Therefore, a monetary conversion requires much more than a political desire as it suggests that many other economic variables have been achieved.

### **Positive Social Change Impact**

This study constitutes a source of information with the potential for social changes in many ways. It presents the views and opinions of different segments of the Cape Verdean population, as well as the ones of scholars, government officials, NGOs and other stakeholders. The collected data and conclusions constitute an indicator on the perception that the Cape Verdean stakeholders have on the integration to the ECOWAS and which policies are worth of praise and which ones should be changed. The people of Cape Verde welcome people from all around the world, the migrants from the ECOWAS region have an easy integration in the islands despite the fact that they are required to present warranties at the border as they enter the country. This measure is deemed necessary to control the capability and sustainability of the infrastructures, the social conditions and the overall quality of life. A country with 4033 square kilometers and about 550 thousand people has to pay attention to the impact that is posed by the input and output of migrants. As it has been mentioned, if 1% Nigerians show up in Cape Verde in a sudden, its population grows up 5 times. If the opposite happens, none notices the resulting increase of the population of Nigeria.

This study also constitutes a document that scholars can use as a reference on the ECOWAS integration from the Cape Verdean perspective. The same way this research relied on findings that had been established previously, it contributes to the available data on this integration matter and an instrument that others can use to continue the search for answers to the challenges that the people face in this region of the globe. Graduate academic research is in exponential growth in Cape Verde and the region, the near future is very promising in terms of the proliferation of search for answers to the human challenges.

In terms of governance, this study assesses the considerable attention the Cape Verdean government has given to its relationship with its neighboring states. The importance of a regional integration is obvious for many reasons including proximity and this study is an objective evaluation of that effort and a modest contribution to accomplish that goal. Through all the struggles that took place in the post-independence era, the Sub-Saharan region is in a transitional climb into the post COVID-19 pandemic era where its leaders need to rise to the occasion and provide real solutions for their people or face the consequences in a world where information travels at the speed of light. The neo-colonialism excuse is working no more, there has to be some African solutions for African problems, and this is an irreversible course of action. The malign corruption which has infested the region is in a descent curve and this can only benefit the people who has been longing for better days ahead. In terms of good governance Cape Verde ranks well and is considered a beacon of good governance and democracy in Africa but should not rest asleep on this assumption. There is space for growth in all directions and the newly re-elected government must continue to implement the internal and regional reforms and policies towards a pleasing future.

The viability of Cape Verde as a state was a debate in the days of independence but through a solid foreign policy and sound diplomatic strategists, the country has been able to establish a notable presence in the international forums, anchored by a close relationship with the International Financial Institutions (IFIs), the United Nations and other NGOs. ECOWAS, CPLP, PALOP, ACP are a core of forums that Cape Verde has as a platform to push its agenda forward. All these forums have contributed in a different manner to establish the ground for a better future for the country and the African continent.

Considering that Cape Verde is the most cosmopolitan and culturally diverse member-state of the ECOWAS region, its geographic location, history, and culture must have a preponderant role in its relationship with the neighboring states. Cape Verde is a strategic point of entry to the region, because it has an airline (Cape Verde Airlines) that can potentially connect the region to the closest continents. Respondents believe that the location of Cape Verde could be a strategic asset to the ECOWAS region and the African continent. Pre-pandemic growth of the CV Airlines prompted new destinations to the sub-region and expectations are high for the post-pandemic recovery. Its oldest city-capital (Cidade Velha) was one of the vertices of the triangular commerce from the days of slavery. This interaction established the formation of a peculiar people, and the Portuguese built their first cathedral and high school in Africa, in these islands.

The findings of this research point to the feasibility of a solid integration of Cape Verde in the ECOWAS without prejudice to the other alliances and forums that it belongs. This study therefore asserts the positivity of all the efforts that other researchers have developed on this matter and attests the need for a continuous social change that will catapult the ECOWAS into higher grounds.

### **Theoretical and Empirical Implications**

All countries depend on their relationship with other countries to achieve their goals, whatever they are. The north needs the south to sell their products and to get the raw materials they need. The south needs the north for the opposite reasons. But according to the dependency theory, this interaction is much more beneficial when it occurs at the regional level in which case the mutual benefits would multiply. If the main goal of the ECOWAS is to



foster the economic growth through a free trade and mobility, then the breadth and depth of regional cooperation must multiply in a multidisciplinary model. Given that the ECOWAS states do only 15% of their business within the region (Tuluy, 2017, p. 336) and 65% with their former colonizers, then something must be done to reverse this trend not for ideologic reasons, but also for economic reasons. It should be expectable that if raw products are transformed within the region, then the final cost of the manufactured product would be much less expensive particularly considering the buying power in the ECOWAS region. Selling cocoa and buying chocolate made at European labor cost is an unsustainable proposition for the low-income consumers of the West Africa region. That's how urgent the local industry must keep on growing so that this dependency trend may be reversed.

The dependency theory has applicability in different ways. In this global era, nations strive to forge their alliances and influences according to their most urgent needs. The level of dependability that each country display is reflect on their ability to forge alliances and attract investments. Globalization exposed the difference between dependency and dependability. Those countries that display an attractive market, economy and know how, have a leverage on the way other states look at them. This does not depend on where a country is economically, but rather which direction it is going. One of the key features of Cape Verde is its geographic location in the mid-Atlantic, west coast of Africa. The air hub and the sea cluster are crucial infrastructures that have been in the agenda for decades and their implementation will return great benefits. These infrastructures backed by a robust technological network would diversify Cape Verde's ability to deliver services that go way beyond tourism.

The dependency theory had a pivotal role in this study. Its applicability ranges from dependency to dependability, pending on the reality of a given state or organization in a given point in time. Having been upgraded to a Middle-Income Country by the United Nations in 2008, Cape Verde became the second country to achieve such a remarkable social change after Botswana (UNSDG, 2021). So, it is a country where the dependency pendulum is shifting from one corner to the other. Zambakari (2018) explains it better:

To escape the resource curse and current extreme dependence on diminishing-return industries such as natural resource extraction, African states will have to develop an alternative source of employment, an industrial base, and strengthen the productive powers of infant industries if those industries are to survive fierce international competition. (p.18)

Even though the country relies on foreign partners to put together a significant portion of its annual budget, its dependency is circumscribed to the economy arena and is originated from a diversified source. The COVID-19 Pandemic has placed extra pressure on all nations with different level of intensity and Cape Verde is no exception. With the cancellation of tourism activities which represents about 25% of revenue, there is an aggravated need for extra resources for the post-pandemic period. The Small states Integration theory (Kurecic, 2016) provides strategies and paths that small states must implement to maximize their viability in this globalization era.

Indeed, Cape Verde enjoys today the ability to form its own destiny, alongside its peers of the region and continent. Since July 5<sup>th</sup>, 1975, Cape Verdean foreign policy has been led with utmost pragmatism, preferring to remain unheard rather than to irritate anyone. One

such example was the aforementioned nomination of a new President for the ECOWAS Commission, a four-year rotational term. It was Cape Verde's turn to propose a name for the position, but in XXXX (year) the Committee claimed that the islands state did not have its fees up to date, and the nomination was passed on to Ivory Coast. When compared to the leniency of the ECOWAS on issues much more serious (such as civil unrest and corruption that still plagues the region), it remains to see how Cape Verde's stand will evolve. The current government of Cape Verde created the Adjunct Ministry of Regional Integration in an effort to foster a path to a stronger bond, with some promising projects such as a better trade route and closer diplomatic representation in the agenda.

### **Recommendations**

This study conducted an extensive review of the policies, strategies and opinions of experts and the public opinion on the integration of Cape Verde in the ECOWAS region, guided by the premises of the dependency theory. It assessed the challenges and identified conflicts, asymmetries and insularity as the main obstacles of a broad and complete integration. It became clear that a lot has been done, the management of conflicts has absorbed much of the resources and time but allot has been accomplished in terms of implementation of the ECOWAS institutions and policies, their physical infrastructure and programs. From the Cape Verde perspective, it is necessary to keep bringing up the awareness of asymmetry as the main obstacle of a full integration and a constant search for solutions to the physical isolation that Cape Verde faces, making it difficult to access and share the ECOWAS market. The academic and NGO stakeholders must continue to contribute to the debate of best practices and policies that would contribute to a positive social change within

the ECOWAS region. Empirical evidence agree with Bolarinua (2015) according to whom it is too early to implement an open border trade and travel, and this fact is accentuated when it comes to the Cape Verde case. Indeed, this goal is much more idealistic than realistic and resembles the African Union project envisioned by Nkrumah and others in the 1960's.

The ECOWAS project as well as the other RECs deserve a lot of credit for what they have accomplished and their contribution to peace, prosperity, and modernization of the regional institutions. The framework they have established is a roadmap to a prosper Africa with opportunities and quality of life for its children.

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## Appendix A: Data Collection Questionnaire

### Thesis research questionnaire

#### Integration of Cape Verde in the ECOWAS Sub-region: Challenges and viability

This study is part of a thesis proposal at Walden University by the PhD candidate Silvestre Rosa and aims to understand the integration of Cape Verde in the ECOWAS region.

##### Introduction

*The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), was created in May 1975 with the intent of fostering the economic growth in its 15 member-states. In the process of implementing its policies and institutions the ECOWAS has faced big challenges, including internal conflicts, asymmetries and migrations and mobility. The purpose of this study is to assess the impact that these factors have on the integration of the Republic of Cape Verde which is the smallest member-state and formulate conclusions and recommendations that would help the organization to find a path to success.*

*This questionnaire comprises 9 questions (three addressing each research question) and one conclusion question*

#### Assessment of current conditions in the ECOWAS

##### I. Effects of insularity and asymmetry on Cape Verde's membership to the ECOWAS

1. How do you describe the current reality in the ECOWAS?

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2. How does the fact that Cape Verde is a small and insular country affect its trading potential in the ECOWAS?

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3. Would a policy change help to mitigate the asymmetries in the ECOWAS?

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**II. Influence of cultural diversity on Cape Verde's stance in the ECOWAS**

1. What are the main integration challenges in the ECOWAS?

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2. How do you evaluate the free movement of people in the ECOWAS region?

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3. How can Cape Verde use its reputation of good governance and stability as an asset in the regional integration?

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### III. Benefits of Cape Verde's integration the ECOWAS region

1. Are there any disadvantages for Cape Verde in being a member of the ECOWAS? If yes, which?

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2. How has Cape Verde benefited from being a member of the ECOWAS?

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3. Does or should the fact that Cape Verde has affiliation with other organizations such as CPLP, PALOP and special partnership with the European Union affect its membership to the ECOWAS?

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### IV. Final/conclusion question:

What should be Cape Verde's strategy in its integration in the ECOWAS?

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Thank you very much for your participation, if further clarification is necessary, I will contact you.

## Appendix B. Data Collection Questions and Results

<b>Data collection questionnaire results: Tabulation of answers to questions 1 to 10</b>	<b>Answer Yes/positive</b>	<b>Answer No/Negative</b>	<b>Open-end Affirm /Neg</b>
1. How do you describe the current reality in the ECOWAS?	15	12	1
2. How does the fact that Cape Verde is a small and insular country affect its trading potential in the ECOWAS?			11/27
3. Would a policy change help to mitigate the asymmetries in the ECOWAS?	14	11	3
4. What are the main integration challenges in the ECOWAS?	Asymmetry 12 Culture 9 Conflicts 4	N/A 3	
5. How do you evaluate the free movement of people in the ECOWAS region?	17	9	3
6. How can Cape Verde use its reputation of good governance and stability as an asset in the regional integration?	22	5	1
7. Are there any disadvantages for Cape Verde in being a member of the ECOWAS? If yes, which?	11	15	2
8. How does the fact that Cape Verde is a small and insular country affect its trading potential in the ECOWAS?	19	5	4
9. Would a policy change help to mitigate the asymmetries in the ECOWAS?	22	5	1
10. What should be Cape Verde's strategy in its integration in the ECOWAS?	Pragmatism 11 Leverage 8 Low profile 6		3

## Appendix C. Consent Form (English)

**CONSENT FORM**

You are invited to take part in a research study about the integration of Cape Verde in the ECOWAS Organization. The researcher is inviting participants who have or had a direct or indirect role in ECOWAS or who have an academic background that reflects a deep knowledge of this organization, to be in the study. I obtained your name/contact info via public database research. This form is part of a process called “informed consent” to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to take part.

This study is being conducted by the researcher Silvestre Rosa, who is a candidate to a PhD Degree in Public Policy at Walden University.

**Background Information:**

The purpose of this qualitative study is to assess the factors that affect integration of Cape Verde in the ECOWAS region and the efforts that Cape Verdean stakeholders have been implementing towards a closer relationship with the ECOWAS.

**Procedures:**

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to complete a survey designed to determine the relationship between Cape Verde and the ECOWAS.

Here are some sample questions:

1. How do you describe the current reality in the ECOWAS?
2. How does the fact that Cape Verde is a small and insular country affect its trading potential in the ECOWAS?
3. Would a policy change help to mitigate the asymmetries in the ECOWAS?

**Voluntary Nature of the Study:**

- This study is voluntary
- You are free to accept or turn down the invitation.
- No one at government institutions agencies will treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. The data will be saved properly and used solely for this research study.

- If you decide to be in the study, you can change your mind later. You may stop at any time.
- Not all volunteers will be asked to take part, but all will have an opportunity if selected.

**Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:**

Being in this type of study involves some risk of the minor discomforts that can be encountered in daily life, such as finding time to answer the questionnaire and return it. Being in this study would not pose any risk to your safety or wellbeing. It will take about two hours to complete this questionnaire.

1 of 2

This study will be an important instrument to understanding the relationship between Cape Verde and the ECOWAS, contributing to the increase of the scientific literary data that is available to other researchers and other stakeholders.

**Payment:**

There will be no financial or material compensation for participating in this study.

**Privacy:**

Reports coming out of this study will not share the identities of individual participants. Details that might identify participants, such as the location of the study, also will not be shared. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purpose outside of this research project. Data will be kept secure in a safe that is kept in a locked cabinet. Digital copy will be kept in a computer with encrypted password. Data will be kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university.

**Contacts and Questions:**

You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via the email [silvestre.rosa@waldenu.edu](mailto:silvestre.rosa@waldenu.edu). If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call the Research Participant Advocate at my university at 612-312-1210. Walden University's approval number for this study is **06-10-20-0348438** and it expires on **June 9, 2021**.

Please keep this consent form for your records.

**Obtaining Your Consent**

If you feel you understand the study well enough to make a decision about it, please indicate your consent by replying to this email with the words 'I Consent'. Upon receiving your consent, the questionnaire will be forwarded to you. You will have two weeks to reply to this invitation and two weeks to return the completed questionnaire if you agree to do so.

Thanks so much for your help in this study.