

## **ABSTRACT**

This study examines the Struggle for Regional Integration in Africa: the East African Community from 1886 to 2013. The East African community is the regional cooperation that comprises of the republic of Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda and South Sudan. The process leading to the establishment of the initial EAC in 1967 started as early as 1886 with the construction of Kenya-Uganda railway. The initial community, however, collapsed in 1977, ten years after its formation. It was however revived in 2002 and in 2007 Rwanda and Burundi joined while South Sudan joined it in 2016. The EAC experiences both success and challenges, some of which correspond to those of its predecessor. In assessing the prospects of the EAC, the study traced the origin of the community; examined lessons learned from its predecessor and its challenges. World systems theory was used to examine lessons, challenges and the achievements of the EAC. The theory defines a world system as a social system with boundaries, member groups, structures, coherence and rules of legitimation. It further explains interactions and relationships between states as well as their development in the modern world. To achieve this, data obtained from both primary and secondary sources was analysed using historical method. Primary data for this study was sought from Kenya National Archives and from various government reports. It also included data gathered from oral interviews with various relevant respondents including; past and present administrators, policy analysts, government officers concerned with regional matters. Secondary data was obtained from books, journal articles, EAC reports and conference publications. An analysis of the challenges and achievements of both the initial and present integration was covered by the study. The study endeavoured to show whether the present community has learned lessons from its predecessor. The study further analysed the prospects of EAC with regard to the lessons derived thereof. The findings of this study can thus be used by policy makers to come up with strategies that can be used to advance regional integration.

### **Keywords**

East African Community