

Challenges to the Undertaking and Growth of Security and Strategic Studies in Africa

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Abstract

The study explored the challenges to the undertaking and growth of security and strategic studies (SSS) in Africa. This was against the observed increased establishment of SSS courses in both African military and civilian institutions of higher learning. The objective of the study was to understand the challenges to the undertaking and growth of SSS and it involved examining the barriers to the adoption of SSS in African security frameworks and the consequent failure to contribute to informed policy choices and development paths. Using a qualitative research approach, 15 respondents from universities, governmental, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations in Uganda, but from diverse African countries, were interviewed and their information was corroborated through document analysis. The sample was arrived at using non-probability sampling, particularly, purposive, convenience and snowballing sampling techniques and document analysis was guided by a well thought out document review checklist. The study found that the undertaking of SSS in Africa begun in military academies then later went to civilian universities and mainly gained speed in the 2000's. While demand for SSS products is on the increase, SSS growth is challenged by prevalent state-centric biases, underdeveloped research and retarded development of SSS. This has resulted in African states interacting with competitors in the international system both state and non-state from a position of disadvantage, limited success in security sector reform, dis-alignment of resources and so on. The study recommended that to aid the growth of SSS there must be departure from the state-centric approach to security, a clear institutional framework for research and development in SSS involving African geniuses from various study fields and establishment of resourceful SSS think-tanks and physical or legal entities responsible for development and application of information from SSS, following certain policy.

Keywords

Challenges, Security Studies, Strategic Studies, Growth of Security and Strategic Studies

1. Introduction

Security and strategic studies constitute one of the growing fields of study at graduate and post-graduate levels world-wide. This development, which until recently was a Western phenomenon, necessitated a systematic investigation into the evolution of SSS in Africa in order to understand the challenges to their undertaking and growth; well aware that continents that have had retarded SSS growth have suffered from persistent insecurity and underdevelopment; consequences of ill-informed policy choices, ill-informed development paths and dis-aligned resources. The study therefore addressed the problem of barriers to the adoption of SSS in African security frameworks, so as to contribute to informed policy choices and development paths. The question was: how can barriers to adoption of SSS in African security frameworks be overcome so that SSS can contribute to informed policy choices and development paths?

1.1. Contextual Background

Security studies (SS) have mainly been a Western subject, largely done in North America, Europe and Australia characterized as war studies, military and grand strategy and geopolitics (Buzan & Hansen, 2009; Rowley & Weldes, 2018). Between 1940's and 1990's SS were systematically institutionalized through establishing courses and institutes, creation of specialist sections within academic institutions, development of specialist journals, founding of SS think-tanks and setting up funding programs by governments and foundations (Lynn-Jones, 1991; Buzan & Hansen, 2009). Before the 1940's security studies existed: the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) was established in 1831 while the United States (US) Army War College has existed for more than a hundred years. Some of the western institutions in which SS is being pursued today existed before the Second World War including the Brookings Institution Think-Tank that was founded in 1927 (Buzan & Hansen, 2009).

Traditionally, the study of strategy was conducted in military institutions and academies and then scholarship moved to think-tanks and to universities, because nuclear weapons meant to be addressed, remained a theoretical exercise requiring civilian experts ranging from physicists and economists to sociologists and psychologists (Buzan & Hansen, 2009; Duyvesteyn & Worrall, 2017). As a result of the cold war and construction of Soviet and international communism (enemies), strategic studies emerged; focusing on external (communist) threats, the (western) state as a referent object of security, a bipolar (East-West) balance of power, distinction between the domestic and the international – especially nuclear threats

(Rowley & Weldes, 2018). In contemporary times, strategic studies are carried out in institutions like Strategic Institute of the US Army War College that sponsor conferences on strategic studies and whose research analysts publish their findings. The publications provide a framework for considering strategy at the grand strategy, national security strategy, national military strategy and regional or theater strategy levels (Yarger, 2006).

In Africa, security and strategic studies do not have a long history (Amaike & Ben, 2017) and are hardly engaged in; because past experience has shown that they have not been useful as a result of incorrect forecasts. Additionally, the strategic environmental factors change so rapidly that actors are unable to cope. The African continent has also historically lacked think-tanks dedicated to understanding complex issues and developing responses to emerging policy challenges (Devex, 2019a). Most of the existing think-tanks are national in character or mainly pursue national policy agenda. The African Center for Strategic Studies (ACSS) is, for example, based in Washington DC and is just meant to support United States foreign policy by strengthening the strategic capacity of African countries to identify and resolve security challenges in ways that promote civil-military cooperation, respect for democratic values and safeguard human rights (Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF, 2019)).

African interest in security studies is however evidenced by the emergence and growth of the number of institutes in that respect. Examples are; the Institute of Security Studies (ISS) based in South Africa. This is the pioneer African strategic studies organization, which aims at enhancing human security on the continent through independent and authoritative research and provision of expert policy advice (Devex, 2019b). Other continent-wide institutions include; the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center (KA IPTC) established in Ghana and offering masters and PhD courses in peace and security (KA IPTC, 2020); the Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS) established at Addis Ababa University (AAU), Ethiopia, in 2007, as a premier institute of higher learning that aims at contributing to African peace and security, through education, research and professional development and finding African-led solutions to peace and security in Africa (African Union Peace and Security Program, APSP, 2012).

According to available data, it is estimated that between 30% - 50% of African universities offer courses in security and strategic studies. The percentage can significantly vary depending on the country and region within Africa. Higher concentration is in regions experiencing significant security challenges and those with established military academies and defense studies programs. While (Rowley & Weldes, 2018; Yarger, 2006) as already alluded to, Think-Tanks in Western countries influence national security decisions, Africa lacks strong institutions dedicated to security and strategic research. While organizations like ISS in South Africa and KA IPTC in Ghana exist, they are among a few Africa-led institutions engaging in security discourse. The majority of African security policies are made by governments without consulting academic experts, which results in reactionary

rather than strategic security approaches.

Lack of (Basedau, 2023) strategic foresight and security planning has contributed to recurring coups in Africa such as in Mali, Burkina Faso and so on, which demonstrates the absence of a well-developed SSS framework in governance. Similarly (Vines & Wallace, 2022), the failure to curb Boko Haram and Al-Shabab in East Africa, Nigeria, Mali and Somalia is partly attributable to poor strategic planning and weak research institutions. While (Ateku & Mensah, 2023) regional organizations such as ECOWAS; SADC or IGAD are meant to coordinate Africa's security efforts, they are struggling because of lack of research-based strategic planning. Equally, (African Union, 2012) while the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) was established to create an African-led security framework, it remains underfunded and highly dependent on external funders like France, the US and Russia. This points to Africa's failure to fully institutionalize SSS at national and continental levels. Many (Maitisek, 2020) African countries actually rely heavily on foreign military assistance rather than developing their own security expertise.

Countries like those in the Sahel (Mahmoud & Taifouri, 2023) have been dependent of France's military assistance (through operation Barkhane), while others have turned to Russia's Wagner Group for security support. This over-reliance on external forces highlights the lack of homegrown security expertise, a direct consequence of failing to invest in SSS. If Africa had strong security research institutions, it would be better equipped to develop its own counter terrorism strategies, defense policies and peace keeping or enforcement initiatives. Africa's (Maitisek, 2020) vulnerability is tied to its failure to prioritize SSS as a field of study and a policy-making tool.

1.2. Conceptual Background

The concepts addressed in this background are: challenges, security studies, strategic studies and growth of security and strategic studies.

Challenges

Challenges (Cambridge Dictionary, 2023) are situations of being faced with things that need great mental or physical effort in order to be done successfully and therefore test people's abilities. According to the Oxford Learners Dictionary (2023) challenges are new or difficult tasks that test both people's abilities and skills. They are (Collins Dictionary, 2023) new and difficult things which require great effort and determination to accomplish and therefore things that by their nature or character serve as a call to battle, contest, special effort etc. Calikoglu (2019) approaches the concept of Challenge/s as a task/s that requires/require effort and in whose outcome success is not guaranteed. They involve a sense of uncertainty that enables individuals to maintain focus on the task.

Security Studies

Security studies entail analysis of security issues including pandemics, environmental degradation, transnational organized crime and more traditional security

concerns such as weapons of mass destruction and interstate conflicts (Asiimwe, 2017). Undertaking security studies is necessary because in the hierarchy of human problems, security features prominently and at the same time it is the most important though not the only common good required by humanity (Buzan, 2009; Jackson-Preece, 2011). Security studies (Kolodziej, 2004), can be classified according to three levels of analysis; state-to-state, trans-state and international levels. Apart from security studies that are close to the traditional theories of realism and liberalism, there are Critical Security Studies (CSS) that originated in the late 1970's. Errikson as quoted in Mutimer (2007) indicated that CSS deal with the social construction of security, assured an emancipatory goal and (Abaho, 2023) claimed that security of the state was not equal to security of citizens and the environment. Since the early 1980's (Grey, 2009) security studies have broadened considerably in that whilst their traditional concerns are still present, there has been an increasing accent upon human security.

While (Carnegie Council, 2014) security challenges have shifted since the cold war, the way security threats in Africa are framed remains entrenched in traditional or mainstream security thinking. To (Hentz, 2014) be meaningful, security studies in the African context should employ different levels of analysis; the individual (human security), the state (national/state security) and the region (regional/international security). This is because each of these levels provides analytical tools for understanding what could be called "African security predicament" and the "new security" issues such as immigration, small arms transfers, gangs and domestic crime, HIV/AIDS; transnational crime, poverty and environmental degradation

Strategic Studies

Strategic studies are about the study of strategy and thus involved in looking into the future and identifying trends and issues against which to align organizational (state) priorities so that goals can be achieved in the most effective and efficient manner possible, through strategic studies missions can be achieved comparatively better than other organizations (the competition) (United Nations, 2019). At state level (Yarger, 2006), strategic studies are applied to grand strategy, national security strategy, national military strategy and regional or theater strategy.

Strategic studies (African Center for Strategic Studies, 2023) in Africa are intended to promote the exchange of ideas and information tailored specifically for African concerns and to address topics such as regional security cooperation, conflict management, health and security, energy and security, counter terrorism and so on. However, (Theron, 2024) there is need for greater African strategic thinking because it has been given limited attention in the academic space.

Growth of Security and Strategic Studies

Growth of security and strategic studies (African Institute for Strategic Studies, 2021) refers to the increasing recognition and development of academic and research institutions focused on understanding and addressing security challenges

on the continent. This growth encompasses a broad range of issues beyond traditional military threats including conflict, development and governance. This calls (African Institute for Strategic Studies, 2021; Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, 2025) for establishing more think-tanks, research institutions and university programs dedicated to security and strategic studies. These institutions can play a crucial role in analyzing security threats, develop policy recommendations and educating the next generation of security professionals.

2. Statement of the Problem

SSS lead to sustainable peace security and development through well-informed policy choices and development paths (Freedman, 2019). They also provide guidance to decision making, recognition and response to winds of change, new opportunities and threats to development (Amaike & Ben, 2017). Largely done in North America, Europe and Australia (Buzan & Hasnsen, 2009), SSS findings (Yarger, 2006) set out in publications provide a framework for considering strategy at the grand strategy, national security strategy, national military strategy and regional or theater security strategy levels. However, Africa as a result of retarded SSS (Nebo, 2021) lacks a grand strategy that would help in the prioritization of security threats, effective coordination and alignment of resources and also lacks an overarching security strategy.

According to the World Bank, (Yale Jackson School of Global Affairs (YJSGA, 2023)) Africa has the world's largest free trade area and a 1.2 billion people market, while the global population is aging, the median age in Africa is 18 and is projected to rise only slightly under 25 in the foreseeable future. This makes the continent the only place in the world with a demographic dividend, able to replace its working age population and continue to expand its consumer base. However, while the continents natural resources have driven the most advanced technological innovations in Silicon Valley and fueled China's exponential growth; Africa is yet to receive its fair share of the economic bounty its natural resources have made possible; a situation not helped by retarded SSS.

Retarded growth of SSS in Africa, is because security and strategic studies do not have a long history (Amaike & Ben, 2017), and are hardly engaged in because past experience has shown that they have not been useful as a result of incorrect forecasts. Additionally, the strategic environmental factors change so rapidly that actors are unable to cope. Because SSS in Africa have suffered from retarded growth, there is therefore need for remedial action if Africa is to benefit from the dividends arising out of undertaking SSS such as well-informed policy choices well-informed development paths, socio-political stability and economic bounty through well-aligned resources.

Because recent trends in Africa reveal a growth of courses in the area of SSS and institutions offering these courses, and the fact that (YJSGA, 2023) African states have to influence international politics, deploy their own agency and navigate competition and conflict among powerful nations and blocks such as Russia,

China, Europe and the United states; there was need for a systematic study to understand the challenges limiting SSS growth on the African continent via a definite methodology guided by the following objective.

Objective

The objective of the study was to explore the studying of SSS in Africa in order to fully understand the challenges facing the undertaking and growth of SSS in Africa. This called for examining the barriers to the adoption of SSS in Africa's security frameworks.

3. Theoretical Review

The theories reviewed include realism, liberalism, social constructivism and human security.

3.1. Realism

Realism states that the nation-states act as the referent object of security and security is appropriation of military and economic power rather than pursuit of ideals and ethics (Asiimwe, 2017). Tenets of realism are that; states are the principal actors in the international system; that the aim of countries is to reach their national interests, expressed in particular by country-survival and preservation of its territorial integrity; that the means of reaching those interests is the determination of countries to use military power; that countries have an inherent desire that forces or leads them to wage war and that security corrections is in their hands and is based on their domination of others (Ondrejesak, 2014). Realists (Lin, 2011) consider the main feature of the world to be anarchy, characterized by no central government within it and no supreme authority that can rule state behavior, settle disputes and conduct punishment. In Africa (Ylonen, 2022) the theory of realism is applied by analyzing state interactions primarily through the lens of national interest, power dynamics and the constant pursuit of security in an anarchic international system, often leading to an emphasis on building military strength, forming alliances and prioritizing self-preservation over cooperation, and therefore of great interest in African SSS:

Realism on its own is an inadequate theory for the study because as a guide to security studies, it only emphasizes the state as the referent object of security and ignores other actors like institutions in matters of security and strategy. Given the limitations of realism, it was necessary to look at other theories as to identify the theory suited for the study. Next is a look at the theory of liberalism.

3.2. Liberalism

Liberalists believe that there are many different influential actors besides states on the world stage, that all that happens in the world isn't related to balance of power between states and that therefore force is not inevitable and it should be the purpose of political institutions to eliminate it or at least minimize it (Wendt, 2005).

They believe in the moral and legal constraints to regulate war in case it breaks out. Liberalism also encourages diplomacy, international law and disarmament as means to avoid war. The goodness of man, democracy, free trade and human rights are the main tenets of liberalism (Asiimwe, 2017). The theory (Ondrejesak, 2014) is based on the assumption that countries function in a peaceful environment and that countries endeavor for cooperation and peaceful handling of disputes; as a basis of prevention of conflict and wars, and that the spread of democracy contributes to building of world-wide peace. Liberalism (Lin, 2011) recognizes that states are key actors in the international system but not the only actors; that states have mutual interests; that institutions and regimes are the mediators, significant forces and the means to achieve cooperation between actors in the international system.

Liberalism (African Union, 2015) in Africa is applied through various regional and international institutions that promote cooperation, democracy and human rights. The African union emphasizes all the above and regional integration. Similarly, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has established a regional security architecture that promotes peace cooperation and collective defense among member states (ECOWAS, 2016). Furthermore, (Okeke, 2020) the African Peace and Security Architecture has been established to promote peace, security and stability in Africa through mediation, negotiation and diplomacy. Overall application of liberal theory in African SSS emphasizes the importance of cooperation, institutions and human rights in promoting peace and security on the continent.

Alone the liberalism theory is not adequate for the study because in guiding security studies, it assumes that there will be an environment of cooperation between states based on mutual interests between states, which cannot always be the case. Since the theory does not fully satisfy the requirements of the study, we shall also explore the theory of social constructivism.

3.3. Social Constructivism

Social constructivism (Cahan, 2018) emphasizes the creation of circumstances and social construction of reality, the establishment of international regimes and norms; and that the structure of the international system is both anarchic and ideational. Ideas and norms once adopted can become sticky and transformational. They may exercise not just a regulative effect on the behavior of actors but also constitute their identities and thereby transform their previous identities. Anarchy (Wendt, 2005) is what states make of it. Socialization can lead to formation of collective identities that can overcome the security dilemma among states, institutions and regimes are not merely regulative, but also have a constitutive effect; international institutions as agents of socialization have a transformative impact on state behavior (Acharya, 2008). Applied to security studies, constructivism argues for a more practical and cultural understanding of security studies (Wendt, 2005). Social constructivism (Lin, 2011) posits that social structures are made up

of elements such as shared knowledge, material resources and practices and the way we think about international relations can help to bring about greater international security. They accept that states are the key referents in the study of international security (but they recognize the importance of non-state actors); they also recognize that the international system is anarchic; that states have a fundamental wish to survive and that states attempt to behave rationally.

Application (Omeni, 2020) of the theory of social constructivism in Africa is by examining how security threats are socially constructed, through language, norms, and identity. Similarly, research has highlighted how the AU's security policies are shaped by norms of Pan-Africanism and regional solidarity, which construct Africa's security challenges as a collective problem requiring collective response (Acharya, 2008). Additionally, studies have examined how regional security organizations such as ECOWAS, construct security threats and responses through their language and practices (Francis, 2017). Overall, social constructivism provides a critical perspective on social construction of security threats and responses in Africa.

Social constructivism on its own is an inadequate theory for this study because of the importance they attach to norms particularly international norms. Such norms, surely exist but they are routinely disregarded if that is in the interest of powerful states. Constructivists tend to assume that the social interaction between states is always sincere and that states generally attempt to express and understand each other's intentions. However, anarchy, offensive capabilities and uncertain intentions combine to leave states with little choice but to compete aggressively with each other. It is therefore necessary to have a look at the human security theory.

3.4. Human Security Theory

This theoretical approach considers individuals rather than states to be the referents of security. This is a significant leap from broadening which still views insecurity as a primarily state-related problem as opposed to a human condition. The deepening of security goes further than broadening the different threats which a state finds itself with (Hough, 2004; Lodgaard, 2004). Central in the deepening approach to security studies is human security whose objective is the safety and survival of the individual and thus is synonymous with security of people (Buzan, 2009). According to the United Nations (2009) human security is defined as "...to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and fulfillment. Human security (Abaho, Mawa, & Asiimwe, 2019) means protecting fundamental freedoms...freedoms that are the essence of life. It means protecting people from critical (severe) and pervasive (widespread) threats and situations. It means using processes that build people's strengths and aspirations. It means creating political, social, environmental, economic and cultural systems that give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity.

Human security theory (Olonisakin, 2017) is applied in African SSS by priori-

tizing the protection and empowerment of individuals and communities from a wide range of threats, including poverty, hunger, disease and environmental degradation. Similarly, research has highlighted how human security has been integrated into the AU's peace and security architecture, with a focus on promoting human development, human rights and human dignity (African Union, 2015). Furthermore, human security has been used to analyze the impact of climate change on human well-being in Africa, particularly in the context of food security and livelihoods (Mulugeta, 2020). Overall, human security provides a people-centered approach to SSS in Africa, prioritizing the protection and empowerment of individuals and communities.

Human security is like sustainable development, everyone is for it, but few have a clear idea of what it means, it also causes major problems for policy makers whose specific task is to make sure that resources are properly allocated to the most pressing matters; which is very difficult to undertake when one considers all issues as equally urgent. Whilst many developing states are now capable of properly guaranteeing human security, non-state actors have not had much success and there is still hardly an international body which can properly govern the treatment of humans by their respective states and other possibly threatening actors. Human security thus is more of an ideal than something which can be strategically implemented (Paris, 2001). We therefore found need to combine all the above four theories to guide the study.

The necessity to combine the four theories to inform the study arose from the facts that: while realism's emphasis on state power and military strength explains prioritization of state security in African policy making, it fails to account for the role of academic institutions in shaping security governance; while liberalism recognizes the role of academic institutions and other institutions in shaping security governance, it is on the basis that states are democratic and operating in a peaceful environment, which is not the case in Africa; while social constructivism emphasizes the regulative and constitutive nature of institutions particularly the transformative nature of academic institutions in shaping security governance, such endeavors in Africa could be undermined or opposed by powerful states, if found to be against their interests; conversely, human security theory highlights the need for a deeper approach to security, yet African governments have not integrated human security into security policy planning. This study argues that retarded SSS can be understood as failure to bridge the competing theoretical perspectives within the African security architecture.

4. Literature Review

Literature was reviewed to prove that the study was not a re-invention of the wheel and in that respect some of the literature reviewed included the following:

The work by Zulkifli (2019) "*Difference between Strategic Studies and Security Studies*" where it is argued that strategic studies can be identified with the use of the military as an instrument of state policy. It's also seen as the use of engagement

for the purpose of war and also as the bridge that relates military power to political purpose and more specifically the theory and practice of the use and threat of use of organized force for political purposes. Strategic studies developed theories, policies and operations that reduced the risk of war.

The work by Koliopoulos (2017) “*Historical Approaches to Security/Strategic Studies*” that treats strategic and security studies as synonymous and as pertaining to the study of the interaction of policy ends with military and other means under conditions of actual or potential conflict. Those strategic/security studies are arguably the most historically minded branch of international relations.

The work by Abass (2022) “*The African Union’s Peace and Security Council: A Critical Analysis of Its Role in Promoting Peace and Security in Africa*” which critically examines the role of the African Union’s Peace and Security Council (PSC) in promoting peace and security in Africa. Abass argues that while the PSC has made significant contributions to peace and security in Africa, it faces several challenges, including inadequate funding, limited capacity and lack of effective coordination with other regional organizations.

The work by Chitiyo (2022) “*Security Sector Reform in Africa: A Review of the Literature*” which reviews the literature on security sector reform (SSR) in Africa. Chitiyo argues that SSR is critical for promoting peace and security in Africa, but that it faces several challenges, including inadequate funding, limited capacity and lack of effective coordination with other regional organizations.

The work by Dersso (2022) “*The Role of Regional Organizations in Promoting Peace and Security in Africa*” which examines the role of regional organizations in promoting peace and security in Africa. Dersso argues that regional organizations, such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), have made significant contributions to peace and security in Africa, but that they face several challenges, including inadequate funding and limited capacity.

The work by Okeke (2022) “*Africa’s Emerging Security Challenges: A Critical Analysis*” which critically examines Africa’s emerging security challenges, including terrorism, cybercrime, and challenges require a comprehensive and integrated approach to security, which hinders their ability to address emerging security challenges.

While these last four articles provide valuable insights in SSS in Africa, they also highlight several challenges and limitations. One of the main challenges is the lack of effective integration of SSS into African security policies. Many African countries lack a comprehensive approach to security, which hinders their ability to address emerging security challenges. Another is the limited capacity and inadequate funding for SSS in Africa. Many African countries lack the resources and expertise to conduct comprehensive security analyses and develop effective security strategies. Furthermore, the articles highlight the need for greater cooperation and coordination among regional organizations, international partners, and local communities. This requires a more integrated and comprehensive approach to secu-

ity, which takes into account the complex and interconnected nature of security challenges in Africa.

Theorized Model

As already indicated in the theoretical review, the theories of security are individually inadequate to explain the realities of African security and related matters but a combination of theories of security such as realism, liberalism, social constructivism and human security can to a great extent explain the realities about security in Africa and guide security studies but they can only explain the reality about strategy in Africa and guide strategic studies to a small extent.

For example, realism in guiding security studies explains how states can manage their security; that states must act selfishly and even be ready to go to war to protect their interests; given that the international system is anarchic. Liberalism indicates that countries can guarantee their security through cooperation with other states through trade, respecting international law and membership to international institutions in which to address mutual interests and conflict. For social constructivism states can be able to take care of their security through adhering to agreed norms and being aware that these norms can be disregarded if it's in the interest of the powerful states. They can also do so through acquisition of knowledge and material resources. For human security theory, countries can take care of their security by enhancing human freedoms and fulfillment through creating political, social, environmental, economic and cultural systems that together ensure people's survival, livelihood and dignity.

While the above aspects can explain the reality about African strategy and strategic studies, they only do so to a small extent and leave out aspects that I wish to add like: for a good strategy and useful strategic studies, strategic studies should be for the purpose of supporting foreign policies by strengthening the strategic capacity of African countries to identify and resolve security challenges in ways that promote civil-military cooperation, respect for democratic values and safeguard human rights. Strategic studies can contribute to African peace and security through education, research and professional development and can take up the intellectual challenge of finding African-led solutions to violence and insecurity in Africa,

Strategic studies should address the issues of grand strategy, geopolitics and the existence of nuclear weapons elsewhere on the globe; should address the need for deliberate action to establish SSS courses and institutes within universities, creation of specialist sections within academic associations, development of specialist SSS journals, founding of SSS think-tanks and setting up of funding programs by governments and foundations in order to promote SSS. A place should be found by governments for civilian strategists ranging from physicists and economists to sociologists and psychologists as this will result into cross fertilization of ideas and bring in different intellectual and policy foci. Conferences organized regularly can provide a framework for considering strategy at the grand strategy, national secu-

rity strategy, national military strategy and regional or theater strategy levels and help researchers publish their findings. Strategic studies can aid policy formulation for sustainable growth and development of any economy and provide guidance to decision making, contribute to recognizing and responding to winds of change, new opportunities and threats to development. In strategic studies, think-tanks should be dedicated to and should further understanding of complex issues and developing responses to emerging policy challenges.

Strategic studies should be based on forecasts which are correct and actors must realize that the strategic environmental factors change so rapidly and therefore prepare to move in tandem with them. Strategist should be able to look into the future and identify trends and issues against which to align organizational (state/continental) priorities so that goals can be achieved in the most effective and efficient manner possible. Strategic studies should drive focus, accountability and results and ensure a mission is achieved comparatively better than other organizations (the competition). Understanding should be made of the challenges, trends and issues, who are the key beneficiaries or clients and what they need and determining the most effective and efficient way possible to achieve the mandate.

Based on strategic studies: to formulate a good strategy, there must be a mission (what we exist to do); sense of urgency (why we need a strategy); vision statement (where we need to go); how we will achieve it (through customers/stakeholders, services/programs, processes, people/knowledge, finances); values (beliefs we will follow). Strategic studies must analyze the present carefully and anticipate changes; and from this plan how to succeed in the future. It must be a plan chosen to bring about a desired future, such as achievement of a goal or solution to a problem and should be applied to planning and marshalling resources for their most efficient and effective use. Strategic studies should determine how resources should be configured to meet the needs of markets and stakeholders. They should define and communicate an organization's (State's) unique position, and determine how organizational (State) resources, skills and competitiveness should be combined to create competitive advantage. Strategic studies should determine the direction and scope of an organization (state) over the long-term. Strategic studies should be about methods and maneuvers which management hope to deploy in order to move the organization (state) from its present position to arrive at its target by the end of a specific period; recognizing that during the intervening period, a host of changes are going to take place in the environment. They should make a statement about what resources are going to be used to take advantage of which opportunities to minimize which threats and to provide a desired result.

Strategic studies should make a calculation of objectives, concepts and resources within acceptable bounds of risk, to create more favourable outcomes that might otherwise exist by chance or at the hands of others. Strategic studies should be about developing and employing instruments of national power in a synchronized and integrated fashion to achieve theater, national and/or multinational objectives. They should be for using the political, economic, social-psychological and

military powers of the state in accordance with policy guidance to create effects that protect or advance national interests relative to other states, actors or circumstances.

5. Research Methodology

The study was exploratory and used a qualitative and descriptive approach to capture people's views, attitudes and experiences of the aspect of security and strategic studies in Africa. An interview guide and document review checklist were used to collect data. The sample size was of 15 (Fifteen) respondents drawn from universities, governmental, inter-governmental and civil society organizations in Uganda, but from diverse African countries. Non-probability sampling was used through purposive, convenience and snowballing sampling techniques, to arrive at the sample; guided by the principle of the saturation point. Purposive sampling of respondents enabled the researcher to ensure that they were representative of diverse African perspectives of SSS beyond Uganda. The primary data got through interviews was triangulated through document analysis that was guided by a well thought out document review checklist. Triangulation borne out of the multi-method approach to data collection facilitated the ironing out of contradictions found among interview respondents, in the course of data analysis. Data was categorized according to the similarity of responses, was then coded, edited, analyzed and the study findings published. By the researcher applying the theories of realism, liberalism, social constructivism and human security, to guide the research methodology, was able to gain a deeper understanding of SSS and develop nuanced context-specific insights into security relationships and outcomes.

5.1. Discussion of Study Findings

The study found that the challenge facing the undertaking and growth of SSS in Africa is one of misconception of security with many people looking at it as a preserve of the state and that only people in the state apparatus should study security. This is a conception of security similar to what [Kolodziej \(2004\)](#) calls state level analysis that is close to the realist school which believes that states are the primary actors in IR and where security is associated with use of physical force and the military. This is the reason why few non-security officials in Africa are studying security and the majority of the people don't appreciate what the concept of security is about; it is not about guns as it is conceived but is ([Abaho et al., 2019](#)) about human security and the day-to-day activities of the citizenry. It is because of still being associated with physical force and the military that SSS are attracting more of male than female scholars; denying it ([Duyvesteyn & Worrall, 2017](#)) cross-fertilization of ideas and policy foci. People are seen playing safe and in the same breath Newspapers (media) tending to shy away from publishing articles in the line of security; that in undertaking SSS or a matter related thereto; one may be seen as intending to antagonize the state. It is also difficult to attract funding to SSS because the program is eye-opening and yet that is the last thing govern-

ments want to benefit their citizens, equally donors from the West are not comfortable with waking up the African people who perceive security as physical security, referred to by Krause & Williams (1997) as the traditional approach to security. This perception of donors based on interviews, was influenced by the fact that (Kimenyi & Datta, 2011) during the colonial era policies were designed externally and Africans had little input and post-independence, African governments heavily relied on foreign experts and intellectuals for ideological and policy direction because donors often tied aid to the provision of their own experts as advisors and consultants in African policy-making institutions.

The general public are averse to attaining knowledge in security and see it as a preserve of the security forces, because by designing the colonial masters restricted security studies to security forces yet the key stakeholders were civilians, who are the major beneficiaries of security services. As a result, African governments have monopolized the security sphere to the extent that its mainly their institutions; (Chutter, 2011) military, police and intelligence that are accessing training in the area of SSS, referred to by Baldwin (1997) as military statecraft. This results into a problem of attitude where some people from government undertaking study of SSS in civilian universities look at the course negatively, as being anti-government, emanating from the misconception of security arising out of the traditional conception of security, which according to Asimwe (2017) looks at the state as the referent object of security. This attitude among such scholars creates the fear of the unknown, the if one continues with the lectures/course one might be labelled as being in cohort with those opposing government (the state). This is where politics comes in to impede the growth of these studies because SSS have a tendency of challenging the status quo; with the state trying to ensure the status quo prevails. The politicization of security: with on the one part, some in the civilian community seeing SSS as a program for armed forces, thus surrendering them (Chutter, 2011) to the traditional security forces; Army, Police and Intelligence Services, with on the other part, armed forces seeing it as a no go area for civilians; is an antagonistic stance with negative consequences for the growth of SSS.

There is a dis-connect between the military/security sector and civil intellectual community when it comes to security issues. The military is suspicious of the civil intellectual community as having a tendency to be subversive and working for foreign (hostile) interests while at the same time the civil community faults the military for being secretive and running a closed security system. This is what Glare (2015) refers to as an uneasy relationship between state security agencies and other institutions. As a result of the above situation civil intellectual communities like universities find it difficult sharing SSS information with security agencies and security agencies are suspicious of civilian institutions that are undertaking SSS and equally suspicious of the people undertaking those studies. Instead of supporting each other which would lead to growth of SSS through synergy, there is a tendency of each community working in isolation. There is therefore lack of inter-agency cooperation (Buzan & Hanse, 2009; Duyvesteyn & Worrall, 2017),

yet it is through exchange of perspectives between the military and civilians that new ideas can be born. SSS (Yarger, 2006) should seek synergy and symmetry of objectives, concepts and resources to increase the probability of policy success and favourable consequences that follow that success. Several African countries (Nantulya, 2016; Khisa & Day, 2020; African Center for Strategic Studies, 2024) demonstrate varying degrees of cross-fertilization between military and civilian actors in SSS. South Africa, Kenya and Nigeria are notable examples with different models of engagement and varying degrees of success.

As already indicated SSS has been misconceived as being for people in the security sector, where the security sector according to Chutter (2011) refers to all those institutions whose primary role is the provision of internal and external security together with bodies responsible for their administration, tasking and control. That is why SSS is mainly undertaken by politicians, and people from the military, police and intelligence services and it is why it has not yet managed to attract many civilians. The other challenge affecting the development of SSS is therefore lack of sufficient civilian institutions that are offering courses in the area of SSS. Journals of SSS are also limited and those teaching SSS are not producing enough literature and are therefore teaching what they are not producing in form of publications, that's why Moller (2018) acknowledges that finding desirable resources for research and instruction in security and strategic studies is difficult. There is need to borrow a leaf from the strategic studies Institute of the US War College and how it produces its specialized journals of strategic studies (Yarger, 2006). The situation we find ourselves in is not helped by the limited conferences in SSS that are organized in Africa, from which the papers presented would end up in publications (Journals) and help in the growth and enrichment of SSS. We also have few PhD's in SSS, in a university you can find one or two PhDs in that area, which also means that we lack supervisors for students enrolling for PhD's in SSS. The other challenge is lack of funding for SSS since there is no policy in respect of SSS, which should be a serious concern of governments, and one in which they should have a deliberate hand.

Another challenge is that of limited research and development in the area of SSS because few people have paid attention to and indulge in SSS research. The other challenge arises out of ignorance which leads to people looking at it as an area that attracts/should attract failures. There is failure by African governments to promote SSS since SSS fall within the Social Sciences (Arts) like IR yet of recent there have been calls by many African governments for emphasis on the pure sciences, as society drives more to the sciences than the arts related subjects. For example, in a country like Uganda science subjects were made compulsory in schools and 75% of the government scholarships to public universities made science based (Sakwa & Longman, 2017). One of the challenges in the growth of SSS is the absence of the will to implement the theories studied; particularly by the students themselves. There is fear on part of the practitioners to tell their superiors of the old school of security (realist school) about the things they have learned in

contemporary SSS because they challenge the status quo. The security status quo in the African context is security for the survival of the man or woman in power and the military taking the lion's share of national budgets (Asiimwe, 2017). There is also reluctance by policy makers to accept the best practices advocated for by the studies; that could influence policy positively, particularly in the area of policy implementation, generally defined as a series of activities by governments and others to achieve the goals and objectives articulated in policy statements (Bullock & Lavis, 2019); which is a big challenge in Africa.

SSS aren't in position to look into the nitty-gritties of the African security set up or context because African countries hardly have an arrangement for declassifying security documents. Therefore, there is no deep analysis possible of the African security set up and its operations because the nature of its operations in transnational democracies, is shrouded in secrecy born out of need (Catanzaro, 2019) to provide opportunity for plausible denial. Developed countries declassify intelligence reports after a certain period of time for academic consumption, as public academic information. For a well-informed citizenry that can make government responsive and accountable, information about intelligence activities should become available after a certain period of time (DCAF Intelligence Working Group, 2003). As a result of failure to declassify intelligence information, we have to rely on foreign literature for our studies which is not helpful to our situation (Agaba, 2009; Africa & Kwadjo, 2009); a situation where many countries do not have national security policies, that should take care of the national security strategies of states. According to Agaba (2009) and Africa & Kwadjo (2009) the National Security Strategy is a document/policy paper that outlines the governments national security strategy and clearly maps the direction the country wishes to take, including issues such as economic security and growth, fiscal issues, markets and investments, environmental security population growth and pressures on the environment, climate change and water resources, military security and diplomacy and underscores the importance of intelligence not only for physical security but also for development.

We lack formal strategic Think-Tanks even at national level and only have small working teams ran by those in power, which work to safeguard the interests of regimes. These teams take advantage of national security infrastructure particularly the infrastructure of the intelligence services; to access information with which they take strategic decisions for the purpose of safeguarding the regimes in power and ensure their survival instead of serving the strategic concerns/interests of states and their citizens. Strategic information is held at an informal level and by individuals for fear of leakage and when the individuals leave the positions or die the information is lost. We should have many continent-wide institutes of Strategic Studies alongside national strategic think-tanks. The elite also don't focus on strategic thinking yet we need to build a strategic foundation for every aspect of life, which must begin with establishing strategic values (Buzan & Hansen, 2009); as was done in the North America, Europe and Australia as far back as the

1940's and beyond. There is need to make people central to security and strategic studies because they are the thinkers, consumers and beneficiaries of these studies. Therefore, how people are socialized is very important, yet they are being socialized wrongly by the existing education system. As a result, the security and strategic studies that are being carried out in our universities and intelligence services end up being premised on advancing what is and not what ought to be. These studies ought to be premised on accepting that we as Africans are human beings on our own volition and with capacity of taking on the functions of thinking and doing; functions of an integrated brain. The thinking and doing functions are conditioned by the environment in the process of establishing the thinking order and taking on the cardinal duty of a human being (thinking and doing) is the one way that can lead to talking about strategy for all aspects of life including strategy on food, strategy for energy and so on.

The challenge to the growth of SSS in Africa is the distorted mind-set resulting from effects of colonialism and neo-colonialism. We have to change the mind-set by revolutionizing the education system in such a way that we teach people to think and how to think. This could not happen under the colonial education system that [Ocheni & Nwankwo \(2012\)](#) characterized as hollow and empty and yet for the purpose of strategic thinking, a subject like logic should be emphasized so that thinking order can be brought to bear on African thinking. Africa has not embraced strategic thought because of the colonial legacy that left us with a situation where everything we do is imposed on us and apart from the change of guards at the helm of the state, we are yet to cut our umbilical cord with colonialism. In the circumstances it is difficult for us to originate strategic thinking in the framework of neo-colonialism; whose colonial education removed the thinking function from our doing function, and went ahead and destroyed the thinking function leaving us with the doing function only. The claim of suppression of strategic thinking by the African education system is supported by scholars like [Mashiya, Meda, & Swart \(2020\)](#) who examined post-colonial education curricula in Africa.

The colonial system of education put into effect and established a master/subject relationship and as subjects we were only taught to obey what we were told to do without asking why, but only asking when. That we have since retained the status of servitude and are being hurt by continuing to be doing persons; which is not helped by over-reliance on western literature and need to attain qualifications related thereto. As far as strategic studies are concerned, there is lack of an enabling environment for people to think and we therefore can't talk of strategy which is a product of thinking. The researcher agreed with a respondent who opined that our thinking and doing functions are disjointed and that while our doing function is a bit developed, we don't make much progress in whatever we do because of lack of capacity to ask ourselves why we are doing what we are doing. Because of the way we were socialized under the colonial arrangement and its education system whose ([Ocheni & Nwankwo, 2012](#)) first objective was political domination,

its second objective was to make a limited application of the why question, there is limited room for strategic thinking; as a result of the way it's possible to exploit the colonized and that by itself colonial education was hollow and empty. We therefore need to build a strategic foundation beginning with establishing strategic values that will influence our thinking order. This should be followed by the establishment of think-tanks for SSS and as advised by [Jonasec \(2019\)](#), there should be established a physical or legal entity responsible for development and application of knowledge from SSS.

5.2. Conclusion and Recommendation

The study drew the following conclusions and recommendations.

Conclusion

The challenges to the undertaking and growth of SSS include: misconception of security as preserve of the state better left to people in the security apparatus compounded by the state-centric approach to security by African governments; which can be mitigated by bringing on board of civilian institutions and the civilian element for the purpose of cross-fertilization of ideas between the military and civilians, reinforced with a deliberated shift from state-centric approach to security to one based on human security; the limited number of civilian institutions undertaking SSS and a limited number of journals of SSS therefore limiting the development of knowledge in that area, compounded by few conferences of SSS that are organized in Africa, few SSS PhDs holders in African universities to supervise training and research in SSS and general lack of funding for SSS-whose mitigation measures are deliberate effort to produce more SSS PhD holders in our universities, increase on conferences organized in SSS and the number of SSS journals and a special budget to support SSS.

Equally, there are very few people paying attention and getting involved in SSS research compounded by people feeling that it is an area that attracts/should attract failures and general failure by African governments to promote SSS preferring pure sciences, which can be mitigated by mindset change and revolutionizing the education system and states employing their geniuses to do SSS research in their areas of specialization so that resources therein can be used effectively and efficiently; failure to understand the nitty-gritties of the African security set up or context resulting from failure by African governments to declassify security documents into public information for academic use, which can be mitigated by governments putting in place deliberate arrangements for declassifying security information; not having formal strategic think-tanks and instead having small working groups that develop and hold state strategic information informally and subject to loss and only use the information to serve selfish interests of regimes, for example regime survival, whose mitigation measure is establishment of inter-university SSS research platforms that should transform into resourceful think-tanks and the establishment of national and continent-wide physical or legal entities responsible for development and application of SSS knowledge; following

certain policy.

Recommendation

1) African governments should shift from the state-centric approach to security and adopt one based on Human security and bridge the dis-connect between the military and civilian elements of society. This should be reinforced by complete security sector reform by all African states and the formulation of national security strategies by all African States; to guide the whole process.

2) African governments should increase the number of civilian institutions undertaking SSS which should translate into increase in journals of SSS, increase in the number of conferences organized for SSS and an increased number of SSS publications and PhD holders in SSS to supervise research in SSS. African governments should also adopt the practice of declassifying intelligence to reinforce academic research in SSS:

3) African governments should encourage and fund SSS research and ensure it is undertaken by geniuses in the various areas of life from economics to psychology, physics to sociology and so on; accompanied by mindset change and overhaul of the education system to emphasize thinking, and alongside periodic declassification of security information for use for academic purposes, African states should encourage specialization in the study of SSS into specialized areas such as American studies, European studies and so on.

4) African governments should establish national and continent-wide inter-university SSS research platforms that should transform into resourceful think-tanks and national and continent-wide physical or legal entities responsible for development and application of SSS knowledge; following certain policy. These entities could be in the form of centers or institutes of SSS run by national governments, regional and continental intergovernmental organizations; to guide policy choices and development paths.

Specifically, the policy actors that are expected to implement the above recommendations are the governments of the 54 sovereign African states and inter-governmental organizations on the continent such as the African Union (AU), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), East Africa Community (EAC) and so on.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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