



The Centrality of Culture in International Communication: An Evaluation of the Roles of UN, AU and EU

Okim-Alobi Oyama*

School of Media and Communication, Pan-Atlantic University, Lagos, Nigeria

Email: mikeoyama88@yahoo.com

Abstract: *International Organisations such as the United Nations (UN), European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU) are integral social institutions that help to promote culture among their member states. This is because culture is central to the international or national communication in any given society and can foster a sustainable and healthy relationship between nations. Where there is a breakdown in communication between nations, conflict arises and the inter-relationship that exists between these nations can be jeopardised and their foreign policy thwarted. Therefore, it is imperative that effective communication must continue to exist in order to foster a healthy and sustainable relationship between nations, and what better way to achieve this than promoting culture in international communication. This paper therefore evaluates the roles, objectives and agenda of the United Nations (UN), European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU) in employing culture as an integral aspect in promoting national/international communication. It will achieve this objective by hinging on the cultural hegemony and cultural identity theories.*

Keywords: *Africa; African Union; Cultural values; Europe; European Union; Member states; Social institutions, Society; United Nations, Unity*

INTRODUCTION

There is no doubt that culture is pivotal for international and national communication. This is because it deals with the norms, core values, beliefs, and traditions of a people united by their cultural heritage, a belief system passed on from generations and will continue to be passed on as long as the unity, integration, habitation and nationality of the people are kept intact. It cuts across language, food, fashion, religion, value system, because it exhaustively communicates the people's way of life. When a people deliberate and discuss issues that affect their nations, when government make policies and build relationships with other countries, when politicians lobby government, mobilise for a cause, and try to build a support group by trying to appeal to the citizenry; culture comes to play and it dictates what ideas the people have, it dictates what beliefs the people share, it guides what values the people propagate and these comes down to build the issues the people discuss about their nations and how and what to do to promote their country and make it great.

There are many countries in the world with diverse and heterogeneous cultural values, norms, traditions and customs. These nations have peculiar and unique cultures that distinct them with other nations and as such some of these nations may not have anything in common with each other which can spite the international communication and relationship between nations. Where there is a breakdown in communication, crisis looms and this can hurt the relationship that exist between nations which will in turn hinder foreign policy, international relations and trades. There are factors that can cause a breakdown in communication, thereby

resulting to unhealthy relations between nations; these factors include xenophobia, conflict of Interest and ethnocentrism. This is why promoting culture is integral in international communication because adequate communication builds and fosters sustainable relations between states. But, there is heterogeneity in culture which means the cultural heritages, traditions, beliefs and norms are peculiar and differ from country to country. In spite of these idiosyncratic cultural distinctions, most of these nations belong to international organisations like the United Nations, European Union and African Union and by association share some common cultural values with other member states as the dominant culture is the one promoted by these international organisations even though some treaties insist on having respect for the regional culture or the indigenous culture of member states.

But what is significantly remarkable is the fact that the UN, AU and EU are not just international organisations, but social institutions that all work hard to consolidate their plans within member states and promote their cultural diversity, intercultural heritage as well as enforce their intercultural values. Each organisation has embarked on programmes, made policies and attracted international collaborations and funding from private and public organisations to propagate the ideals of their union or organisation and emphasise their core values, accept cultural diversity and preserve their intercultural heritages.

Therefore, employing a review of extensive literature and document analysis as a methodology, this paper examines international organisations as social institutions in promoting culture in international communication. It extensively reviews the roles, responsibilities, values and objectives of international organisations like the United Nations, African Union, and the European Union. Even though as a limitation of this study, the paper would not be able to cover all programmes, projects and policies ever made from the inception of these organisations till date, the study will try to do justice to the discourse and highlight certain cultural policies, frameworks, programmes and projects deployed to achieve cultural diplomacy which is integral in international relations.

In a paper like this, the cultural identity theory from the perspective of Young Yung Kim in his 2007 research work has been reviewed to illustrate its applicability to this discourse and acts as a framework for which this discourse is anchored on.

Conclusively, the paper makes recommendations for the international organisations discussed here; identifying new policies, ideas, programmes and ways it could collaborate with other bodies and organisations to promote and preserve culture.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Cultural identity theory

The cultural identity theory was first posited by Collier & Thomas [1], who describe it as “the enactment and negotiation of social identifications by group members in particular settings”. They look at cultural identity from three perspectives: Avowals (how members of group present themselves to others), Ascriptions (other people’s representations about the identities of one’s own group), and Salience (the importance of particular cultural identity enactment relative to other potential identities) [2]. Even though these postulations and theorisations are the foundation for which the cultural identity theory is built, the paper would be exploring this theory from the perspective of Kim [3], who examines the cultural identity theory from four philosophical frameworks: *Assimilationism*, *Pluralism*, *Integrationism* and *Separatism*. Assimilationism, is popularly known with the dictum ‘E Pluribus Unum’- the US motto which means “Out of many, one”. It simply expresses the notion “When in Rome, do as Romans do” and backs the concept of individualism, a theoretical and philosophical framework that promotes individual identity, self-reliance and personal responsibility. It particularly

emphasises the conformity to a unified way of living, often adopted by the cultural minority and immigrants [4]. Contrary to the principle of Assimilationism, Pluralism highlights the foreseeable breach between the principles of assimilationism and the actuality of living up to those daily ideals. It de-emphasises the concept of individualism and very much promotes collectivism and group identity with the distinctiveness of each group. As a matter of fact, Hongladarom [5], examines pluralism from several perspectives, but what is more striking and important in this discourse, is looking at it from the cultural angle where he defines pluralism as a space within which diverse languages, cultural phenomena and different cultures coexist with one another. Pluralism is simply accommodating diverse views, culture, values, traditions and beliefs all coexisting together. With Integrationism, Kim [3], examines the concept from the perspective of the need to moderate the often tortured reality of identity politics and to search for some kind of reconciliation and balance often where the integrationists support bilingual programs that are ephemeral and are not political tools of influence demanded by every group for their own individual slice of the national cake. Integrationism calls for a middle ground or a balance in the social and cultural order.

Separatism on the other hand is an ideological concept where extremities are avoided. The separatists distinguish themselves from extreme ends, particularly not identifying with neither the extreme right nor the extreme left.

There is a close relationship between all four conceptual frameworks from which the cultural identity theory is discussed. In this paper, the discourse will be analysed from the four main tenets of the cultural identity theory according to Kim [3]. International organisations such as the United Nations, African Union and European Union help promote culture within member states. This is because culture is integral to international communication between nations and understanding the culture of member states can help these organisations come up with better programmes and policies that will enrich the culture and improve the communication within member states for healthy relations. Kim's concept of the cultural identity theory is really important to access and analyse the roles of the UN, EU and AU in promoting culture. The question is, why should they communicate? Obviously because better communication brings understanding between the parties which help to build and foster the relationship between the parties and absence of communication can fuel conflict, war, poor foreign policy and hinder trade deals and other aids between nations because of the estranged relationship that will exist as a result of poor or absence of communication between nations. To communicate better between members of different nations with heterogeneous culture, it is wise to first understand the culture of those nations in order to channel one's messages adequately. This is why Kim [3] concept of cultural identity builds a framework for which the roles of the UN, AU and EU in cultural promotion in international communication is x-rayed. Kim's ideology talks about four perspectives of cultural identity which include: Assimilationism, Pluralism, Integrationism and Separatism. As stated above, all four concepts are intertwined to build a theoretical framework for which a discourse can be accessed.

Using Kim's Concept then, the UN, AU and EU should first of all assimilate the culture of member states where each cultural programme or policy, is designed for them. The concept of Assimilation simply opines with the maxim "When in Rome, Do like the Romans do", this maxim therefore will be used to ascertain if truly international organisations actually do as the Romans do when designing and implementing cultural programmes and policies for their member states. Also, the concept of Pluralism gives room for diverse cultures and ideologies to co-exist. In fact, it deals with having respect for the existence of other cultures and ideas. Going by this dictum, it is important to ascertain therefore whether the UN, AU and EU have respect for the diverse cultures of their member states and do allow these cultural values, beliefs, traditions and ideologies to co-exist which brings the concept of integrationism to play. This ideology basically calls for a balance or middle ground in the social or cultural order, how the UN, AU and EU find a middle ground or balance in the implementation of cultural programmes and policies will be integral to this discourse. And finally, the concept of Separatism simply calls for an avoidance of extremities in the socio-cultural order. Separatism in this context will connote that international organisations should be able to separate themselves from the politics and

ideology of extreme left and extreme right. It would be interesting therefore to find out whether the UN, AU and EU separate the organisation from leaning toward the political, social, cultural or ideological extremities while performing the role of promoting culture between nations.

Going by Kim's perspective of the cultural identity theory therefore, this paper seeks to interrogate how all four concepts of Assimilationism, Pluralism, Integrationism and Separatism apply to how the UN, AU and EU perform their roles of promoting culture in international communication. It will analyse, interrogate and predict the assumption that promoting culture can enhance communication and foster a healthy and sustainable relationship between nations.

BASIC CONSTRUCTS

Culture

According to Spencer-Oatey [6], culture is a notoriously difficult term to define. He added that despite a century of efforts to define culture adequately, there was in the early 1990s no agreement among anthropologists regarding its nature. Birukou et al. [7], add that culture is a slippery and ubiquitous concept. This is why a British Anthropologist Tyler in 1870 described culture as that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society [8]. It is quite obvious that culture as a construct has been defined, interpreted and understood by several scholars from generation to generation, who share diverse and heterogeneous views about what culture is and is not, and what culture stands for or means. This is why scholars have come up with their own interpretations and understanding of what culture means.

Hofstede [9], defines culture as the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another. To Hofstede, culture is more of an imprint in the mind based on interactions with people and society which differentiates one group of people from the other. With this, one could say that culture is unique and helps to differentiate societies, people and lifestyles from one another. This is why it is seen as a set of attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviours shared by a group of people, but different for each individual, communicated from one generation to the next [10]. Kroeber & Kluckhohn [11], agree with Mastsumoto that culture is not an individual, but a collective reflection of a group of people whose beliefs, values, norms, customs and other ways of life that are peculiar to one group or society, distinguishes them from other groups or societies.

The complexity of culture keeps scholars continually researching into this concept to come up with a more encapsulating and comprehensible definition that is universally accepted. But the more scholars define culture, the more they disagree on what constitutes culture. But culture here would mean a people's way of life, beliefs, norms, values, customs and traditions that can differentiate people from people, society from societies, and nation from nations.

Communication

Lunenberg [12], defines communication as the process of transmitting information and common understanding from one person to another. Keyton [13] agrees with Lunenberg's definition as he believes communication involves an exchange of information and meaning within persons. Communication is the recreation of shared meaning, it is the process by which a sender encodes a message through a given channel that is decoded by the receiver as response or given feedback. Communication can occur between one person, two people, a group or a mass audience even with machines, plants, animals and even the metaphysical. The word communication is derived from the Greek word "*Communis*" which means *common*, connoting that communication is only

communication if there is a common understanding of the information sent and received [13]. Communication is either verbal or non-verbal. Verbal communication is either spoken or written, enabling logical reasoning that can easily be understood by the targeted audience. Non-verbal communication however is used to express and communicate thoughts and feelings [14]. Communication is not all about what is said, heard or read, it is sometimes what is shown, displayed, observed and detected; it involves deducing human feelings, vocal tones, bodily movements and posture, gestures, gesticulations and even objectifications and symbols. This is why it is called non-verbal communication because it is neither written nor spoken; it is perceived, felt, detected, and observed.

National communication

According to the Bangladesh Ministry of Environment and Forests, national communication is a reflection of aggregate actions on mitigation and adaptation of a country to address the nation's issues. Each developed country party is pledged bound to prepare a national communication discourse geared towards addressing issues affecting the nation as well as enhancing the relationship between the government and its people. In national communication every issue, topic, discourse, situation, policies of a nation are discussed for the purpose of bringing growth and development to a nation's polity. Most times, national communication is educational, it involves citizens discussing about the affairs of the state and how to improve it, it involves, the government disseminating information to its people about its policies as well as the state of affairs, it involves the diplomatic interaction between nations for the purpose of fostering peace, unity and democracy and to improve the diplomatic ties between the nations. International and national communication involves a lot, from the courses like government taught in schools to people sitting together to discuss national issues, to the government briefing the people about its policies and the state affairs, to deliberations between government officials, legislators, judiciary, executive, as well as interacting with other countries to strengthen their foreign policy, political campaigns, debates, referenda, mobilisations, etc. National/International communication is as deep as anyone could imagine.

OVERVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS (STRUCTURE, ROLES, OBJECTIVES, and SYMBOLS)

United Nations (UN)

The United Nations is a unique organization of independent countries that have come together to work for world peace and social progress. The organization was formally founded on October 24, 1945 with 51 founding member countries, which at the end of 2008, later grew to 192 countries with no expulsion of any country so far since its inception in 1945. According to the UNDPI [15], the United Nations has four purposes which include maintaining international peace and security, developing friendly relations among nations, cooperating in solving international problems and promoting respect for human rights, as well as to be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations.

As its objectives, the UN as it is called for short, aims to keep peace globally, develop friendly inter-relationships between nations, work in unity to alleviate poverty and improve the standard of living; conquer diseases, hunger and illiteracy, and encourages others to respect each other's freedom and rights which is central to assisting nations achieve the goals mentioned above.

The UN respects every member state no matter how rich, poor, small or big. Every member state has the right to voice and vote and cannot be bullied by the bigger or developed nations. It enables cultural diversity, diverse political and social views and gives the opportunity for nations to balance global interdependence and national interests when ameliorating international problems. The UN has a system with 30 affiliated organisations to

help promote its vision, mission and values as well as achieve its objectives. These organisations operate as affiliates within the UN. The UN is made up of the following organs of government: The General Assembly, the Security Council, Trusteeship Council, Economic and Social Council, International Court of Justice and the UN Secretariat.

Most people misconstrue the UN for a kind of government that controls, rules and dictates for the world, but that is just a misconception as the UN provides the means for the effective resolution of international conflicts and to formulate policies on issues that border all member states. In the UN 1945 Charter, the all 51 founding member countries pledged to achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction to race, sex, language, or religion [16].

European Union (EU)

According to Bonde [17], article 1 of the Lisbon Treaty stated the decision of key European nations to establish a union called the European Union which will replace the European Community with the sole aim of attaining the objectives that each member states have in common. The organisation is an economic and political union of Member States (currently 27) and has legal personality. The treaties (Treaty on the European Union, Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and The Treaty of Rome and The Lisbon Treaty) contain the fundamental values such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities on which the European Union stands for and protects. The main institutions in the European Union include: The EU Parliament, EU Council, Council of the EU, EU Commission, Court of Justice of the EU, EU Central Bank and the Court of Auditors.

In 2011-2014, the EU Council of Ministers for Education, Youth, Culture and Sport adopted a work plan for culture, establishing working groups for the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) made up of experts from Member States who focused on developing ideas and conceiving a working plan for the EU to promote public arts as well as key into the countless opportunities of the cultural and creative industries. To the EU, culture is necessary for economic development and stability.

African Union (AU)

The African Union was first established as the Organisation of African Unity in 1963 by an agreement of the 32 member states in Africa that had gained independence at the time. This organisation was inspired by the noble ideals which guided the founding fathers of our nations and other Pan-Africanists who were determined to promote unity, solidarity, understanding and cooperation among the African people and their states. According to Zuma & McCully [18], 21 members further joined the OAU, which brought the number to 53 member states by the time of the AU's creation in 2002, and with South Sudan being the latest African country to be independent, they joined the AU in 2011 to become the 54th African Union (AU) member. Borrowing the structure of the European Union, the AU upholds the sovereign equality and independence of its members with the aim of promoting peace, security and solidarity in Africa. It upholds the concept of Pan-Africanism from the OAU but has extended its obligation into earmarking the challenges of a geometrically rising globalising epoch. Thabo Mbeki, former President of South Africa said during the inauguration of the organisation that the time has come for Africa to take her rightful place in the global world, the time has come to put an end to the marginalisation of Africa [19]. In addition to the AU's main objectives, the organisation was established to safeguard the sovereignty and geographical integrity of its membering states, expunge colonisation and apartheid from Africa, promote international relations within the UN's framework and harmonise members' policies in politics, diplomacy, economy, education, culture, health, welfare, science, technology and military.

The main organs of the African Union include: The Assembly of the Union, The Executive Council, The Pan-African Parliament, The Court of Justice, The Commission, The Permanent Representatives Committee, The Specialised Technical Committees, The Financial Institutions, The Peace and Security Council, and The Commission.

THE ROLE OF UN, EU AND AU IN PROMOTING CULTURE IN INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION

The UN, EU and AU have played integral roles in the promotion of culture. This is because these institutions are aware that culture is central in international communication and understanding a nation's cultural values, beliefs, traditions and customs can foster international relations between member states and help them to coexist with each other in order to achieve their common goals and objectives.

In a 2010 UN General Assembly Summit, it was resolved that culture was integral in achieving the millennium development goals and should be incorporated in the UN's development policies and strategies to highlight the contributions of culture to sustainable development. The United Nations set up a body of itself saddled with the responsibility of promoting culture among member states. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) is that body that ensures that the cultural heritage of member states is preserved and promoted across boundaries to foster relationships and diplomacy among nations. As at January 2012, culture had been included in 70% of the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks. In 2010 and 2011, of a total of \$378 million that was budgeted for programme and related services, 15% of that amount (\$56.7 million) was allocated for Culture [20]. Cultural diplomacy is an integral strategy UNESCO employs in fortifying diplomatic ties between nations. One of the ways, the UNESCO has utilised culture is through cultural heritage, cultural and creative industries, sustainable cultural tourism, and cultural infrastructure which has served as strategic tools for revenue generation particularly in developing countries, given their often-rich cultural heritage and substantial labour force. In fact, UNESCO has created policies, guidelines, tools for monitoring and evaluation, programmes for capacity building and formulated tangible working engagements that protect and promote culture, advance cultural institutions, create several systems of experts and vigorously include local communities as part of its developmental framework. UNESCO believes that culture can contribute to sustainable development if it is integrated into governance, focused on the cultural and creative industries' contribution to the development of the economy and the reduction of poverty, capitalised on traditional knowledge to sustain the environment, anchored on modelling culture to sustain social cohesion, and capitalised on the potentialities of the arts to support social interrelation and advance entrepreneurship especially among youths in a post-crisis or conflict situation.

In the European Union, culture has continuously been promoted such that member states interact with each other and share the same homogeneous cultures. They share similar art, music and literary works. In fact in the EU, their official currency Euros is used to replace the currencies of member states except for the British Pounds which off course is one of the major reasons for Brexit. In schools in the UK, EU nationals and UK citizens pay similar fees and in the recruitment of people, any citizen of an EU state can work in another member state as long as they belong to the EU and the same parameters used for citizens of that nation is the same parameters used for other EU nationals. These are all traces and proofs of the Cultural identity theory at play.

In fact, the European Commission, the Executive body of the European Union in a press statement at Brussels noted that the European Union and its member states stand to benefit a great deal by better restructuring their cultural diplomacy. The European Union has built the economy of Europe on the development of the cultural and creative industries which has been well funded. It has become a major income earner for Europe. Lhermitte et al. [21] stated that Europe is second to Asia in the cultural and creative industries with a revenue of about \$709 billion and has created 7.7 million jobs. It has helped to promote culture among nations in films, music,

architecture, publishing, video gaming, arts, etc. and this enhances international communication among nations.

In fact, a recent study carried out in the United Kingdom and released on January 26, 2016, by the Department of Media, Culture and Sports reveals that the cultural and creative industries is now worth £84.1 billion per year in the UK's economy. The study also show that the creative industries almost doubled the entire UK economy when it achieved an 8.9% growth in 2014, generating almost £9.6 million per hour, and has reported that UK's films, books, craft, fashion, music, video games, and television would be the mainstay and driver of the UK's economy in 2016 [22].

It is with this knowledge that the EU has supported, promoted and funded several programmes aimed at streamlining the cultural diplomacy of member states through intercultural dialogue for the purpose of fostering intercultural partnerships, formulating improved cultural policies, facilitating international networking, developing training programmes for cultural leadership as well as developing the economy of member states by tapping into the vast opportunities and market of the cultural and creative industries. Some of these programmes include: the creative hubs' networks or the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) cultures and programmes aimed at encouraging cultural dialogue and governance. Also, from time to time the EU delegations organise some cultural diplomatic activities geared towards taking bold actions and decisions in preserving the cultural heritage of African nations. An example is the programme to restore the Timbuktu manuscripts in Mali. To the EU, culture is integral for international communication to be effective, hence its support to the Anna Lindh Foundation in the South Mediterranean which is a perfect example of how the EU promotes culture in order to strengthen diplomatic ties between member states. Promoting culture is a rationalized framework for strengthening foreign policy for EU nations. The Young Arab Voices Programme is one wonderful programme heavily supported and funded by the European Union. In fact, the EU's support for this programme has ensured that it has been extended to the Euro-Mediterranean region so that they collaborate with young people and civil societies to take a stance and sound a voice against extremism and radicalisation that distorts world peace and breeds hatred against other nations.

The EU has also assisted in protecting the cultural heritage in Syria by partnering with UNESCO to support local stakeholders to track the state of the heritage and eradicate unlawful trafficking activities in Syria. The European body has also developed the Eastern Partnership (EaP) Cultural Programme to help support the cultural and creative industries' contribution to viable humanitarian, socio-economic development [23].

Every cultural programme or project supported by the EU is to promote cultural dialogue to achieve better foreign policies, strike smart international trade deals as well as foster cultural governance and diplomacy with member states. Some of these projects or programmes help EU nationals from different member states to benefit from learning the cultural values, customs and traditions of another member state and would help to strengthen diplomatic ties and international communication between these nations. This just goes to show how central culture is in international communication and the EU is aware of the socio-economic and political advantage of promoting culture between nations. In fact, it has developed five guiding principles in its action or agenda on culture. The EU promotes cultural diversity and respect for human rights, fosters mutual respect and intercultural dialogue, ensures respect for complementarity and subsidiarity, encourages a cross-cutting approach to culture and promotes culture through existing frameworks for cooperation [23].

For the African Union, its stance on culture is not really different from the European Union and the United Nations. Before, the AU was transformed from the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), it had developed the Cultural Charter for Africa in 1976 where it agreed to abide by the following guiding principles in the actualisation of its cultural aims and objectives. The organisation promised to grant access of all citizens to education and culture, ensure respect for the freedom to create and the emancipation of the creative genius of the people, ensure respect for national authenticities and specificities in the field of culture, ensure selective incorporation of science and technology into the cultural life of Africans and ensure exchange and dissemination

of cultural experience between African countries in the field of cultural decolonisation in all its forms [28]. The AU understands that all cultures are equal and entitled to respect just as all people are equal as regards free access to culture. The AU has therefore urged its member states to do all they can to fulfil the objectives of the AU as enshrined in the Cultural Charter for Africa. But in spite of culture being a prominent theme in the AU's agenda where it theoretically states that member states should contribute 50% to promoting culture in their countries, [24], the report states that only about 0.5% to 1% is actually budgeted for culture in most African nations when observed from the allocation of resources which means culture is being neglected by the governments of African nations and is not really treated as the child that needs a lot of attention from African nations. In fact, there are several advantages that come with promoting culture, and in the Abidjan Final Report of 5-9 of June 2000 for the African Union Symposium on the Policies, Strategies and Experiences in the Financing of Culture in Africa, culture was identified as a driver for sustainable international dialogue and socio-economic development. This is why it collaborates with several organisations and bodies to organise programmes and deploy projects that will help the group achieve its cultural objectives.

Some projects on culture organised in Africa include: The African Itinerant College for Culture and Development funded by UNESCO in January 1996, the iron road in Africa which was established to highlight Africa's culture of iron technology and funded by UNESCO; A general history of Africa, documenting African history, published in eight volumes in English, French and Arabic and funded by UNESCO with support from other African nations. There are numerous projects and programmes organised for the promotion of the culture of Africa and supported by other international bodies, multilateral agencies and business organisations that have been deployed in the African region but are so numerous to mention. In fact, the AU, then OAU set up the African Cultural Fund (ACF) to provide funds for the promotion of the African culture and the preservation of its heritage and believes that cultural diplomacy is a conduit for peace and stability in Africa, a driver for economic development and helps to brand Africa as a safe haven for great cultural export.

Like the EU, the AU can also key into the cultural and creative industries in Africa. Nollywood for example is the largest film industry in Africa, third largest in the world and produces the highest number of movies annually than any film industry in the world. Nollywood movies are usually a true reflection of the African culture, values and traditions and these are portrayed in the movies. The AU can fund or sponsor film industries in Africa especially Nollywood which has an enormous global presence so it can continue to promote the culture of Africa and be used as an avenue for cultural diplomacy and cultural export as well as an income generation industry to improve the socio-economic life of the people.

So generally, culture is really central to international communication and UN, EU and AU are so familiar with this that they have since integrated cultural diplomacy as an objective they must achieve to build sustainable relations among nations.

CONCLUSION

UN, AU and EU have continued to promote culture and unity among their member states. They have invested heavily in promoting the dominant culture of their organisations and continent and every year draw up programmes to foster cultural ties between nations which aid international communication. Since member states share some commonalities in food, language, music, art, values, traditions, norms and customs; it makes it easier to communicate and relate with one another which has helped to boost international trade and policy, strengthened diplomatic ties, and have helped to improve the economy of member states. UN, AU and EU are International social institutions, and these institutions help to protect the sovereignty and independence of member states against the oppression of bigger states and these gestures help to consolidate peace, security, diplomacy and democracy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As seen in the paper, it is clearly obvious that promoting culture can foster a healthy and sustainable relationship between nations; and the United Nations, European Union and the African Union have done quite remarkable in promoting culture within member states. However, there are still certain recommendations that if implemented could help them achieve their objectives and foster the relationship they have with their member states as well as the relationship between member states. These recommendations are:

- The African Union and the United Nations through UNESCO should partner with members of the cultural and creative industries in Africa in promoting culture. In Nigeria, Nollywood is at the heart of the Cultural and Creative Industries with a total value of about \$500 million [25], and the largest film industry in the world, producing more movies than India's Bollywood and the USA's Hollywood [26]. Since it is obviously the largest cultural and creative industry in Africa going by the above statistics, a partnership with Nollywood would help the African Union and UNESCO achieve their objectives for Africa easily, this is because films help to promote culture and the African Union and the UN can reach out to a lot of people through films.
- The Calabar Carnival is also another cultural and tourism event that international organisations such as the UN and AU can tap into. The carnival according to Amalu & Ajake [27], has been tagged as the largest street party in Africa and can engage as well as reach the communities than more traditional art forms, creating novel economic opportunities in the cultural and creative industries. It could be a large platform to promote culture and better engage with the African people because it embraces cultural diversity which reiterates the underpinnings of the cultural identity theory.
- The study of history is really integral to the overall knowledge of the individual. This is because it will enlighten and educate the people about other cultures, nations and people such that it does not look strange to them. The UN, EU and AU can promote culture in international communication, by partnering with the various Ministries of Education and the Ministries of Information and Communication to implement policies which involves teaching African History, European History and Global History to students in their member states. If students are taught about the cultural practices and history of other countries, it would promote unity in diversity, combat xenophobia and enlighten individuals from the basic foundation of education about other nations. If the foundation is nurtured, enlightened and educated about the culture of people from other nations, they can integrate and learn to co-exist with them as the communication with them will foster the relationship that exist between them [3].

REFERENCES

1. Collier, M. J., & Thomas, M. (1988). Identity in intercultural communication: An interpretive perspective. In Y. Y. Kim, & W. B. Gudykunst, *International and intercultural communication* (pp. 99-120). Newbury Park: Sage.
2. Collier, M. J. (2005). Theorizing cultural identifications: Critical updates and continuing evolution. In W. B. Gudykunst, *Theorizing about intercultural communication* (pp. 235-256). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
3. Kim, Y. Y. (2007). Ideology, Identity and Intercultural Communication: An analysis of differing academic conceptions of cultural identity. *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*, 237-253.
4. Palo, D. d., Faini, R., & Venturini, A. (2006). *The social assimilation of immigrants*. Bonn: Institute for the Study of Labour (IZA).
5. Hongladarom, S. (2011). Basing political pluralism on epistemology: The case of Thailand's southern violence. In G. Collste, *Implications of pluralism: Essays on culture, identity and values* (pp. 1-145). Selangor: Institute of Ethnic Studies (KITA).

6. Spencer-Oatey. (2012). *What is culture? A compilation of quotations*. Warwick: GlobalPad Core Concepts.
7. Birukou, A., Blanzieri, E., Giorgini, P., & Giunchiglia, F. (2009). *A formal definition of culture*. Trento: University of Trento.
8. Avruch, K. (1998). *Culture and conflict resolution*. Washington: United States Institute of Peace.
9. Hofstede, G. (1994). *Cultures and organisations: Software of the Mind*. London: Harper Collins Business.
10. Matsumoto, D. (1996). *Culture and psychology*. Pacific Grove: Brooks/Cole.
11. Kroeber, A. L., & Kluckhohn, C. (1952). *Culture-A critical review of concepts and definitions*. Massachusetts: The Museum.
12. Lunenberg, F. C. (2010). *Communication: The process, barriers and improving effectiveness*. Houston: SCHOOLING.
13. Keyton, N. (2011). *Communication and organisational culture: A key to understanding work experience*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
14. Ambady, N., & Rosenthal, R. (1998). *Nonverbal communication*. Cambridge: Academic Press.
15. UNDPI. (2008). *Everything you always wanted to know about the United Nations*. New York: United Nations Department of Public Information.
16. United Nations. (1945). *Charter of the United Nations and Statue of the International Court of Justice*. San Francisco: United Nations .
17. Bonde, J.-P. (2008). *The Lisbon treaty*. Notat Grafisk: Foundation for EU Democracy.
18. Zuma, N. D., & McCully, M. (2014). *African Union handbook*. Addis Ababa: African Union Commission and New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade/manatu aorere.
19. Oji, E. C. (2004). *The African Union: Examining the new hope for Africa*. Standford: Standford University.
20. UNESCO. (2010). *UNESCO at work*. Paris: UNESCO.
21. Lhermitte, M., Bruno, P., & Blanc, S. (2015). *Cultural times: The first global map of cultural and creative industries*. London: Ernst & Young Global Limited (EYGM).
22. DCMS. (2016). *Creative industries economic estimates*. London: Department for Culture, Media and Sport.
23. European Commission. (2006). *A new strategy to put culture at the heart of EU international relations*. Brussels: European Commission.
24. OAU. (2000). *Symposium on the policies, strategies and experiences in the financing of culture in Africa*. Abidjan: Organisation of African Unity.
25. Idiahi, E. (2011). *Nigeria's creative industries: Optimising the economic potentials of the creative industries through global partnerships*. Lagos: Nigerian Economic Summit Group.
26. John, A. G., Igwe, S. R., & Nkoro, F. (2013). Market oriented culture in nollywood industry: An empirical investigation of filmmakers and producers in Nigeria. *International Journal of Business Management and Economic Research*, 752-758.
27. Amalu, T. E., & Ajake, A. O. (2012). An assessment of the influence of Calabar carnival on the economy of the residents of Calabar metropolis, Cross River State, Nigeria. *Global Journal of Human Social Science Geography & Environmental Geosciences*, 13-24.
28. African Union. (1976). *Cultural charter for Africa*. Addis Ababa: African Union.