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"The Ongoing Influence of French Colonialism in Former African Colonies: A Comparative Analysis"

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Abstract

This journal article explores the enduring influence of French colonialism in former African colonies, shedding light on the various dimensions of this complex relationship. The legacies of French colonial rule continue to shape politics, economics, culture, and society in these nations. Through a comparative analysis of selected African countries, this study delves into the mechanisms and consequences of this influence, including language, trade, security, and political structures. By examining both the positive and negative aspects of French colonialism's legacy, this article provides valuable insights into the contemporary challenges and opportunities faced by these nations as they navigate their post-colonial trajectories. The study employed a mixed paradigm and descriptive survey design that sampled Institutions of higher learning, members of Parliament, Government Ministry (Judiciary) and Non-Governmental Organizations and interviewed, members of Parliament (from both ruling and opposition), senior civil servants, university lecturers, university students and NGO members. Data was obtained from respondents by means of interviews, questionnaires and project observation schedules. The sample consisted of two hundred respondents. Frequency, percentages, tables, graphs and pie-charts were used to analyze the quantitative and qualitative data obtained. Data was then analyzed manually in some cases and also, a combination of software MS Access and MS Excel. The findings revealed that the influence of French colonialism on former African colonies remains a deeply ingrained aspect of these nations' identities and trajectories though the impact varies from one country to another and across different aspects of society, but it is undeniable that the legacy of colonialism, including French colonialism, continues to shape the present and future of these African nations. and the study recommended that addressing the ongoing influence of French colonialism in former African colonies is a complex and multifaceted issue. It requires the collaboration of individuals, organizations, governments, and international bodies to foster positive change and empower African nations to shape their own destinies.

Key words: Comparative analysis, Economic, Influence, Former African Colonies, French Colonialism, Political

1.INTRODUCTION

Many African countries were once French colonies and the former French colonies in Africa include Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Mauritania, French Sudan now Mali, Niger, Chad, Central African Republic, Sudan (before it was divided into Sudan and South Sudan), Ivory Coast (Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Niger, Togo, Senegal, Guinea, French Guinea now Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Upper Volta now Burkina Faso, Equatorial Guinea, Dahomey now Benin, Republic of the Congo, Chad, Comoros and Seychelles (Crumley,2010). These are just a few examples, and there are more African countries that were once under French colonial rule though it is important to note that many of these countries have gained their political independence and are now sovereign nations. At the moment, the colonies of France now include the Islands of Guadeloupe, Martinique, Saint-Martin, Saint-Barthelemy, Saint Pierre and Miquelon (Atlantic Ocean). Reunion Island, Mayotte, the French Southern and Antarctic Lands (Indian Ocean). French Polynesia, New Caledonia, Wallis and Futune (Pacific Ocean) (Charbonneau,2008).

French colonialism had a profound and lasting influence on the former African colonies that were once part of the French colonial empire. This influence can be seen in various aspects of these countries, including politics, economics, culture, and society. Some key ways in which French colonialism shaped these African nations include political systems as French colonial rule often imposed centralized and authoritarian administrative structures. Many former French colonies inherited these systems, which have sometimes contributed to political instability and authoritarianism (Tarluig,2003). The French introduced a divide-and-rule policy in some regions, which exacerbated ethnic and tribal divisions, leading to challenges in nation-building after independence. Many African countries adopted the French legal and bureaucratic systems, including the civil law legal system and administrative practices.

The second French influence on the colonies was Language since the French language remains a significant legacy of colonialism. French is often the official language in former French colonies, and it is used in government, education, and media. The use of French as a primary language has both advantages and disadvantages. It can facilitate international communication and trade but may also limit access to education and government services for those who do not speak French. The third was economic dependency (Karsh,2006). The French colonial economic model often prioritized the extraction of natural resources and the export of raw materials to France. This legacy of resource exploitation has left some African countries economically dependent and vulnerable to global market fluctuations. Also, the post-independence economic policies in some former French colonies were heavily influenced by France, maintaining a neocolonial economic relationship. The fourth was Culture and French colonialism left a mark on the cultural identity of these countries, influencing art, music, literature, and fashion. French cultural elements, such as cuisine and fashion, can still be found in many African societies, particularly in urban areas (Das,2011).

The fifth was Education and the French introduced their education system in many of their African colonies. While this system brought formal education, it also had a tendency to reproduce a Eurocentric worldview and sometimes failed to address the unique needs of African societies. Religion was sixth as Christianity, particularly Catholicism, was promoted by French colonial authorities in many regions. This has had a lasting impact on the religious landscape of these countries (Burbank and Frederick,2010). The arbitrary borders drawn by colonial powers have often led to ethnic and tribal conflicts in post-colonial Africa. The French colonial administration played a role in shaping these borders. In addition, the French legacy of military and security structures influenced the armed forces and law enforcement agencies in former French colonies, sometimes contributing to political instability or authoritarianism. However, the impact of French colonialism varies across different African countries. While some nations have experienced significant challenges and drawbacks due to their colonial history, others have managed to adapt and use certain aspects of French influence to their advantage (Bessel, Nicholas and Jane,2010). The legacy of colonialism is a complex and ongoing issue in Africa, and it continues to shape the development and trajectory of these nations.

French colonies were ruled, on the one hand, through decrees issued by two different ministries (the Ministry of the Interior and the Colonial Office) in Paris and, on the other hand, by executive orders that made the representative of the French government the main source of the law. How did France rule African colonies? Each colony of French West Africa was administered by a Lieutenant Governor responsible to the Governor-General in Dakar. Only the Governor-General received orders from Paris, via the Minister of Colonies (Hogan,2000). The Minister, with the approval of the French National Assembly, chose Lieutenants Governor and Governors-Generals. "Indirect rule" was not the only option available to the Colonial powers; the French opted for a system of "direct rule". To maintain dominance in their Colonies, the French used the policy of assimilation, which dominated French colonial administration in the 1800s, they maintained French commercial monopolies and centralized political control of the overseas possessions (Delmas and Nigel,2011).

Furthermore, before gaining independence, France ruled its African colonies through a system known as French colonialism. The approach to governance and administration of these colonies varied over time and across different regions of Africa. Some key features of how France ruled its African colonies before independence included direct rule (Vansina,2010). France practiced a policy of direct rule in many of its African colonies. This meant that French administrators, known as colonial officials, held significant authority and made decisions on behalf of the colonies. These officials often governed the colonies with limited input from the local population. The second was Assimilation Policy-France pursued a policy of assimilation in some of its colonies, particularly in West Africa. The assimilation policy aimed to transform the local population into French citizens by promoting French culture, language, and legal systems. This approach was more prevalent in the coastal regions of West Africa, such as Senegal. Thirdly, France used Indirect Rule and in some regions, such as parts of French Equatorial Africa, France implemented a form of indirect rule, which allowed traditional local leaders to maintain authority within the colonial structure. French administrators worked alongside indigenous rulers and used them as intermediaries in governance (Short,2012).

The other type of rule used by France was forced labor. France, like other colonial powers, relied on forced labor for various infrastructure projects and economic activities in its colonies. This often involved conscripting local labor for public works, plantations, and mines. France also used economic exploitation where the colonies were exploited for their economic resources, including minerals, rubber, timber, and agricultural products. French companies and the French government profited from the exploitation of these resources (Ruce,2008). Segregation was another form of rule used as there was a clear separation between the European settlers and the indigenous African population, with Europeans enjoying superior privileges and rights. Segregation was practiced in various aspects of life, including education, healthcare, and access to public services. French Language and Education was also a form of rule used by the French to rule African colonies. The French language was promoted in education and administration. French schools were established, and many local people were educated in the French system (Reinhard and Kate,2011). However, the education system was often designed to serve the interests of the colonial administration and to produce a skilled labor force for colonial economic activities.

Legal System were used to rule as French law was imposed in the colonies, and indigenous legal systems were often superseded. The French legal system was used to enforce colonial policies and maintain control. Repression was applied in French rule of African colonies. In some instances, there were acts of repression and resistance against colonial rule. France used military force to suppress revolts and maintain control over its colonies (Butlin,2009). Nevertheless, It's important to note that the colonial experience varied across different regions of Africa and evolved over time. The impact of French colonial rule had significant and lasting effects on the social, political, and economic structures in these African colonies. The struggle for independence and the desire for self-determination eventually led to the decolonization of Africa, with many African nations gaining independence from French colonial rule in the mid-20th century.

Before gaining independence, France treated its African colonies as part of its larger colonial empire, which was known as French West Africa and French Equatorial Africa. The treatment of these colonies varied over time and by region, but in general, the French colonial administration was characterized by a paternalistic and exploitative approach (Armitage,2009). France established a centralized colonial administration, where power and decision-making authority were concentrated in Paris. Each colony had a governor appointed by the French government, and these governors had significant control over local affairs. The French colonial authorities used forced labor in various forms to extract resources and develop infrastructure. This often involved the conscription of local labor for public works projects, such as roads, railways, and mines. Forced labor conditions were harsh, and workers often faced abuse and exploitation. France exploited the natural resources of its African colonies for the benefit of the French economy. Resources like rubber, timber, minerals, and agricultural products were extracted and exported to France, often at the expense of the local populations (Thomas,2006). Also, France imposed a system of forced labor in agriculture known as the "cotton crisis" in some regions. This system required African farmers to grow cash crops like cotton for export, leading to the neglect of food crops and contributing to food shortages.

France used cultural assimilation and here, French colonial policies aimed to assimilate Africans into French culture, language, and values. This included the promotion of the French language, education systems that prioritized French culture, and the suppression of local languages and traditions. Segregation and discrimination was applied and in many cases, Africans in French colonies faced discrimination and segregation. They were often subject to different legal systems and limited access to education, healthcare, and other services compared to the European settlers (Gilmartin,2009). The French also use of indigenous authorities and this is where the French colonial administration often relied on indigenous leaders or chiefs to help maintain control and manage local affairs. These leaders were sometimes co-opted by the French to serve French interests. African resistance to colonial rule was met with repression and violence. Colonial authorities used force to suppress uprisings and maintain control over the colonies. In summary, It is important to note that the treatment of African colonies varied from one region to another, depending on local conditions and the specific policies of individual colonial administrators. The process of decolonization in Africa began in the mid-20th century, with various countries gaining independence in the years following World War II (Tonio,2010).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

French colonialism left a significant and lasting impact on the nations it once controlled in Africa. While many former African colonies have gained independence, the legacy of French colonial rule continues to exert influence in various aspects of their societies as the French left legacies such as political influence, economic dependence, cultural and social impact, geopolitical relations, legal systems and institutions and, education and knowledge systems. Nevertheless, understanding the ongoing influence of French colonialism on former African colonies is essential for addressing contemporary challenges and advancing the development, autonomy, and self-determination of these nations (Englebert and Dunn, 2013).

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of the study was to explore the enduring influence of French colonialism in former African colonies, shedding light on the various dimensions of this complex relationship as the legacies of French colonial rule continue to shape politics, economics, culture, and society in these nations. Through a comparative analysis of selected African countries, this study delves into the mechanisms and consequences of this influence, including language, trade, security, and political structures. By examining both the positive and negative aspects of French colonialism's legacy, this article provides valuable insights into the contemporary challenges and opportunities faced by these nations as they navigate their post-colonial trajectories.

1.3 Objectives

- i. To assess how the legacies of French colonial rule continue to shape, culture and societies in former colonies.
- ii. To explore mechanisms and consequences of French legacies in former African colonies.
- iii. To examine the positive and negative aspects of French colonial legacy on former African colonies

1.4 Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by the Dependency theory of development and underdevelopment first proposed in the late 1950s by Raul Prebisch but the Dependency theory gained prominence in the 1960s and 1970s where the Dependency theory holds that “the condition of underdevelopment is precisely the result of the incorporation of the Third World economies into the capitalist world system which is dominated by the West and North America”(Randall and Theobald, 1998). According to Dependency theory, underdevelopment is mainly caused by the peripheral position of affected countries in the world economy. Further, in Dependency theory and its close relative, World System theory (created by Immanuel Wallerstein in the 1970s), emphasized the role of external relationships in the developmental process and views relationships with developed countries and particularly with multinational corporations as barriers to the development of third world countries.

1.5 Significance of the Study

It is hoped that the findings of the study would be of help to all the stake holders interested in the political and economic development of Africa. It would benefit the current governments in power, individuals, organizations, governments, and international bodies to foster positive change and empower African nations to shape their own destinies as well as and come up with appropriate interventions in order to revamp the economies of not only the former French colonies but Africa as a whole with less dependence on the outside world. The policy makers would benefit as the study would help them modify the political and economic systems to make them more relevant to national needs. The findings would also help politicians and government officials to shape their political, economic, cultural and social impact, geopolitical relations, legal systems and institutions and, education and knowledge systems and also create favourable local policies for placement of human resource in government and private sector, strengthen legislature, executive and judicial systems to enhance effectiveness and efficiency in governance as well as awaken the citizens to hold leadership accountable to the electorates.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 What is Franc Afrique?

"Franc Afrique" refers to a term often used to describe the continuing influence of France on its former African colonies, particularly in economic, political, and military matters. The term is a portmanteau of "Franc" (referring to the French currency, the franc) and "Afrique" (the French word for Africa). Historically, many African countries were colonized by European powers, including France (Martina, 2011). As these countries gained independence in the mid-20th century, France maintained close ties with them, including economic and political relationships. This has been a source of controversy and debate, with some critics arguing that these relationships have given France undue influence and control over the affairs of these African nations. Key elements of Franc Afrique include among others economic ties as many former French colonies in Africa use the CFA franc, which is linked to the Euro and guaranteed by the French Treasury. While this arrangement provides financial stability, it also means that these countries have limited control over their own currency and monetary policy. Military presence is another and France has

maintained military bases and troops in several African countries, which has been justified as a means of supporting regional security and peacekeeping. However, some view this presence as a way for France to maintain its influence in the region (Daneel and Dana,2011).

Political influence is also a key element of Franc Afrique as France has often been accused of interfering in the domestic politics of its former African colonies, sometimes propping up leaders who are seen as friendly to French interests. Resource Extraction is yet another and France has had significant economic interests in African countries, particularly in sectors like oil, mining, and agriculture, which some argue have been exploitative (Schwaller,2011).

The concept of Franc Afrique has been the subject of criticism and debate, with some African leaders and activists pushing for greater autonomy and self-determination for their countries, free from what they see as French interference. On the other hand, France has defended its policies as a means of maintaining stability and security in the region (Walter,2013). The dynamics of Franc Afrique continue to evolve, and the extent of French influence in Africa remains a subject of ongoing discussion and analysis.

2.2 French influence on its former African colonies

France maintains influence on its former African colonies through a combination of economic, political, and military ties. These ties are rooted in historical, cultural, and economic relationships, and they have evolved over time. Some of the key ways in which France maintains influence in its former African colonies include economic ties as regards currency arrangements and in this vein, many former French colonies in Africa use the CFA franc, which is guaranteed by the French (Moore and Van Nierop,2017) Treasury. This arrangement provides stability but also ties their economies to the French monetary system. As regards trade agreements, France maintains strong economic ties through trade agreements that benefit both parties. These agreements often favor French companies, making them significant players in sectors like energy, telecommunications, and infrastructure. Investment and aid was key as France provides financial assistance and investment in infrastructure projects, education, and healthcare, reinforcing economic dependencies (Ganesan,2012).

On Political Ties, France created diplomatic relations with former African colonies and to date, France maintains close diplomatic relations with its former colonies, often acting as a mediator in regional conflicts and helping them navigate international relations. On security cooperation, France often cooperates with these countries on security matters, including counterterrorism and peacekeeping operations, which further solidify political ties (Marsh,2013). Support for Regimes-France has been criticized for supporting authoritarian regimes in its former colonies to maintain stability and protect its interests, even if it means overlooking human rights abuses. As regards Military Ties, France was to create Military Bases and France maintains military bases in some African countries, which serve as logistical hubs for regional operations and reinforce its military presence. On Training and Support, French military advisors and trainers work with African armed forces, promoting interoperability and strengthening the military capabilities of these countries while on Intervention in Crises, France has intervened militarily in several of its former African colonies to restore or maintain political stability when deemed necessary (Holliday,2012).

Examples include Operation Serval in Mali and Operation Sangaris in the Central African Republic.

On cultural and linguistic ties. The French language continues to be a lingua franca in many African countries, which facilitates cultural and intellectual exchanges and deepens ties. Educational and cultural programs are funded by France, such as the Alliance Française, promote French culture and values in these countries. Nonetheless, It is important to note that these relationships are complex, and while they provide advantages to both sides, they have also been criticized for perpetuating dependency and neocolonialism (Marsh,2013). There is ongoing debate and discussion within African countries about the extent to which they want to maintain these ties and the need for greater sovereignty and autonomy in their relationships with France. Changes in leadership, public opinion, and international dynamics can also impact the nature of these relationships over time.

2.3 Economic relations of France with former African Colonies

The economic relations between France and its former African colonies have a complex history and continue to be a subject of debate and scrutiny. France has a unique relationship with its former colonies, often referred to as "Francophone Africa," as many of these countries share a common currency, the CFA Franc, and maintain close economic and political ties with France. Some key aspects of these economic relations include: Colonial Legacy as many African countries were colonized by France during the late 19th and early 20th centuries (William and Bunton,2016). This colonial period had a significant impact on the economic and social structures in these countries. It left a legacy of economic dependency and structural challenges. The second was the use of CFA Franc and the CFA Franc is the common currency used by 14 African countries that were former French colonies. These countries are part of two currency unions: the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) and the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC). The CFA Franc is guaranteed by the French Treasury and has a fixed exchange rate with the Euro (UN,2017).

The other key aspect of economic relations is the Fixed Exchange Rate. The fixed exchange rate with the Euro means that these African countries do not have full control over their monetary policy. While the CFA Franc provides stability, it can limit their ability to adjust their currency's value in response to economic conditions. Currency Reserves is another and in this arrangement, the African countries using the CFA Franc must keep a portion of their foreign currency reserves in the French Treasury (McCann,2013). This arrangement has been criticized for limiting these countries' financial autonomy. France also brought in Trade Relations and France continues to be a significant trading partner for many of its former African colonies. These countries often export raw materials, including oil, minerals, and agricultural products, to France. Investment and Aid was another aspect where France has historically played a role in providing development aid, technical assistance, and investment in its former colonies (UN,2006). However, there have been concerns about the effectiveness and transparency of these programs.

Economic Dependency was also used as another aspect or way in which France maintains influence in its former African colonies and critics argue that the economic relations between

France and its former colonies perpetuate dependency, hinder industrialization, and contribute to inequality and poverty in these countries. Therefore, there have been calls for reform of the CFA Franc and a reconsideration of the economic and financial arrangements between France and its former colonies. Some countries have taken steps to diversify their economic relations by engaging with other countries and international partners. Nevertheless, It is important to note that the economic relations between France and its former African colonies are a complex and evolving issue (Tarig,2012). African countries have been taking steps to gain more control over their economic policies and resources, but the historical ties between these nations continue to shape their economic relations. The debate over these relationships continues to be a topic of discussion in both France and Africa.

2.4 French military relations with former African relations

The French military has historically had close and complex relations with its former African colonies. France maintained a significant military presence in several African countries, even after they gained independence, and these relationships have evolved over time. Some key points regarding French military relations with former African colonies include, colonial legacy. Many African countries were former French colonies, and the French military played a crucial role during the colonial period in maintaining control and suppressing dissent (Hapkins and Cain,2011). This legacy has had a lasting impact on the post-independence military relationships. Creation of Military Bases was another military relationship. France maintained military bases in several African countries, often through agreements with the host governments. These bases have been used for various purposes, including training, logistics, and regional security cooperation. Defense Agreements were signed and France has maintained defense agreements with some of its former colonies, often referred to as "Françafrique" policies. These agreements have included military assistance, intelligence sharing, and training programs. These also, agreements have sometimes been criticized for their opaqueness and their potential to undermine the sovereignty of African nations. The other military relationship was intervention in crises and surely, France has intervened in various African conflicts, sometimes at the request of African governments or international organizations like the United Nations or the African Union (Ness and Cope,2015). Notable interventions include the Rwandan Genocide, the Ivorian Civil War, and the Mali conflict. Counterterrorism and Peacekeeping agreement was also signed and in recent years, France has been actively involved in counterterrorism efforts in the Sahel region, particularly in Mali and the broader Sahel region through Operation Barkhane. French troops have been deployed to counter extremist groups and provide support for regional peacekeeping missions.

France's military involvement in its former African colonies has been the subject of criticism and controversy. Some argue that it perpetuates neocolonialism and undermines the sovereignty of African nations. Concerns have also been raised about human rights abuses and the lack of accountability in some cases. The nature of French military relations with African countries has evolved over time. African nations have increasingly sought to diversify their international partnerships, looking to other countries and regional organizations for security cooperation (Porter,2016). The future of French military relations with its former African colonies will depend on a variety of factors, including the evolving security landscape in Africa, the role of regional

organizations like the African Union, and the willingness of African nations to assert their sovereignty in defense matters. However, the dynamics of these relationships can vary from one African country to another, and there is no one-size-fits-all approach to understanding French military relations with its former colonies on the continent. These relationships are shaped by historical, political, and security considerations and are subject to change over time (Preestley,2018). Today, some former French colonies in Africa such as Burkina Faso, Mali, Guinea, Niger, Gabon are fast gaining notoriety for military coups as people are losing hope in democracy in Francophone Africa and since 2020, anti-French sentiments seems to have triggered some coups. Experts blame the worrying trend on high levels of poverty, poor governance, ineffective civil society and above all, excessive French influence and these coups show changing ties with France.

2.5 French political relationship with former African colonies

The relationship between France and its former African colonies has been complex and multifaceted, shaped by historical, economic, political, and cultural factors. The relationship has evolved significantly over the years, but some key elements persist such as colonial legacy where France had a significant colonial presence in Africa, with colonies that spanned from North Africa to sub-Saharan Africa. These colonies were under French rule for many years, and their legacy still influences contemporary relations (Hugh,2010). Decolonization-Many African countries gained their independence from France in the mid-20th century, with the process of decolonization occurring between the 1950s and 1960s. This marked a crucial turning point in the relationship. Françafrique and the term "Françafrique" is often used to describe the neocolonial relationships that continued to exist between France and its former colonies even after they gained independence. It includes political, economic, and military ties that persisted, with France often seen as exerting significant influence in its former colonies' affairs. France maintains strong economic ties with its former African colonies, particularly in sectors like trade, investment, and development aid. The CFA Franc, a common currency used in some African countries, has historically been linked to the French Treasury. (Salhi,2002) Also, France has maintained a military presence in several African countries, which has been used for various purposes, including countering terrorism, stabilizing conflicts, and supporting friendly governments. France has intervened in African conflicts, notably in Mali, Ivory Coast, and the Central African Republic.

As regards political influence, France has often been accused of supporting and propping up autocratic regimes in its former African colonies, contributing to political instability and preventing democratic progress. French language and culture continue to have a significant influence in many African countries, which is a legacy of the colonial period (Bamford,2010). However, in recent years, there has been a growing awareness and debate about the need for a more equal and mutually beneficial relationship between France and its former African colonies. Many African countries seek more autonomy and independence in their diplomatic and economic relations with France. Activists and political leaders in Africa and France have called for a reevaluation of the Françafrique system and a more equitable partnership. This has led to discussions about changing the CFA Franc, addressing historical injustices, and promoting democracy and good governance. Nevertheless, the relationships between France and its former

African colonies are diverse and vary from country to country, depending on historical context, political leadership, and the specific economic and geopolitical interests of both sides(Charbonneau,2008). The dynamics continue to evolve, and the future of these relationships remains a subject of ongoing debate and negotiation.

2.6 French cultural and social connections with former African colonies

The relationship between France and its former African colonies is complex and multifaceted, with deep cultural, social, and historical connections. These connections are the result of France's colonial history in Africa, which began in the 19th century and continued into the mid-20th century. Some key aspects of the cultural and social connections between France and its former African colonies include: Language as French is one of the official languages in many African countries due to their colonial history with France(Crumley,2009b). The French language continues to be widely spoken and is often used in education, administration, and the media. This linguistic connection fosters cultural exchange and facilitates diplomatic and economic ties. As regards education, many students from African countries study in France, either through government scholarship programs or private means. France's higher education system is respected globally, and African students often seek educational opportunities there. This educational exchange contributes to cultural connections and intellectual exchange.

Migration from former French colonies to France has been significant. People from these African countries have moved to France for various reasons, including economic opportunities, family reunification, and seeking asylum. This migration has led to a diverse and multicultural society in France, with significant African influences in terms of culture, cuisine, and language. There are ongoing cultural exchanges between France and its former African colonies. These exchanges encompass music, art, literature, and more. African artists and cultural figures often find opportunities to showcase their work in France, and French cultural exports are also popular in African countries (Howden,2011). In addition, the "Francophonie" is an international organization that promotes the use of the French language and cultural diversity. Many African countries are members of this organization, and it serves as a platform for collaboration and cultural exchange between France and its former colonies. France maintains strong diplomatic ties with many of its former African colonies, and these connections are often built on shared history and interests. France has played a role in peacekeeping and development efforts in some African countries(Crumley,2009a).

France has economic interests in many of its former African colonies, and trade relations continue to be significant. French companies invest in various sectors in African countries, and these economic connections contribute to social and cultural interactions. The relationship between France and its former African colonies is not without its challenges. Historical grievances, economic disparities, and political tensions have occasionally strained these connections. Debates about the impact of colonialism, post-colonial governance, and economic dependencies persist. Overall, the cultural and social connections between France and its former African colonies are deeply rooted in history and continue to evolve, reflecting a complex mix of shared heritage and contemporary challenges (Tull,2006). The interactions between these countries are influenced by a range of factors, including language, education, migration, and diplomatic and economic ties.

2.7 French Pacts with Former African Colonies

France has signed various agreements with its former African colonies over the years, and one of the most notable ones is the "CFA Franc" system. The CFA Franc, initially established in 1945, was a currency used by several African countries that had historical ties to France. There were two separate versions of the CFA Franc (Williams,2009). The first is the CFA Franc BCEAO (Banque Centrale des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest): This currency was used by eight West African countries, including Benin, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Togo, and Guinea-Bissau. The second is the CFA Franc BEAC (Banque des États de l'Afrique Centrale): This currency was used by six Central African countries, including Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, and Gabon (Crumley,2010).

Under the CFA Franc system, these African countries pegged their currency to the French franc and later to the euro. They also held a significant portion of their foreign exchange reserves in the French Treasury. This arrangement gave France a high degree of influence and control over the monetary policies of these African countries. In December 2019, France and the African countries using the CFA Franc system agreed to reform the currency and replace it with a new common currency called the "Eco." This reform aimed to reduce the influence of France in the monetary affairs of these African nations and grant them more autonomy (Lavallee and Vicard,2010). However, the specifics of the implementation and the timing of this transition were still being worked out as of my last knowledge update in January 2022.

Just before France conceded to African demands for independence in the 1960s, it carefully organized its former colonies (CFA countries) in a system of "compulsory solidarity" which consisted of obliging the 14 African states to put 85% of their foreign currency reserves into the French Treasury and invest it in French stock markets, leaving African countries with only 15% for their development. If an African country needs to access that money, the demanding country should submit financial report to France and if approved, country gets 20% of deposits as a loan and be repaid at commercial interest rate (Head, Mayer and Ries,2010). The new monetary cooperation agreements were signed in November 1972 for Central Africa and in December 1973 for West Africa. These marked a turning point in the relationship between France and its African partners, with the later taking greater responsibility for the governance of their central banks. The other pact was the defense agreement which is attached to the colonial pact. Under this pact, France was to train all military personnel from its former colonies and that all military equipment were to be acquired from France and that France has the right to intervene militarily in African countries, and also to permanently station troops in military bases and installations, entirely managed by the French. Also, on mineral deposits, all minerals discovered and yet to be discovered in former African French colonies, French companies have the right of refusal (Anderson,2010).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design

The research design was descriptive survey with both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection in order to attain the comprehensive results (Musonda,2009). Qualitative methods was

appropriate to this investigation as it produced detailed data from a small group of participants, while exploring feelings, impressions and judgments. On the other hand, quantitative method made the use of questionnaires, surveys and experiment to gather data that is revised and tabulated in numbers, which allows the data to be characterized by use of statistical analysis (Martyn, 2008).

3.2 Research Sites

The study was carried out in four institutions of Government Ministries, Universities, and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) offices from which respondents were also sampled.

3.3 Population, Sample and Sampling procedure

The population for the study was purposefully drawn from the Lusaka province of Zambia where all the respondents are found. Purposive sampling procedure was used to select the institutions (3) while the simple random sampling procedure was used to select the University lecturers (50); five from each institution, University students (50); five from each institution, Senior Civil Servants (50); five from each Ministry and NGO executive members (50); four from each organization (Bickel, 2007). The sample size comprised of 200 respondents. Also, the primary data was complimented by the secondary data which was derived from government policy documents, ministerial reports and relevant literature on language use.

In the sampling of province and institutions, the study adopted the stratified cluster random sampling technique. Sampling of the province was done on the basis of concentration of respondents and institutions were then done zone by zone. Universities and other institutions were clustered by zones. Two zones were purposively selected based on the basis of concentration of respondents. The sampling was done at three levels: Sampling zones, universities and other institutions- level 1, Sampling University lecturers and Civil servants-level 2, Sampling NGO Executive members-level 3.

3.4 Data Analysis

In this research, data was analysed qualitatively as in-depth interviews, questionnaires and observation schedules were used as data collection instruments. Thematic approach was used, where data analysis started with the categorization of themes from the structured interviews, questionnaires (Kombo and Tromp ,2006). Charts and graphs were used to analyse data. The data gathered was analysed according to the themes of the study and per the order of the research

objectives. Data generated from the interview guide was analysed manually and also, a combination of software MS Access, SPSS and MS Excel was used to analyse data. Analysis was mainly descriptive, that is, mean, median, mode, range, and standard deviation. Related statistics were applied where possible. Statistical testing took the form of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), correlation and regression both simple and multiple, (Buetow, 2010:123-125).

3.5 Ethical Issues

The researcher avoided pressuring respondents to take part in the research. Alternatively, permission consents, assents were obtained from respondents involved in the research and the research topic was strategically selected to ensure that there was no harm whatsoever to the research respondents. In this research, the researcher was fully conscious of the need to abide by the ethical rule of respecting the privacy of individuals taking part in the research. In the same way, all the respondents of the research were to remain unidentified to the public as all their valuable views, opinions and perceptions were only known by the researcher for use only in the research and participant's identities will forever remain hidden.

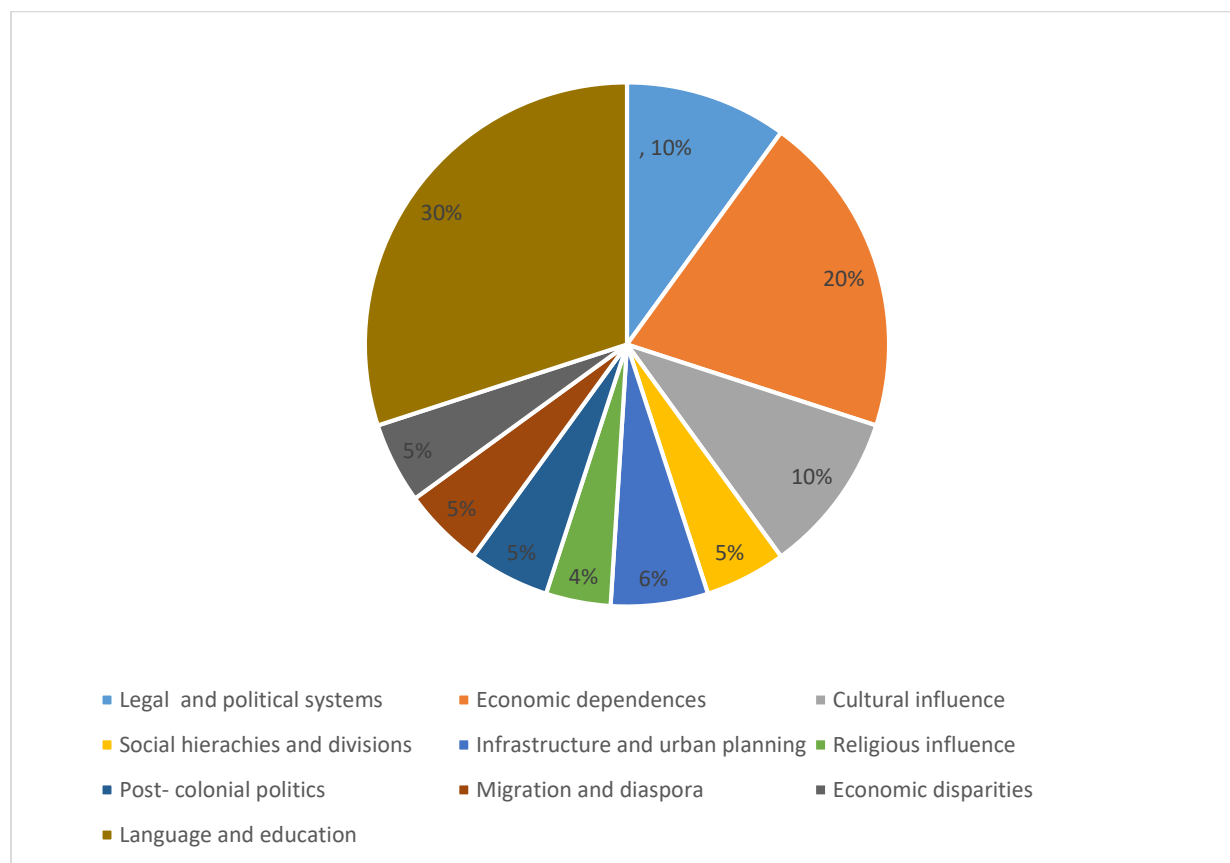
The Researcher got permission from the Vice Chancellors to interview lecturers and students, from Permanent secretaries to interview senior civil servants in the Ministries and Executive officers to interview NGO members. The names of respondents would remain anonymous for the sake of confidentiality, (Bryman,2001) and (Diener and Crandall,2008). However, the identity of respondents was concealed in the article but for identification in the article, the fifty lecturers were allocated numbers 1 to 50, the fifty students were allocated ordinal numbers 1st to 50th, the fifty NGO members were allocated names of fifty Primary schools in Lusaka, the fifty Civil servants were allocated names of fifty secondary schools in Lusaka and Zones and institutions used pseudo names.

4.FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 How does legacies of French colonial rule continue to shape, culture and societies in former African colonies?

According to study findings, the legacies of French colonial rule continues to shape the culture and societies in former African colonies in the spheres of language and education at 30%, economic dependencies at 20%, cultural influence and legal and political systems at 10%, infrastructure and urban planning at 6%, social hierarchies and ethnic divisions, post-colonial politics, migration and diaspora and economic disparities at 5% while religious influence was at 4% as illustrated in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: How legacies of French colonial rule continue to shape culture and societies in former African colonies



Source: Research Findings 2023

The study results showed that the legacies of French colonial rule continue to have a profound impact on the cultures and societies of former French colonies in various ways. These effects are complex and multifaceted, and they vary from one country to another. French is often the official language in many former French colonies, and it remains an important language in education,

government, and business (Crumley,2010). The French education system, with its emphasis on the French language and curriculum, continues to influence education in these countries. The legal and political systems in many former French colonies are based on the French civil law tradition. This includes legal codes, administrative structures, and governance models. The legacy of French colonial administration has also shaped the way these countries are governed. Also, many former French colonies maintain economic ties with France, often through trade agreements and currency arrangements. This can lead to economic dependencies and imbalances in the relationship between the former colony and the former colonial power (Lavallee and Vicard,2010).

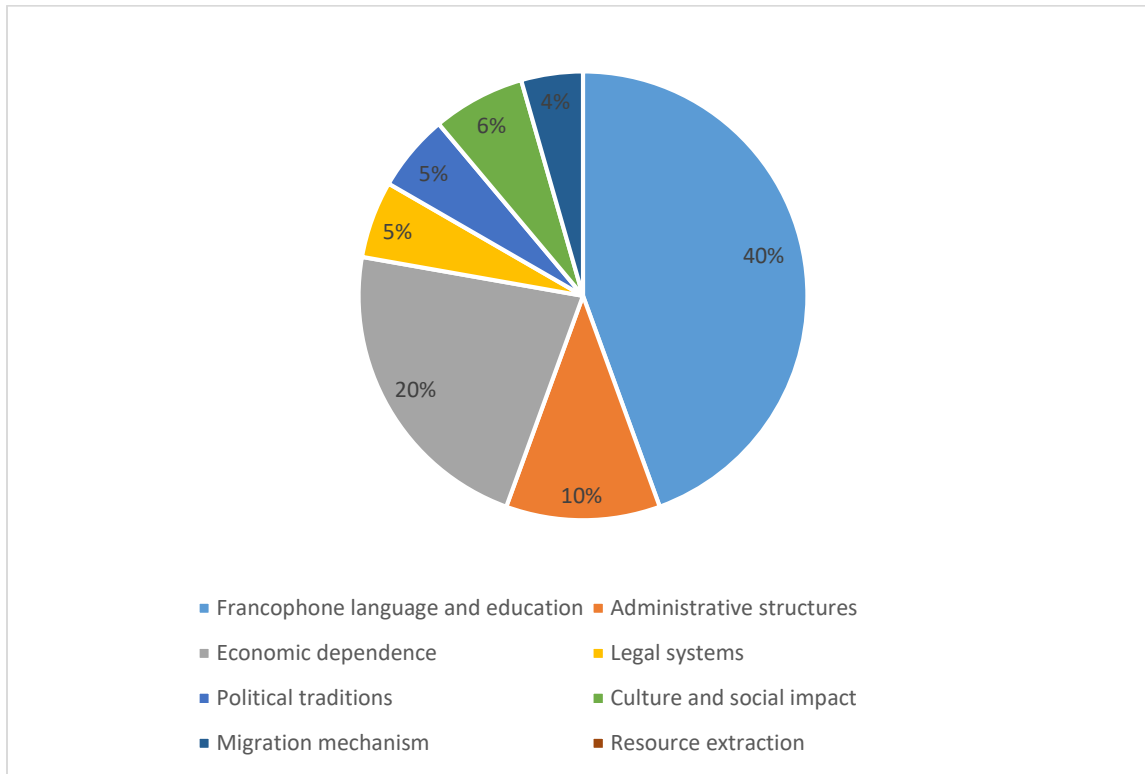
The study results also, showed that French culture, including art, literature, fashion, and cuisine, has had a significant impact on the cultures of these countries. French cultural elements can be found in various aspects of daily life, including food, clothing, and entertainment. French colonial rule often reinforced or exacerbated social hierarchies and ethnic divisions within the colonies. These divisions can persist and sometimes contribute to conflicts and tensions within these societies (Hugh,2010). Nevertheless, French colonial rulers often invested in infrastructure and urban planning in their colonies, which has left a lasting impact on the physical layout and development of cities and transportation networks. On religious influence, the Catholic Church was a significant presence in many French colonies, and its influence can still be seen in religious practices and the moral values of the population.

Further, the study results showed that the legacy of French colonialism also plays a role in the politics of many former colonies. Issues related to independence, governance, and national identity continue to shape the political landscape. The historical ties between France and its former colonies have led to significant migration flows between these countries. This has created diaspora communities in France and other former colonies, influencing culture, trade, and politics. Also, the economic structures put in place during colonial rule often favored the exploitation of resources for the benefit of the colonial power (Porter,2016). This has contributed to economic disparities and challenges in many former colonies. However, the impact of French colonial rule can vary widely from one former colony to another, depending on factors like the length of colonial rule, the specific policies implemented, and the subsequent history and development of each country. While some of these legacies have had positive effects, others have been more detrimental, and many former colonies continue to grapple with these legacies as they shape their own futures and identities.

4.2 Examples of mechanisms and consequences of French legacies in former African colonies

According to study findings, the examples of mechanisms and consequences of French legacies in former African colonies were Francophone language and education at 40%, economic dependencies mechanisms at 20%, resource extraction and administrative structures both at 10%, culture and social impact at 6%, legal systems mechanisms and political traditions at 5% while migration mechanisms was the lowest at 4% as illustrated in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Distribution of examples of mechanisms and consequences of French legacies in former African colonies



Source: Research Findings 2023

The study results reviewed that the French colonial legacy in former African colonies has had a profound and complex impact on these nations, shaping their political, economic, social, and cultural landscapes. The French colonial administration promoted the use of the French language and the French educational system in its colonies. As regards consequence, many African countries maintain French as an official language, and the French educational system remains influential. However, this has also created linguistic and educational disparities within these nations (Ness and Cope, 2015). Also, French colonial rule established centralized administrative systems in Africa, with power concentrated in the hands of the colonial authorities. Consequence: Post-independence governments often inherited these centralized structures, leading to challenges in decentralization and local governance. It can also contribute to political instability and authoritarianism. In addition, mechanism: French colonies were integrated into the French economic system, and their economies were structured to serve the interests of the colonial power. Consequence: Even after independence, many former colonies remain economically dependent on France, with trade and monetary policies influenced by the French government. This can hinder

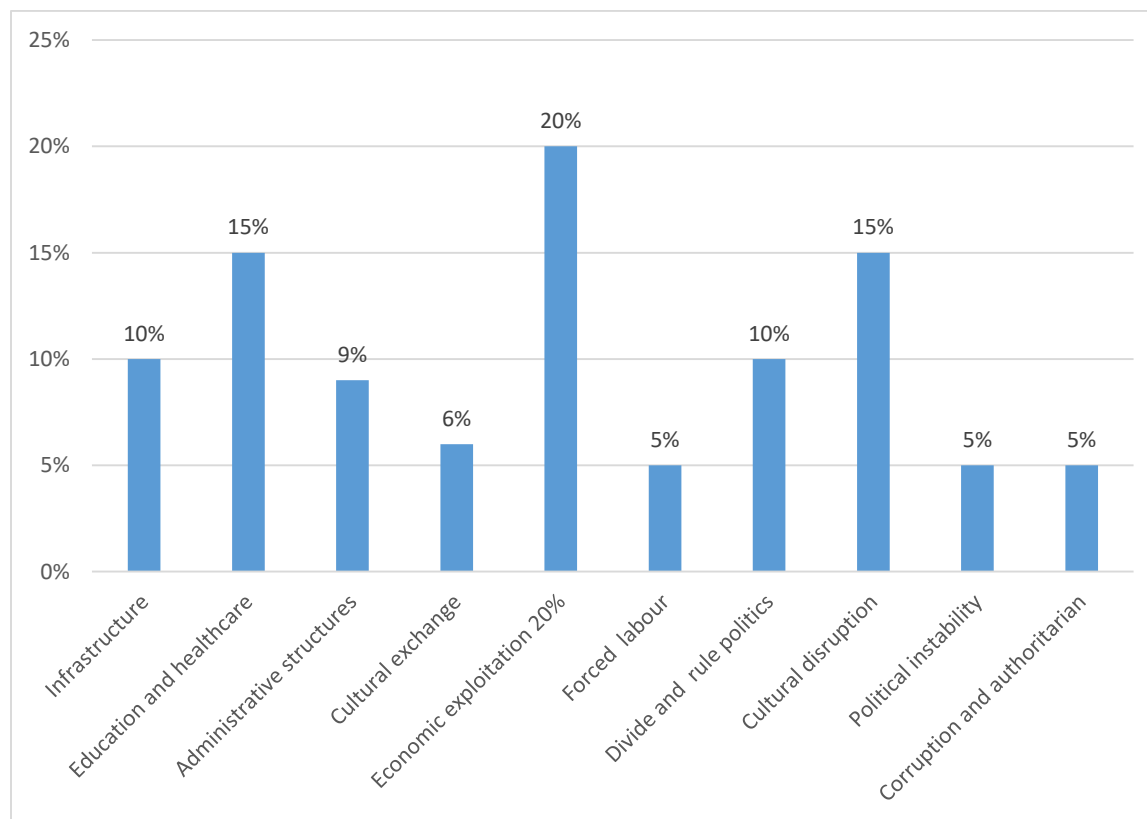
economic diversification and development (Hapkins and Cain,2015). The French civil law system was introduced in many African countries, replacing traditional legal systems. Consequence: While the civil law system can provide a stable legal framework, it can also create a disconnect between modern legal systems and local customs and traditions.

Further, the study reviewed that French colonialism left a legacy of centralized authority and a tradition of strong executive leadership. On consequence, post-independence governments in some countries have struggled with authoritarian rule, a lack of checks and balances, and political instability. French colonialism influenced African art, literature, and culture. It also shaped social hierarchies and attitudes toward race. African cultural expressions sometimes bear a French influence, and racial and social divisions created during colonial rule persist in some cases. Some former colonies maintain close military ties with France, including defense agreements and French military bases (UN,2017). While this can enhance security cooperation, it can also lead to concerns of continued neocolonialism and a lack of sovereignty in defense matters. The legacy of French colonialism has led to significant migration flows between former colonies and France. Migration has both positive and negative effects, including brain drain, remittances, and cultural exchange. French colonialism often exploited the natural resources of African colonies. The extraction of resources has had both economic benefits and environmental consequences in many former colonies (Marsh,2013). Nevertheless, the consequences of French colonial legacies in Africa are complex and vary from one country to another. While some legacies have been beneficial, others have contributed to ongoing challenges and inequalities in many African nations. Understanding these mechanisms and consequences is essential for addressing the issues and fostering development and stability in the region.

4.3 Positive and negative aspects of French colonial legacy on former African colonies

According to study findings, the legacy of French colonialism in former African colonies has had both positive and negative aspects. The positive aspects were at 40% while the negative aspects were at 60%. The positive aspects were education and culture at 15%, infrastructure at 10%, administrative structure at 9%and cultural exchange at 6% while the negative aspects were economic exploitation at20%, cultural disruption at15%, divide and rule policies at 10%, and forced labour, political instability and, corruption and authoritarianism all at 5% as illustrated in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3: Distribution of positive and negative aspects of French colonial legacy on former African colonies.



Source: Research Findings 2023

The study results reviewed that the legacy of French colonialism in former African colonies has had both positive and negative aspects. It's important to note that the impact of colonialism varies from one region to another, and not all former French colonies experienced the same effects.

On positive aspects, the study results reviewed that French colonial rule often led to the construction of infrastructure such as roads, railways, ports, and buildings, which in many cases laid the foundation for modern transportation and urban development in these regions. The French also established educational and healthcare systems in many African colonies. Although these systems were often designed to serve the interests of the colonial administration, they did contribute to increased literacy and access to healthcare (Martina,2011). French colonialism introduced bureaucratic and administrative structures that some African countries have continued to use after gaining independence. This has provided a foundation for governance and public administration. In addition, French colonialism facilitated cultural exchanges between France and its African colonies, leading to the blending of cultural elements. This exchange influenced art, cuisine, and language.

As regards the negative aspects, the study results reviewed that French colonial rule was often characterized by the extraction of natural resources, such as minerals, rubber, and agricultural products, which were sent to France. This economic exploitation left many colonies economically dependent and impoverished. The French colonial administration relied on forced labor in various forms, including *corvée* labor and forced recruitment. This led to the suffering and exploitation of the local population (Walter,2013). Colonial powers often exploited ethnic and religious differences in African societies to maintain control. These policies sowed the seeds of division and conflict that persist in some countries today. The imposition of French language and culture sometimes also led to the erosion of traditional customs, languages, and cultural identities in many African communities. This legacy of cultural disruption and alienation remains a concern. Further, French colonial policies, including the drawing of arbitrary borders, sometimes created conditions for political instability and conflict in post-independence Africa (Porter,2016). In some former French colonies, the colonial administration left behind a legacy of corruption, authoritarianism, and weak governance structures that continue to plague these nations. Nevertheless, the legacy of French colonialism is complex and multifaceted. While there were some positive contributions to infrastructure and education, these were often intertwined with significant negative consequences, including economic exploitation, cultural disruption, and political instability. The specific impact of French colonialism varies from one country to another, and many African nations continue to grapple with the long-lasting effects of their colonial history (Prestley,2018).

5.CONCLUSION

The ongoing influence of French colonialism on former African colonies is a complex and multifaceted issue that continues to shape the political, social, economic, and cultural landscapes of these nations. French colonialism left a lasting linguistic and cultural impact on many African countries. French remains an official language in numerous African nations, and French cultural elements, such as cuisine and fashion, continue to be influential. Many former French colonies adopted political systems and administrative structures modeled after the French system. This has sometimes resulted in centralized governments, which can be both a source of stability and a cause of authoritarian rule or political instability. Economic ties between former French colonies and France persist, with some countries using the CFA franc as their currency, and others maintaining preferential trade agreements with France. These economic arrangements can be both beneficial and constraining for these nations. Critics argue that French influence in Africa has transformed into a form of neocolonialism. This involves economic exploitation, political interference, and the perpetuation of dependencies that limit the self-determination of African nations. The French educational system continues to influence African education, but it can also perpetuate inequalities and reinforce a Eurocentric worldview. Additionally, French-trained administrators and elites have played significant roles in post-independence governance. The legacy of colonialism, including French colonialism, has contributed to many challenges in former African colonies, including issues of governance, corruption, ethnic tensions, and underdevelopment. These issues continue to have a significant impact on these countries' development. The influence of French colonialism on former African colonies remains a deeply ingrained aspect of these nations' identities and trajectories. The impact varies from one country to another and across different aspects of society, but it is undeniable that the legacy of colonialism, including French colonialism, continues to shape

the present and future of these African nations. Efforts to address the enduring consequences of colonialism, promote self-determination, and foster positive partnerships with former colonial powers are ongoing challenges for these countries.

6.RECOMMENDATIONS

The influence of French colonialism on former African colonies is still evident in various aspects of their societies and politics. The legacy of French colonialism in former African colonies has had both positive and negative aspects. Addressing the ongoing influence of French colonialism in former African colonies is a complex and multifaceted issue. It requires the collaboration of individuals, organizations, governments, and international bodies to foster positive change and empower African nations to shape their own destinies. While each country has its unique experience, here are some general recommendations on understanding and addressing this ongoing influence:

1. Historical Context:

- Africans should educate themselves and others about the history of French colonialism in Africa, including the specific policies and practices employed in different regions.
- Recognize that colonialism had a profound impact on the political, economic, social, and cultural structures of African societies and foster efforts to address these enduring consequences of colonialism.

2. Neocolonialism:

- Africans must be aware of neocolonialism and where former colonial powers maintain influence through economic, political, and cultural means, they should understand how it impacts the sovereignty of African nations and find amicable ways of charting their own destinies as sovereign nations.

3. Economic Dependency:

- Recognize the economic dependence on former colonial powers, often maintained through trade agreements, debt, and foreign aid. African should support efforts to renegotiate more favorable terms as well as increase trade amongst themselves.

4. Language and Education:

- Understand the role of the French language in former French colonies. Advocate for the promotion of indigenous languages and increased access to quality education.

5. Political Systems:

- Examine the legacy of French-influenced political systems and work towards building democratic institutions that reflect the needs and aspirations of African citizens.

6. Cultural Identity:

- Support cultural preservation and awareness initiatives to counteract the erosion of traditional African cultures due to colonialism's cultural assimilation.

7. Reparations and Restitution:

- Advocate for reparations for the damages caused by colonialism, including the repatriation of stolen cultural artifacts and resources.

8. Grassroots Movements:

- Support local movements and organizations that work to address the ongoing impact of colonialism, promote social justice, and advocate for human rights.

9. International Solidarity:

- Encourage international cooperation to address the legacy of colonialism and promote fair trade, equitable development, and human rights in Africa.

10. Diverse Perspectives:

- Embrace diverse viewpoints from African scholars, activists, and leaders who provide valuable insights into the ongoing influence of French colonialism and potential solutions.

11. Political Leadership:

- Support African leaders who prioritize economic self-sufficiency, social development, and cultural preservation. Hold governments accountable for transparent governance.

12. Academic Research:

- Promote academic research that examines the ongoing impact of colonialism on former French colonies and informs policy and public discourse.

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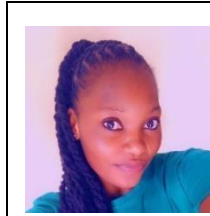
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