The United Arab Emirates and the Horn of Africa States

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by

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Abstract

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Because of globalism is broadly defined as the interconnecting and interdependency among peoples, countries, culture, particularly in markets and financial institutions, therefore, nations feel obliged to find ways in optimizing the profits of being interrelated with each other. The United Arab Emirates, which located almost at the geographical "middle" of the Middle East, has grasped in all directions to nations and regions that it considers to be important in terms of trade, market/commerce and security. Even though its primary security guarantees lays in the form of the Gulf Cooperation Council, which deals primarily with regional threats, and various domestic agencies which focus on civil security, cyber security and policing, the UAE also devotes considerable attention and resources to monitoring wider threats. This thesis analyses the relationship of the UAE and the Horn of Africa in order to provide some observations and assessment of the importance of the latter on the former in the area of security, economic and humanitarian. Due to a rising security crisis on Gulf of Yemen, the UAE decided to expand its foreign policy in Horn of Africa and to act decisively on multiple fronts. This thesis tries to establish what is being done and how effective the efforts are proving.

Indexing Terms: Horn of Africa, humanitarianism, port politics, UAE foreign policy, geopolitics

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To my wonderful children; Ali, Omar, Shamma and Shamayel,
To the Late my beloved parents, May Allah grants them with His best place,
To all my teachers in Khalifa University, and to my colleagues at my work place; NPCC.

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Declaration and Copyright

Declaration

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Khalifa University of Science and Technology. The work is entirely my own except where indicated by special reference in the text. Any views expressed in the thesis are those of the author and in no way represent those of Khalifa University of Science and Technology. No part of the thesis has been presented to any other university for any degree.

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Contents

Abstract iii
Declaration and Copyright v
Chapter 1: Introduction 3
1.1 Context to the Topic and Research Problem Description 3
1.2 Problem Statement and its Significance 7
1.3 Research Objectives 8
1.3.1 Statement of Research Aims 8
1.3.2 Research Question 9
1.3.3 Research Hypothesis 9
1.3.4 Variables, Concepts, and Indicators 9
1.4 Structure of Thesis 9
Chapter 2: Literature Review 11
2.1. Introduction 11
2.2. Conceptual framework 11
2.3. Regional context: History, Religion, Economy 11
2.4. Relationship of UAE with the Horn of Africa 12
2.5. UAE's Four-Pillared Foreign Policy in the Horn 13
2.6. Somaliland-UAE Military Base Deal 14
2.7. The Horn of Africa's Growing Importance to the UAE 15
2.8. Summary 16
Chapter 3: Methodology 17
3.1 Introduction 17
3.2 Research approach 17
3.3 Methods 20
3.4 Limitations of findings (Validity, Reliability and Generalizability) 22
3.5 Ethical issues 23
Chapter 4: Results 24
4.1 Introduction 24
4.2 Findings and Analysis: qualitative secondary research 24
4.2.1 Steps taken by UAE for engaging the states of Horn of Africa 24
4.2.2 Funding military bases and ports 25
4.2.3 Military Base 25
4.2.4 UAE and Eritrea 26
4.2.5 UAE and Somalia 27
4.2.6 Providing Facilities 28
4.2.7 Overcoming the risks 29
4.2.8 Berbera port and port of Assab 30

4.3 Impacts of geopolitical interests of the Horn in their relationship 31
4.3.1 Rivalry of Ethiopia and Eritrea stresses the relationship between Horn and UAE 32
4.3.2 Geopolitical Showdown of Horn 32
4.3.3 Geostrategic and Geopolitics of Horn 33
4.3.4 Geopolitical Challenges faced by Horn 33
4.3.5 Preventing Geopolitical complications of Horn 34
4.4 Security, economic and humanitarian issues in their relation 34
4.4.1 Security issues 34
4.4.2 Economic issues 36
4.4.3 Humanitarian Issues 36
4.5 Summary 37
Chapter 5: Discussion 39
5.1 Introduction 39
5.2 Security, Economic or Humanitarian concerns that drive the UAE's interest in the Horn of Africa. 39
5.3 Is the UAE driving the relationship? 43
5.4 Research Hypotheses 45
5.5 Summary 46
Chapter 6: Conclusion 48
6.1 Research implications 48
6.2 Further Research 49
6.3 Recommendations 50
6.4 Research Reflections 51
Bibliography 53

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Context to the Topic and Research Problem Description

The UAE has strong concerns about the global, regional and nation impact of the terrorism and potential destabilization caused by radical Islamist extremism. It has, for example, seen the involvement of the Brotherhood in Egypt and other countries in the Middle East as a significantly negative aspect of the so-called Arab Spring and it has consequently taken a very firm stand against the Brotherhood; a stand as firm as that against major Islamist groups like ISIS and Al-Qaeda. The UAE sees the Horn of Africa as a region of commercial and friendship opportunities but also of significant threats. Terrorism and intrastate conflict are certainly present, or were in recent decades, in all of the four countries within the Horn of Africa – Djbouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia – with the most well publicized example being the Al-Shabaab militant group in Somalia. Given that the Horn of Africa lies geographically besides the southern Arabian Peninsula, even though the UAE is not as close as, say, Saudi Arabia, Yemen or Oman, the close proximity creates a sense of risk that cannot be ignored.

This thesis aims to examine why the Horn of Africa is important for the UAE. Specifically, after the outbreak of conflict in Yemen in 2011, which determined the UAE's Armed Forces' role in protecting the GCC from extremism, the UAE has played a bigger role in the conflict-ridden Middle East and, correspondingly, in the Horn of Africa. This is, in part, due to its increasing economic, military, and political clout and represents a change from the past four decades, in which the UAE generally played a low-key role in the region. However, as the UAE has become a major economic capital and hub for global trade, the UAE has responded to security threats in its neighborhood countries by investing in infrastructure at home and abroad, including major investment in its military capabilities. Additionally, it has increasingly sought strategic alliances with other countries, including certain Horn of Africa states.

The Middle East is generally characterized as unstable. So too is the Horn of Africa. Additionally, since the onset of the Arab Spring in 2011, the UAE's foreign policy has been steadfast in its fight against religious extremism, particularly in the guise of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB, referring to the MB as a terrorist group, which the UAE considers as a threat to its regional stability. While these are often given as some of the main reasons why the UAE has shifted its strategic focus to safeguard its national

security and economy, this alone cannot explain the UAE's increasing interest in the Horn of Africa (Ulrichsen, 2013; Hedges & Cafiero, 2017).

It is undeniable that the clearest display of Emirati military power has been in Yemen, where UAE has a significant role in the Saudi-led coalition to restore Yemen's internationally-recognized government, crush the Houthi rebel movement, and to ensure the flow of commodities and oil through the Bab al-Mandab Strait. Further afield, the UAE has worked to cooperate with the international community to restore peace in Libya after years of war in that oil rich country which left many people dead and displaced.

The growing population in UAE has helped the Emirates to expand their foreign policy objectives and strategies, including the increasingly important search for natural resources in Africa and Asia. The UAE has seen this as an important strategy to support not only regional stability but also as a way of bringing economic growth to African countries. This approach, while generally welcome in Africa, has also come with the development of a stronger UAE military, which may flex its muscles on the African continent in the future. Correspondingly, through UAE Vision 2021, the country emphasizes the important of securing not only today's, but future economic development and safeguarding the gains.

The United Arab Emirates is getting involved into security cooperation relationships with a range of Horn of Africa states, to include Eritrea, with intentions to reduce instability and the growth of Islamist militias in the region and better prosecute the struggle against Iranian influence in Yemen. In doing so, the UAE signed a 30-year lease agreement for the use of the deep-water port at Assab as well as the Assab airfield. This includes a 3,500-meter runway from which the UAE can choose to land large transport aircraft including the C-17 Globemaster transports (Mello and Knights, 2016). The UAE reportedly agreed to refurbish the airport of Eritrea's capital city, offered a financial aid package, and increase fuel supplies to Eritrea (African Intelligence, 2015).

Given the UAE's strategic and largely military goals in this part of the Horn of Africa, Eritrea has risen in importance for the UAE. In order to create an environment conducive to cooperation, the UAE has offered a wide range of aid and infrastructure projects that will result in lessening Eritrea's international isolation and improve its moribund economy.

In September 2016, the government of the breakaway and de-facto independent Republic of Somaliland signed its biggest investment deal, to date, which will allow the moribund port of Berbera to become a major trading hub for goods to and from the Horn of Africa. The development of this $400 million project will be carried out by the UAE's Dubai Ports World (DP World). DP World is a mega-ports operator based in Dubai. The company was founded in 2005 and has a portfolio of 77 operating marine and inland terminals supported by over 50 related businesses in 40 countries across six continents. The deal was followed by another with the UAE, signed in March 2017, for a military base a few kilometers from the port. Locals and foreign investors believe that Berbera – and Somaliland - is on the edge of an economic booming, and this definitely will make the town wealthy once more (Gardner, 2017).

DP World will reportedly set up a joint venture with 65% control together with the government of Somaliland to manage and invest in the Port of Berbera (DP World, 2016). The investment of up to $442 million will include a first phase of a 400 meter quay and 250,000 square meter yard extension, and gantry cranes and reach stackers to handle containers and cargo. Construction of the quay extension is expected to start 12 months after the satisfaction of the terms and conditions of the agreement and will take 24 months to complete.

Total investment of up to $442 million will be phased over time and be dependent on port volumes, and will create a regional trading hub along with the scope for a free zone (DP World, 2016). The project will focus on containers with the capability to handle other types of cargo and will be implemented with the government of Somaliland.

Sultan Ahmed Bin Sulayem, Group Chairman and CEO, DP World, said: "We are delighted to extend our African footprint with a major investment in Somaliland. Investment in this natural deep-water port will attract more shipping lines to East Africa and its modernization will act as a catalyst for the growth of the country and the region's economy. "Berbera will contribute to our continued growth in the developing markets of Africa in the years ahead" (DP World, 2016).

Beyond Eritrea and Somaliland, the UAE has been heavily involved in the Horn of Africa state of Djibouti. Located at the southern entrance to the Red Sea, Djibouti is a tiny, dry country. However, because of its strategic geopolitical location guarding the approach north to Suez and south to the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean, Djibouti

has become a base for various forces, to include the US, France and China. It is used for covert, anti-terror and other operations in Yemen, as well as the US fight against the Al Shabab in Somalia and against Al Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). Key security interests in the region, including combating the jihadist threat in Africa. European and other international navies use Djibouti's port as a base in the fight against piracy from neighboring Somalia. Somali pirate attacks have dropped off: 176 attacks were recorded in 2011, and none in 2015, according to the EU naval force. These are important — and sometimes dangerous — waters. It also houses a deep water port that makes it particularly important for states operating blue water navies as well as states fielding large transport vessels, particularly tankers.

The largest and most important section of Djibout Port is the Doraleh Container Terminal launched in 2009. The latest port infrastructure project has been undertaken by the UAE under the leadership and guidance of DP World. The aims of building Doraleh is to benefit from its strategic geographical position to set itself as a regional hub for the regional container traffic by offering to its customers and trade communities world class infrastructures and services (DP World, 2018).

30 kilometres across the Gulf of Aden lies war-torn Yemen, devastated by a civil war that has pitched Al Houthi rebels — backed by Iran — against an internationally recognised government backed by Saudi-led air strikes. Extremist groups, including Al Qaida's Yemen-based branch, one of the militant network's most dangerous franchises, as well as Daesh forces, have also joined the battle for power in Yemen. "Djibouti is located exactly at the epicentre of all this [extremist] movement in the Horn of Africa and the southern part of the Middle East" (Gulf News, 2016).

The UAE's military outreach in Eritrea and Somaliland is coupled with enterprise and economic engagements in Djibouti and Somaliland. The importance of the eastern Africa region, particularly the Horn, is also demonstrated by the UAE's diplomatic presence. The UAE currently has 15 embassies in Africa. However, they are overwhelmingly located in North and East Africa, to include Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya.

Additionally, the UAE has gone from being largely focused on the Middle East to become one of the Arab world's most influential donors in support of poor and disadvantaged people in developing countries. The UAE has pursued the soft power

through its financial resources for aid and development to build international friendships, promote its perspectives, defend its interests, and enhance its reputation in particularly in its neighborhood countries and all countries in general.

The UAE's humanitarian missions in the Horn of Africa have been continuous for the past decade. In fact, on October 23rd, 2017, the former President of Somalia, Sharif Shaikh Ahmad humbly speaking to media at Somalia Embassy in Abu Dhabi expressed his gratitude to the UAE's rulers for extending great support in the aftermath of terror attack. He thanked UAE President His Highness Shaikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan; His Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai; and His Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, for standing by and helping the Somali people all the time, especially since civil war had broken out. Ahmad stated that the UAE is a country that has helping the continuously. He said "the UAE didn't delay for a day but stood in forefront to help us." (Ahmed, 2017)

Abdul Kadir Sheikhey Al Hatimi, Somali Ambassador to the UAE, also stated to Emirates News Agency (WAM) "The UAE's immediate response to airlift 100 of injured Somalis to receive treatment in Kenya at its cost has alleviated the human suffering and limited human losses due to that heinous attacks," (Ahmed, 2017)

UAE has been a provider for medical supplies and medicines to Somali hospitals to increase their capacities to provide health-care services to the increasing number of injured people (Ahmed, 2017).

1.2 Problem Statement and its Significance

Is the UAE's recent interest in the Horn of Africa solely driven by security concerns? Or is the UAE equally driven by profits, humanitarian concerns and diplomatic clout that characterizes rising powers? Additionally, what role do Horn of Africa states play currying the interest of the UAE in order to advance their own interests?
There is no doubt that security concerns have generated a large part of the UAE's interest in the Horn of Africa. As an oil-producing state dependent on the export of fossil fuels – particularly via tanker ships – the UAE has a deep-seated interest in keeping the world's shipping lanes safe. Choke points, located in the worlds' narrow straits, are of particular concern. One of these, the Bab-al-Mandeb Strait, is the narrow

body of water separating Africa and the Middle East, more specifically stretching between Djibouti and Yemen and linking the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea. The rise of piracy along the northern and eastern Somali coasts beginning in 2007 resulted in the hijacking of several ships, including oil tankers and the payment of large ransoms. It also disrupted shipping in the Indian Ocean and the Strait. While this threat has dissipated largely through the concerted action of UN-sanctioned combined maritime forces, the conflict in Yemen and insecurity on the opposite side of the Strait in the Horn of Africa has led to recurrent concerns about the safety of shipping lanes. Looking at Horn of Africa as geostrategic point in the world and given how much trade and oil flow through the Bab el-Mandeb Strait every year, it is natural for the UAE to be concerned about the security of this region. However, this may be only half the story. The importance of this thesis and its study of the factors that contributed to the UAE's recent interest in the Horn of Africa is that also looks at other key variables, including economic motives – to include profit by major UAE companies – as well as diplomatic clout and interest in rising power prestige. The UAE appears to be motivated by security concerns but also by deep-seated humanitarian concerns, with officials publicly stating their interest in ending the conflict not only in Yemen but also disputes on the other side of the Strait. The UAE's famine relief in Somalia and elsewhere in the Horn has been welcomed regionally and internationally and cannot be said to be driven primarily by security concerns.

Lastly, the UAE's decisions to involve itself ever more heavily in the Horn has major implication for the regional balance of power. An additional effect of this important research is that it will add significantly to existing political science, particularly international relations, as well as security studies theory.

1.3 Research Objectives

1.3.1 Statement of Research Aims

The research aims are to explain the recent interest and growing relationship between the UAE and the Horn of Africa states, particularly in regards to the port of Berbera in Somaliland. This information will be used to inform current and future UAE policy in regards to best managing risks and expectations. It will do so by identifying the political fault lines and rivalries at play in the Horn of Africa.

1.3.2 Research Question

The explanatory research question is formulated as "**What explains the UAE's recent interest in the Horn of Africa?"**

This can be divided into the following questions, which are answered in Chapter 5:

- What steps has the UAE taken to engage Horn of Africa states?
- How is the relationship informed or driven by the geopolitical interests of Horn of Africa states?
- Is the UAE's relationship driven by security, economic or humanitarian concerns?

1.3.3 Research Hypothesis

The primary research hypothesis of this thesis is formulated as "The UAE's recent interest in the Horn of Africa is driven primarily by security concerns."

A related but secondary hypothesis of this thesis is formulated as "There is a positive correlation between the UAE's involvement in the Horn of Africa and the regional interests of certain Horn of Africa states, particularly Ethiopia."

1.3.4 Variables, Concepts, and Indicators

The key concept of this research is UAE foreign policy in the context of the increased unrest in the Horn of Africa and the Arabian Peninsula.

Dependent Variable: The UAE's increasing relationship with Horn of Africa states.

Independent Variable: Insecurity on both sides of the Bab al-Mandab Straits and the operationalizing of geopolitical aims by Horn of Africa states.

Indicators of the Dependent Variable are the steps and agreements the UAE takes in the Horn of Africa.

1.4 Structure of Thesis

The introductory chapter puts the research into context, considers the problem, the aims and objectives of the research, and present definitions of the factors involved in this study. The literature review will explore the available academic literature on this topic, considering the geopolitical interests of the Horn of Africa as well as the UAE and the rise in security concerns on both sides of the Bab al-Mandab Straits. The methodology chapter will then present a paradigm for literature and media reports as well as an exploration of the source material from which data will be sourced. Chapter four will present the results, particularly examples of recent UAE involvement in the Horn of

Africa, examples of Horn of Africa states' interest in the UAE and a case study of Berbera Port. Chapter five will then discuss the results of this research, attempting to answer and rank what drives the UAE's interest in the Horn of Africa: security, economic or humanitarian concerns and whether the UAE driving the relationship or is being driven, in some cases, by the interests of Horn of Africa states. Chapter 5 will conclude with a discussion on any problems with this research. Finally, chapter 6 will present the conclusions of this research, presenting recommendations on this topic and areas for further research and reflections on this research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

The present chapter studies the literature regarding the relationship between UAE and Horn of Africa, paying special attention to the emergence of the Berbera port deal. Due to its unique location, Horn of Africa occupies an advantageous strategic position. In the present scenario, and as the Middle Eastern region goes through significant security and political changes, the Horn of Africa region is increasingly viewed as an important strategic asset (Weber, 2017). Berbera port in Somaliland has recently caught the attention of different parts of the world and the interest of UAE over the port has resulted in improvements to the infrastructure and the management of the port. Furthermore, UAE has developed various strategic goals in order to strengthen its regional clout and improve the security of the Horn of Africa as well.

2.2. Conceptual framework

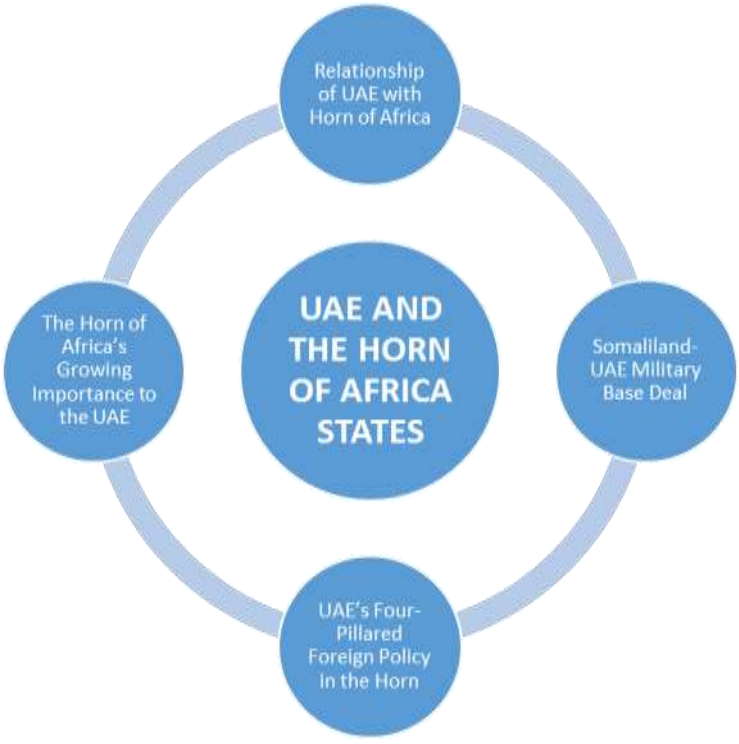

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

(Source: Self-created)

2.3. Regional context: History, Religion, Economy

The Horn of Africa and The Middle East are a part of a common religious, trade and historical background. A major link between Africa and the Middle East has been the

Red Sea and Nile River, which has separated two regions and witnessed the same cultural, historical and religious legacies along with trade, migration and security concerns. There are three main Abraham religions that bind the regions, namely Christianity, Islam and Judaism. Different holy sites such as Jerusalem, Mecca and Medina are the traditional and most popular pilgrimage destination for every religious adherent in the region.

However, the Horn of Africa is also a venue for conflicts between Islam and Christianity which may negatively impact the building of a constructive partnership. To cope up with the political and security crisis produced in the Horn of Africa, particularly Yemen, the UAE has acted as a junior partner to Saudi Arabia in terms of foreign policy and directives. Moreover, the GCC countries have already utilized the Horn of Africa as a battleground for their proxy wars (Laakso and Hautaniemi, 2014). Further, the Horn of Africa has been utilized for expansion of the extremist version of Islam in the region so as to flourish in economic competition. Therefore, it can be said that, the lingering conflicts in the horn between Eritrea and Ethiopia, South Sudan and Sudan, Eritrea and Djibouti along with the war in Yemen that needs to be resolved in order to ensure a safe and secured neighborhood. This would not evolve as a proxy wars groud between the recruitment boon and bigger rivals for religious extremists.

The economic situation for the Horn of Africa would have been worse if trade did not persist between these two regions. The link with the Horn of Africa can be extended to the trade in charcoal, livestock and other exports (Abdulle, 2017). Similarly, the UAE is also responsible for exporting a large quantity of merchandise to the Horn of Africa. UAE not only invested on the export but also provided support on the manufacturing, seaport management and agriculture in the Horn of Africa. Furthermore, the UAE and the rest of the GCC host a large number of employment and business opportunities for the population of Horn of Africa by inviting migrant laborers from the region.

2.4. Relationship of UAE with the Horn of Africa

Along with such interventions of UAE, the trained labor migration is a new developed cooperative strategy meant to benefit mutually. This initiative was taken with a primary aim to reduce the poverty in the Horn of Africa region along with the development of the UAE. Highly skilled human resources are the primary requirement for the development of the country. Moreover, there is more than ten million unemployed and underemployed workforces in the Horn of Africa. A constructive relationship between these two regions has successfully benefited both the region by reducing poverty and

unemployment over the Horn of Africa and avoiding any depletion of trained and skilled human resources (Bereketeab, 2017). The Horn of Africa and UAE took the initiative of merging political, regional and economic situation of both the countries so as to foster a stronger relationship and contribute towards global development.

2.5. UAE's Four-Pillared Foreign Policy in the Horn

The foreign policy pillars of the UAE are the trade and tourism along with counter-terrorism and containment of regional influence. The political economy of UAE is not influenced by religious imperatives likeother states of the Middle East region. As a result, the relationship between the Horn of Africa and UAE are generally strong and the adopted foreign policy is devoid of any religious agenda (Strachan, 2016). This is the reason the future perspective between these two countries look prosperous and a sustainable partnership.

The United Arab Emirates has been more assertive in international and domestic policymaking than before. Their foreign policies towards the Horn of Africa has been upgrading gradually, as the states of Horn is are not only their neighboring land but one of the main arena of their business expansion. "Four-Pillared" policy is one of the most effective policies among UAE's foreign policies (Affi*et al.* 2016).

Main four issues of this policy are the trade, tourism, counterterrorism and checking domination of Iran. UAE has used these as their path to enter into the land, expand business and finally control the ruling power.

Trade issues:

Trade is the main route UAE has chosen to control the Horn of Africa. Initially, Emirates aspired to serve as a manufacturer by purchasing several agricultural products from different places if Africa. After that, the entire process of packing, selling and making them prepared for global consumption (Marchand*et al.* 2017). This was one of the finest ways to expand their business in the lucrative market of Africa.

Tourism sector:

Dufour*et al*. (2018) commented that, UAE has utilized Horn of Africa states including Somaliland to compete with the rapidly growing trade and global influence of Qatar. That is why they concentrated on each sector of business. Due to arranging football World Cup, Qatar had made a huge business in tourism sector during that certain time. Horn of Africa states are quite backward among Muslim countries, so it was easy for UAE to build up their military base and engage those areas for their tourism business.

Counterterrorism:

Counterterrorism is the way UAE used to enter almost forcefully into the Horn of Africa states. They have been proving to be more powerful than Africa peninsula and to prove their power they secured two main military bases in Eritrea and Somaliland (Manjang, 2017). It was also another strategic plan of UAE to take advantage of these places in Yemen war.

Controlling the domination of Iran:

Iran was one of the fear factors in front of UAE. Dr Anwar Gargash, UAE minister of state for foreign affairs strongly accuses Iran of trying to enter and push the states of Arab. In order to resist chaos of Iran in the Horn of Africa, UAE used Assab and other areas of Somaliland to build up a military base.

These above issues are the major sectors used by UAE to enlarge their business in the Horn of Africa and finally grasp their market and socio-political aspects.

2.6. Somaliland-UAE Military Base Deal

The deal of military base between Somaliland and UAE is another important and controversial topic regarding UAE's engagement on Somalia's neighbor the Horn of Africa. This incident has been taken place at the time of self-declared republic in Somaliland. There is controversy about the strategic importance of UAE's military base on the Horn. The agreement of military base of UAE on Somalia is for 25 years. Finally, the confusion has been cleared as the Aviation minister of Somaliland Farhan Adan Haybe has declared that after 25 years, Somaliland will engage their own military base in the border area. Somaliland also signed a deal with DP World, which operates port internationally (Cannon and Rossiter, 2017). This deal will result in the upgrade of Berbera port. Berbera port was one of the main focuses of UAE to engage Horn of Africa states because of its position which is helpful to enter directly in the Horn. UAE has utilized this positional advantage of Berbera port and they have entered in term of business purposes.

Not only Berbera UAE has secured already their military base also in the port of Assab. In fact, UAE has almost forcefully entered and built up their military base. They have modified the entire structure and facility system of the port of Assab so that their improved war instruments can easily enter through Assab.

According to the observers of the Somaliland-UAE Military base deal, the neighbors of Somaliland in the Horn of Africa have proved too controversial. It became a part of a coalition that has led to the fighting of Houthi rebels and resulted in the imposition of a naval blockade of Yemen. The consequences or the impact has been huge since 2015

after more than 10000 people are killed and more than 40000 people are wounded (Manjang, 2017). However, according to the president of Somaliland, the deal was primarily aimed at creating job opportunities for the population. Due to rising political tension, Somaliland declared itself to be independent of Somalia in 1991. Additionally, the country signed a deal for upgrading the port of Berbera into a military base which was mainly used for exporting livestock to the Middle East.

2.7. The Horn of Africa's Growing Importance to the UAE

Horn of Africa is now playing almost a pivotal role in security interests of UAE at the time of rising international uncertainty, domestic transformations and regional conflicts. That is the reason UAE is spreading their foothold in the Horn, especially including Eritrea and Somaliland. According to Abdulle (2017), "Pivot to the Horn" policy of Abu Dhabi has been designed to control three major security concerns like the instability of Yemen, freedom of navigation threats and piracy.

(a) Yemen war has played the main role in UAE's military engagement in Somaliland and Eritrea. The land of the Horn is helpful for UAE to fight from and it will provide those advantages. Therefore, this land carries extra value to them.

(b) The Horn is a centre of attraction to many traders during a long period of time. The alluring market of Africa is also another attraction to almost all the countries. That is another reason UAE became so much interested in them. From the very beginning, UAE focused on the developed agriculture of the Horn and their productivity.

(c) Pivot to the horn strategy also combines several national policies with the growing domestic disturbance, regional conflict and military prestige. Therefore the Horn is becoming interesting to all the major powers of UAE including Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Egypt, Iran and others. They not only focusing on the interesting business opportunities of the land but similarly they are trying to control the regional conflicts by their military power in order to clear their trade issues.

Therefore, it can be assessed that, the study helps to evaluate and investigate the relationship between UAE and Horn countries of Africa generally, Eritrea, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan and Djibouti. The article produces a brief sketch of the religious and historical ties and focuses on the foreign policy of UAE related to Horn countries of Africa. However, further research is necessary to understand the impact of policies of

UAE on Horn countries in order to develop effective ideas to develop beneficial relations with the Horn of Africa.

2.8. Summary

This above chapter is about understanding the engagement of the UAE and their relationship with the Horn of Africa states. The researcher has reviewed several secondary sources to gain knowledge about this particular topic. Many scholars have their analysis and discussion about it and here some of them have been collected. This chapter will surely help to know not only about the relation between UAE and the Horn but the entire historical, regional and economic context of their relation. The background of building up UAE military base in Somaliland and how Somalia accepted this deal has been clearly manifested here. The researcher has analyzed different shades of UAE's foreign policies and growing interest of Emirates towards Horn with a spontaneous discussion.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The Horn of Africa has an important strategic position in the world map. The engagement of various states of Middle East especially Turkey and UAE with the states of Horn of Africa is a very common picture from the past few decades. This research has been organized in order to discuss this security engagement and those particular socio-political aspects of the relation between them. Here the researcher has collected information from the port of Berbera. Final findings are based on the collected raw information and their analysis. This chapter will help to develop effective methods and techniques in order to evaluate and investigate the relationship between the UAE and the Horn of Africa states, particularly Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia. The entire research has been conducted through an organized method and the following chapter will throw light on each of the sectors.

3.2 Research approach

This current research has followed a certain philosophy and has used a particular approach and design. This section will describe the philosophy, approach and the research design used here by the researcher.

Research Onion:

Research Onion is actually one kind of research tool, which is greatly used for writing the research methodology of a research work. This tool is used to provide a graphical representation of the entire methodology which makes the topic easier to understand. Each of the mentioned topics in research onion has its individual illustration. This model helps to understand the different approach of each section and its proper justification supporting the main topic.

Research Philosophy:

There are several kinds of research philosophies like Pragmatism, Positivism, Realism and others. The ***pragmatism philosophy*** is the right choice for this research as it can elaborate a vast topic in an organized way. Here the researcher has such a topic which also has a vast arena of discussion (Mackey & Gass, 2015). Only news, books, internet information are not enough to understand the real socio-political picture of Horn of Africa after the engagement of UAE on them. Therefore, a huge number of raw data and information have been needed to know about UAE's foreign policies to engage the states of Horn of Africa, the relationship between UAE and Somalia and influence of

their geopolitical interests. The political, economic and security issues are also another concerns of this research. Therefore, this philosophy is appropriate for this research rather than the others.

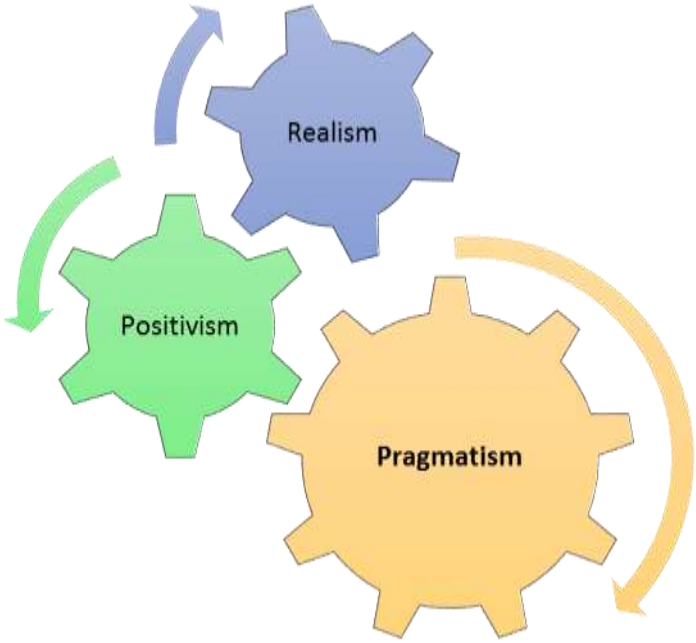

Figure 1: Different kinds of Research Philosophies

(Source: Morgan, 2014)

Research Approach:

Deductive and Inductive are the main two approaches used to conduct a research work. When the inductive approach focuses on the modern or new theories and data to understand a particular topic, then deductive approach includes test theory and a vast series of data. The usage of both depends on the topic of the research; here the nature of research topic is very sensitive. UAE's foreign policy in Horn of Africa states along with their impacts on the social and political sectors of the Horn is the main concern of this research (Flick, 2015). ***Deductive approach*** is applicable to both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Here the research has followed a case study of Berbera port. In fact to understand the engagement of UAE in the Horn of Africa, the historians' analysis is not sufficient. Therefore, face to face conversation is a vital part of this research, which has helped to collect an enormous amount of genuine data. That is why here deductive approach is more appropriate than inductive approach to fulfill the research goal.

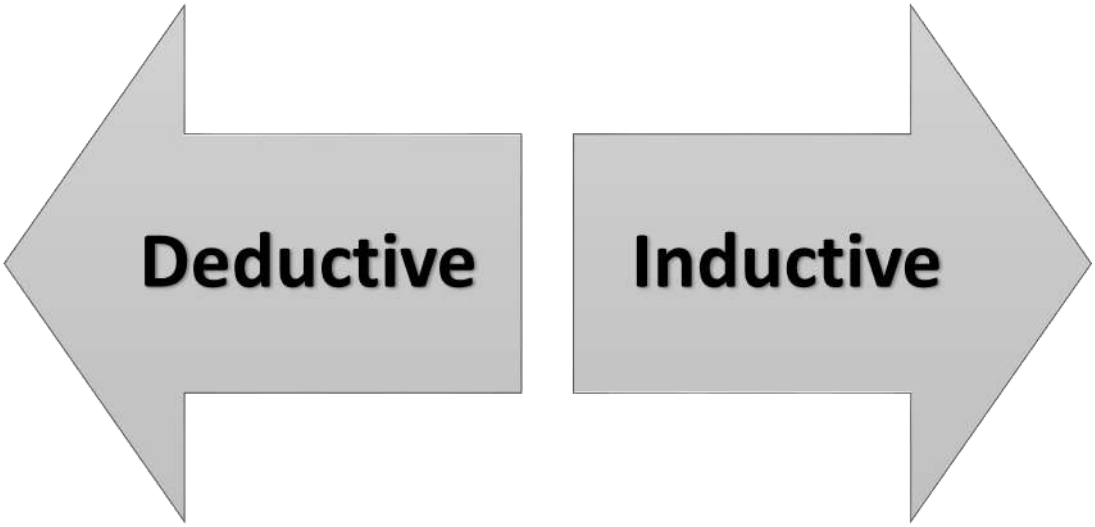

Figure 2: Different kinds of Research Approaches

(Source: Cho & Lee, 2014)

Research Design:

Various kinds of research designs can be used for a research work. Descriptive, Explanatory, Exploratory are some of the common research designs. ***Descriptive design*** is useful when an individual wants to gain knowledge about a large number of people or a group. The exploratory design helps to get familiar with data and start with hypothesis and explanatory design helps to show something in specific way. On other side, deductive design has a great application in case of interviews, surveys even case-studies as it helps to depict the participants in a proper way. The relation lies between UAE and the Horn of Africa and its impacts on their people and socio-political aspects of the Republic of Somaliland are some major issues of discussion. The roots of the topic are inherited deeply in past and current attitudes of UAE towards the Horn. Therefore, this design is perfect to elaborate the various shades of the above topic (Meyers, Gamst & Guarino, 2016)

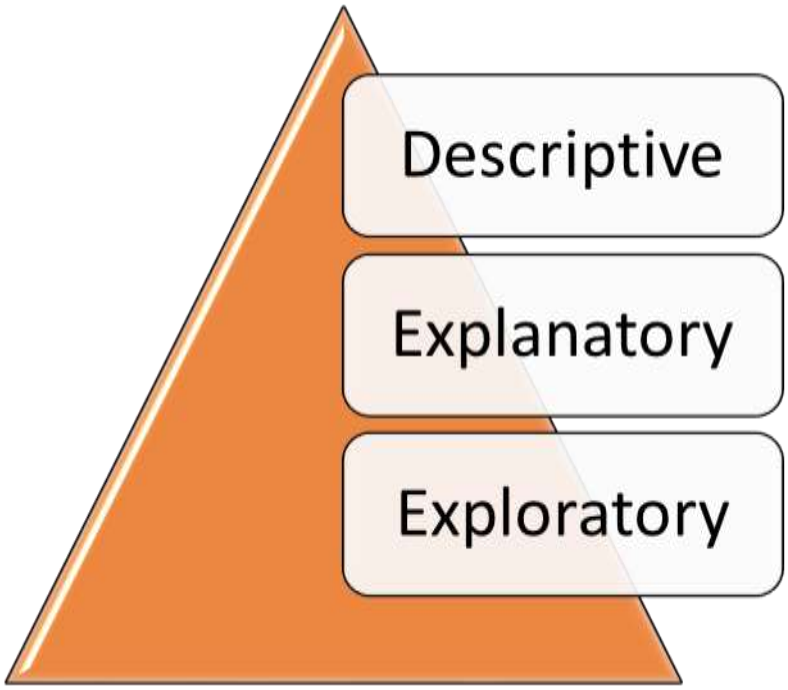

Figure 3: Different kinds of Research Designs

(Source: Meyers, Gamst & Guarino, 2016)

3.3 Methods

Methods used to conduct a research is basically includes the procedures of data collection and the result of analyzing the collected data. Here the topic is based on the relationship between UAE and the Horn of Africa along with Somalia. The bookish knowledge could not help properly to gain a perfect picture of UAE engagement on Horn, in fact, a direct connection and conversation were needed to make true sense regarding political and security issues of Emirates. That is why the Berbera is a suitable place for the researcher to collect information from. This section is supposed to describe mainly the data collection and the analyzing procedures for this current research.

Data Collection Method:

Here the researcher has applied the secondary method to collect data for the research. Basically the primary method is very helpful for getting genuine data especially when the area of the research is vast and it deals with an important and sensitive issue. The researcher has selected secondary data from the internet or several books, journals and newspaper. In fact, the political situation, security issues and obviously the reactions of the common people towards the decision of the nation is not possible to recognize from the secondary data sources. In case of this research, it was not possible for the researcher to reach Berbera port and collect data due to shortage of time and money. At the initial stage, various secondary sources such as books, journals and websites

regarding this current topic have helped the researcher to understand the proper method, design and approach should be chosen to conduct the research. Finally, the researcher has chosen the secondary data collection procedure to conduct this research (Johnston, 2017).

After getting basic knowledge about the procedure about the research methodology, the researcher has taken help from several books and journals about the problems of engagement of UAE in Horn of Africa. The issue is highly sensitive and already many scholars have analyzed this topic, even several research works have also been done on this, these samples have helped the researcher to know more about it and understand the existing situation. Several websites of UAE's foreign political policies regarding their engagement on Horn of Africa are also useful to provide adequate data for this current research. Within a short time and limited money, it was not possible for the researcher to reach to Somaliland or Berbera Port for interview but their newspapers have provided concrete idea about the entire situation. Therefore, the researcher has to surf internet and went through various source of information immensely (Stage & Manning, 2015).

Data Analysis Procedure:

Data analysis is the most important part of a research because it determines the final findings from the collected data. Qualitative and Quantitative both are equally popular and important data analysis research method (Taylor, Bogdan & DeVault, 2015). The quantitative method is mainly based on practical numeric data that finally provides statistical results. This above topic is much more concerned with the social and political atmosphere and dilemma regarding the relationship between UAE and Somalia and UAE's engagement on the Horn of Africa. Therefore, numeric data do not have a big function here; rather the conversation between the researcher and the governing body of Berbera port could have helped the researcher more though it has not been possible due to limitations of money and time. In fact, the security issue was another barrier for the primary data collection through interviews (Silverman, 2015). This research requires a lot of information about both UAE and the Horn to their relation properly; even the researcher also needs to collect more samples on same issue to justify their genuineness. Only internet and libraries have helped to collect huge amount of data. After that Qualitative method has helped to deal with this huge amount of data. Therefore, the qualitative method has been chosen for this current research. At the very initial stage of qualitative data analysis, the researcher must need to get a proper concept of the data and their key points. In case of this research, being familiar with the data was not very difficult as the researcher not only went through them but collected them directly from

genuine sources. Second step is to find out the similarity among the collected data. At this stage, information about similar topics from different books and journals has been justified properly to know whether they are actually true (Ragin, 2014). In the qualitative method, the researcher gets the opportunity to analyze a large amount of data in the easier way.



Figure 4: Different stages of Qualitative Research

(Source: St. Pierre & Jackson, 2014)

3.4 Limitations of findings (Validity, Reliability and Generalizability)

In the several stages of this research, the researcher has faced different kinds of problems. Sometimes, the problem was in choosing the proper methods but the major problems were faced at the time of following those methods and executing them. This kind of issues is highly dependent on the people involved in the system and the entire situation of the place. Therefore, a researcher can make perfect knowledge about this through interviews, surveys and observing the entire situation thoroughly. In this current research Primary data collection has not been possible therefore the researcher had to depend on several books, journals and web contents to know about the place and the socio-political aspects of UAE and the Horn of Africa states. That is why; the research has lacked some important things like reaction of the people of Somalia, reviews of the government agents of Berbera port regarding UAE's engagement on the Horn and future of these strategies. Only the scholarly articles of the previous research work were the main sources of information for the researcher. The e-books, e-journals,

websites, old and current newspaper have played here the role of research sample. In fact, the research has not been properly done for shortage of money, time and security issues. Therefore, it is surely leaving many scopes for further study on this above topic to know more about UAE's engagement on the Horn of Africa. In future, more allotment of money and time will help to collect primary data and conduct the research properly. Simultaneously, this research will surely work as a useful guide for further study on this topic.

3.5 Ethical issues

The researcher observed all ethical and moral issues while conducting this research, even though this thesis contains no personal interviews or any other form of human subject and data collection that may have implications on officials or other employees. I submitted a Waiver for Human Subject Research to Dr. Brendon Cannon (Thesis Supervisor) on 08/03/2018.

Chapter 4: Results

4.1 Introduction

According to many scholars, the security and political situation in the Horn of Africa is fragile and therefore is of concern to many of its neighbors, to include the UAE. While there are conflicts closer to home, such as the ongoing civil war in Yemen, the UAE's interest in the Horn states have risen over the past decade and they have made engagement with Horn of Africa states a priority.

The researcher has collected data from different secondary sources and the data has been analyzed through qualitative data analysis method. Moreover, the researcher has tried to collect information about the engagement of UAE in the Horn and the relationship between them. At the very initial stage of research, particular goals and questions were manifested in chapter one and the entire research work has been done in order to achieve those goals and arrive at cogent and relevant answers. This chapter will provide the results the researcher has gleaned from the research and the knowledge extracted from the collected data.

This below study is as important as the previous chapters because it will provide adequate knowledge about UAE's initiatives to engage the Horn of Africa states. The entire discussion will throw light on the main topic of correlation between UAE's relation and regional interests in the Horn. The geopolitical interests of Horn and how it influences their relationship with the UAE are another concern of this chapter. Apart from these, it will manifest differing, driving factors such as security, economy, humanitarianism and other areas of concern informing the UAE's substantive engagement.

4.2 Findings and Analysis: qualitative secondary research

4.2.1 Steps taken by UAE for engaging the states of Horn of Africa

It is seen that UAE has tried its best to expand its influence within the Horn of Africa. The geography diversity, population, politics, history as well as culture have made the Horn of Africa far too prone towards conflict. As such, the sea port developments took place within this security framework and in two phases. Furthermore, the competition for prestige and influence in the region has influenced the moves by certain Gulf States, as the rivalry stretches beyond of Horn of Africa and straddles the critical Bab-el-

Mandeb strait. The mentioned strait links the Red Sea with the Gulf of Aden. It was found that this strategic strait coupled with the war in Yemen has informed much of the decision-making in Abu Dhabi and Dubai regarding engagement with the Horn, particularly Somaliland and Ethiopia.

4.2.2 Funding military bases and ports

The autonomous state of Puntland, in northeast Somalia, has signed a concession of 30-years' with Dubai for developing and managing the multipurpose port within the city of Bossaso (Rondos, 2016). The deal was signed after that signed with the self-declared independent Republic of Somaliland. This agreement saw major investment in the moribund Berbera port and allowed the UAE to establish a military base near the Berbera port. The upgrades to the port will ideally create a regional trading hub on the coast of the Red Sea. With Somaliland largely peaceful for the past 25 years, a new frontier was paved for global powers for the deepening of their presence on the strategic waterway (Rondos, 2016). In neighboring Djibouti, the military bases have been established by China, France, the United States, and Japan. The military forces, sometimes in concert, conducted counter-terrorism operations along the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean.

It is found that UAE is mainly concerned by potentially lucrative economic ventures along the Red Sea and Gulf of Yemen littoral. It is also intent on containing or stamping out Iranian influence in the region. Furthermore, the ambitions of the UAE are underpinned by concerns over the growing presence of Turkey within the wider region. Marchand, et al. (2017) opined that in the near future, the agreements surrounding the port may face legal complications. This is possible because the deal was signed with the unrecognized, de-fact independent Republic of Somaliland. As such, the deal will likely face legal obstacles and diplomatic efforts of Somalia.

4.2.3 Military Base

The most concrete step the UAE has taken to engage the Horn of Africa states is the establishment of military bases in Eritrea and Somaliland and the economic engagement. The UAE has trained and equipped security and counterterrorism units in Somalia (Costagli et al., 2017). The UAE military training base in Somalia was opened in 2015 and has provided training for the Somali National Army (SNA). The UAE has developed its relationships with the Horn of Africa states by investing a huge amount of

money in natural gas exploitation, food security projects, port infrastructure and other projects.

According to Weber (2017), the UAE is respected in the Horn for its strong and well-organized military system as well as its incredible development path and human capital. This is the most important thing UAE has used to establish their engagement. Because of the security complex in the Horn of Africa and wider region, the UAE is viewed as a lynchpin partner.

The main concern of the UAE in the Horn is the threat of Iranian expansion. It is found that Iran is trying to establish organizations like Hezbollah in its region. Furthermore, the support of Iran for Houthi rebels in Yemen and their shipment of missiles that threaten both the UAE and Saudi Arabia constitute a direct and dire threat (Weber, 2017). They have decided to increase military strength and reach to restrict the forces of Iran over the Horn.

The second area of concern is the threat of the Muslim Brotherhood. As such, the UAE has attempted to balance the power of both Turkey and Qatar in the region. From the beginning of Gulf crisis, it is found that Turkey backed its leadership within Doha, which sends a signal that they have not left the Qatar alone (Manjang, 2017).

In terms of influencing the socio-political atmosphere in the Horn, the UAE has tried to build up military power in the major areas of the Horn. Even outside Yemen, they have built up military presence in Eritrea mainly in its port Assab and are in the process of refurbishing the port of Berbera and using the airbase nearby. These military bases are not only for observing the environment, but rather they are nodes of control that can influence the security arena decisively. They had their developed infrastructure of getting satellite images and using aircraft like the fighter jet, helicopter, and drones and so on. UAE officials had complete command on the military force, their operations. Recently, US President Donald Trump approved more aggressive airstrikes against targets in the Horn of Africa and Yemen (Rondos, 2016). This was applauded by the UAE and they have already engaged more progressive campaign and several aids to the Horn. It has become possible and easier for them to expand the military force to Somaliland.

4.2.4 UAE and Eritrea

Perhaps the best example of UAE military engagement in the Horn of Africa is Eritrea. When Eritrea was struggling for their independence from Ethiopia, the UAE was one of the main aid donors to Eritrea (Manjang, 2017). Afterwards, Eritrea opened their

Embassy in UAE (Affi et al. 2016). A rancorous relationship and a diplomatic rift between the UAE and Djibouti were to the benefit of both Eritrea and its arch-enemy, Ethiopia. A rift is noticed between Djibouti and UAE. Djibouti is found to control the container terminal that is run by the port operator of Dubai. It is their latest move in the legal dispute on the East African nation's facility. It is seen that Djibouti's Government has brought some legal challenge against the DP World. The legal challenges are accusing them of taking bribes and even called the entire agreement unfair (Shiferaw, 2016). Most recently, Djibouti forcibly seized the port and all operations from DP World in a major breach of international law.

History can explain the rough relation of UAE with Ethiopia. Positional incompatibility and other regional issues are main leading aspects of their relationship status. Thus a strong and close relation was built up between UAE and Eritrea and it added another geopolitical advantage to UAE in order to engage the regions of Horn of Africa especially at the time of Ethio-Eritrean war (1998-2000) (Manjang, 2017).

UAE also was able to utilize the Yemen crisis to further their engagement, because of the convergence of financial resources in Yemen benefited the Eritrean army and state. Therefore Eritrea also continued their relationship with UAE to project animosity against Ethiopia and to escape diplomatic isolation. High-level diplomatic and frequent official visits, consultations in the states of Horn helped UAE to make widen their influence on them.

4.2.5 UAE and Somalia

UAE's engagement on Somalia is rooted in that initial development of coastal communities of Somalia. At the time of first Gulf War, Somalia's connection with GCC countries made UAE's engagement smoother. This relation provided a diplomatic approach and financial support to Somalia, therefore, the influence of the UAE increased rapidly.

In fact, the people of the Horn along with the government needed to build up a delicate route to spare themselves and their region from vagaries of clienteles. There were three major challenges in front of them to stand against external forces like UAE. After this, other GCC countries felt interested in Somalian business and market. UAE again used this issue because the majority of the business icons and political personalities were from UAE, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. They had the goal to make Somalia stable to enough to increase their business; therefore UAE involved their military force very

tactfully to control the atmosphere (Marchand et al. 2017). UAE also had another aim to avoid a rise of Muslim Brotherhood in the power to govern Somalia and that was another important reason to fight against Iran.

First challenge:

Their first challenge was to manage to win the population and receive it as a national project. A major distinction was there between coercion and persuasion. Their motive was to establish the democracy and create their own loyalties. The engagement of the UAE though did not get the chance to do so rather they were strong external actors who exploited them from outside.

Second challenge:

Regional integration was the second challenge faced. The states of the Horn of Africa were suffering from terrorism, failed states and no clear hegemon. Therefore, a connection between the internal politics was badly needed but it was not completely possible for due to the strong influence and engagement of UAE on them majorly from the socio-political aspects.

Third challenge:

Due to their geographical position, internal weakness and authoritative crisis, the Horn of Africa has become a contested zone. The UAE has been able to exploit these situations, including poor governance and mutual destabilization to more readily engage several zones of the Horn.

It was not an easy job to face and overcome all these challenges. Engagement of the UAE with the Horn of Africa has already freighted with several divisive historical items of baggage at the same time it is quite an important issue to both them. Basically, the Horn of Africa states is backyard among the Muslim countries where the countries of UAE were quite more efficient in their military force, governance, economic and security sectors. That is why it was easier for them to spread their business in order to engage the Horn.

4.2.6 Providing Facilities

It is a very common and familiar picture of business policies that the powerful countries do not directly fight or create negative issues against their weaker opponent; rather they provide a different kind of facilities so that they can smoothly start their business journey and expand it gradually. This same has also happened in case of UAE's engagement on the Horn of Africa.

(a) There are many discussions among the scholars regarding the analysis of the struggle of Horn states and the new and rapidly grew up wave of interest of the Middle East. One thing is clear that local diplomacy and political aspects had the role of disrupted traffic in the Horn and their inner conflict determined new formulations of rivalries and geopolitical interests of their states. UAE has stoutly announced their $442m agreement with Somaliland government to develop their management and operate a regional trade, logistic hubs and other regulating operations in Berbera port (Ibish, 2017). This announcement clearly shows the power and dominance of UAE over the governing system the Horn of Africa.

(b) UAE has planned to upgrade various deepwater facilities and improvement of road networks. These plans are about to make easier the marina congestion in the Horn especially focusing on Berbera port.

(c) The position of Berbera port is a kind of advantage for UAE. That is why they had chosen this port to boost up their trade flows. The investment of UAE is the largest in Somaliland's history. Their geopolitical interests also grew due to this investment because it solved their geopolitical uncertainty and other significant risks.

(d) UAE also took steps of investment to construct logistics venture and planned ports which are also a kind of providing facilities to Somaliland. No doubt such investments act as a boon for the country, their credibility and improve their weak economy.

4.2.7 Overcoming the risks

UAE's engagement was not completely free from risk factors and the risks were for both UAE and the Horn of Africa. In that respect, UAE also took help of legal issues to stabilize the perfect governing body in the Horn.

(a) When UAE invested money in Somaliland, then the political environment of the country was extremely unstable. UAE controlled the situation through imposing the military force and minimize the disturbances among the country.

(b) Due to political uncertainty, Eritrea also faced problem in the war with Ethiopia, here also UAE supported them. UAE has their self-concern on the land of Eritrea because they wanted to apply their business to save the country in war.

(c) The federal government of Somalia maintained the region falls under Mogadishu jurisdiction to slow down political hustle and expand business in a stable environment.

(d) DP World's engagement in the Horn of Africa is another controversial issue which also caused miscellaneous risk factors for UAE. Djibouti even accused that organization of paying bribes in order to secure concession to operate entire Horn of Africa states. This accusation poses a severe risk for UAE because DP World was one of the main regulating tools of UAE for their engagement (Laakso and Hautaniemi, 2014).

DP World faced the challenge of operating the environment of Somaliland. In fact, DP World has a large contribution behind UAE's engagement in the Horn as the organization was fully engaged in Berbera project in order to enhance different long-term financial issues and manage the growing political influences (Shiferaw, 2016). DP World not only overcame the challenges of building up control over Somaliland, it also played an important role to govern the states. Berbera was the initial platform for DP World to enter into African zone, as this port is the base of naval and missile of the Somali government. How far UAE occupy this place, they became able to grasp the further arena. UAE never focused only on the country or the state but they always concentrate on the government. They tried to engulf the government of that place so that they can rule the people along with expanding business aspects.

4.2.8 Berbera port and port of Assab

UAE control on Berbera port has been clear from the business strategy and politics of DP World discussed in the above portion. The port of Assab development is another diplomatic initiative of the UAE. In fact, both Berbera and Assab played major roles in their several actions to engage the Horn. The UAE used both of these ports in order to expand their business but they can use them in different ways. Berbera is a good option for business transport, therefore the UAE entered Berbera in terms of business and marketing. This was a bold diplomatic step that directly affected the future of Somaliland and strengthens their place in the market of Africa.

The position of Assab is quite good to regulate the entire Horn. Therefore the UAE has concentrated military forces in this zone (Laakso and Hautaniemi, 2014). The UAE built a new airfield at Assab that is 3500 meter in length with the capability to land large transport aircraft.

The unrecognized Republic of Somaliland signed a trade agreement with the DP World. The trade agreement has thus opened a direct competition in the field of trade with Djibouti. The deal with Somaliland on Berbera has raised an alarm within Djibouti. It is found that Berbera is neglected when compared with Djibouti. Ethiopia took the

decision of shifting 30 percent of traffic and DP World decided to invest about US$442m on the port, which is more than the annual budget of Somaliland (Rondos, 2016). The trade agreement has brought tension between the relation of UAE and the countries of Horn and has even brought competition in the trade field. Somaliland is found to be receiving no aid from foreign countries and it is also not a member of the international organization. Somaliland has an unarmed force of police, government, well-equipped army and even a judicial system. In addition to this, Somaliland functions is largely peaceful and holds relatively peaceful and regular elections. The areas of Somaliland are found to be threatened by underdevelopment and diplomatic attrition. The agreement that was made with the DP World has made Somaliland a more viable state.

The politics of Berbera port is very critical in the case of national security to Somaliland (Adam, 2017). The dissatisfaction of Somalia surrounding the deals of the UAE with Ethiopia, which Hargeisa has engineered and thus enhanced its strategic economic and security interests is palpable. The Horn of Africa has also a place of the strategic struggle of power, which has stressed the relationship between UAE and the Horn ("History of Berbera Port", 2017).

4.3 Impacts of geopolitical interests of the Horn in their relationship

Referring to the map, the Horn of Africa holds a strategic position in the world. According to Acharya et al. (2017), geopolitics refers to the impact of geography on international relations and the politics of a country. In the present case study, the Horn stands as a fragile neighborhood in Europe's and the Arab Gulf's backyard. The conflicts have given certain Gulf States a chance to secure their interests within the Horn of Africa. Changes made in the security and political situation have affected the entire region, which has resulted in a key battle in balancing the political influences of regional players. The complexities of Horn's geopolitical dynamics is further complicated through the political rift that takes place among Qatar and UAE, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Bahrain (Adam, 2017).

The Horn of Africa is the best place for trade and people's movement from one place to another. The geopolitical interest of Horn lies on the coastal zone, which is driving away the place from having a secure and favorable trade. The relation between Horn and UAE has already become sour when Djibouti forcefully tried to renegotiate the DP World. After the negotiations faltered, there was an allegation made that all the

companies of Dubai are involved in corruption, thereby stressing the relationship between the two.

4.3.1 Rivalry of Ethiopia and Eritrea stresses the relationship between Horn and UAE

UAE has a great relationship with Eritrea based on the activities going on the Assab port. The leaders of Ethiopia feared that the full attention of UAE is driven towards Eritrea. Ahmed and Audu (2016) claimed that the attention on politics, security, and stability as well as navigation freedom is required for establishing any healthy relationship between the countries. The senior officials of Ethiopia were sent to the Abu Dhabi for pleading UAE to focus and utilize Berbera Port, instead of Eritrea. The Minister of Ethiopia gave the opinion that the focus is made towards investing Somaliland, and not on Eritrea. A decision was taken that a project would be set up on Horn of Africa by Ethiopia and UAE. It was then noticed that Ethiopia developed the Port of Berbera, which coincided with the economic development with UAE, thereby rising a crisis between UAE and Horn. Taking away the focus of UAE towards Berbera port, there arise rivalries between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Having a sight from the political aspects, Berbera's strategic importance increases as UAE has given proximity to the eastern areas and has even lessened Assab's importance for UAE (Bateman, 2016).

4.3.2 Geopolitical Showdown of Horn

As opined by Cannon and Rossiter (2017), substantive and symbolic development provides opportunity as well as a challenge for the geopolitical interests of any country. In the present case study, two great developments are noticed in Djibouti and Somalia. These areas have attracted the attention of international media. The substantive development stresses the geopolitical interests of Horn in the Red Sea as well as in the Indian Ocean. Serious challenges are faced within Horn, which includes hegemonic activities of Ethiopia, Arab spring's indirect effect as well as checkbook diplomacy of China. Costagli, et al. (2017) opined that landlocked countries have the advantage of increasing their economy through trade relation with other surrounded countries. It is found that Ethiopia is the stakeholder of China and Djibouti. The policy of Ethiopia is seen colliding with the strategic interest with UAE. In addition to this, political clout is provided by Ethiopia within IGAD, so as to deal with any future threats.

4.3.3 Geostrategic and Geopolitics of Horn

Dufour et al. (2018) stated that geographical region has a major impact on the politics of any country. The Horn has a combination of minimal population, geographical location as well as remoteness from security and media attention. The sovereign and unified Somalia stands as a significant factor tippling strategic power balance in Red Sea and Indian Ocean. A strategic partnership was formed with U.S. for protecting Somalia from any political predators. A new policy of U.S. is required for Somalia in order to protect from neighbor predators of politics (Adam, 2017). In terms of geopolitical, People residing in Horn and its Government require a delicate path for sparing themselves as well as the region from strategic clientelism vagaries, which would help to understand the entire region of Horn (both politics and history).

4.3.4 Geopolitical Challenges faced by Horn

As stated by Eid (2014), the population is the preliminary part that any country faces while managing the country. In the current study, Horn manages to have full control over the population of the state with a distinction based on coercion and persuasion. Persuasion requires deliberation which will form a part of democracy within the countries of Horn. Contrarily, if democracy is not set marginalisation will prevail in the rural and urban areas. It is further noticed that discontent of the Horn countries helps in creating new loyalties, which are exploited easily by external or internal actors (Adam, 2017).

Ibish (2017) commented that regional integration refers to the method, where neighboring states makes an agreement, so as to upgrade the cooperation through rules and common institution. A link between regional integration and internal politics is noticed in the present case. It is well noticed that horn is a region that is controlled by loose frontiers, which are populated by the marginalized communities.

McSparren *et al.* (2017) stated that civil wars stand as a threat to any country. As per the current case study, three regions of Horn, that is Somalia, Sudan, and South Sudan succumb to the unresolved and most vicious civil war. It is also found out that Horn is the playground of players from outside Africa and even players inside of Horn. The mutual destabilization, poor governance mix as well as external intervention stands as combustible ingredients within Horn that are hovering as security risks of Horn. Such a mix has led to overturning the region into the virtuous various cycle of regional integration, participatory government. Ethiopia lies at the center of Horn, which is never colonized and is bound with ethnic federalism. Somalia lies at the east of Horn, which is

the only region after independence that has to espouse irredentist ideology. It is seen shattered by the civil war, besides united with identity (Adam, 2017). While looking at the west of Horn, Sudan comes into focus, which makes the researcher research on the region in order to find out any geopolitical challenges the region is facing or not. It is found that Sudan is divided between rebellious peripheries and central authorities. The division has led conflict in Darfur, Kordofan and Blue Nile. On the north of Horn, Eritrea lies that is isolated by the conflicts with Djibouti and Ethiopia. It is subject to the international sanctions that control about 1,000 kilometers coastline of Red Sea. Furthermore, the region is also accused of the violations of human right.
It is noticed that Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia are the core countries of Horn, which are facing challenges for creating a national identity. After researching on the Horn of Africa, it is found out that the region is dominated by five wars in past 40 years. Failure in managing a single state of Horn can lead the downfall of Horn of Africa.

4.3.5 Preventing Geopolitical complications of Horn

The engagement with the Gulf has made the countries of Horn enjoy great financial support from KSA and UAE. Ursing and Desai (2016) noted that political and financial support is required by any country for development. In the current study, it is found that UAE has properly and eagerly rented Assab port with an unknown amount, which has given financial lifeline out of political as well as financial isolation for the development of the present port. Furthermore, UAE is also found supporting Somalia and KSA promised to give $50 million if Somalia breaks its relation with Iran (Rondos, 2018). Conflicts of Yemen have resulted with Al-Qaeda that is seen to be controlling the entire port that trades with Puntland and Somaliland. Even several troops were sent by Sudan, Eritrea, and Sudan to Yemen. Additionally, GCC is found to be developing a strategy for the Horn of Africa. Along the East Africa coast that is in Somalia and in some parts of Ethiopia, Eritrea as well as in the Sudan region it is noticed that there is a prevalence of imported radicalism (“History of Berbera Port”, 2017).

4.4 Security, economic and humanitarian issues in their relation

4.4.1 Security issues

Berbera port which is also called as a port of Berbera is most active and official seaport of the land of Berbera. In Somaliland, this is also known as the commercial seaport which is classified into many different parts. The horn of Africa includes six countries

as part of its chain. They are Djibouti, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Sudan and Eritrea. The Relation between these countries and UAE belong to the same religious and migrational boundary of core influence.

Influence of internal and external territories:

According to Rudincová (2016), a pragmatic foreign policy is followed by UAE. To crack down the fundamentalists, the armies of the counties have aligned with Saudi Arabia, Libya, Egypt and UAE. Starting from the beginning, Qatar has taken support for the Islamist groups and has also faced many rough diplomatic ex-communications from the Gulf Cooperation Council (Ursing and Desai, 2016).

Alliance for better security:

Developing security within a country needs resources such as weapons, military support, nuclear missile and another financial backup for an emergency situation. For security purpose, the ‘Gulf Cooperation Council' countries have allied with the USA (Hagmann et al. 2017). This happened because the US maintains a proper access to required resources in the Middle Eastern countries and it maintains a very strict strategic base. In Bahrain, the fifth fleet of US maintains a permanent presence to combat any potential attack in the Middle East. For countering any kind of Iranian threats, UAE has built a security pact with the USA and also employs Saudi led gulf countries to make a unity between them.

The threats of Iran to GCC*:*

As the most multilateral territorial organizations, GCC seeks out for collective security arrangements from different resources and basically concerns for the perceived external threats and security maintenance. GCC plays a bulwark or as a shield against the Iranian threats. Therefore the GCC countries have already participated in a proxy war against Iran which held in Yemen. Similarly, same kinds of attacks have taken place in Syria which was against the Islamic state followed by Libya and Egypt too (Bateman *et al*. 2017). All the possible attempts to uniting Arab were failed and they settled in as the League of Arab States which is headquartered in Cairo in Egypt.

The UAE is secure in its power and wish to support constructive development in the Horn (Cannon and Roister, 2017). This has positive implications for the Horn of Africa. The fight against Iranian influence leads the whole scenario as UAE very strongly gives support and assists in developing policies to this end in concert with its ally, Saudi Arabia.

UAE's newly launched security policy and the change of Geopolitics in the African states of the Horn region:

According to L'Hermitte (2017), the decision of the UAE to establish a military base in Somaliland and to operate the seaport of Somaliland has various political consequences. The major and principal trading seaport in the Horn Region of Africa has been operated by Djibouti and Dubai's DP world. The contract was cancelled because it was corrupted which was allegedly reported to Djibouti. The UAE and Somaliland agreement could be interpreted as the response of the UAE to the exclusion of Dubai's DP World and the imbalanced relation with Djibouti. This agreement was made to develop the port of Berbera (Costagli et al. 2017). The agreement was made between the UAE, Ethiopia and Somaliland.

4.4.2 Economic issues

UAE follows a socio-economic policy which embraces the globalization and believes inequity of economic balance all over the country in terms of value and currency. UAE also serves as the manufacturing portal or hubby buying required agricultural materials from Africa and from the rest of the world. Furthermore, it follows much another process such as processing the products, packing and selling for global use. UAE engages in a competition against Qatar's global trade and influence which is becoming sky high as time passes by. The competition takes place in such a way where it shows while Qatar plans to host the football world cup, similarly, Dubai tries to host the World Trade Exhibition. Dubai is aiming to be a global extravagant tourist spot by doubling up almost ten million visitors per year. The UAE's trade has exploded in Africa in term of its business and tourism purposes (Grüne, 2017). Mainly the eastern part of Africa including Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya are the major parts of it. Qatar is more involved in politics rather than focusing on investment and trade. In the Horn of Africa, Qatar plays a negative diplomatic role despite the fact of being so small in size.

4.4.3 Humanitarian Issues

Bateman (2016) noted that drought is the major humanitarian issue in the region. The people of Somalia are found to be internally displaced during the time of draught. People from other several regions migrate with their pastoral households to Somalia for searching water and pastures. Same is the case during malnutrition, food insecurity as well as during disease outbreaks in the countries of Ethiopia, Somalia, and Kenya and so on. No proper help from the humanitarian organization is seen in the present case that is in the countries of Horn. Ethiopia drought is very common and if proper humanitarian aid is not provided, the people would lose life in the country due to food

shortage. In Ethiopia, the El Nino impact is seen on insecurity and the prices of food. In Kenya, it is found that about 3.5 million of people are suffering from food insecurity, while in Ethiopia; 8.5 million people suffer the same. Furthermore, it is also researched that 3.1 million of people are coming under food insecurity range, which shows deteriorations in the humanitarian indicators (Adam, 2017). In order to get relief from such problems in the countries of Horn, a program named 'National Integrated Food-Cash Relief Plan' is developed. The plan is aimed at providing prioritized and integrated delivery of safe food and cash to the peoples of the country. During the case of disease outbreak in Horn countries, nationwide campaign is set up for vaccinating about 4.2 million of children in the country (Rondos, 2016). A reduction in the outbreak of cholera is noticed in the country Somalia in recent past due to the vaccination campaign.

The UAE has played a critical role in alleviating humanitarian disasters in the Horn of Africa.The Emirates Red Crescent has operated in Somalia for over two decades, offering multiple types of assistance to Somalis. According to an ERC statistics, the value of assistance provided by the leading UAE relief agency to Somalia over the last 23 years stands at Dh277.6 million (Ahmad, 2017). Additionally, the UAE Water Aid Foundation (Suqia), under the umbrella of the Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives, has implemented two projects to provide drinking water to more than 90,000 people in Somalia (Ahmad, 2017).

4.5 Summary

Based on this chapter, it can be summarized that the United Arab Emirates has immense influence on the Horn of Africa. The Horn of Africa is important to them because of the proactive and improved agriculture and the alluring market of Africa. This chapter has attempted to detail the engagement of the UAE on the Horn of Africa states. In order to gain knowledge about the topic and other-regarding preferences, the researcher has gone through various secondary data sources. At the end of analyzing all those collected data, the above result and findings have been gathered.

UAE has taken so many diplomatic initiatives and aggressive steps to engage the states of Horn. The above chapter has thrown light on some of those steps in order to grasp the social and political situation of Somaliland. Besides this, Horn's geopolitical interests and their several impacts on business strategies of the UAE have also been discussed here. Several issues including security and economic problems during the time of war,

Yemen crisis have been vividly illustrated. Finally, the chapter has analyzed the humanitarianism of the UAE, which has greatly assisted its engagement with the region.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Introduction

The UAE's influence and strategic presence in the Horn of Africa and their developing relationship is the product of a long history as well as near-term political changes. Various dimensions and shades of the relationship between the UAE and other GCC states with the Horn of Africa have been described vividly in the previous chapter of this thesis. This chapter will provide a discussion of those findings and attempt to gauge the diplomatic and political steps taken by the UAE in the region.

5.2 Security, Economic or Humanitarian concerns that drive the UAE's interest in the Horn of Africa.

As per the findings of this research, this chapter seeks to answer the main research question of this thesis: **"What explains the UAE's recent interest in the Horn of Africa?"** It also attempts to prove or disprove the hypotheses listed in Chapter 1. As such, this chapter will discuss how the UAE's relationship is driven by security, economic and/or humanitarian concerns and how this has shaped foreign policy of the UAE in its engagement with the Horn of Africa.

First, the findings of this thesis indicate that the UAE's recent interest in the Horn of Africa can be explained by the following.

1. Security concerns in Yemen have largely driven the UAE's interest in the Horn of Africa as control of the Gulf of Aden and the strategic Bab el-Mandeb Strait has become critical to thwarting Iranian efforts in the region.
2. In order to foster potential political and economic ties, thereby further enhancing the UAE's international image and clout, the UAE has invested time, effort and money into building its relationship with multiple states in the Horn.

Security concerns:

The Horn of Africa is of growing interest to Arab Gulf States such as the UAE as these political actors wish to expand their trade and political influence to eastern Africa. Several states such as Eritrea and Somaliland stand to benefit immensely via the targeted engagement of the UAE. These advantages and benefits extend from business to security, with security factors being a key concern for both internal and external actors in the Horn. For example, the UAE has supported Eritrea to emerge from the isolation imposed by the international community and led by Ethiopia. But the UAE has

also maintained good relations with Ethiopia and Somaliland – a diplomatic feat hitherto unaccomplished by any state. The UAE did so by further Ethiopia's and Somaliland interests vis-à-vis the upgrade and refurbishment of the port of Berbera (Cannon & Rossiter, 2017).

The UAE also assisted itself vis-à-vis its security and economic interests in eastern Africa. It saw tremendous business opportunities in Berbera given Ethiopian assurances of large amounts of exports. It was also able to secure an agreement with Somaliland's politicians for a strategic military base just outside the port zone in Berbera, thus assisting the UAE to better broadcast power not only within Africa but across the Gulf of Aden in Yemen. The UAE's moves were also informed by ongoing political tensions not only in Yemen, but also in Libya and Syria. These are integral parts of the wider Middle East and this interconnected cluster within the region has promoted terrorism and security threats to the states of Africa as well as the Gulf Arab States. When the UAE, through DP World, signed the Berbera port deal with Ethiopia and Somaliland, it swept aside what had previously been an ill-defined foreign policy vis-à-vis Africa and emphasized the importance of the whole region to the UAE (Huliaras & Kalantzakos, 2014).

Due to a rising security crises on both sides of the Gulf of Yemen, the UAE decided to act decisively on multiple fronts. The policies being implemented will further resolve conflicts between various states and armed non-state actors, such as terrorists. However, along with providing security and military support to the states of Horn of Africa, UAE also aims to build military strength and diplomatic support. As such, the UAE will provide financial aid to Horn of Africa states such as Ethiopia and Somaliland. In return they were provided with marine, terrestrial and air support for UAE armed forces participating in the military coalition in Yemen.

In the Horn of Africa, Berbera port has been seen as a major development in the security and a change in the economic condition off the same. This was a result of a smooth business operation without any interference of the political parties or the terrorists. The GDP of multiple states also stands to benefit via the UAE's significant investment and infrastructure projects. It actually helped the entire business process of surrounding areas. UAE supported Somaliland's self declared freedom as they accepted UAE's military base on their land. At the same time, Eritrea also interested to attempt a legal binding with Somaliland and UAE in order to secure their land from several external and internal attacks.

Since the days of merging of Yemeni and Saudi, back in 2009, conflicts has started to intervene. In larger part of Horn of Africa, there is Gulf of Aden, where Somalia militants have strong control, which resulted in inconvenience in commercial transaction through various ports, including Barbera. According to (Affi *et al.* 2016), this local unrest flooded the Horn with regional insecurity, for which people started migrating and increased number of Somalia refugees in Yemen by 1 million.

Economic concerns:

Economic issues play a vital role in UAE's engagement with the Horn. These concerns included the UAE's desire to further enhance their economic status and regional clout. DP World's operation and refurbishment of the port of Djibouti fits firmly into this category. The port of Berbera is also economically of interest to the UAE. Indeed, Ethiopia gave assurances to the UAE that over 30 percent of its trade should go through the port of Berbera, thus fulfilling a longstanding goal of Ethiopia's to limit its reliance on Djibouti. Because of these significant volumes of trade, DP World's investment in the port appears sound from a business perspective. Should DP World transform Berbera into a viable blue water port it could eventually rival next-door Djibouti. Horn of Africa states such as Ethiopia and Somalia, to include the breakaway Republic of Somaliland stand to benefit from the UAE's economic involvement. In essence, less developed countries in the Horn of Africa will find more readily available opportunities to make business deals with the UAE. Huliaras & Kalantzakos (2017) commented that the UAE's foreign "Four-Pillared" policies were not only helpful for UAE but they had positive impacts on the economy Somaliland also.

The Horn was very developed in their agriculture which was one of their positive points. Besides this, the large market of Africa was the centre of attraction to any country. Therefore the importance of the Horn of Africa states grew up easily to UAE. The offer of buying, packaging and processing agricultural materials of the Horn from UAE was truly beneficial for the Horn.

The UAE, in the form of DP World, will invest a lot of money to develop Berbera port and modify the port of Assab. This will be done for commercial reasons in the former and largely for strategic and military reasons in the latter.

Humanitarian Issues:

Over the past few decades, states in the Horn have faced some of the worst humanitarian crises ever known. This is largely because the region suffers inordinately from wars, domestic conflicts and drought. Around 7.5 million people of this area have suffered from acute drought in past 60 years. Not only is there a related problem of

migration and natural calamities but problems like malnutrition, insecurity of food appeared in the Horn.

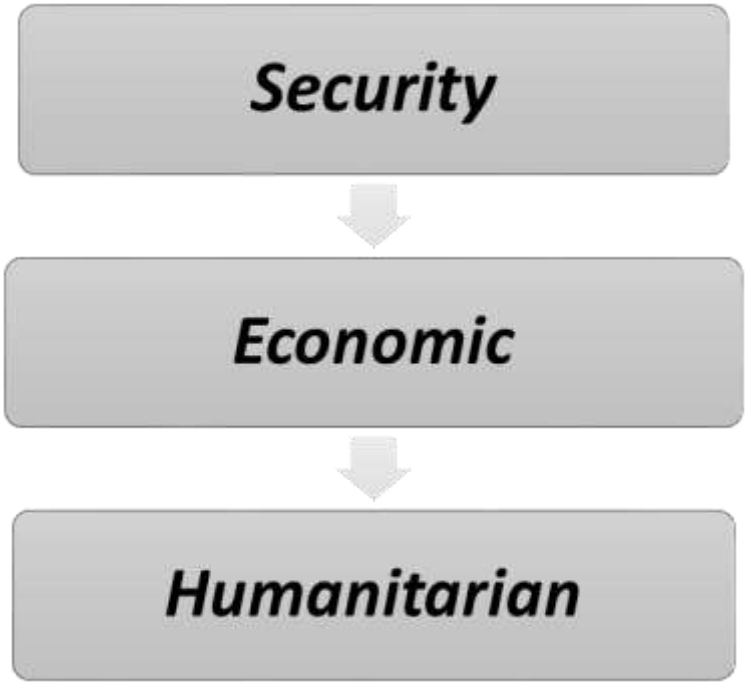

Figure 7: Three major concerns that drive the UAE's interest in the Horn of Africa

(Source: Self-developed)

The UAE has greatly assisted the Horn on the humanitarian front. United Nation raised find of $145,675,342 for emergency medical support, it was not possible for the Horn region to improve its humanitarian crisis in near future (Weber, 2017). Though UN support was there, still, issue of food continued to be an issue and in 2016 number of hungry people was increased from being 2 million to 2.3 million and it s expected that b 2020, this percentage would increase to 2.6 million (Azar & Raouf, 2017). In Horn area relief fund has been increased by 6.7% by which improvement of this crisis has been solved by 20% and currently, 8.5 million people have been benefitted through supply of emergency food, still it is expected that Horn area would take time to improve its humanitarian crisis in near future.

The UAE's generous financial aid packages and donations to states, particularly in the Horn, have reached over AED173 billion. This figure fails to include charity by citizens and residents. Other soft diplomacy initiatives the UAE hosts include numerous meetings between various religious leaders to promote peace (Al Qassemi, 2017). This generosity is not new to the UAE. Five years ago, the UAE committed AED5.83 billion in grants and loans to 137 countries and regions around the world (WAM, 2013). By

2017, the UAE spent more on aid to develop other countries than any other nation on earth compared to its wealth (Staff Report, 2017).

As the UAE became more involved in the Horn of Africa, it realized how dire the famine situation was in many of these states. The humanitarian situations in the three countries continue to cripple their development progress. Drought has pushed Somalia to the brink of famine, as well as threatened lives in many parts of Ethiopia, despite strong government leadership in the 2016 and 2017 drought response. Conflict in South Sudan, worsened by climate change, has caused over 2.3 million people to flee their homes and 1 million people at risk of famine in 2018. "Humanitarian response and prevention is at the heart of the UAE's foreign aid and assistance. The UAE is deeply concerned by the different situations in the Horn of Africa, from war to climate change, and is partnering with OCHA to illuminate the options for the UN community and donors to empower these countries and their people to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals" (Ismail, 2017).

5.3 Is the UAE driving the relationship?

The basic interest in coordinating the Horn of Africa states was majorly from the UAE. They started to enter in Africa primarily through trade issues and then rule over the entire zone. Qatar crisis had no more continuation in the Gulf but it was deeply rooted in the financial implications for the Horn. Among the competition between Turkey and different states of Gulf, the UAE has found the land of Horn as strategic engagement in order to enhance their capabilities. The UAE has established their military base in Somaliland very recently, in 2016. Therefore, the current relationship between them is not only based on the issues like trade, business and transport. Rather the relation is much more based on influencing the socio-political aspects of the Horn. In fact, the governing power of the Horn is majorly dependent on the power of UAE.

Africa is home to the world's quickest developing economics and then offers the most balance profits for the speculation among the rising economics. The mining and oil are two of the major areas which have a foundation for the shopper showcase and foundation venture. It have been assessed that around 75% of the population is under the age of 35 and additionally fuel the financial improvement. The UAE plays an increasingly major role in deciding the financial situation of the states of Horn of Africa after the establishment of Berbera port that are meant to promote business and employment opportunities along with providing security to the concerned areas. The relationships are therefore strengthened for exchanging valuable assets of each other.

The driving relationship was boosted by the implementing all the positive aspects such as providing support for the security and also improvise the financial situation of the country (Weber, 2017). A number of UAE companies are recently playing a major role in developing the states of Africa and provide financial stability over the nation. The port of Berbera further enhanced the opportunities that expanded across Africa by welcoming foreign investors and encouraging the young population.

At the same time, Somaliland approved this engagement of UAE and both their naval and air base. UAE has complete freedom to use and modify the Assab and Berbera port so that the business issues and engagement has become easier to UAE. The current relation of UAE with the Horn of Africa has become stronger as it is now based on their long-term deal.

Some of the neighboring countries like Djibouti opposed this deal from the outset; therefore, their current relationship with the Horn is not so healthy. The rising tension between the terrorism and the military has influenced them to expand their foothold so as to gain more advantages over the terrorist forces. Next, within the Arabian Peninsula in eastern and southern Yemen, the operations against the al-Qaeda have been the prime importance for the military forces. The government of the Horn has agreed to the deal with UAE for a long period of time which is a big proof of their internal lack of confidence and sufficient power (Azar & Raouf, 2017).

Moreover, the position of the Saudi Arabia is a gateway for the sates of Horn of Africa to develop its nation. UAE have been the major point of transit for the trade and good flows which is an advantageous point of interest for the government of Africa. The driving relationship is therefore highly influenced by the rising interest for both of the nations. The global organizations are looking for opportunities to perform their business and also make a gateway for the employment of the young population (Garcia-Bertrand, 2014). The extensive infrastructure along with modern financial system and regulations offers a great deal of protection and facilitate a large number of opportunities for operating the base port of Berbera. The entrepreneurs of the Africa are also experiencing new opportunities to operate their business and expand in the UAE market. Further, it has been also observed that many numbers of UAE companies are the major scope of economic development for the nation. Specifically, the telecommunication industry has expanded over the states of Horn of Africa that created many business opportunities along with the development of the lifestyle of the population. This not only led the countries to be more informed, the companies have also specified the most appropriate way for settling the business and create

employment. The difficulty or the challenges which are mainly faced by doing business in Africa is unstable political and economic conditions. Due to this reason, the driving relationship became stronger as both the government dealt to provide stability to each other in terms of security and financial condition respectively.

Presently, the Federal government is the most powerful in Somalia. This government has not only approved the military base of UAE but the random business of other GCC countries using Berbera port. Yemen crisis had a strong effect on the armies and military force of UAE along with their beneficial aspects of the overall economy. Therefore, they are now much more concerned about their own issues and solve them out with the help of Horn states.

During the time of regional conflicts in the Middle East region, international uncertainty and demand of domestic transformations, the states of Horn of Africa played a significant role in the security of UAE's interest. Therefore, yes the UAE took the initiation for driving the relationship further for the development and security purpose of the both of the nation. In 2016, the Emirates opened a military base at the Assab in Eritrea which included an airbase, a facility for military training and a deepwater port. The meetings between the government of Eritrean president and the Saudi king in the year 2015 initiated the driving relationship between the two countries (Adam, 2017). Since then, UAE has been expanding their hold over the region with Eritrea in order to host their first military base out of their states and also in Somaliland. Further, in the present study, it has been found that the strategy of pivot to the horn by the Abu Dhabi is designed for tackling three main concerns which are free of navigational threats, instability of Yemen and piracy.

5.4 Research Hypotheses

The primary research hypothesis of this thesis is formulated as “The UAE’s recent interest in the Horn of Africa is driven primarily by security concerns.”

A related but secondary hypothesis of this thesis is formulated as “There is a positive correlation between the UAE’s involvement in the Horn of Africa and the regional interests of certain Horn of Africa states, particularly Ethiopia.” In order to prove or disprove these hypotheses and explain the actions of the UAE in the Horn of Africa, it is necessary to clarify that the UAE’s increasing relationship with Horn of Africa statesis the dependent variable, and insecurity on both sides of the Bab al-Mandab Straits is the independent variable.

The first hypothesis has largely been proved by the findings of this thesis. That is, the UAE's recent interest in the Horn of Africa is driven primarily by security concerns. Fears of Iranian encirclement concerns over insecurity in the Horn and exploitation of that same insecurity by Iran and other rival powers have all led to the UAE's recent and sustained engagement with the Horn.

The second hypothesis is also proved. States such as Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti and the self-declared, independent Republic of Somaliland have all benefitted from the UAE's increased involvement in the Horn. Though states such as Ethiopia and Eritrea are at cross purposes, the UAE has filled a power vacuum for both that has resulted in minimal power gains by both, but maximum gains for the UAE. In Eritrea, the UAE's engagement with the regime in Asmara has meant that its isolation may be at an end. As importantly, the UAE's investments in the country in the form of aid and development provide a much-needed source of cash for a strapped regime.

In Ethiopia, the UAE's interest in Berbera port coincided with Ethiopia's desire to rid itself of its dependence on the port of Djibouti. With DP World investment, expertise and management of the port, Ethiopia plans to ship increasing amounts of goods and service to and from the port of Berbera.

In the case of Somaliland, the UAE has brokered a deal with an unrecognized state but, in doing so, has taken the first steps in the direction of recognition. This has buoyed the regime in Hargeisa and its major supporter, Ethiopia. According to some scholars, "Ethiopia was able to engineer a formal, legally-binding agreement between the de-facto but unrecognized, independent state of Somaliland and the UAE. In doing so, Ethiopia further ensured the continuing Balkanization of Somalia and potentially paved the way for eventual, international recognition of the Republic of Somaliland" (Cannon & Rossiter, 2017).

5.5 Summary

This chapter has attempted to define and showcase the different, critical issues arrived at vis-à-vis the UAE's engagement with the Horn of Africa. By throwing light on the historical background, this analysis has demonstrated both the strengths and weaknesses of their current relationship. Engagement in the Berbera port, modification of the port of Assab, the UAE's establishment of a military base in Somaliland, and also the UAE's growing interest in expanding their agro-business to different neighboring states are some of the key issues discussed in this chapter. Almost all these issues have been mentioned along with the evaluation of UAE's diplomatic foreign policies they applied

for the Horn of Africa. Apart from these, this chapter has tried to understand the socio-political, economical and other concerns of UAE for their engagement.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

6.1 Research implications

There are three cardinal aims of this thesis. First, to provide an understanding of the reasons and rationale behind the growing interest of the UAE and other GCC states in the Horn of Africa. Second, to provide an accurate analysis of the current relationship between the UAE and the Horn of Africa states. This necessarily includes a survey of the historical background. This historical background as well as past trade ties and current business opportunities and issues have been included in this in order to provide a more in-depth understanding of the UAE's impetus and drive to involve itself in the Horn of Africa. For example, the UAE's brilliant entry into various Horn of Africa markets by a combination of mutually-beneficial business proposals as well as the packaging and export of agricultural goods from the Horn have been elaborated here. Religious, economic, social, cultural and political issues that have influenced and continue to influence the engagement of the UAE with the Horn, particularly Somaliland and Somalia, have been analyzed in depth.

Third, the thesis attempts to definitively answer the research question **"What explains the UAE's recent interest in the Horn of Africa?"** as well as prove or disprove the primary hypotheses "The UAE's recent interest in the Horn of Africa is driven primarily by security concerns" as well as the related, but secondary hypothesis formulated as "There is a positive correlation between the UAE's involvement in the Horn of Africa and the regional interests of certain Horn of Africa states, particularly Ethiopia."

In the process of collecting and analyzing the data, the author discovered and was able to categorize distinct domains and different shades of this mutually-beneficial engagement. These include the identification that the UAE's foreign policy vis-à-vis the Horn of Africa is supported and defined by four pillars. This includes and helps explain the DP World port agreement with the Republic of Somaliland's as well as the subsequent UAE deal with the same country for an UAE military base. These two primary issues, the subject of much debate and misunderstanding in the outside world, have formed the major focus of this thesis and discussed at length in the preceding chapters.

Each of the four pillars mentioned above of the UAE's foreign policy along with its purpose and application has been examined and elaborated on at length by the researcher. The foreground of the economic, security and humanitarian issues that

appeared at the forefront of engagement in Ethiopia, Somalia and Somaliland and how they were overcome through the UAE's support has been manifested here with relevant positive and negative impacts on the region. At the same time, the problems from several external and internal issues like the Yemen crisis, Iranian influence and meddling, as well as conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea have been discussed and analyzed in this thesis. Beyond this, from this UAE's engagement with Somaliland and Ethiopia vis-a-vis the port of Berbera and modification of Assab port have been elaborated on.

6.2 Further Research

This research has been conducted based on the information and data collected from several journals, books, websites and online news articles. The researcher has tried to cover almost all the cardinal points and aspects of this topic. Due to progress in an organized way, the researcher has determined the final goal and basic objectives of the research at the very initial stage of Chapter 1. After stages have followed those objectives and the researcher has tried utmost effort to find the genuine source to conduct the research.

The topic of the Gulf region's engagement with the Horn of Africa, while possessing a long and varied history, is, in its current incarnation, relatively recent and one that seems set to continue for the foreseeable future. In particular, the UAE's engagement with the Horn, while already encompassing many successes – particularly on the humanitarian front, looks set to grow and become more complicated as relations deepen. This is particularly the case with the recent GCC crisis and the machinations of various states acting on or with political actors in the Horn. As such, analysis of this burgeoning and shifting relationship is lacking. Continued research on the UAE's as well as the Arabian Gulf States' relations with the Horn is critical from a geopolitical and security perspective.

Unfortunately, the author was unable to conduct primary research due to a shortage of funding, time and also due to the precarious security situation in much of the Horn. Therefore, it is well within the scope of future research to collect data in the Horn of Africa through surveys and/or interviews, if possible. This would provide a much-needed assessment as to actual attitudes of Somalis or Ethiopians, for example, in regards to the UAE's engagement.

On a related note, in an attempt to understand the current relationship between UAE and the Horn properly, as well as its future trajectory, it was necessary for the author to

grasp a complex political environment involving many states and two regions. This was only partially possible due to the shortcomings listed above. As such, the author was limited largely to gray literature as well as the few academic publications about the issues at hand, some of which were inadequate and/or out-of-date.

While the author has attempted to explicate the major issues complicating engagement such as migration/humanitarian problems as well as security crises, a neglected but promising research area would be an elaboration on the religious ties and/or dissonance that may hinder or help the relationship.

It is clear from the above discussion that, this research has been done by focusing almost all the key issues related to UAE's engagement on the Horn of Africa states. Simultaneously, mainly due to the secondary data collection procedure, there are multiple, promising fields of research remaining.

6.3 Recommendations

Based on the research findings and result, there are number of recommendations which can be provided to several UAE governmental agencies and departments (political, security, and military) that may affect future decisions regarding the UAE's future relationship with the Horn of Africa states:

1. To evaluate the interests of other regional Horn of Africa states (Ethiopia, Somalia etc.), and to grow or limit the UAE's relations based on level consistent with core national interests. The point here is to balance the UAE's interests regionally and internationally.
2. To evaluate the interests of other external states such as Turkey, Qatar, Italy and others and then grow or limit the UAE's relations based on levels consistent with core national interests. The point here, as in the above-listed recommendation, is to balance the UAE's interests regionally and internationally
3. To re-evaluate the current security environment in the Horn of Africa, and to set goals for the UAE accordingly from multiple perspectives, including militarily, economically and politically. The point here is to minimize or maximize one or all of the options depending on a rapidly changing situation.
4. To avoid entanglements when core national interests are not at stake based on the re-evaluation recommended in the above-listed point. The point here is to reduce the obstacles in the UAE's rise as a regional power through understanding and defining the interests and rationale of friends and foes alike.

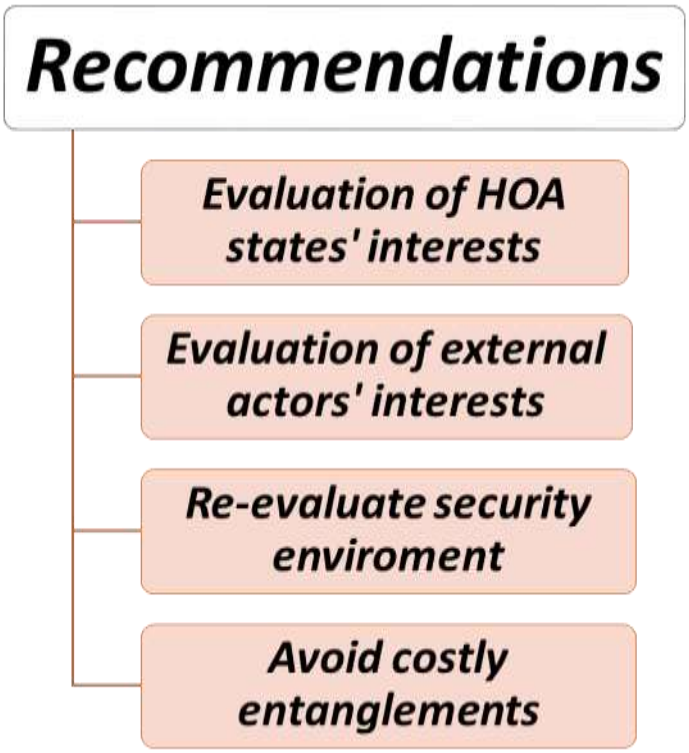

Figure 7: Recommendations of the current research

6.4 Research Reflections

Based on empirical analysis from the author's experiences writing this thesis, there are several things the author would done differently if this research were to be conducted again. The topic of this thesis is both timely and sensitive. Therefore, the author was conscious about collecting information, gathering relevant knowledge and locating results in a qualified and suitable manner. Qualified, timely sources of data, as noted multiple times in this thesis, were in short supply. The majority of scholars or journalists either relegated the UAE's relationship with the Horn to the political/security/military realm or to the economic realm. The findings prove that this is not the case and that the UAE has a multi-pronged, four-pillared approach to the Horn. For example, while I was able to find quite a bit of gray literature on the 30-year agreement between the UAE and Somaliland, much of this was conjecture or hearsay. Relatedly, while some information vis-à-vis the UAE's rationale for this move was forthcoming, the internal picture within the Horn of Africa states remained murky. I was unable to procure sufficient information about the common people's reaction and the impact – current and future - of this engagement one their lives.

Due to the shortage of money and time and for security reasons the author was unable to perform research in the Horn of Africa. As such, the author had to depend on several case studies available through secondary sources. Should the author have been able to

perform research in Somaliland, for example, the author could have collected information involving personalities and politicians associated with the port deal and the UAE-Somaliland relationship. That would have also assisted the author in understanding and observing the locales of specific UAE's engagement.

In addition to the above-stated points, the author now understands that beginning the thesis early would have been most helpful. For various personal and work reasons, this was impossible. However, should things have been different, the author would have started writing this thesis directly after completing IICS 698 Thesis Workshop and given myself the entire twelve-month period to complete the thesis. This would have allowed the author more time to think about and read material germane to the topic. Importantly, the author would impress on future MA students to meet weekly with their thesis supervisor. The author came to value these meetings, however infrequent due to a hectic work schedule, in gaining a better understanding of the research topic, in keeping focus on researching and answering the research question, and completing the chapters efficiently and effectively.

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