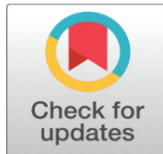
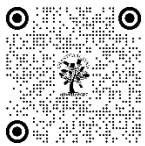


AN ASSESSMENT OF UNITED KINGDOM'S MEMBERSHIP TO EUROPEAN UNION DURING BREXIT PERIOD

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ABSTRACT

This paper mainly explains about United Kingdom's membership to European Union during Brexit period. Regarding United Kingdom's membership to European Union, many studies had conducted in different parts of the World. But all these studies give a partial or one-sided views about United Kingdom's membership to European Union. There were different approaches had developed to understand the complete picture of the European Union's origin, development and United Kingdom's membership. The study analyzes the reasons and the cause for United Kingdom's membership to the European Union during Brexit period. The whole study can be broadly divided into three stages. In the first stage, the study includes the basic ideas, theories and different models to know about the reasons behind the European Union's formation. In the Second stage, the study includes the influence of European political, economic, social conditions after the Second World War in forming the European Union. In the third stage, the study involves the reasons behind United Kingdom's membership to European Union during Brexit period.

Keywords: European Union, United Kingdom, Second World War, Schuman Declaration, ECSC, Messina Conference, Brexit

1. INTRODUCTION

As a distinctive regional organization, European Union, in the early period of its formation, the scope was restricted to the Coal and Steel Sector, which was then extended to include atomic energy research and development through Eurotom and economic activities through European Economic Community (EEC) which was developed in 1957. Later, the assistance stretched to large number of economic areas and gradually to foreign and security matters, impacting to Countries politics, economy, foreign policy and society. During Brexit era, the study on United Kingdom's membership to European Community plays a pivotal role to understand the reasons behind United Kingdom's exit from the European Union.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

In the light of above, the proposed research aims to understand the following:

- To understand the theories, basic ideas and to know the reasons behind the European Union's formation.

- To analyze the influence of Second World War in forming the European Union.
- To know the influence of Schuman declaration in the formation of European Union.
- To understand the reasons behind United Kingdom's membership in the European Union during Brexit period.
- To understand the internal debate in the European Union member countries regarding United Kingdom's membership in European Union.

METHODOLOGY:

This work on 'An Assessment of United Kingdom's membership to European Union during Brexit Period' is basically an analytical work. The proposed study will largely rely on primary sources including official, Government documents and publications. The study also proposes to hold interviews with the concerned policy makers and discussions with the experts. The study will also critically examine the secondary sources available on the subject matter such as books, journals, periodicals magazines and tertiary sources such as newspapers.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

The Review of literature is an important stage of research as it provides the researcher an overview of what has been done and what is being done. In this background, there exist several works pertaining to the subject matter of the research that could be usefully employed in the research. In this study mentioned a few.

Rajendra K. Jain et al. (Eds.), (2002), European Union in World Politics (Radiant Publishers, New Delhi,) in their book analyzed the growing role of the European Union in international politics, the enlargement of the European Union. The book also analyzed the role of France, Germany, and Britain in the European integration process and also assessed the challenges of EU at international level.

Christian Schwinger, (2007), in his book on Britain, Germany and the Future of the European Union (PALGRAVE MACMILLAN Publications, New York,) has analyzed the role played by Britain and Germany in the European Union. And the author also analyzed the Britain and European integration, the Britain and Germany's cooperation in different fields.

Alistair Jones, (2007), in his book Britain and the European Union (Politics Study Guides), (Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh,) analyzed the history of the EU, its institutions and policies. The author also analyzed the British applications, the referendum on membership, inter-governmentalism v/s Supra-nationalism.

3. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS:

Formation of European Union:

Regarding the formation of European Union, there were many theories had developed to better understanding the European integration process and the problems of Society. All these theories explained the European integration process in their own ways. There are mainly three theories plays a pivotal role in the European integration process. They are, Neo-functionalism, Inter-governmentalism and Federalism theories.

Theories for the formation of European Union:

The Neo functionalism theory plays an important role in the European Union's formation. This theory explains the overall working of the European Union's institutions and decision-making process in the European Union. And this theory also explains the role and functions of European Commission.

The inter-governmentalism theory strongly supports that the state's power and also argues that not any organization cannot substitute the role of a state and the state is an important actor and the organization or institution should play the role as a civil servant. And this theory also argues that, states have no right to surrender the powers which was given by its citizens to any outside organization. This theory also explains the role and functions of European Council in the European Union.

The Federalism theory explains the role and functions of European parliament. This theory also argues that the Federal government has to take the responsibility on important policies like defense, economic and external relations. It has been

said that, along with these theories, there were also some minor theories and other factors also influenced in the formation of European Union.

The Idea of European Unity:

The first idea to support European Unity was developed in Athens in between 480 B.C. to 430 B.C. and in the Roman Empire between 100 B.C. to 100 A.D. Later, a French scholar Pierre Dubois, in fourteenth century in his writings developed the concept of European federation for maintaining peace and stability in Europe. In the Fifteenth century Henry IV of France (1553-1610), in the Sixteenth century William Penn (1644-1718) and in the seventeenth century Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) developed their ideas for peace, stability and harmony in Europe. Emeric Cruce's idea in 1623 for an assembly in which "all sovereigns would have a permanent ambassador", the idea can also be traced in Duc de Sully's "Grand Design" (1638), for setting up a Council of fifteen leading Christian states and William Penn's (1693) Diet or Parliament for the meeting of European Princes. This proposal was also seen in the writings of Saint-Simon (1760-1825) and Carlo Cattaneo (1801-1869) in 1891, in his principle of 'subsidiarity', argued for European Unity.

But all these approaches had limited objective in the direction of European Unity. In this direction, the First World War changed the international scenario in a greater way. The Versailles treaty was signed on the 28th of June 1919. But this treaty failed to fulfill its objectives. In 1923, a Hungarian nobleman, Richard N. Counden hove Kalergi and Aristide Briand, a French Prime minister formed a Pan European Movement. This movement developed the idea of European integration in 1927. But, the real efforts to European Unity taking form in the twentieth century during the Second World War.

Impact of Second World War:

However, during the Second World War period, for the first time British Prime Minister Winston Churchill gave the idea of a "United Europe". The Second World War had made many changes in the world as well as in European continent. After the War, Britain's stand disappoints many countries, as, many who hoped that Britain, which was less damaged by war, would take a lead role in uniting Europe. Instead of taking leadership role in European integration process, Britain put forward the idea of either France or Germany should take the leadership role. Then British Foreign Secretary Bevin says Britain was much concerned with maintaining "a sound relationship between Europe, the Commonwealth and the USA." So, Britain avoids every proposal that would bind the country closer with Europe. Britain sees any closer involvement in the European integration process as a threat to its Sovereignty and freedom of action. In this direction, Schuman plan plays an important role in the European unification process.

The Schuman Declaration:

The French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman made an historical declaration on 9 May, 1950. This declaration laid the foundation for the formation of European Union. Initially, Britain wanted to join the plan and later it understood the real motive of France. The British statesman Ernest Bevin realized the objectives behind France for establishing ECSC. And at the same time, Britain, realize the impact of Schuman plan's consequence on its future social, economic and political arena. And at the end, Britain decided not to join the Schuman Declaration. This declaration led to the establishment of European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1952.

Britain's Response:

Britain did not join the European Coal and Steel Community. Because, firstly, Britain always wants to see them as a victorious world power and it had no interest in any regional organization to control its activities and surrender its Sovereignty to any supranational organization. Secondly, it did not like the supranational role of High Authority's control over member countries under the ECSC. Thirdly, Britain had maintained special relationship with U.S.A. and Commonwealth countries. So, it did not want to lose this relationship at the cost of ECSC. Fourthly, Britain was self-sufficient in coal and Steel production compared to six member countries of European Community. Finally, Britain was not ready to be a part of common member country in the ECSC.

Messina conference and Spaak Committee Report:

All the factors ultimately led to the Messina conference in June 2, 1955. The Messina conference led to the formation of a committee headed by a Belgium Foreign minister, Paul Henry Spaak. He had given the task of study and to give a detailed report on the future development Europe. This conference decided to invite Britain to take a leadership role in

the European integration process. But, the Britain's response to the Messina conference was negative and skeptical. Finally, the Spaak committee submitted its report in April, 1956. In its report, it recommended for the formation of Common market and the Atomic Energy Community. Finally, it led to the formation of a Rome treaty.

Rome Treaty:

It established the European Community which includes, European Economic Community (EEC) and European Atomic Energy Authority (EURATOM). This came into operation in January 1, 1958.

But, after 1960, Britain's earlier stand of not joining the European Community had changed for many reasons. Firstly, Britain's economic growth was drastically declined in compared to the members of European Economic Community. Secondly, the economic and political conditions of Europe also made Britain to think in the direction of joining the European Community. Thirdly, the U.S.A. and Britain had maintained strained relationship during this period. Fourthly, the decreasing rate of British Pound Sterling in the international market and finally, Britain had deficit trade in international market during this period.

United Kingdom's membership to European Community (1973):

In this scenario, Britain, for the first time in 1961, under Conservative party Prime Minister, Harold MacMillan, and for the second time in 1967, under Labour party Prime Minister Harold Wilson applied for the membership to European Economic Community. In both the times, French President Charles de Gaulle did not allow Britain's membership claim to European Economic Community. This was because, firstly, he strongly opposed Britain's membership to European Community. During this period, Britain was facing major economic crisis and its uneasy relationship with U.S.A. and Common Wealth countries. Secondly, he thought that, Britain's membership to European Community would affect France's leadership ambition in Europe. Thirdly, he thought that Britain's request for European Community membership was the plan of Britain and U.S.A. to block his idea of uniting Europe.

In France, after De Gaulle, Georges Pompidou came to power in 1969. He was in favor of Britain's membership to European Economic Community. This was because, firstly, France thought that if Britain included to European Community, it would be a strong defense against Germany. Secondly, during this period, France was playing a dominant role in the European Community and it was not liked by other member countries in the European Community. Thirdly, France also thought that, by including Britain into European Community, it would easily access British and Common Wealth market for its finished goods. In the same time, in Britain, after Harold Wilson, Conservative Prime Minister, Edward Heath came to power in 1970. He supported Britain's membership to European Community.

A meeting was held between French President Georges Pompidou and British Prime Minister Edward Heath on 20th and 21st May 1971 at Paris. Later, a white paper was published in July 1971. On this issue, a detailed debate and discussions had taken place in the House of Commons from 21st to 28 October 1971. Finally, a treaty of Accession was signed on 22 January 1972. A bill on Britain's European Community's membership got Queen's assent on 17 October 1972. Later, officially, Britain along with Denmark and Ireland joined the European Communities on January 1, 1973.

4. CONCLUSION:

Over all, the decline of the British Empire and the domestic economic troubles of the 1950s and the 1960s forced the British leaders to pay increased attention to the European integration. It can be said that, United Kingdom did so without its notion of maintaining its global role. This shows that, United Kingdom had not suddenly developed an enthusiasm for the European integration. But it wanted the membership of the Common Market mainly because; it wanted to become a part of an economically successful club of continental Europeans. When Britain finally joined the EC after two unsuccessful applications in 1973, it remained an unwilling player who never fully shared the idealism of its continental neighbors. This has been the case under successive British governments, regardless of their political orientation.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

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