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**INFLUENCE OF REGIONAL TARIFF POLICY ON RWANDA'S INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN THE EAST
AFRICAN COMMUNITY: A CASE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

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INFLUENCE OF REGIONAL TARIFF POLICY ON RWANDA'S INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY: A CASE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

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ABSTRACT

This study established the influence of regional tariff policy on its international relations in the East African community. This study was guided by spatial theory of trade. Descriptive research design was used to achieve the study objectives. The target population for this study constituted 184 officials of Rwanda's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation from whom a sample of 126 respondents was selected using stratified random sampling method. Data was collected using a questionnaire and was analyzed using descriptive, inferential and thematic content analysis techniques. Analyzed statistical data was presented using tables and charts while qualitative data was documented using narratives. This study concluded that regional tariff policy has a positive and significant effect on Rwanda's International Relations in East African Community. From the findings, this study recommended that the government should encourage the reduction of tariff barriers among member states to promote regional integration and expand market access for Rwandan goods and services. This can be achieved through negotiations within the EAC's Common External Tariff (CET) framework.

Key Words: Regional Tariff Policy, International Relations, Trade Barriers

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INTRODUCTION

The East African Community (EAC) was founded in 1967 as a regional intergovernmental organization whose main objective was to help the member countries to boost their interstate cooperation in many spheres of life, including a stronger market to boost the member countries' businesses (Cadot, 2012). Although originally comprising of Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya, the EAC has since been joined by Rwanda, Burundi, and most recently South Sudan and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Taping into trading strengths of each of its partner states, the EAC remains one of the fastest expanding regional economic partnerships globally, with a market boasting of an estimated 180 million people. Although the partner states' mutual interests in the East African Community cut across political, social, and economic realms, much of the direct focus is on its growing cooperation in trade across the member countries (Kibii, 2020). Yet, individual business interests and unique international trade policies and practices of each of the member countries in the bloc may present challenges when it comes to consolidating the middle ground for all the countries in the partnership as equal partners (Baldwin & Gu, 2004).

From an ideal point of view, underlying the operation of the EAC is the principle of nondiscrimination and equal opportunities of people of other partner states regardless of their nationalities, and transparency in issuance of business licenses or travel visas (Afman & Maurel, 2010). At a higher level, through the East African Community, member countries are expected to benefit in terms of infrastructure development, such as more accessible and efficient transport, energy, and communication for enhanced regional economic competitiveness. There is also anticipation of improved agriculture, food security, and rural development, industrialization, tourism, trade and human capital expansion (Maru, 2013). Notwithstanding the great potential of the East African Community for the mutual benefits to the member states, interstate trade policies and

practices of some countries may not be favourable to the rest of their peers.

Rwanda's place in the EAC remains very important. However, as a landlocked country relying on Tanzania, Uganda, Burundi and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) for its external trade, Rwanda may need to emphasize more on cross-border cooperation policy that is fair to its neighboring countries in terms of free movement of goods for enhancing interstate trade (Helms, 2014). However, there are both tariff and nontariff barriers that tend to limit effective cooperation among all the countries in the EAC partnership. For instance, overlapping of membership of individual EAC member countries in other regional economic communities, such as Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and Southern African Development Community (SADC), may further complicate trade regimes of specific countries in the EAC arrangement (African Union [AU], 2011). The East African Community Treaty seeks to harmonize and rationalize investment incentives, including taxation, as the EAC region is promoted as a single investment area. Nevertheless, the legal and institutional frameworks for investments often remain country-specific, thereby inconveniencing certain countries in the region (Limao, 2006; Peter, 2015).

Apart from policy variations in the EAC member countries, there may also be the aspect of different goods being produced in each of these countries, their popularity in the common market, and possible competition from the rest of the countries (Helms, 2014). Despite existence of trade between countries since time immemorial, there are always restrictions in terms of the commodities to be traded, thereby limiting the kinds of goods or services that a given country can trade with the other (Hoekman & Zarrouk, 2009). According to Kee, Nicita and Olarreaga (2009), some of the important aiding factors for successful international trade among neighboring countries include shared history between countries, culture, political ideologies, and common language, among others. However, there

are often certain gaps since it is not very possible to have countries with similar visions and shared ideologies in all important aspects of economic development (Mann, 2013).

Statement of the Problem

International trade is very important for any country's economic development opportunities and market expansion across borders. As a promising economy in the East African region, Rwanda has remained aggressive in occupying its rightful place among its peers through the East Africa Community collaboration framework. Despite increased efforts for promotion of the East African Community as a platform for interstate trade and development of all the partner countries, certain specific legal and corporate regimes place hurdles for sustainable good international relations (Ministry of the East Africa Community [MEAC], 2014). For instance, notwithstanding abolition by licensed agents of pre-shipment or destination inspections in all the EAC countries, these practices are carried out for certain goods in Kenya and Burundi. Hence, some tariff and non-tariff customs procedures and documentation requirements continue to remain country-specific where different computer systems are applied.

Discrepancies in legal and operational activities in one way or the other hamper their full harmonization, thus denying creation of standard operating procedures for the EAC fraternity for cheaper and easier movement of goods and services between partner countries. The EAC Customs Management Act of 2004 (as revised in 2009), and the EAC Customs Management Regulations of 2010 envisage harmonization of legal and operational practice among the EAC member countries. Yet, there are a number of country-related nontariff barriers that further derail regional trade, investment and service systems integration in the region. This has for instance led Tanzania and Kenya to be often accused of propagating the 'bigger-brother' syndrome thus denying other countries like Rwanda their rightful share in interstate trade in the East African region. Since joining the EAC in 2009, Rwanda has increased its trade volume. However,

regional tariff policy could impact its international relations in the East African Community.

Various studies have focused on international relations in the east African community. For instance; Wanjugu (2019) focused on the effect of EAC trade block on economic growth in Kenya, Kihumba (2018) assessed the effect of Kenya's and Tanzania's economic interests in the east African community (EAC) Between the Periods 1967-1977 and 2000-2016 and Uwineza (2018) conducted an Evaluative analysis of the compliance with the EAC-CMP: the cases of Rwanda and Tanzania. Nevertheless, none of these studies assessed the influence of interstate trade practices on Rwanda's international relations in the East African Community. To fill the highlighted gaps, this study sought to assess the influence of regional tariff policy on Rwanda's international relations in the East African Community.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assess the influence of regional tariff policy on Rwanda's international relations in the East African Community.

Research Questions

- What is the influence of regional tariff policy on Rwanda's international relations in the East African community?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

Spatial Theory of Trade

Spatial theory of trade was advanced by Harold Hotelling in 1929 to explain interstate trade and the various economic, social and political dynamics involved (Hotelling, 1929). The theory was initiated based on the concept of distance as an ideological or economic form. The model also incorporated different disciplines in its explanation of trade between different countries, with the view that trade is naturally spatial (Aiginger & Davies, 2004). This meant that the distribution of economic activities across countries' or regional borders determined the pattern of trade within the trading

partners. On the other hand, trade is an enabler to many corporations within given boundaries in terms of specialization in production of goods and services, as consumers and other smaller corporate buyers are able to demand a larger market of the products depending on increased demand.

According to Anderson and Van Wincoop (2004), the balanced relationship between trade and distribution of an economic activity across space is critical when it comes to the assessment of the national and regional trade patterns and development. The spatial theory of trade further postulates that the more an economic activity or commodity is spatially distributed, the more it will have an impact on the countries, regions or individuals within the distribution borders. In this sense, application of the spatial concept brings to the fore the underlying differences in doing business among different international players (Trefler, 2004). Considering the objective of this study which is to examine the influence of interstate practices on Rwanda's international relations in the Easy African Community, spatial theory trade would be essential in explaining the impact Rwanda's goods would have in the EAC market if such goods were to gain prominence.

In what Harold Hotelling extensively explained in his article "stability in competition" as spatial completion model, the theory further explains the role of demand and supply as functions of pricing of commodities. This view illuminates the concept behind completion for a market within the EAC framework where member countries may be driven by competitive advantage to win more space than their peers in the region. For Rwanda, both tariff and non-tariff policy direction and practices will definitely define how much of this space it can have in the common market of the EAC, and how this will subsequently influence its international relations with the rest of the EAC member countries. According to Helms (2014), and based on the arguments by the spatial theory of trade, the relationships between Rwanda and other countries in the East African Community can only be

understood better by examining a range of trade factors in the region, including taxes and transport costs, which could significantly influence the level of each country's market share. However, other internal factors to each of these countries cannot be ignored. For instance, the level of democratic space enjoyed in each of the EAC member states may not be the same, and this can eventually dictate the foreign policy direction (Mold, 2020).

The Hotelling model of trade further advances the concept of locational equilibrium in which two or more countries or firms are forced to choose where to sell their produce, bearing mind the consumers' transportation and distribution expenses (Davis & Weinstein, 2003). In a study of the equilibrium location of two dealers of a similar product in a linear town where all customers are concentrated in one locality, Anderson and Van Wincoop (2004) noted that physical distance is a central determinant of growth and success. This means that when sellers are competing in terms of location (spatial competition) when other factors (such as quality, prices, costs, etc.) are the same, then their optimal performance can be determined by their personal characteristics as business people, such as their approach to customers. However, it was evident at the level of a country that interstate trade practices will significantly influence how a country will be treated at the international stage in as far as their products are concerned.

A country's understanding of trade within the common marketing space will determine what steps to take in order to remain more competitive over the rest of the competitors. Besides economic completion, there is the spatial theory of trade talks about political completion where countries must adopt favorable interstate trade policies in order to be more competitive in an international platform (Helms, 2014). While the basic assumption of spatial model is that individuals are motivated mainly by self-interests where businesses exploit profit and consumers maximize utility, the same can be said of government entities. The concept of space can be expounded beyond the physical universe to include

positioning of a government in the international arena in general. This way, spatial theory will be viewed as a conceptual tool which enables trade-offs between gains and losses among different players as a result of shifting in spatial positioning (Downs, 1957).

The spatial model further theorizes that nations that share borders tend to cooperate more in order to promote interstate trade (Trefler, 2004). This is often made possible by a common language to enhance exchanging of information, and a common currency which eases business transactions and cements trading partnerships among partner states (Cadot, 2012). Focusing on interstate trade practices as possible influencing factors on Rwanda's international relations in the EAC region, spatial theory will provide the right impetus and insights on how to critically analyze specific elements of study to eventually arrive at the right conclusions and recommendations based on empirical findings. Spatial Theory of Trade was used in this study to assess the influence of regional tariff policy on Rwanda's international relations in the East African Community.

Empirical Review

Regional Tariff Policy and International Relations in the East African Community

Reestablished in 2005 after its initial collapse in 1977, the East African Community (EAC) is an important platform in the region for guiding free movement of goods and services, people, and labour capital from one-member state to another (Richard, 2017). It also provides people from the partner states to enjoy the rights of residence and establishment without too many restrictions. Through the EAC international trade protocols, there is increased market size, and a sense of harmonized trade policies where regional trade integration is seen as the foundation of trade policies for the EAC member states. According to the Africa Center for Strategic Studies (ACSS), the move allows strengthening of public institutions and private sector corporations handling export promotions (ACSS, 2017). According to the United Nations

Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) (2018), through the Customs Union which may be the first regional integration breakthrough, the EAC has redefined its position in enhancing interstate trade in the region. This move saw the EAC emphasize its commitment and resolve to establish free trade, where there is no duty imposed on goods and services moving between the countries in the partnership. Besides, there was a mutual pact on a common external tariff which allows the partner countries to subject all imports from countries outside the EAC common bond to same tariff when commodities are sold to any of the member countries.

Within the provisions of the Protocol for the Establishment of the East African Community Customs Union (PEEACCU), goods traded freely in the EAC must comply with the EAC Rules of Origin, thus allowing respective countries the leeway to set certain standards for their goods (Craig, 2016). Some of the sectors under the EAC customs union include agriculture, custom, health, immigration and labour, industrialization and small and medium enterprise development sector, as well as the infrastructural development sector. Other sectors are tourism and wildlife management, and trade. Each of these sectors continues to expand opportunities for the EAC countries to grow their trade, while emphasizing mutual respect. For example, on agricultural development and food security, the EAC is driven by the need to enhance food security through agricultural and livestock rationalization initiatives by harmonizing agricultural policies and joint extension programs for efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery to the EAC citizens and beyond (Odusote, 2015). The Customs is envisioned to enable the EAC partner states to enjoy economies of scale through implementation of a single customs territory.

The Republic of Rwanda and Burundi joined the East African Community and signed the treaty on 18th June 2007 where they became full-fledged members from 1st July of the same year (United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 2016a). These

were joined by the Republic of South Sudan years later, which signed the treaty on 15th April 2016 and officially welcome into the fold on 15th August 2016. The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is the latest entrant into the EAC in July 2022, making the 7-member list of Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, South Sudan, and DRC (USAID, 2022). The EAC intergovernmental organization has continued to play a pivotal role in each of the member country's economic development, but not without challenges. For instance, while harmonization of immigration and labour policies and practices among the member countries has gone a long way in facilitating free movement of people and labour as a move to accelerate economic expansion and growth in the region, there are still challenges at common borders that inhibit easy achievement of this objective.

Since joining of the EAC in 2007, Rwanda has made significant strides towards achieving development through its active role in the partnership. The country is host to the East African Science and Technology Commission (EASTC), charged with promoting and coordination of development, management, and application of science and technology among the EAC partner states (Odusote, 2015). The EAC action plan and priorities of 2022-2026 is projected to benefit Rwanda and the rest of the member states in several ways, with the main objective of boosting interstate relationships and international trade in all the countries. Full implementation of the single customs territory (SCT) is expected to make a very huge impact on management of customs revenues among the EAC member countries. The integration of customs systems across the EAC partner states has the potential to facilitate effective flow of information between different customs stations for more efficient processing of payments and transfers of revenues and other necessary resources needed to enhance interstate trade and international relations (USAID, 2022). However, Rwanda, like a number of other EAC partner states may be faced with country-specific and cross-cutting barriers that tend to pull back interstate trade within the EAC framework.

Despite the desire by all the EAC member countries to enhance domestication and establishment of regional pledges in line with the EAC common market protocol, there is no common political goodwill from all the countries in the common bond (WTO, 2013). For instance, attainment of a common currency for the EAC has not been possible yet due to the disparities of the strength of each of the country's currency in the world financial market (Odusote, 2015). Similarly, strengthening of regional peace, security and good governance remains unfulfilled, partly due to differences in political organizations in each of the countries' where their respective internal affairs take center stage as opposed the priorities of the EAC as a trading bloc. Notwithstanding notable efforts by some of the countries in the region in development of quality multidimensional strategic and critical infrastructure which makes it relatively easier for internal commercial transactions, the same may not be manifesting across borders, thus creating impediments to free trade (Craig, 2016). For example, while Mpesa innovation and physical infrastructural development in Kenya tend to have revolutionized movement of goods and financial transactions which has a significant impact on the overall business development within the country, similar initiatives have not been replicated at the regional level to enhance interstate trade. Institutional transformation of all the EAC member countries remains uneven, thereby creating loopholes in facilitation of interstate trade (Cassim *et al*, 2015).

Some of the major constraints to effective interstate trade relations among the EAC member countries include poor policy enactment and structural harmonized taxation platforms. Further to these, unreliable power supply, low agricultural productivity which causes insufficient raw materials for the industries, as well as lack of competitive market tend to hinder success of the EAC countries interstate practices (USAID, 2022). However, with renewed vigour by the partner countries in the bloc, there is hope that a repeat of the 1977 when first

EAC was disintegrated does not happen. Instructive to note, the collapse then was as a result of disagreements among the member countries on sharing of positions in key decision-making organs of the EAC, and different economic systems, such as Ujamaa in Tanzania which was at variance with Kenya's and Uganda's more liberal economies at the time (Oduosote, 2015).

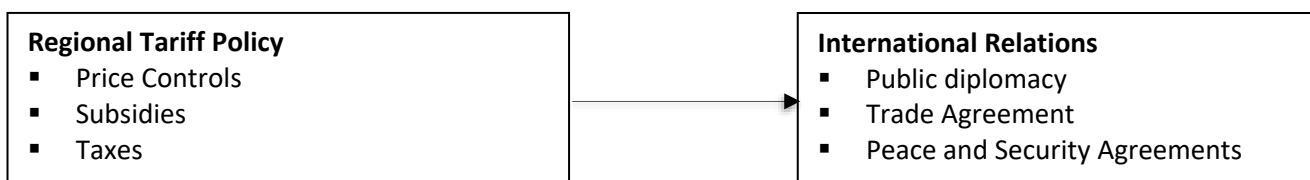
Despite the commitment of the 7 EAC partner countries to the unity and cooperation in common trade in the region, each of the countries is grappling with the question of protecting their autonomies in the global market (Arvis et al, 2016). This move is informed by the unique internal issues faced by any country at any given time. Levying of taxes on imports remains one of the common trade phenomena every country has to deal with in order to protect local industries. Yet, this practice is at the same time viewed as a barrier to trade as it makes it difficult for all the countries to develop a common tariff policy whose purpose is to serve them all. Another hurdle to interstate trade in the common market of the EAC concerns government subsidy to certain domestic industries which makes such goods cheaper in the local market than markets in the partner states. Despite the challenges related to tariff policy and their impact on the interstate trade in the EAC, the current study seeks to highlight the interstate practices in the region and how they impact Rwanda's international relations within the East African Community arrangement.

International Relations

International relations is the study of the relationships and interactions between states, international organizations, and other global actors in the international system. It encompasses a wide range of topics, including diplomacy, international security, global governance, international law, and international political economy. The study of international relations seeks to understand the ways in which global actors interact with one another, and the impact of these interactions on global politics, economics, and society. It also explores the ways in which international relations have evolved over time, and the factors that have shaped the international system (Afman & Maurel, 2010).

International relations is an interdisciplinary field, drawing on insights from political science, history, economics, sociology, and other social sciences. It is an important area of study for understanding global challenges, such as conflict, terrorism, climate change, and economic inequality, and for developing effective strategies to address these challenges. Overall, the study of international relations plays a crucial role in shaping global policy, as well as in promoting peace, security, and cooperation among nations. It is a dynamic and constantly evolving field, reflecting the changing nature of global politics and the challenges facing the international community (Aggarwal, & Ranganathan, 2019).

Conceptual Framework



Independent Variables

Dependent Variable

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

The study used descriptive research design to achieve its objectives. The target population for this

study constituted 184 officials of Rwanda's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation who were accessed through Rwanda's Embassy in Kenya.

Sampling was undertaken using stratified random sampling technique where research participants were proportionately selected from different categories or departments in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to allow incorporation of different views into the study. The sample size was 126 respondents. The research utilized a structured questionnaire for collection of primary data. After data collection, completed questionnaires also become easier to organize, code, and analyze data, thereby proving to be time saving. With a questionnaire, it is also easier for a researcher to allow the respondents to administer the tool on their own so that the researcher can later pick completed copies for processing and analysis (Flick, 2017). In this case, the questionnaire was designed to comprise of both close and open-ended questions so that a rich quantitative and qualitative data was obtained from the respondents. In the process, data generated from pilot study was entered into SPSS computer software and thereafter Cronbach's alpha generated to help in testing internal consistency of the

questionnaire. Descriptive and inferential statistics were analyzed using SPSS computer software and excel worksheets and documented using tables and charts. Processing of qualitative data involved the researcher going through texts severally and keenly to determine emerging patterns and themes based on the specific objectives of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Analysis of Influence of Interstate Trade Practices

Regional Tariff Policy and Rwanda's International Relations EAC

The first objective of the study was to establish the influence of regional tariff policy on Rwanda's international relations in the East African Community. Regarding whether regional tariff policy has any influence on Rwanda's international relations in the East African community, the responses were as demonstrated in figure 2.

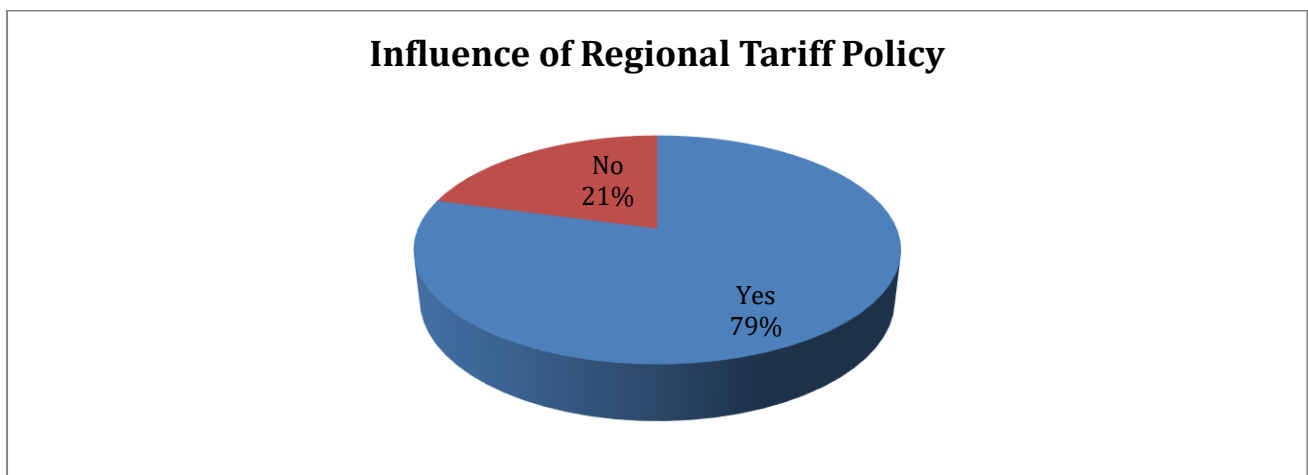


Figure 2: Regional Tariff Policy and Rwanda's International Relations

From figure 2, 79% (89) of the respondents replied yes against 21% (24) who said no to the question whether regional tariff policy has any influence on Rwanda's international relations in the East African community. Furthermore, the respondents were

asked about the extent to which regional tariff policy influenced Rwanda's international relations in the East African Community, where the responses were captured in figure 3.

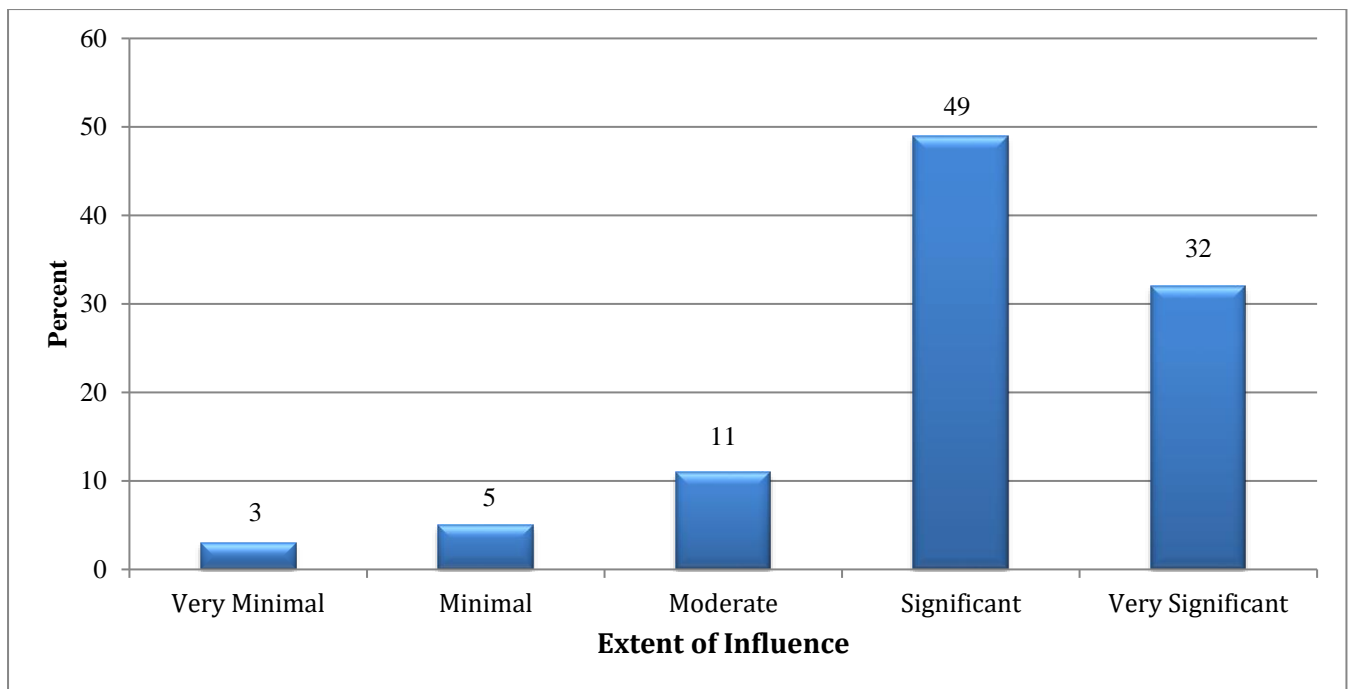


Figure 3: Extent of Influence of Regional Tariff Policy

Aspects of Regional Tariff Policy

The respondents were further, requested to indicate the extent to which Regional Tariff Policy influence

Rwanda's International Relations in EAC. A five-point Likert scale was used where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree. The study results were as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Aspects of Regional Tariff Policy

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Implementation of regional tariff policies is guided by international trade rules and regulations	113	3.717	0.960
High tariffs on imports	113	3.792	0.961
Low tariffs on imports	113	3.943	0.815
Mode of tariff collection	113	3.974	0.730
Mode of tariff payment	113	3.641	0.848
Tariff exemptions	113	3.798	0.918
Lack of harmonized tariff rates	113	3.862	0.932
Access to foreign exchange is limited	113	3.978	0.843
Lack of effective dispute resolution mechanisms	113	3.609	0.954
Measures put in place to regulate pricing are effective	113	3.509	0.863
Price controls put in place are effective	113	3.873	0.785
Aggregate		3.799	0.865

From the table, the respondents agreed that implementation of regional tariff policies is guided by international trade rules and regulations. This is

supported by a mean of 3.717 (std. dv=0.960). In addition, the respondents agreed that there were high tariffs on imports which tended to negatively

affect Rwanda's international relations in the EAC ($M=3.792$, $SD=0.961$). Further, the respondents agreed that low tariffs in imports influenced Rwanda's international relations in the EAC ($M=3.943$, $SD=0.815$). These results are in agreement with the findings of Richard, (2017) who established that there are rules and regulations which guide implementation of tariff policies and when effectively adhered to leads to positive improvement.

From the results, the respondents agreed that mode of tariff collection influence Rwanda's international relations. This is supported by a mean of 3.974 (std. $dv=0.730$). A similar trend was witnessed regarding mode of tariff payment where the respondents agreed that it influences Rwanda's international relations ($M=3.641$, $SD=0.848$). In addition, the respondents agreed that tariff exemptions influence Rwanda's international relations ($M=3.798$, $SD=0.918$). Further, the respondents agreed that lack of harmonized tariff rates affects Rwanda's international relations ($M=3.862$, $SD=0.932$). Odusote, (2015) established that tariff collection and tariff exemptions play a significant role on a country's international relations

As shown in Table 1, the respondents agreed that access to foreign exchange is limited. This is supported by a mean of 3.978 (std. $dv=0.843$). Further, the respondents agreed that measures put in place to regulate pricing are effective ($M=3.509$, $SD=0.863$). The respondents also agreed that price controls put in place are effective. This is supported by a mean of 3.873 (std. $dv=0.785$).

The findings of the current study are generally a reflection of past studies, with various findings emphasizing the relationship between interstate trade practices and international relations of different countries in the East African Community. According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) (2018), through the Customs Union, the EAC has redefined its position in enhancing interstate trade in the region. This move saw the EAC emphasize its commitment and resolve to establish free trade, where there is no

duty imposed on goods and services moving between the countries in the partnership. Besides, there was a mutual pact on a common external tariff which allows the partner countries to subject all imports from countries outside the EAC common bond to same tariff when commodities are sold to any of the member countries.

The current research established a significant influence of tariff exemptions on Rwanda's international relations. Similar sentiments were raised by (Craig, 2016) by noting that since joining of the EAC in 2007, Rwanda has made significant strides towards achieving development through its active role in the partnership. The country is host to the East African Science and Technology Commission (EASTC), charged with promoting and coordination of development, management, and application of science and technology among the EAC partner states (Odusote, 2015). Similarly, strengthening of regional peace, security and good governance remains unfulfilled, partly due to differences in political organizations in each of the countries' where their respective internal affairs take center stage as opposed the priorities of the EAC as a trading bloc. Notwithstanding notable efforts by some of the countries in the region in development of quality multidimensional strategic and critical infrastructure which makes it relatively easier for internal commercial transactions, the same may not be manifesting across borders, thus creating impediments to free trade (Craig, 2016).

CONCLUSIONS

This study concluded that Regional Tariff Policy has a positive and significant effect on Rwanda's International Relations in East African Community. The study established that Regional Tariff Policy (Price Controls, subsidies and taxes) influence Rwanda's international relations in the East African Community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In relation to Regional Tariff Policy, this study recommended that the government of Rwanda should continue supporting and advocating for trade

liberalization within the EAC. The government should also encourage the reduction of tariff barriers among member states to promote regional integration and expand market access for Rwandan goods and services. This can be achieved through negotiations within the EAC's Common External Tariff (CET) framework.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study was limited to the influence of interstate trade practices on Rwanda's international relations in the East African Community. Further research should therefore be undertaken on the challenges facing Rwanda and other East African Community partner states in international relations.

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