

East African Community and Citizen's Economic Welfare in Juba, South Sudan

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ABSTRACT : The study investigated the impact of East African Community (EAC) practices on the economic welfare of the people in Juba, South Sudan. The objective was to assess how the common market affected the economic welfare of Juba's residents. A cross-sectional research design was used. The study found a very strong positive correlation (correlation coefficient of 0.978) with a significance level of 0.01 (two-tailed) between the common market and economic welfare. This high correlation indicates a significant link between the performance of the common market and the economic well-being of the local population. The study concluded that the EAC's common market significantly improved the economic welfare of South Sudanese in Juba, facilitated by the free movement of goods, services, and capital, which enhanced regional economic activity and connectivity. The study recommended implementing comprehensive awareness campaigns to inform the South Sudanese, especially those in Juba, about the benefits of the common market, using various communication methods like media, community forums, and educational programs to spread this information.

KEYWORDS: East African Community, Common Market, Citizen's Economic Welfare, Juba, South Sudan

I. INTRODUCTION

Regional integration is seen by policymakers and academics as a relevant strategy to raise the level of intra-regional trade, boost economic growth and ensure the integration of African countries into the global economic system (African Development Bank., 2016). It can also be a lever for accelerating the structural transformation of African countries through economies of scale, improved competitiveness, more efficient resource mobilization and the promotion of regional value chains. Regional trade integration (RTI hereafter) can also promote the dissemination of knowledge and technology and facilitate the design of new products. With this in mind, several regional economic communities (RECs) have been formed in Africa since the years of independence (Aydiner-Avsaret *et al.*, 2017). Recently, the African Union has launched the operational phase of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which will be the world's largest free trade area by the number of countries once it's fully up and running.

The East African Community is an intergovernmental organization composed of seven countries in the Great Lakes region of East Africa: the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the United Republic of Tanzania, the Republics of Kenya, Burundi, Rwanda, South Sudan, and Uganda (East African Community, 2017). The East African Community (EAC) is the regional intergovernmental organization of the Republics of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania with its Headquarters in Arusha, Tanzania. The Treaty for Establishment of the East African Community was signed on 30th November 1999 and entered into force on 7th July 2000 following its ratification by the Original 3 Partner States – Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The Republic of Rwanda and the Republic of Burundi acceded to the EAC Treaty on 18th June 2007 and became full Members of the Community with effect from 1st July 2007 (Eberhard-Ruiz, & Calabrese, 2017).

Arguably, East African countries have achieved the strategy of integration by joining the East African Community (EAC). The integration has been beneficial to member countries like South Sudan, which is landlocked, being opened to the international market environment through partnering states (Bakr, 2017). In this regard, this study critically appraises whether East Africa Economic integration has impacted its member countries positively or negatively on bilateral trade, with South Sudan as the case study. It is an open question as to whether regional trading blocs create more trade than they divert. On one hand, the lowering of trade barriers among members may lead to greater competition and open up larger markets for producers in member countries (Buigut, 2016). Indeed, a well-crafted trade bloc can increase competition in domestic industries and spur

productive efficiency gains which improve the quality and quantity of inputs and goods available to the economy.

In Juba, EAC has proved to be very vital in enhancing the economic welfare of the South Sudanese since this integration typically has led to a reduction in the cost of trade, improved availability of goods and services and a wider selection of them, and gains in efficiency that lead to greater purchasing power (Calabrese, and Eberhard-Ruiz, 2016). In addition to increasing market efficiency and reducing the cost of doing business by offering opportunities for economies of scale, the EAC has eased trade and investment flows and shift the composition and direction of foreign direct investment flows into South Sudan and thus boosting South Sudanese economic welfare as a whole (Cichecka, 2019).

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1.1. Theoretical Framework

The study was grounded in the Theory of Economic Integration, developed by Bela Balassa in the 1960s (De Melo & Regolo, 2016). Balassa's theory posits that as economic integration progresses, trade barriers between markets diminish. He anticipated that common markets would create demand for further integration, not just economically but also politically, with some trading arrangements eventually evolving into political unions. Balassa outlined a progression of integration forms, starting with a Free Trade Area (FTA), followed by a customs union, a common market, and finally economic integration.

The Theory of Economic Integration, as articulated by economists like Bela Balassa, offers a framework for understanding how the unification of economic policies among states can lead to improved economic outcomes for member countries. This theory is particularly relevant to the economic welfare of the citizens in Juba, South Sudan, through its involvement in the East African Community (EAC) (East African Community, 2017). The perspectives of Balassa and Jacob Viner continue to underpin modern integration efforts, highlighting the removal of tariffs and non-tariff barriers among countries and the adoption of common external trade policies against non-member states (Eberhard-Ruiz and Calabrese, 2017). According to them, economic integration is driven by various factors, with the primary motivation being the potential for enhanced economic growth and development (East African Community, 2017).

2.1.2. EAC common market and economic welfare of citizens

The Common Market represents the second milestone in the East African Community's (EAC) regional integration, operational since 2010, in accordance with the EAC Treaty (Nzioka, 2018). It follows the fully-fledged Customs Union established in January 2010. To foster economic growth and development, EAC Partner States uphold a liberal approach towards the four Freedoms of movement for all factors of production and two Rights among themselves (Oketch, 2018). Agriculture is the backbone of East African economies and livelihoods, contributing 25%-40% of the GDP of EAC Partner States (Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, and South Sudan) and employing over 80% of the region's population. More than 70% of EAC industries are agro-based, relying on agriculture for raw materials. Agricultural commodities make up about 65% of intra-regional trade volume in the EAC (Okute, 2017).

Cooperation in agriculture and food security is a priority in the EAC integration process (Oparanya et al., 2019). Chapter 18, Articles 105-110 of the EAC Treaty outline the agriculture sector's objectives, focusing on achieving food security and rational agricultural production to promote complementarity and specialization in national agricultural programs, ensuring food sufficiency within the EAC region (Oppong, 2019). Progress over the years includes developing governance instruments to strengthen regional coordination in the sector, enhancing food and nutrition security and safety, and promoting agricultural value chains in crops, youth employment, livestock, and fisheries.

Regional trade integration is a fundamental aspect of the trade policies of EAC Partner States. This includes enhancing public institutions and private sector organizations involved in export promotion (O'Reilly, 2019). Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda benefit from the EU's everything but Arms initiative, which grants preferential access to the EU market for all products from Least Developed Countries except arms and ammunition. Additionally, the EAC Partner States, except Burundi, which lost its eligibility on January 1, 2016, qualify for duty-free access to the US market under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (Protas and Romward, 2018).

Products from EAC countries can access various markets in developed nations through the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), which provides preferential treatment to a wide range of products from developing countries (Ramsay, 2019). Membership in the African, Caribbean, and Pacific States and the GSP allows products from Partner States to benefit from preferential tariffs on exports to member countries. Burundi also belongs to the Economic Community of Central African States, which aims to establish a Central African Common Market (Shepherd et al., 2017). To promote efficiency in production, the EAC focuses on rationalizing

investments and fully utilizing established industries, while also harmonizing trade policies, investment incentives, and product standards to position the Community as a single investment area.

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1.1. Instrument

This study utilized a cross-sectional research design to collect data from a large pool of subjects, allowing for comparisons between groups. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were employed to ensure that the limitations of one type of data were offset by the strengths of the other. The researcher randomly targeted a population of 149 respondents, including 4 East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) members from South Sudan, 115 selected South Sudanese individuals, 10 officials from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning in Juba, and 20 Government of South Sudan delegates. The total target population was 149 respondents. These categories were chosen because they were expected to have a comprehensive understanding of the East African Community and the economic welfare of the South Sudanese people in Juba.

3.1.2. Sample Size

The nature of the data generated in this study required various techniques to better understand the research problem. This approach is known for achieving a high degree of validity and reliability while minimizing biases, as noted by Amin (2015). Sloven's formula was used to determine the sample size from the target population of 149, resulting in a sample size of 109 respondents. This sample size was sufficiently large and representative to validate the findings. Questionnaires were the primary method of data collection, supplemented by interview guides used to gather information from East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) members from South Sudan.

3.1.3. Data Management

The researcher initiated the study with an introductory letter from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Kampala International University, proceeding to the field for data collection using questionnaires and interview guides. Quantitative data exclusively derived from the questionnaires, which initially required structuring for meaningful interpretation. Raw data obtained was cleaned, sorted, and coded to facilitate organization and clarity. The coded data was then entered into a computer, verified, and subjected to statistical analysis using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software, enabling the generation of descriptive and inferential statistics.

Qualitative data was gathered through interviews with East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) members from South Sudan. Qualitative analysis involved coding (open, axial, and selective), categorization, and deriving essential meanings from the data. This phase included thorough immersion to ensure a comprehensive and accurate description of the phenomenon. Content analysis techniques were applied to refine and restructure the qualitative data into concise, meaningful statements. The data was further analyzed and organized into themes based on identified patterns, repetitions, and commonalities related to the study variables. Finally, findings from both quantitative and qualitative analyses were integrated to draw conclusions and formulate recommendations based on the study outcomes.

IV. RESULTS

4.1.1. ResponseRate

The response rate is a percentage that indicates the proportion of individuals who participated in a survey out of the total number invited to do so. This is determined by dividing the number of survey participants by the overall sample size.

Table 4. 1: Response Rate

Questionnaires Distributed	Questionnaires Returned	Response Rate
109	102	$= \frac{102}{106} * 100\% = 96.2\%$

Source: Primary Data (2024)

The findings outlined in Table 4.1 demonstrate that out of a total of 106 questionnaires were handed out to potential respondents, 102 were completed and returned by the respondents. This means that 96.2% of the distributed questionnaires were successfully completed and returned, indicating a relatively high level of engagement or participation in this research.

4.1.2 Demographic Features of the Respondents

Table 4. 2: Gender Distribution of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Males	68	66.7

Females	34	33.3
Total	102	100

Source:Primary Data (2024)

Table 4.2 above, illustrates that out of the total 102 respondents, 68 were males, representing 66.7% of the participants. The study included 34 female respondents, constituting 33.3% of the total participant pool. The table summarizes the gender composition of all 102 respondents included in the research, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the demographic makeup of the study participants. This implies that the majority were men since they are the ones who are mostly leading initiatives of EAC towards economic welfare of the citizens in Juba.

Table 4. 3: Age distribution of the respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
20-35 years	62	60.8
36-49 years	38	37.3
50 and above years	2	2.0
Total	102	100.0

Source:Primary Data (2024)

Table 4.3 provides an overview of the age distribution of respondents in the study. It was revealed that a majority of the respondents, 62 individuals, fall within the age range of 20 to 35 years, constituting 60.8% of the total participants. The study includes 38 respondents aged between 36 and 49 years, making up 37.3% of the total. A smaller proportion of respondents, 2 individuals, are aged 50 and above, representing 2.0% of the participant pool. The majority of respondents, being in the age range of 20-35 years, suggests that a significant portion of the study participants consists of a relatively younger demographic.

Table 4. 4: Educational Level of the Respondents

Education level	Frequency	Percentage
Others	6	5.9
Certificate level	15	14.7
Diploma	39	38.2
Bachelor's Degree	32	31.4
Master's degree	10	9.8
Total	102	100

Source: Primary Data (2024)

Table 4.4 revealed that six respondents, representing 5.9% of the total, have an educational level categorized as "Others." Fifteen respondents, constituting 14.7%, have achieved education at the certificate level. The study includes 39 respondents (38.2%) with a diploma qualification. Thirty-two respondents, accounting for 31.4%, have attained a bachelor's degree. 10 respondents, representing 9.8%, have achieved a master's degree. The distribution across various education levels signifies the diversity in educational backgrounds among the respondents. The significant number of respondents with diploma qualifications and bachelor's degrees suggests a relatively higher level of formal education within the participant pool.

4.1.3 Descriptive results on the effects of Common Market on Economic Welfare of South Sudanese People in Juba, South Sudan

Table 4.5: Effects of Common Market on Economic Welfare of South Sudanese People in Juba, South Sudan

Items	Mean	SD	Rank
South Sudanese companies can freely sell in EAC market without worrying about unfair competition due to trade barriers	4.75	0.55	1
South Sudanese workforce can look for better opportunities in other member countries.	4.50	0.60	2
South Sudanese consumers benefit in the single market since the competitive environment brings them cheaper products	4.25	0.72	3
South Sudanese people can benefit through the big infrastructure projects of EAC	3.88	0.86	4
Customs market makes the region a more attractive investment destination hence benefiting the people in member states	4.40	0.64	5
South Sudanese people can now incur lower costs for regional payments	3.55	0.78	6
Common market facilitates trade of food products and industrial goods through mutual recognition agreements	3.52	0.81	7
EAC smoothens border crossings by expanding the green lanes initiative to cut the waiting time at the borders	3.41	0.66	8
Average SD & Mean	4.03	0.7	

From the Table 4.5 above, the respondents strongly agree that South Sudanese companies can freely sell in the East African Community (EAC) market without concerns about unfair competition due to trade barriers, with a mean score of 4.75, ranking first. This indicates a very satisfactory perception of this particular aspect of the common market. Similarly, the workforce's ability to explore better opportunities in other member countries received a mean score of 4.50, ranking second and falling into the "Very Satisfactory" category. The competitive environment within the single market, leading to cheaper products for South Sudanese consumers, is perceived as very satisfactory with a mean score of 4.25, ranking third. The big infrastructure projects of the EAC, while still viewed positively, have a slightly lower mean score of 3.88, falling into the "Satisfactory" category.

The customs market's role in attracting investments and benefiting people in member states is highly regarded, with a mean score of 4.40, ranking fifth. The South Sudanese people incurring lower costs for regional payments is viewed as satisfactory with a mean score of 3.55. The common market's facilitation of trade through mutual recognition agreements for food products and industrial goods is also seen as satisfactory with a mean score of 3.52. Furthermore, the EAC's efforts to streamline border crossings through the expansion of the green lanes initiative, aimed at reducing waiting times at borders, received a satisfactory mean score of 3.41. The overall average mean for all items is 4.03, with a standard deviation of 0.7, indicating a generally positive perception of the common market's impact on economic welfare in Juba, South Sudan.

Lastly, the data in Table 4.5 suggests that the common market has a notably positive influence on various aspects of the economic welfare of the South Sudanese people, as reflected in the respondents' strong agreement and satisfactory evaluations across different dimensions. This positive perception bodes well for the potential benefits and opportunities associated with the common market in the region. Thus, the study findings suggest a generally positive perception of the common market's impact on economic welfare in Juba, South Sudan. This positive perception implies that the common market has the potential to generate significant benefits for the local economy, including increased trade opportunities, enhanced labor mobility, improved consumer welfare, and greater regional integration.

Table 4.6 shows Correlation between Common Market and Economic Welfare of South Sudanese people in Juba, South Sudan

Correlations			
		Common market	Economic Welfare of South Sudanese people
Common market	Pearson Correlation	1	.978**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	102	102
Economic welfare	Pearson Correlation	.978**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	102	102

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Primary Data (2020)

The presented table, denoted as "Table 4.6," offers a comprehensive examination of the correlation between the common market and the economic welfare of South Sudanese people in Juba. Utilizing Pearson correlation coefficients, the analysis reveals a highly significant and very strong positive relationship between these two variables. The correlation coefficient of 0.978, accompanied by a significance level of 0.01 (two-tailed), signifies a remarkably strong and positive association. The correlation between the common market and the economic welfare of South Sudanese people is bidirectional, with both correlations yielding the same coefficient of 0.978. This near-perfect correlation underscores the robust connection between the common market's performance and the improvement in the economic well-being of the local population.

The implications of this correlation are noteworthy and hold valuable insights for policymakers, businesses, and the local community. First and foremost, the very strong positive relationship suggests that as the common market evolves and becomes more effective, there is a parallel enhancement in the economic welfare of the South Sudanese people in Juba. From a policy perspective, these findings emphasize the importance of actively supporting and strengthening the common market initiatives. Policies that encourage and facilitate trade, economic cooperation, and integration with other member states can directly contribute to an improved standard of living for the local population. Policymakers should consider the correlation as a guiding factor in the formulation of strategies that aim to enhance economic development and well-being.

Table 4.7 shows Correlation between Customs Union and Economic Welfare of South Sudanese People in Juba, South Sudan

Correlations			
		Customs Union	Economic Welfare
Customs Union	Pearson Correlation	1	.954**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	102	102
Economic Welfare	Pearson Correlation	.954**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	102	102
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The presented table, labeled "Table 4.7," unveils a significant correlation analysis between the Customs Union and the economic welfare of South Sudanese people in Juba, South Sudan. Employing Pearson correlation coefficients, the study reveals a highly substantial and positive association between these two pivotal variables, with a correlation coefficient of 0.954. The statistical significance is underscored by a p-value of 0.000, signifying significance at the 0.01 level for a two-tailed test. The correlation coefficients for both the Customs Union's impact on economic welfare and vice versa are identical, with each registering a robust 0.954. This symmetry emphasizes the consistency and strength of the positive correlation between the Customs Union's functionality and the enhancement of economic well-being among the local population. The implications drawn from this correlation are multifaceted and carry profound implications for various stakeholders. Firstly, the remarkably high correlation coefficient of 0.954 indicates a robust and positive relationship. This signifies that as the Customs Union undergoes development and becomes more operationally effective, a considerable and positive impact is observed in the economic well-being of the South Sudanese people in Juba. The statistical significance of the correlation, reflected in the p-value of 0.000, adds a layer of confidence to the findings. This statistical rigor ensures that the observed relationship is highly unlikely to be a result of random chance, reinforcing the credibility of the correlation.

Table 4.8 shows the Correlation between Monetary Union and Economic Welfare of South Sudanese People in Juba, South Sudan

Correlations			
		Monetary Union	Economic Welfare
Monetary Union	Pearson Correlation	1	.910**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	102	102
Economic Welfare	Pearson Correlation	.910**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	102	102
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Table 4.8 illuminates a comprehensive analysis of the correlation between the monetary union and the economic welfare of South Sudanese people in Juba, South Sudan, employing Pearson correlation coefficients. The statistical findings reveal a highly significant and very strong positive relationship between these two crucial variables, as indicated by a robust correlation coefficient of 0.910. Significantly, the observed correlation is deemed highly reliable, given the statistical significance at the 0.01 level for a two-tailed test, underscored by a p-value of 0.000. The correlation coefficients for both the impact of the monetary union on economic welfare and vice versa mirror each other, both registering a substantial 0.910. This consistency highlights the strength and reliability of the positive correlation between the effectiveness of the monetary union and the enhancement of economic well-being among the local population.

The implications drawn from this correlation carry profound significance for policymakers, businesses, and the local community alike. Firstly, the robust correlation coefficient of 0.910 suggests a powerful and positive relationship. As the monetary union advances and operates more effectively, there is a significant and positive impact on the economic well-being of the South Sudanese people in Juba. The statistical significance, denoted by the p-value of 0.000, adds a layer of confidence to the findings. This statistical rigor ensures that the observed relationship is highly unlikely to be a result of random chance, reinforcing the credibility of the correlation and its implications for decision-makers.

In conclusion, the findings presented in Table 4.8 underscore a compelling and positive correlation between the monetary union and the economic welfare of South Sudanese people in Juba. Policymakers and stakeholders should leverage this information to inform strategies that support the monetary union, thereby contributing to the economic prosperity of the local population. The statistical significance lends weight to the reliability of the observed relationship, making these insights invaluable for decision-making and policy formulation in the pursuit of sustainable economic development.

4.1.4. Discussion of Findings

The study revealed that utilizing Pearson correlation coefficients, the analysis reveals a highly significant and positive relationship between these two variables. The correlation coefficient of 0.978, accompanied by a significance level of 0.01 (two-tailed), signifies a remarkably strong and positive association. The correlation between the common market and the economic welfare of South Sudanese people is bidirectional, with both correlations yielding the same coefficient of 0.978. This near-perfect correlation underscores the robust connection between the common market's performance and the improvement in the economic well-being of the local population. The implications of this correlation are noteworthy and hold valuable insights for policymakers, businesses, and the local community. First and foremost, the positive relationship suggests that as the common market evolves and becomes more effective, there is a parallel enhancement in the economic welfare of the South Sudanese people in Juba. This is in line with O'Reilly, (2019) who noted that regional trade integration is a cornerstone of EAC Partner States' trade policies. This involves strengthening of public institutions and private sector organizations involved in export promotion. Furthermore Oparanya et al., 2019 noted that cooperation in agriculture and food security is one of the priorities that feature prominently in the EAC integration process. Chapter 18, Articles 105-110 of the Treaty sets out the overall objectives of the agriculture sector as the achievement of food security and rational agricultural production with a view of promoting complementarity and specialization in the sustainability of national agricultural programs, in order to ensure among other things, food sufficiency within the EAC region.

V. CONCLUSION

The study concluded that the establishment of a common market within the East African Community (EAC) has significantly impacted the economic welfare of the South Sudanese people in Juba. The free movement of goods, services, and capital has stimulated economic activity, creating a more dynamic and interconnected regional economy. This has led to an expansion of trade opportunities, increased market access, and a diversification of products available in Juba. The common market has played a pivotal role in fostering economic growth, attracting investments, and creating employment opportunities. With reduced trade barriers and streamlined cross-border transactions, businesses in Juba have been able to tap into a larger consumer base within the EAC. This, in turn, has contributed to an improvement in the living standards of the South Sudanese people, as increased economic activity translates into better job prospects and a broader range of goods and services at more competitive prices.

5.1.1 Implications

The relationship between the East African Community (EAC) and the economic well-being of residents in Juba, South Sudan, is a complex and dynamic topic with implications for regional integration, trade dynamics, and socioeconomic development. The study enriches our understanding by examining how regional integration,

particularly within the EAC, influences the economic welfare of Juba's residents. It investigates the mechanisms through which the EAC facilitates cross-border trade, market accessibility, and economic collaboration, revealing the intricate dynamics of regional integration in this specific context. The research provides insights into the specific impacts of the EAC's common market on the economic welfare of Juba's residents. It explores how the free flow of goods, services, and capital affects local businesses, employment opportunities, and overall economic expansion. A nuanced perspective is offered on the role of the EAC's customs union in shaping Juba's economic landscape, analyzing the effects of unified trade policies, tariff elimination, and streamlined customs procedures on trade dynamics and economic well-being. Additionally, the study examines the potential implications of a monetary union for the economic welfare of Juba's residents within the EAC framework. It evaluates both the challenges and benefits associated with adopting a shared currency, providing a comprehensive analysis of its potential impact.

The study illuminates the extent of awareness among Juba's citizens regarding the East African Community (EAC) and its initiatives. It investigates the local population's knowledge and engagement in the regional integration process, providing insights into the effectiveness of communication strategies. The research contributes by evaluating the accomplishments of the EAC's Customs Union and other programs, offering a comprehensive overview of their positive impacts and the challenges encountered in implementation within the South Sudanese context. Based on empirical evidence, the study presents valuable policy recommendations aimed at maximizing the EAC's beneficial influence on the economic welfare of Juba's citizens. These recommendations encompass areas such as infrastructure development, trade facilitation, and public awareness campaigns. In conclusion, this research advances our understanding of the relationship between the East African Community and the economic well-being of Juba's residents. It provides nuanced insights, policy suggestions, and a localized perspective that can inform both academic discussions and policymaking across the region.

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