

ABSTRACT

The overall objective of this study was to assess the impact of regional integrations on business performance with specific interest to the East African Community. The study was conducted to meet three specific objectives including: (a) to examine trends on Intra-EAC Exports and imports from 2004 to 2015, (b) to determine the benefits of integration to member states in terms of intra- EAC Trade balance, and (c) to explore implications of trade agreements on trade policy reforms and EAC trade performance. The study used secondary data which was mostly obtained from EAC database and UNCTAD database. Findings showed that intra-EAC export values for Kenya were dominantly higher than for the rest of EAC countries from 2004 to 2014. Some member states benefited more from intra-EAC trade than others. In particular, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda were in better position regarding balance of trade than Rwanda and Burundi. Findings showed that although Kenya was the biggest exporter in the intra-EAC trade, was the least reformer on policies which were geared towards improving business environment so as to guarantee mutual benefits of all member states. The study calls for the following measures. The EAC Secretariat in Arusha should make sure that there is equity in reaping the benefits of the integration brought about by trade. Kenya should make more reforms geared towards promoting fair trade. Burundi and Rwanda should see to attract more FDI so as to promote production in different sectors and eventually boost their exports within the East African region.

