



Special Issue Editorial

Editorial on Special Issue on COVID-19 and Regional Development in Africa

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It is a well-established notion that “growth and development” are the necessities for everyone who is living on the landscape of the earth. These are the two faces of the same coin: growth promotes development and development accelerates the growth and the needed purchasing of the people [sin-quo-non] for enhancing the quality of life of the People in general and African people in particular, which is the need of the day. This concept is as valid for the African region as elsewhere.

African region is one of the least developing regions in the world and the acceleration of growth and development is the need of the hour. Unfortunately, the emergence of COVID-19 has created the enormous crisis of growth and development in the region resulting into huge economic loss.

Emergence of COVID-19

The year 2019 is remembered in the global history due to the emergence of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) was first reported in China as an infectious upper respiratory disease. The virus has since spread world over created one of the most serious global health crises, with high socio-economic costs. Wherein the health impacts were directly through contagion. The economic impacts were largely a consequence of the preventive measures adopted by the respective governments to curtail its spread. The measures taken by the African Governments to overcome the increasing number of cases, had generated significant setbacks for African economies mainly in terms of lost productivity and trade, both internal and external with the countries. Specifically, these measures have significantly strained almost all key growth drivers for enhancing the productivity of among the sectors of many economies, and ultimately, on their overall income.

Losses due to COVID-19

According to the available data on the different aspect of African region. The International Air Transport Association (IATA) estimated revenue losses of up to US\$113 billion. The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) projected revenue loss amounted to US\$65 billion among Africa’s top 10 fuel exporting economies. Added to these, due to COVID-19 disruptions in global value chains including other things, the World Trade

Organization (WTO) witnessed a enormous decline in global trade of between 13% and 32% in 2022-2023. On the whole, an unprecedented global recession is being envisaged with a global GDP slump ranging between 0.5% and 3.8% (IMF, 2020; OECD, 2020; World Bank, 2020).

COVID-19 cases in Africa are mainly confined to six of its 54 countries with infection rates that are still low as compared to the worst affected economies in Europe, Asia and the USA. As most the countries did not extend the mode of stay-at-home or follow the complete lockdown transmission control measures. However, border closures were widely adopted to control cross-country transmissions. As a whole, COVID-19 has far reaching effects, consequences and implications to most of the African countries. Their linkages with the global world, particularly trade and investment are worst affected. These have resulted into sever consequences and implications for African regional development in particular.

Hence, it was realised and felt that there is an urgent need to undertake a special issue on it. The academicians, planners, policy makers, and development economists were requested to provide a deeper insight into the critical issue. The academic journal namely: Regional Economic Development Research [REDR] had taken the responsibility for publishing the issue.

Papers structure

All five papers were received on the different aspects of the theme providing an interesting reading and deeper insight into the issue. First Paper contributed by Fisay and Asonagu provides an interesting and in-depth knowledge on of the critical issues i.e., socio-economic consequences and Implication of COVID-19 to African region. Second paper written by Sarma and Das analyses the emerging trends in bilateral trade between India and Africa under the shadow of COVID-19. Third paper authored by Gidigbi; Beatrice; and Deborah touched upon another significant issue relating to COVID-19 and capital importation to banking business, wherein the authors opined that there has been a decline in capital importation due to COVID-19. Fourth paper contributed by Bello and Gidigbi highlighted the emerging trends and issues in regard to pattern of trade flows in Nigeria during pre-and post-era of COVID-19. Fifth paper authored by Titus, Akpa and Obiakor discussed another important issue with regard to Trade and Remittances in the context of COVID-19.

After going through the contents of the papers, the researchers may find the special issue as a value addition to the existing literature on the theme. Any future research on this theme will find the special issue as an asset.

Authors, reviewers and editorial team people have done a great job. Without their help, the special issue would not have see the light of the day. At the end, I am grateful to the publisher and their staff especially Ms. Daisy Wong of the journal [REDR] for its excellent efforts in completing the SI.

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