

JACQUES DE JONGH

School of Economic Sciences, North-West University, South Africa

PRECIOUS MNCAYI

School of Economic Sciences, North-West University, South Africa

THE IMPACT OF ECONOMIC GLOBALISATION ON GENDER INEQUALITY IN SACU COUNTRIES: A PANEL ECONOMETRIC ANALYSIS

Abstract:

An interconnected and globalised world has arguably been one of the most prominent features of the 21st century. Globalisation, as a process, has altered many socio-economic features, and the gendered aspects of society have been among the most prominent. Ongoing debates suggest that the modern wave of neoliberal and technologically inclined integration has seen a more significant improvement in the socioeconomic position of females. Though from the developing world, concerns have been raised on the skill-biased nature of the process, its creation of a gendered division of labour, and trade liberalisation practices that have mainly benefited male-dominated sectors. Therefore, the study's main objective was to determine the impact of economic globalisation on gender inequality in Southern African Customs Union (SACU) countries. This study utilised a novel panel econometric approach, accounting for structural breaks, cross-sectional dependence and heterogenous slopes by employing the dynamic common correlated effects estimator. Causal links were identified using a Dumitrescu-Hurlin causality test. The main findings indicate that economic globalisation improves gender inequality in SACU countries. There is also evidence of a bidirectional causal relationship between the variables, suggesting that the way these countries integrate into the global economy is both a cause and effect of gender income distributions. It is therefore recommended that policies aimed at reducing gender inequality within the customs union consider the broader economic and social context in which economic globalisation is embedded. Strategies must promote gender-sensitive trade practices and improve women's education and training in preparation for employment in export-oriented sectors. Moreover, policymakers should prioritise attracting investments that enable the cohort and their communities while improving women-owned businesses' participation in global value chains.

Keywords:

Globalisation; Economic globalisation; Inequality; Gender inequality; SACU; Southern Africa

JEL Classification: F00, F63, F15