



The Impact of AfCFTA on Southern African Supply Chains in Ghana

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Abstract

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) aims to create a single market for goods and services within Africa by eliminating tariffs and other trade barriers, thereby boosting regional integration and economic growth. The study employs a qualitative research approach, utilising semi-structured interviews with key industry stakeholders including government officials, business leaders, and supply chain managers from various sectors. Data collection was conducted through online surveys and focus group discussions to gather detailed insights into market dynamics post-AfCFTA implementation. There is evidence of increased collaboration between Ghanaian firms and their counterparts in neighboring countries, with a notable shift towards deeper integration in the cocoa supply chain where Ghana has seen an 18% increase in exports to West African nations as a result of reduced trade barriers. The findings suggest that while AfCFTA has facilitated greater participation of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in regional markets, there are challenges such as uneven implementation across member states and resistance from established players who fear losing market share. To maximise the benefits of AfCFTA for Ghana's economy, it is recommended that policy makers strengthen regulatory frameworks to ensure fair competition and facilitate smoother cross-border transactions. Additionally, support programmes should be developed to assist SMEs in navigating these new trade opportunities.

Keywords: *Sub-Saharan, Ghanaian, Southern, Afrocentric, Qualitative, Ethnography, Comparative, Heritage, Folklore*

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