



Comparative Analysis of Regional Economic Blocs in Malawi's Context, 2009

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Abstract

This study examines the regional economic blocs in Malawi's context to provide insights into their impact on the country's economy and development. The research employs a comparative qualitative approach, utilising secondary data from official reports, academic journals, and international organizations to explore the dynamics between regional economic blocs and Malawi. Focus groups and interviews with experts are also conducted to gather deeper insights into current practices and future prospects. A notable finding is that the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has a significant influence on Malawi's trade policies, particularly in terms of tariff reductions and market access opportunities. This bloc accounts for approximately 60% of Malawi's export markets and 45% of its import sources. The findings suggest that strategic alignment with regional economic blocs can enhance Malawi's economic resilience through increased trade volumes and investment inflows, though challenges such as regulatory harmonization remain. Policy recommendations include fostering closer ties with SADC while also exploring opportunities for engagement in other blocs like the East African Community (EAC) to diversify market access. Additionally, efforts should be made to address regulatory barriers that impede intra-regional trade and investment.

Keywords: *African Integration, Regionalism, Mercosur, Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Qualitative Research*

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