

**EAST AFRICA COMMUNITY INTEGRATION AND RWANDA TRADERS’
WELFARE
A CASE STUDY OF RWANDA CEMENT TRADERS**

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ABSTRACT

Every state in Africa is at least a member of one community, but the contribution of their integration to the welfare is not weighty. This research assessed the contribution of EAC to Rwanda traders „welfare and was carried out in Rwandan cement traders, due to the highest cost of cement in the EAC region (US\$300/ ton); the main objective of this research was to assess relationship between East Africa Community integration and Rwanda traders’ welfare. The specific objectives were to optimize the different factors facilitate region members in trading on the basis of optimal price and quantity demand of cement, to assess the different approaches used by region members to achieve their goals regarding trading and then, to establish the correlation of regional trade integration and Rwanda traders’ welfare using price of cement in Rwanda and aggregate quantity demand of cement in the regional members. The findings of this study is important for different users especially Rwanda traders’. This researcher focused on the period scope of 2001 to 2013. The researcher reviewed literature related to regional integration, welfare and the contribution of regional integration to trade in the region, whereby the study focused on East Africa community. The critical review of existing literature to identify the gap that was bridged by the research was also done. The conceptual; framework showing the relationship between dependent and independent variables was presented together with the factors that intervene from the environment. The research designed that, the researcher used both descriptive statistics, correlation and regression model, where analytical based on qualitative and quantitative data. Expert judgment was used to determine the validity while Cranach alpha coefficient (0.862) was used to determine reliability of research instruments. Qualitative, quantitative data using linear regression analysis were employed. The total population was 418 people from MINEAC and Rwanda cement traders with the selected sample size of 81 obtained using Morgan’s sampling formula with 90% confidence interval and 10% error of precision. The researcher collected data using questionnaires and unstructured interviews for primary data and documentary review for secondary data. The collected data were presented using tables, figures and equations, while statistical methods were used to ascertain the percentages and frequencies upon which analysis and interpretation were based. The researcher found positive and low relationship ($r = 0.402$) between EAC integration and Rwandan traders’ welfare using primary data. The researcher suggested the optimal price of cement in Rwanda using regression model, where he found that optimal price of cement should be US\$199.12 per ton. This research also recommended Rwandan cement traders, Government of Rwanda, EAC members and other researchers.