

The Impact of Trade Barriers Targeting Russia on Kenya's Food Security and Economic Performance

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of trade barriers targeting Russia on Kenya's food security and economic performance within the context of global trade dynamics from 2022 to 2024. Imposition of sanctions and other trade limitations on Russia because of the Russia-Ukraine war has various implications on the world markets with one of the key sectors of the Kenya economy, agriculture and energy, being among them. The main focus of this study was to determine the extent to which such trade barriers impacted on the ability of Kenya to access some essential agricultural dishes such as wheat and fertilizers and also on food prices, inflation and the stability of the entire economy. Mixed-methods design was used that unites qualitative and quantitative systems of collecting data. A total of 150 key stakeholders in the agricultural and energy sector of Kenya consisting of policymakers, industry experts and business leaders were approached through structured surveys. These surveys measured the direct and indirect effects of the restrictions on the trade on the economy of Kenya. Furthermore, 15 semi-structured interviews will be conducted with the representatives of the international trade, economics, and government policy experts, which will give a better understanding of why Kenya struggled to react to these disruptions. The secondary sources of data included the Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPR, 2022), International Trade Administration (2023), and the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS, 2022) and provided a historical background and cross-check of the primary research data. This paper discusses how trade restrictions affecting Russia would affect the food security of Kenya and the state of her economy over the 2022 to 2024 period. The result indicates serious grass-intellectual tensions of fertilizer and wheat imports which translates into rise in price of food more so wheat flour and inflation. The importation of fertilizers in Russia reduced by 48%, and the price of fertilizers increased by 30%. The use of the Russian wheat in Kenya resulted in huge food crises and an increase in wheat flour by 28% in the year 2022. Imports of the country into Russia dropped significantly and then in 2023, the imports rose as Kenya diversified its imports. Rising costs of fuel added to the economic hardships because they led to inflation and budget shortfalls. This has shed light on how Kenya was susceptible to international trade shocks and how the country had to strategically diversify in its agriculture policies, trade, and energy policies. One of the recommendations is that Kenya should diversify its trade relationships especially with emerging economies such as Brazil and India to eliminate over dependence on individual suppliers. Greater funding in local agricultural production in terms of better irrigation, lending opportunities, and climate-smart agriculture is important to long-time food security.

Keywords: Trade Barriers, Russia-Ukraine War, Kenya's Food Security, Agricultural Imports, Inflation, Economic Performance.

INTRODUCTION

The world economy has considerably changed within the past few years and sanctions and trade restrictions have become major instruments of foreign policy. The ripple effects of these successful economic actions, which are intended to change the political or military action of a nation, cannot only be paid by the affected nation alone, but also by other countries who are bound to the global trading system (Abely, 2023). A prominent recent example of such actions is a series of trade barriers introduced against Russia because of its geopolitical behavior, specifically in the case of the Russia-Ukraine war. The effects of these obstacles have been significantly felt in Russia and the trading partners particularly in the developing world, such as sub-Saharan Africa (Ben Hassen & El Bilali, 2024). This study concentrates on how the said trade barriers to Russia, which target Kenya, affect its food security and economic performance, and looks at the overall outcomes of global trade relationships leading up to the end of 2024.

Sanctions on oil and gas, military implications, agricultural products and more have been addressed by the trade options against Russia and have had colossal effects on the international markets. These sanctions have placed Kenya in a very embarrassing situation since it is a well-integrated country as far as international trade is concerned. Kenya as a major importer of agricultural produce and other products such as energy and fertilizers, has exposed its food security and stable economy to the risks of relying on Russian export, particularly wheat and fertilizers (Crozet & Hinz, 2020). These global trade restrictions have directly affected the food security defined by the availability, accessibility, and consumption of food by raising its cost and breaking the supply chain (Zhao et al., 2024). On an international scale, Kenya and many of the African countries rely on imports to supply their food and energy requirements and such countries are highly susceptible to any coagulation in international trade.

The results of trade barriers on the food security in Kenya can be conceptualized in the context of trade relations with the rest of the world such that the interconnectedness is a synonym to the direct effects and indirect effects. The food market of the global economy exists amid a maze of trading interactions and the introduction of trade restrictions on a large supplier to the global market such as Russia has resulted in instability in the prices of food around the world, which has impacts on the nation that relies on imports (Blitt, 2024). Considering Russia as an example, prices and availability of wheat in the world market have dropped as a result of sanctions imposed on Russia, which is a great producer of wheat. Consequently, Kenya has experienced steep raise in the prices of wheat and flour as part of its food basket, and this has not only influenced the development of high food prices but has also worsened food insecurity (Chen et al., 2023). Such price fluctuation is not only problematic in respect to food security but also exhibits wider economic implications, especially to a country like Kenya where food inflation is a decisive factor in as far as the general economic performance is concerned.

Besides food security, the entire economic performance of Kenya has also been severely affected under the influence of the world cascades caused by the sanctions on Russia. Kenya is an excellent agricultural exporter of tea and coffee and is highly dependent on foreign trade (Blondeel et al., 2021). The sanctions on Russia have helped to reduce the demand of part of Kenyan exports and block trade routes which have also added pressure to Kenya economic growth prospects. Besides that, economy-related issues, which have been exacerbated by the Russia-Ukraine crisis, have also led to a rise in energy prices, particularly in oil and gas, which are also extremely important in Kenya in the context of the industrial and transportation sectors (Blondeel et al., 2021). The increase in fuel prices has caused a trickle down impact on the prices of goods and services to an already struggling Kenyan economy that is already undergoing severe inflationary pressures.

Another significant factor in Kenya economic performance analysis is policy reaction to the effects of global trade disruptions. Some of the strategies that Kenya has implemented so far that will help in reducing its dependence on foreign imports include adoption of various trade partners and locally production of farm produce that will reduce dependency on foreign imports that is one of the strategies that Kenya has implemented in the wake of challenges that trade barriers pose against Russia. However, it has not been especially successful due to the scale of the logistical chain shocks worldwide and the fact the nation relies on foreign suppliers as far as primary goods are concerned (Geda & Michael, 2023). The fact that such measures have to be applied in order to make Kenya less susceptible to shocks in the global trade shows that national policy is not as strong as it should be in the fast-growing globalizing world economy. In this study, much attention will be given to how Kenya policies have enabled Kenya to be cushioned against the effects of international sanctions on the economy.

The most significant date to take into consideration when tracing the impacts of said impediments to trade and, more specifically, the dynamics of world trade that continue to evolve is the year 2024 (Bogdanova, 2021). The economic consequences of food security hit and impact Kenya will be felt fully by the year 2024 when Kenya shall still be adjusting to the economic conditions that are prevailing in the world and the sanctions that have been imposed on Russia. This is the information they most desire to learn as the policymakers of Kenya and other countries they will be interested to learn how they can compete with the dynamism of the world trade as they secure national food and security and how their economic performance will not be affected (Coronado, 2020). The impact of the trade restrictions imposed on Russia on the food security and the economic performance of Kenya were thus evaluated within the global trade dynamics framework. The observation of such effects would enable this research to deliver policy change recommendations and strategies that Kenya can use to guard against the threats of such international economic actions.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The two theories supporting the theoretical framework underpinning the study are Human Security Theory and the Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT), which are beneficial in providing an insight in assessing how trade barriers that are applied to Russia affect food security and economic performance of Kenya. The Human Security Theory, which emerged at the beginning of the 1990s, criticizes the conventional and state-oriented security values based on prioritization of military threat and state territory (Debre, 2021). Instead, it focuses on the welfare of human beings, highlighting the necessity to take into consideration various forms of vulnerabilities, such as economic disadvantage, food insecurity, and social injustices, as well as military hazards (UDP, 1994; Haq, 1995). This practice is currently pertinent especially to Kenya, where the hitch in the global trade has resulted in the threat to military security as well as to the economy and food security. Increasing prices of imported grains (wheat) as well as fertilizers triggered by sanctions imposed on Russia directly influence the living conditions of people in Kenya especially those people who were already vulnerable due to the economic crisis in the country. The strength of the Human Security Theory is that it establishes a broad perspective of security, comprising of both physical safety and economic stability, hence, offering a perspective on the effects of global trade barriers on the overall security of a group of people.

Although the Human Security Theory covers the role of individuals in relation to the security within the region, Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) presents an idea that highlights the relationship of inter depends among nations of the concerned geographical region. Advanced by Buzan and Wæver, RSCT states that the security interest of states in a region is usually entangled, implying that the security of one state depends very much on the security situations of other neighbors (Buzan & Waeber, 2003). In the case of Kenya, the sanctions placed on Russia are harmful to Kenya not only because it affects its access to food and energy but also in terms of regional stability of East Africa. Kenya is one of the major actors in the East African region and is closely connected with its neighbors due to common trade routes, markets, and supply chains. The interruptions to the supply of commodities such as fertilizers and wheat due to the trade prohibitions on Russia have been transferred across the territory to put the neighboring states, as well, at risk of food security and economic stability (Geda & Michael, 2023). This interdependence within the regions renders the national security of Kenya to be a direct reflection of the stability and cooperation between Kenya and its neighbors and enhances the fact that when it comes to analyzing the effects of global sanctions or trade barriers, such an analysis has to be viewed through the lens of its regional context.

The regional interdependence as practiced at RSCT comes in handy in explaining the approach taken in Kenya and its East African pals regarding the collective securities available to Kenya when Russia is under attack in terms of trade barriers. Economically, since these sanctions are worsening food and energy crises in the region, Kenya now faces an even more complicated situation of attempting to ensure sufficient food supply and overall stabilization of its economy (Grosse et al., 2021). The theory brings to attention how local measures, e.g. sanctions, may spiral into regional conflicts necessitating the joint effort and collaboration among adjacent states. Nevertheless, although RSCT gives valuable inputs regarding the regional security dynamics, RSCT has its limitations. Gradually isolating itself on the regional level, RSCT can pay less attention to the involvement of global actors and forces, including the international economic system and multilateral organizations, which have a substantial influence on the development of a regional security and trade pattern (Hassan et al., 2022). Additionally, the theory might not exhaustively explain the long term changes in the structure of global trade that can have significant impacts to the economies within regions especially developing regions such as East Africa.

When these two theories are applied to the present study, it appears obvious that those sanctions against Russia are not simply interrupting the existing global flow of trade to the extent that it poses a massive threat to the food security and the economic performance of Kenya. The Human Security Theory can provide an analytical tool to understand the nature of such global upheavals and the effects of such changes on the lives and well-being of people particularly in terms of high cost of food products and economic insecurity (Henderson et al., 2024). Contrarily, RSCT helps in making Kenya reaction regional to the East Africa region where there is need to involve in regional solutions in reaction to overall regional security issues relating to such global interruptions of trade. The two theories put together offer a healthy notion of the international sanctions that are traditionally complex and vacillate within and outside the national and regional security apparatus, particularly in the third world like that of Kenya. This theoretical framework thus underpins the exploration of how Kenya can

conceivably build upon the manner in which it approaches those issues posed by global trade upheavals to ensure that national and regional security issues are not left unaddressed.

METHODOLOGY

The study used mixed-methods research design which would assist in integrating both qualitative and quantitative research approaches in order to ascertain the validity and multidimensional study of the impacts that are imposed on the Russian market through the trade barriers on food safety and economic development of Kenya. The mixed-methods design was the cornerstone in terms of grasping the complexity of the problem because the triangulation of the evidence on the issue expressed in numerical and descriptive sources was possible. The quantitative aspect entailed structured surveys of important actors in the Kenya agricultural and energy industry including policymakers, industry players and business leaders to determine the direct and indirect impact of global balance-of-trade shocks. The qualitative aspect was incorporation of semi-structured interviews to international trade experts, economists and officers working in the government to get more information about the impact of these sanctions in relation to the issues that Kenya specifically was facing in replying to these sanctions.

Stratified random sampling was also employed in the research so as to have a good representation of the different sectors of interest in data collection. The survey sample was a group of government officials at the Ministries of Trade, Agriculture and energy and the stakeholders in the private sector at the trade and energy production. The sample size was about 150 respondents and 15 experts were interviewed to provide the qualitative data. Quantitized information was processed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics; however, qualitative information was processed by using the thematic analysis. The primary data were complemented with secondary data obtained in Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA, 2022), International Trade Administration (2023) and KNBS (2022). The integration of the methods resulted in the excellent recognition of the influence of trade barriers on food security and economic stability of Kenya by linking the aspects of global trade relations.

FINDINGS

Implications of Trade Barriers Targeting Russia on Kenya's Food Security and Economic Performance

The objective of this study was to assess implications of trade barriers targeting Russia on Kenya's food security and economic performance, within the framework of global trade dynamics by the end of 2024. To meet this objective, structured questions were asked and results were as presented below;

Trade Barriers Targeting Russia on Kenya's Food Security

This section examines how trade barriers imposed on Russia have affected Kenya's food security, particularly in relation to wheat, fertilizer, and other essential agricultural imports. It highlights the economic and supply chain disruptions experienced between 2022 and 2024.

Table 1: Impact of Trade Barriers Targeting Russia on Kenya's Food Security (2022–2024)

Indicator	2021 (Pre-Conflict)	2022 (Conflict Onset)	2023	2024
Fertilizer imports from Russia (Metric Tons)	Significant supply	↓48% decline (Apr–Jun 2022)	Alternative sourcing initiated	Partial recovery
Fertilizer price increase (%)	Stable	↑30% increase	Remained high	Gradual stabilization
Kenya's wheat import dependence (%)	31% from Russia	Sharp decline in imports	Higher costs, import diversification	Slight improvement
Wheat flour price (KES per 2kg)	158 (Feb 2022)	205 (June 2022) (↑28%)	210 (Feb 2023)	190 (Jan 2024)
Kenya's total imports from Russia (KES billion)	19.9B	6.6B (Q1 2022)	50.97B (H1 2023, mixed imports)	Data not available

Sources, International Trade Administration, (2023); KIPPRA, (2022); KNBS, (2022)

Table 1 reveals the effects of trading restrictions on Russia on communities in Kenya, as seen by shifts in the amount of fertilizer and wheat imported. Before the war, Russia accounted for 31% of Kenya's wheat imports and sent the country major amounts of fertilizer (Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis [KIPPRA], 2022). During the first quarter of 2022, Russia's exports of fertilizer fell by 48% because of its trade restriction which drove up US fertilizer prices by 30% through the International Trade Administration, (2023). In response to production losses caused by market price inflation, Kenya formed new supply ties with various countries in 2023. High market prices for fertilizer were observed at the start of 2024 since disruptions in trade caused long-lasting problems in the global economy.

Since Kenyan farmers only grow 14% of the country's wheat needs (KIPPRA, 2022), the 2022 cut in Russian wheat imports caused severe food shortages for Kenya. The price of wheat flour rose 28% from February 2022 KES 158 to June 2022 KES 205 because of the modification. The highest price point registered in 2018, KES 210, was replaced as the highest by KES 190 when it hit early 2024, according to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS). Imbargos with Russia resulted in a big drop in Kenya's imports which went down from KES 19.9 billion prior to the war to only KES 6.6 billion during the first quarter of 2022 (KNBS, 2022). In 2023, the country's imports went up to KES 50.97 billion as Kenya bought more than just staple foods. These findings suggest that Kenya is very vulnerable to disruptions in foreign trade and should put more effort into food defense, farm investments and enlarging its variety of trading connections to withstand foreign risks.

A rise in oil and gas prices internationally has mounted economic difficulties for Kenya, seen in increased inflation, living costs and required changes in government budgets. According to one financial analyst,

"Increasing fuel costs have increased the expenses of both businesses and consumers" (Interview 3).

Kenya reported 9.2% inflation after fuel prices were increased, according to the study by Omondi (2023). The cost of living is rising due to upsurges in transportation and production costs that make people spend more on food and limit economic growth. Due to global fuel price increases, Kenya decided to supply more fuel subsidies, leading to a wider national fiscal deficit (Mutua, 2023). Kenya's currency is stable mainly thanks to price variations in global oil and gas, as these help keep the country's economy secure from unpredictable swings in other economies.

Effectiveness of Kenya's Trade and Energy Legislation

This section examines the effectiveness of Kenya's trade and energy legislation in mitigating the challenges posed by global sanctions and trade barriers. It explores how policy responses have influenced energy security, food supply, and economic stability.

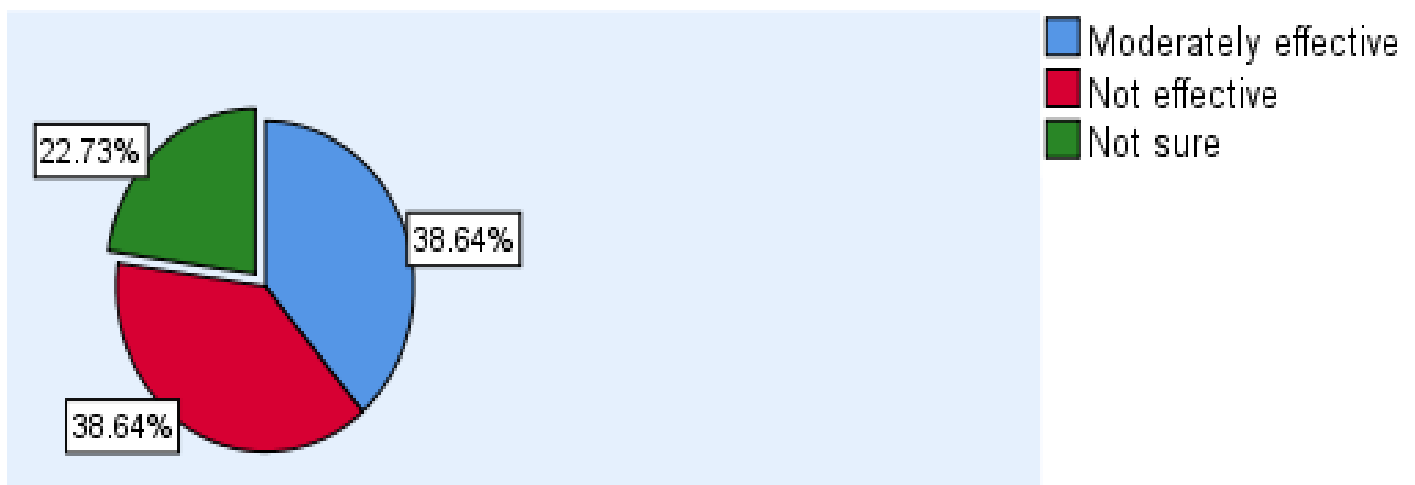


Figure 1: Effectiveness of Kenya's Trade and Energy Legislation

(Source: Researcher, 2025)

In Figure 1, participants in the survey rate Kenya's trade and energy law in terms of how it resists global trade challenges and restrictions. Survey participants declared that roughly the same amount of them, 38.6%, considered the legislation to be mediocre or average, but a further 38.6% reported that the law did not work. Roughly one-quarter of the audience were unsure about their knowledge or support for present trade and energy policies. The results support Mutuku, (2023) who explains that the Trade Remedies Act of 2017, as well as other protectionist laws, affected Kenya's economy unevenly. There has been criticism against the measures taken to safeguard home industries from foreign influences; this is due to the weakening of trade-related connections and limits to the capacity of the country to address unpleasant influences from different sources.

According to the analysis, Kenya often struggles to meet international trade sanctions because of non-tariff barriers that exist among regional trade blocs including COMESA (Sewe & Kimunio, 2023). Despite efforts by trade and energy regulations, the economy continues to be threatened by inflation due to inefficiency in the bureaucracy, high tax rates and sluggish policy changes (Omondi, 2023). The results suggest Kenya should get rid of its trade barriers to make energy and trade policies more effective through better partnership organization.

Food Security Strategy Emphasized in Kenya to Address Supply Chain Disruptions

This section explores the food security strategies most emphasized in Kenya to mitigate supply chain disruptions caused by global trade barriers. It highlights policy interventions, agricultural investments, and trade diversification efforts aimed at enhancing food stability.

Table 2: Food Security Strategy Emphasized

	Frequency	Percent
Encouraging local agricultural production	57	43.2%
Expanding import partnerships	49	37.1%
Implementing subsidies for food commodities	26	19.7%
Total	132	100.0%

(Source: Researcher, 2025)

The government of Kenya has planned the actions shown in Table 2 to support its food supply chains against difficulties faced in the global market. Participants ranked local agricultural production encouragement as their top priority, as it received the highest number of votes regarding food security. The country of Kenya has adopted Vision 2030 to help increase the amount of food it can produce at home and cut back on food importation (Mwangi & Wanjiru, 2023). Kenya's government is increasing irrigation, improving seeds and helping farmers manage finances to make sure the country can resist problems with food supply from foreign sources for a long time.

According to survey findings, 37.1% of the participants considered expanding import partnerships with Brazil and India which is crucial as Kenya wants to increase the range of its food suppliers (Otieno, 2023). The strategy allows Kenya to bring in new wheat and fertilizer to make up for what was formerly imported from Russia and Ukraine. According to 19.7% of those surveyed, food subsidies were chosen as the third best approach because they mentioned how governments could use them to control prices during inflation. Support offered by subsidies only lasts a short time, as there are often problems finding enough money and following the rules when it comes to funding. According to the results, Kenya is focusing on growing its agriculture, but import market growth and the use of subsidies help secure the country's food supply.

Effectiveness of Kenya's Trade, Energy, and Economic Policies in Mitigating Global

This section evaluates the effectiveness of Kenya's trade, energy, and economic policies in mitigating global disruptions, using a Likert scale analysis. It assesses public perceptions of policy success in addressing trade barriers, energy security, and economic resilience amid global challenges.

Table 3: Effectiveness of Kenya's Trade, Energy, and Economic Policies in Mitigating Global

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Kenya's trade and energy legislation has effectively mitigated the effects of global sanctions and trade barriers.	22 (16.7%)	25 (18.9%)	17 (12.9%)	32 (24.2%)	36 (27.3%)	3.27	1.461
Local production initiatives have been successful in reducing Kenya's dependence on imports.	16 (12.1%)	37 (28.0%)	18 (13.6%)	31 (23.5%)	30 (22.7%)	3.17	1.377
Renewable energy investments have significantly improved Kenya's energy security.	16 (12.1%)	35 (26.5%)	17 (12.9%)	23 (17.4%)	41 (31.1%)	3.29	1.449
Food security strategies have been effective in addressing supply chain disruptions caused by global crises.	13 (9.8%)	50 (37.9%)	17 (12.9%)	22 (16.7%)	30 (22.7%)	3.05	1.364
Kenya's economic policies have strengthened resilience to global economic shocks.	17 (12.9%)	29 (22.0%)	25 (18.9%)	26 (19.7%)	35 (26.5%)	3.25	1.395
Efforts to diversify energy sources have reduced Kenya's vulnerability to global energy disruptions.	8 (6.1%)	35 (26.5%)	19 (14.4%)	38 (28.8%)	32 (24.2%)	3.39	1.276

(Source: Researcher, 2025)

A survey using Likert scale in Table 3 explores how Kenya deals with challenges in trade, including embargoes, interruptions in flows of supplies and energy reliability. Data suggests that while some approved, others disapproved of trade and energy legislation in Kenya because 51.5% of participants thought its effectiveness was positive and 35.6% felt otherwise ($M = 3.27$, $SD = 1.461$). According to results, even with existing measures, there are many irregularities and poor enforcement when it comes to regulations (Mutuku & Wanjohi, 2023). Economic stability over the long run needs there to be efficient plans in trading and energy sectors.

When participants were asked, it was found that local production initiatives were moderately useful since 46.2% said these brought down Kenya's need to import goods ($M = 3.17$, $SD = 1.377$), but 40.1% said something else ($M = 3.17$, $SD = 1.377$). Kenya is working to grow agricultural and industry, but the high price of expanding infrastructure keeps the country short of achieving full economic self-reliance (Omondi, 2023). Despite facing issues, the investments Kenyan companies have made in agro-processing and manufacturing have helped the country grow food production at home and control its need for imports.

A majority of respondents thought sustainable measures supported energy security (48.5%) which is 2.79 points ($M = 3.29$) above the neutral point (Muthama & Ochieng, 2023). The promotion of renewable energy has placed Kenya at the front of sustainable energy in Africa, so the country's economy does not depend so much on fluctuating fuel prices from outside. The food security strategies got mixed results because 47.7% of the respondents claimed they did not work and only 39.4% said they did ($M = 3.05$, $SD = 1.364$). Food subsidy programs and agricultural changes in Kenya have reduced but not entirely eliminated problems leading to unstable food and unemployment (Kariuki, 2023). Developing the ability of agriculture to cope on its own must be emphasized in future plans to avoid shocks from global sources. The study revealed that 46.2% of people believe Kenya achieved economic success and 53.0% agree it has made progress in energy diversification ($M = 3.25$; $M = 3.39$). Kenya's shift towards new economic and energy sectors has enhanced its defenses against outside challenges, suggests Njoroge, (2023). Implementing strategic trading policies and a mix of energy sources by Kenya is expected to help the country stay economically stable by removing unnecessary threats from abroad.

DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this study shed light on the multifaceted impact of trade barriers targeting Russia on Kenya's food security and economic performance, with particular emphasis on the years between 2022 and 2024. The impacts of the Russia-Ukraine conflict and the consequent sanctions against Russia have a very radical extent in the directions of agriculture, energy, and the general stability of the economy. As noticed the introduction of trade bans on Russia led to a high decline in Kenya imports of key agricultural inputs such as wheat and fertilizer, two key elements in guaranteeing food security. However, prior to the sanctions, Russia supplied 31 percent of Kenya wheat imports but in 2022, such imports declined significantly or drastically hence resulting to severe food scarcity and an alarming rise in the cost of wheat flour. Wheat flour begun to rise in price by 28 percent within a few months, in June 2022 it had reached KES 205 and by the beginning of 2024, it had not yet returned to pre-war prices (KNBS, 2022). This solidifies that the Kenyan food security system is susceptible to international shocks, as they have very high figures of imports especially of staple products such as wheat and fertilizers. Furthermore, a high-cost of fertilizers that was further boosted by a 48% decrease in the imports of Russian fertilizers only added to the burdens of the local farmers already facing an inflation and a weakening supply chain (KIPPRA, 2022; International Trade Administration, 2023).

In regard to economy, the economy of Kenya depended on the Russian imports of essential resources such as fertilizers and wheat; thereby making the Kenyan economy vulnerable. The fact that the imports of Russia have declined significantly since 2021, with the present value of KES 6.6 billion reported in the first months of 2022 also illustrates how geopolitical tension can disrupt the economy of a developing nation (KNBS, 2022). This led to inflationary pressures in Kenya and especially food and energy prices, which were reported to have increased on the cost of living within the country. The intense increase in fuel prices is one of the factors that prompted inflation rates to rise to 9.2% in 2023, causing an upsurge in transport price and production price (Mutua, 2023). This eventually compromised the economic sustainability of both Kenyan families and companies, which underscores the relationship between the price fluxes in the global energy market and the domestic economic prosperity. Although some of the immediate impacts of such inflationary pressure were cushioned by some short-term mitigation measures like the introduction of fuel subsidies by Kenya, the short-term economic measures came at the cost of higher fiscal deficits, which points out the shortcomings of short term economic interventions.

The results also brought out the lackadaisical efficiency of Kenya trade and energy content in counteracting the magnitude of international restraints and trade obstacles. The results of the survey revealed that Kenya has a trade and energy law response that was split. The trade and energy laws used in Kenya were thought to be somewhat effective in responding to global disruptions by 51.5% of the respondents, whereas 35.6% were less confident in their effectiveness (Mutuku & Wanjohi, 2023). This is an inclination of a bigger issue of inefficiency of certain policies, especially those that address the effects of non-tariff barriers in regional trade blocs such as COMESA (Sewe & Kimunio, 2023). The fact is that even after creating diversity within trade relations and developing local agricultural sector as 43.2 percent of respondents indicated in the survey (Mwangi & Wanjiru, 2023), it is still difficult to reach the point of full economic resilience. On the one hand, the Vision 2030 of Kenya, as well as its policies aimed at investing in local production and renewable energy sources, cannot be evaluated as something negative but, on the other hand, is faced with considerable challenges of implementation, including low efficiency of bureaucracy and rather expensive infrastructure. An example of this is that although Kenya has managed to improve in policy formulation, it can hardly effectively protect itself against the jolt of blocking international trade and sanctions.

Local agricultural manufacturing, the development of import relationships, agricultural subsidies are among the tools used in Kenya to improve food security and present a practical solution to any supply chain disorder. Nonetheless, the efficiency of these strategies in terms of the long-term food security is doubtful because when it comes to local production, no one can meet the increasing demand in food consumption particularly during external shocks such as the sanctions on Russia. The diversification of import relations with such countries as Brazil and India, which was mentioned by 37.1 of the survey respondents (Otieno, 2023), is the right move. Such developments, however, also underscore Kenya still being dependent on international markets when it comes to getting important food sources, which further drives the necessity to have a more diversified and resilient agricultural system. Their overall performance as evaluated by the respondents (only 39.4 percent ranked food security measures as successful) prove that the country still has to invest in country-based agricultural production

and policy changes so that Kenya could decrease its reliance on foreign suppliers and become more self-reliant in food security terms.

CONCLUSION

In this study, researchers have demonstrated the severe effects of the trade obstacles aimed against Russia on Kenya food security and the performance of its economy during 2022 to 2024. The sanctions that were enforced against Russia altered the flow of vital commodities such as wheat and fertilizers that drastically raised prices and created food insecurity in Kenya. Such prices as wheat flour, for example, rose by 28 percent in 2022, aggravating the inflation and worsening the economic welfare of Kenyan households further. The research also showed how the increase in energy prices globally especially fuel has led to inflation in 2023 to increase to 9.2 percent stressing both businesses and consumers. Although solutions that were implemented within the short term such as fuel subsidies were set in place, Kenya could only protect itself partially against these shocks, which revealed the weakness of its economy.

In a bid to counter these developments, enhancement of local agriculture output and diversification of trading alliances came up as key undertakings that would help Kenya absorb the shocks of global trade havocs. The results however showed that local production cannot be entirely adequate in satisfying the food security need of the country. Kenya should maintain its infrastructure investment, diversify its importation, and focus on sustainable energy to allow long-run resilience. The enhancement of regional integration, enhancement of the implementation of the trade policy, and emphasis on diversifying the economy are some of the major steps Kenya has to undertake to reduce its reliance on external markets and enhance the ability to sustain subsequent global trade shocks.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In enhancing the resilience of Kenya to global trade shocks, it is prudent to advise the country to diversify its trading relationships especially with emerging economies such as Brazil and India, as a way of minimizing the supply concentration. Improving on local agriculture, infrastructure as well as supporting climate resilient agriculture will assist towards improving food security and lessen dependence on import. Kenya should also enhance its trade and energy policies by eliminating regional restrictions and investing in renewable sources of energy. Finally, the government should invest in long-term measures of food security such as improved storage facilities, distribution, and assistance to small-scale farmers to be prepared against future events shaking the world.

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