

**EFFECTS OF COVID-19 CRISIS ON ACHIEVEMENT OF SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS) IN AFRICA: CASE STUDY FROM KIGALI,
RWANDA.**

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Abstract

1. The study focused on understanding the effects of COVID-19 pandemic on the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals. The study was guided by five specific objectives: To examine the effect of total lockdown measures on achievement of sustainable development goals (SDGs); to determine the effect of social distance and wearing mask measures on achievement of sustainable development goals (SDGs); to assess the effect Covid-19 testing and vaccination on achievement of sustainable development goals (SDGs); to find out the effect of cashless policy on achievement of sustainable development goals (SDGs) and to identify the coping strategies taken from the perspective of Rwanda, back on track towards the SDGs implementation despite COVID-19 Pandemic.

The main reasons for this research was to assess the effects that COVID-19 pandemic has caused to the implementation of social economic related sustainable development goals and to come up with policy recommendations aimed at minimizing the such effects for future pandemics. Preparedness will be critical for the whole world to build the needed resiliency in so many sectors and this will require stronger coordination among all stakeholders.

The results of this research study was achieved through survey research design such as descriptive and correlational research design. The respondents were given a complete chance to share their opinions and views about the asked questions and research problem. Moreover, the sample population of this study includes the individuals that were directly affected by the pandemic.

2. Introduction

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) also known as Global Goals, are 17 strategic goals that were developed and adopted by all United Nations member states in 2015 as a universal call to action for the eradication of poverty, protection of the planet, and ensuring that all peoples enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030. These SDGs were integrated recognizing that action in one area would affect outcomes in others and that development must balance socio-economic and environmental sustainability. Since their inception, the pledge of the Sustainable Development Goals was to leave no one behind. The SDGs were a roadmap and a commitment by the world to ensure optimum human and planetary health and prosperity by 2030, starting with those at the furthest back (World Bank, 2018). Especially, least developed countries have lagged significantly behind, with average growth for 2015–2018 at 4.2% (WB databank).

The COVID-19 pandemic hit the world on an unprecedented scale, bringing all aspects of the world to a stand-still and regression at a pace never before experienced, including, and most especially, developmental agendas. COVID-19 pandemic has been described as a twin crisis - an economic and health crisis, the world is grappling with new and preexisting challenges all around. Due to this unexpected crisis, there is a shift of countries' priorities, which is diminishing their efforts to reach the SDGs. Countries as main responsible for SDGs implementation, can use the crisis as an opportunity to strengthen their commitment for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, by placing sustainability at the core of their recovery plans.

1. Problem statement

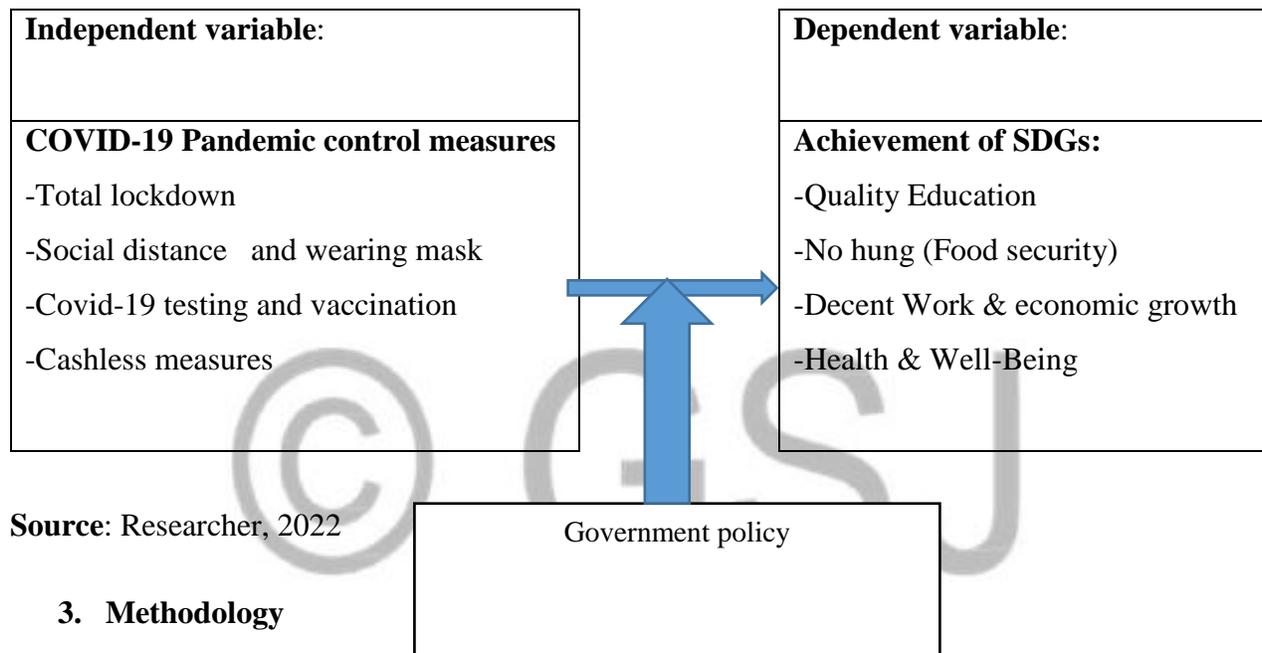
In 2015, the world committed to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. According to the high level political forum (HLPF) in 2020, the SDGs even before pandemic were not on track to be reached by 2030 where global world has been on track to end poverty (SDG1), making a steady decline from 15.7% in 2010 to 8.2% in 2019 with projections of reducing to 6% by 2030. SDG2 (food insecurity) had already been on the rise from 22.4% in 2014 to 25.9% in 2019. The improvement had also been made on SDG 3 (health) but there is a great need for acceleration (Word bank, 2020).

Despite the widespread adoption of and progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals, however, this current positive trajectory is juxtaposed by Covid-19 outbreak was first reported in Wuhan on 19th December 2019.

2. General Research Objectives

The general objective of this study was to assess the effects of covid-19 crisis on achievement of sustainable development goals (SDGS) in Africa with a Case Study from Kigali, Rwanda.

Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework



Source: Researcher, 2022

3. Methodology

The results of this research study achieved through qualitative and descriptive methods. To achieve the best results, we must use both quantitative and descriptive data collection methods. When you combine the two, we get deeper insights.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of cleaning, transforming, and processing raw data in order to extract actionable, relevant information that assists businesses in making informed decisions. The procedure reduces the risks associated with decision-making by providing useful insights and statistics, which are frequently presented in charts, images, tables, and graphs. This study used descriptive, correlation analysis for quantitative while content analysis for qualitative data.

Kenton, (2019), said that, descriptive statistics are brief descriptive coefficients that summarize a given data set, which can be either a representation of the entire or a sample of a population.

Descriptive statistics was used to describe the basic features of the data in the tendencies and then replicated in tabular manner. It involved use of percentages, frequencies, mean and standard deviation.

Correlation analysis was used to find out the relationship between COVID-19 Pandemic measures such as total lockdown and school closure; social distance and wearing mask; covid-19 testing and vaccination and cashless policy as independent variable and achievement of SDGs as dependent variable.

4. Findings

This section summarized the findings of the study based on the research objectives:

- **First research objective**, the findings revealed that total lockdown had negative and significant effect on achievement of SDGs in Kigali city ($\beta_1 = -0.103$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$, $t = -4.023$) which means that a unit increase in total lockdown would lead to decrease in achievement of SDGs in Kigali city by 0.103 units.
- **Second research objective**, the findings revealed that it had negative and insignificant effect on achievement of SDGs in Kigali ($\beta_2 = -0.045$, $p\text{-value} = 0.081 > 0.05$, $t = -1.751$) which implied that a unit increase in social distance and wearing mask would lead to decrease in achievement of SDGs in Kigali by 0.045 units but not significant.
- **Third research objective**, the findings revealed that Covid-19 testing and vaccination had significant positive effect on achievement of SDGs in Kigali as indicated by $\beta_3 = 0.240$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$, $t = 6.777$. The implication is that an increase of one unit in Covid-19 testing and vaccination would lead to an increase in achievement of SDGs in Kigali by 0.240 units.
- **Fourth research objective**, the findings revealed that there is significant positive effect of cashless measures on achievement of SDGs in Kigali as indicated by ($\beta_4 = 0.266$, p -

value=0.000<0.05, t=10.168) which means is that an increase of one unit in cashless measures would lead to an increase in achievement of SDGs in Kigali by 0.266 units.

Table 1: Regression coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	2.538	.206		12.331	.000
X1=Total lockdown	-.103	.025	-.160	-4.023	.000
X2=Social distancing and wearing mask	-.045	.026	-.071	-1.751	.081
X3=Covid-19 testing and vaccination	.240	.035	.287	6.777	.000
X4=Cashless measures	.266	.026	.434	10.168	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Y=Achievement of SGDs in Kigali City

The findings concluded that there was variation of 38.7% at 95% of confidence interval on achievement of SDGs in Kigali as a result of COVID-19 measures as depicted in the model summary below:

Table 2: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.627 ^a	.393	.387	.28204

a. Predictors: (Constant), X4=Cashless measures, X1=Total lockdown, X2=Social distance and wearing mask, X3=Covid-19 testing and vaccination

5. Conclusion

In the effort to curb the wide spread of COVID-19 pandemic, Government of Rwanda and the world at large adopted some measures such as total lockdown, social distancing, wearing mask, schools closure, cashless policies and testing and vaccination which in turn affected the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The study concludes that for the future pandemic preparedness, the governments will need to take a broad view of the health systems that incorporates universal health coverage, sustainable

development and investing in up-stream interventions that address multiple societal issues as well as developing a rapid and comprehensive research ecosystem and strengthen mechanisms for evidence-based policy-making that can handle uncertainty. This will require robust institutionalization of public health systems and strengthening of global cooperation and coordination mechanisms.

6. Recommendations

This study provides a number of recommendations in an effort to provide policy implications that aims at preparing countries for future pandemics:

The world was not prepared for the COVID-19 pandemic and must do better. For future pandemic preparedness, we will need to take a broad view of the health systems that incorporates universal health coverage, sustainable development and human rights, investing in up-stream interventions that address multiple societal issues.

The study recommends the introduction of a financial stimulus package for Rwandan businesses. Funds should be set aside with the intention of providing credits to the ailing people business in order for the businesses to start picking up in the market. Besides that, the government should introduce financial policies reducing the tax liability to be paid by the SMEs for a minimum period of 2 years in order for the businesses to pick up after suffering economically during the COVID-19 stringent restrictions period.

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