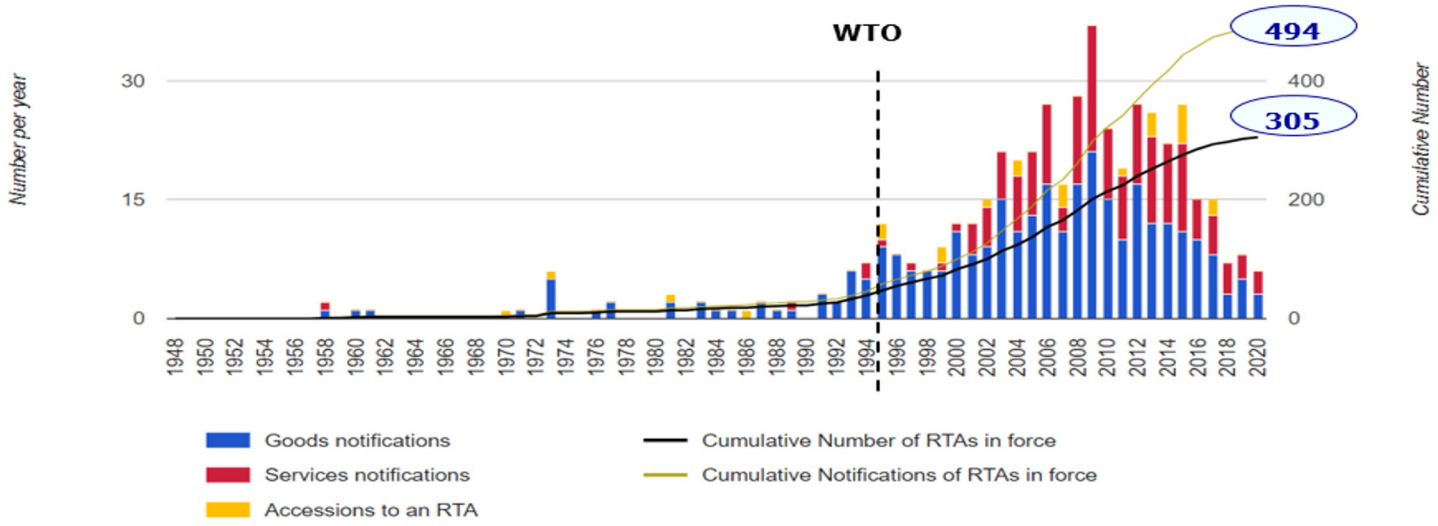
WTO會員貿易自由化程度與其治理COVID-19疫情成效之關聯性研究

2023/09/09

The WTO and RTAs in Force



Note: Notifications of RTAs: goods, services & accessions to an RTA are counted separately.

Source: WTO Secretariat - August 7, 2020

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Research Q

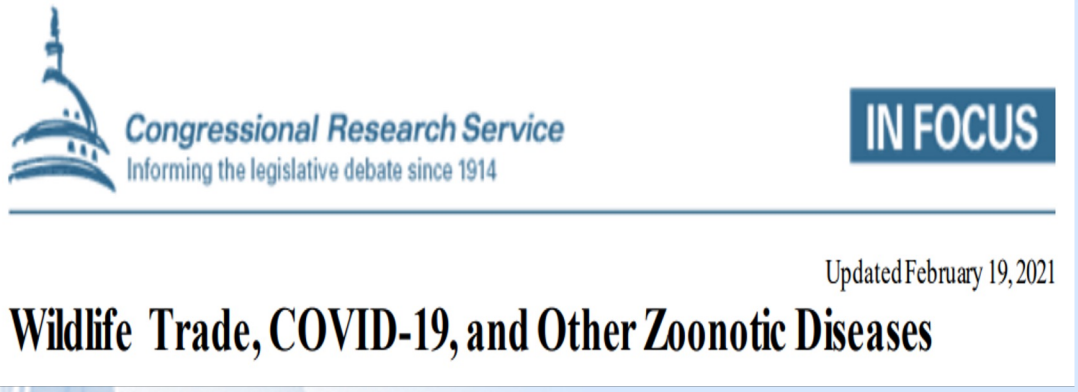
Why were countries that signed more trade liberalization agreements before the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic less effective to prevent and control its spread?

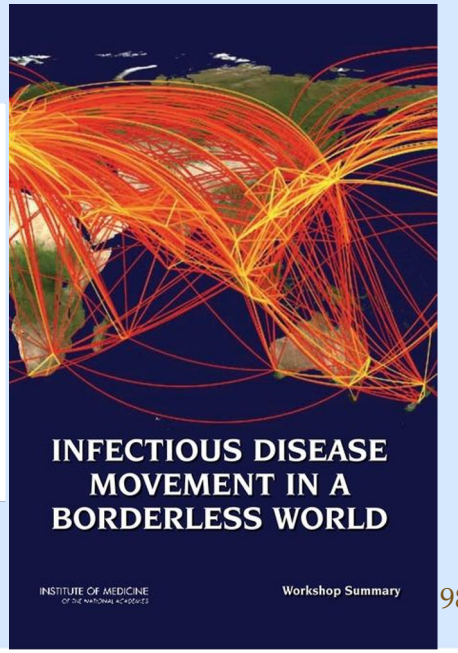
Background & Basic Facts

- The COVID-19 pandemic challenges the conventional view linking economic downturns with infectious diseases.

- However, the high degree of globalization in contemporary human society, infectious diseases now spread faster and over a wider geographical range than in the past (Fidler, 2003; Kimball, 2006).

- there is indeed a correlation between a country's level of economic development and the quality of its public health; however the existing literature in the field of PH overlook the impact of "external factors".





IT: An External Factor

- The existing literature has notably focused on the negative impacts caused by ***G***
- ***G*** has had 'negative effects' on 'certain countries,' for instance, in international investment where the invested countries have experienced a decline in environmental quality.

- Why are certain countries? Are all highly globalized countries experiencing severe domestic outbreaks? Have we overlooked something in the context of globalization?

- This paper questions the conventional wisdom of singling out specific countries for certain conditions and suggests a need to consider other factors, e.g.: *the legal obligations that a country assumes after signing a trade liberalization agreement.*

Research Design

- The scope covers the period from the end of January 2020 to the end of November 2021.

- Two hypotheses:
  (H1) when a country assumes more obligations related to TL, its epidemic prevention performance tends to be worse.
  (H2) the obligations of TL that a country assumes have a more critical impact on epidemic prevention performance compared to its level of trade openness.

Empirical Analysis

	M (1)	M (2)	M (3)	M (4)
	Mortality Rate (log)	Mortality Rate (log)	Mortality Rate	Mortality Rate
N° of RTAs (log)	0.821***	0.497**	445.204***	325.399*
	(9.27)	(3.13)	(8.23)	(2.41)
Trade Openness		0.009*		2.512
		(2.49)		(0.89)
RTAs * TO		-0.007**		-2.054
		(-3.15)		(-1.22)
Democracy		0.008		9.639*
		(0.77)		(2.53)
GDP per capita (log)		0.320		-59.273
		(1.65)		(-0.43)
GINI		0.046**		22.618*
		(2.76)		(2.14)
Pop Intensity		0.000		-0.150
		(1.61)		(-0.68)
Island		-0.846		-661.291**
		(-1.95)		(-3.28)
HB Occupancy		0.111		111.762
		(1.54)		(1.94)
V Coverage		-0.05		-0.539
		(-0.42)		(-0.11)
CONSTANT	4.243***	-0.767	87.110	-874.653
	(17.08)	(-0.53)	(0.87)	(-1.12)
Observation	154	122	154	122
F	86.01	15.47	67.73	12.19
R2	0.292	0.498	0.247	0.379

Preliminary Research Findings

- The higher the degree of TL obligation a country undertakes, the less effective it is in preventing and controlling the spread of COVID-19 within its borders.
- There exists a substitute relationship between the '*obligation*' of trade liberalization and a country's *trade openness degree*.
- Therefore, this paper suggests: 'obligation-based market openness,' ***vs.*** 'voluntary-based market openness.'

- TL serves as a powerful indicator of the phenomenon of ***G***. It is often seen as a prescription to maintain peace or prevent wars after major international conflicts and has become a universal value pursued after the end of the Cold War.

- However, there is no such thing as a free; as countries pursue integration into trade liberalization, they should evaluate the 'opportunity cost' it entails.

Thank you very much for your attention. Sincerely ask everyone to provide me with valuable suggestions to make the current research more rigorous.