

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

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摘要

世界貿易組織 (World Trade Organization, WTO) 目前有 164 個會員，佔聯合國 (United Nations) 會員國總數的 84.9%；世界衛生組織 (World Health Organization) 會員國總數的 84.5%。在此三個國際組織彼此會籍重疊率均逾八成以上的情況下，本文提出一個目前仍鮮少有文獻釐清之問題，即貿易自由化的程度對於 WTO 會員 (主權國家和個別關稅領域) 治理 COVID-19 疫情的成效是否具有負面影響？藉由會員實際承擔之條約「義務」來估算貿易自由化的程度，本文發現 WTO 會員承擔之「義務」越多，其在因應 COVID-19 此一突發性公衛危機時的治理成效越差。毋寧，過高的貿易自由化程度確實不利於多數 WTO 會員的衛生安全 (health security)。本文的另一貢獻在於，對貿易自由化進行有意義且較細緻的分類，用以說明並非所有的「貿易開放」皆會弱化 WTO 會員治理及因應公衛危機之能力。

關鍵字：貿易自由化、義務承擔、防疫成效、WTO 會員、COVID-19

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Abstract

The World Trade Organization (WTO) currently has 164 members, accounting for 84.9% of the total number of member states in the United Nations, and 84.5% of the same base in the World Health Organization. In a situation where the membership overlap among these three international organizations exceeds 80%, this paper raises a question that is still relatively unexplored in the academic literature nowadays: Does the degree of trade liberalization have a negative impact on the performance of governing the COVID-19 pandemic for the WTO members (sovereign states and separate customs territories)?

By assessing the quantity of ‘treaty obligations’ undertaken by the WTO members, this paper estimates the level of members’ integration into trade liberalization. It is observed that as WTO members take on more obligations, their performance to govern the public health crises such as COVID-19 becomes worse. In other words, an excessively high degree of trade liberalization does indeed pose a disadvantage to the health security of a majority of WTO members. Another contribution of this paper lies in meaningfully and intricately categorizing trade liberalization, which illustrates that not all types of ‘trade openness’ will necessarily weaken the capabilities of governance and response that the WTO members have in a time of public health crises.

Keywords: Trade Liberalization, Undertaking of Obligation, Performance of Pandemic Governance, Members of the WTO, COVID-19