

APPLICATION TEMPLATE

First name: Ndirangu

Last name: Ngunjiri

Institutional affiliation: University of University

Nationality: Kenyan

Please select:

- ☐ Based in Cape Town
- ☒ Based in South Africa, outside of Cape Town (please specify where)

- ☐ Based in Africa, outside of South Africa (please specify where): Kisumu Kenya

- ☐ Other (please specify where)

Educational background

r3n5 mp

Graduate studies - University of Nairobi, finance, climate change.

Post-graduate -Faculty of Business and Management Science

Relevant work experience: More than 15 years

Questions (200 words each):

1. Provide a short bio about yourself, written in the first person.

Ndirangu Ngunjiri is a Doctoral (Finance & Accounting) fellow at the University of Nairobi with a research interest in; inequality & poverty, cyber security, innovations, and international trade. He is a published researcher and has presented at local and international conferences. Currently, he is working on a study that involves analyzing data from mobile loan platforms and their impact on market performance, showcasing how digital data can be leveraged to understand economic trends and challenges in real time. This aligns with the digital focus on utilizing data and technology for economic analysis

2. Explain your motivation for applying for the program. Why have you applied and what do you hope to get out? Please avoid generic answers.

As a PhD candidate, I am deeply immersed in my dissertation, which examines the impact of financial innovations on economic growth and development in sub-Saharan Africa. My research aims to identify how financial instruments, such as microfinance and mobile banking, can be leveraged to promote inclusive growth and reduce poverty.

This is an opportunity I perceive as an extraordinary chance to interact with students and scholars from diverse professional and cultural backgrounds coming from all over the World.

This type of networking is very important for the integration of different ideas and perspectives on diverse global issues.

Participating in this workshop will be highly beneficial to my academic and professional development. I anticipate the following key benefits. Receiving constructive feedback on my paper will help enhance the quality of my research and prepare it for publication in reputable journals. The workshop will allow me to connect with fellow researchers and practitioners in the field of development studies, fostering potential collaborations and expanding my academic network.

I am eager to participate in this enriching experience and look forward to the opportunity to contribute to and learn from the workshop.

Thank you for considering my application.

3. Provide an overview of your work, explaining where you are in your process and the direction of your work. Please include information about your current research methods, empirical area, and conceptual interests.

My current work is centered around understanding the relationship between economic development and social inclusion in Sub-Saharan Africa, with a particular focus on marginalized communities such as the LGBTQ+ population. I am exploring how inclusivity, or the lack thereof, impacts broader economic outcomes in the region.

At this stage, I am refining my research framework, with the aim of linking social factors to economic performance at both micro and macro levels. I am using a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. For the quantitative aspect, I employ econometric tools to analyze data from national surveys and reports, focusing on key economic indicators like employment rates, income distribution, and access to financial services. On the qualitative side, I am conducting interviews and case studies to gain a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of LGBTQ+ individuals and the structural barriers they face in participating in the economy.

Conceptually, I am interested in exploring how exclusion from economic opportunities due to social factors like gender identity or sexual orientation impacts economic growth at a national level. I am particularly intrigued by the intersection of social justice, economic inequality, and development policies. By highlighting the economic cost of exclusion, I hope to influence both policy and public opinion toward greater inclusivity.

The empirical area of my research is primarily focused on Kenya and other neighboring countries, given the unique socio-economic dynamics and ongoing discussions about LGBTQ+ rights and inclusion in the region. My long-term goal is to contribute to policy recommendations that foster both social and economic well-being across marginalized communities in Sub-Saharan Africa.

4. Write a short vignette from your life or research where you experienced a digital platform glitch. Alternatively, describe a digital platform you have encountered that left you puzzled, curious or disturbed.

During one of my research projects, I was collecting survey data through an online platform to gather insights into the economic experiences of marginalized communities. I had meticulously designed the survey, ensuring that the questions were clear and the interface was user-friendly. After launching the survey, I received an overwhelming number of responses in the first few days, which was encouraging.

Abstract



Accelerating Digitalization and Technological Innovation as Keys to Boosting Economic Growth in Africa

The growth of an African digitalization process is improving millions of lives and rapidly transforming the continent. Africa has a unique opportunity to become more sustainable and create economic growth through the better use of data, instead of using old technologies. Digitalization transforms our everyday life, our way of communication and information, as well as our relationships with other people. Especially in African countries, digitalization is still under development and poses on the one hand risks, challenges, and difficulties, on the other hand, opportunities, chances, and perspectives for users, providers, and politics. High hopes for development lie in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and their potential benefits for the Global South. Digitalization has many benefits: It speeds up the spread of information, brings people closer together, creates jobs, and makes societies more efficient. In this study, we investigate the role of digitalization and technological innovation characteristics related to Africa economic development, in 45 African countries, a sample of 789 participants in public and private sectors were selected from 2020 to 2023. Technological progress and economic growth inter-dependency were analyzed in two steps. First, the relation was tested using Augmented Dickey-Fuller method. Second, we estimated the long-run relation between the variables by using Engel Granger and Error Correction models. A disaggregated analysis of the types of usage reveals that two indicators, social media and the importance of ICTs to government vision, are significant for growth. Results of regression analyses show that digitalization and technological innovation positively related to

Africa's economic growth. Also, the results indicate that adopting technological innovation and digitizing the economy has the potential to drive sustainable growth and development. In particular, it was noted that ICT investments drive high productivity rates and faster economic growth. In sum, technological progress and digitization have the potential to foster significant growth and therefore must be given high credence in the planning and designing of development programs. This paper contributes to development theories on the role that ICT plays in economic growth and development.

Keywords: Digitalization, Digital technology usage, Economic growth, Africa.

For application-related questions please contact:

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Bcc	 Person
Subject	

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