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Data article

Dataset on retail outlet product prices for Botswana, Lesotho and South Africa

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ABSTRACT

The data presented in this article are related to the research article entitled “Closer monetary union and product market integration in emerging economies: Evidence from the Common Monetary Area in Southern Africa” (M. A. Nchake, L. Edwards, N. Rankin, 2017) [1]. This article describes the monthly retail product prices used in the compilation of the consumer price index of Lesotho, South Africa and Botswana, and collected by the statistical offices in the respective countries. The data are provided at the product level and vary across cities and across time. Each individual product has information on the date (month and year), city, product and unit codes, units of measurements and, in some cases, brand name of that product. The data is made publicly available to enable replication analysis or to extend on the existing results.

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Specifications Table

Subject area	International economics, Private Enterprise Development
More specific subject area	Retail firms and micro price data
Type of data	Tables and metric variables
How data was acquired	The data were collected from the statistical offices of Botswana, Lesotho and South Africa.
Data format	Analysed
Experimental factors	Three datasets (for Lesotho, Botswana and South Africa) were combined in order to compare the level retail price differences over two specific periods.
Experimental features	The data were compared between the two periods which coincide with the periods before and after the introduction of macroeconomic policy shock in Botswana.
Data source location	Lesotho Bureau of Statistics, Botswana Central Statistical Office, Statistics South Africa.
Data accessibility	Data is available in this article.

Value of the data

- The data underscores the significance of analysing price disparities at a micro level across countries can unpack some important insights on heterogeneity in the level of product prices across cities, even within narrowly defined products.
- The described study is important for the analysis of product market integration across countries.
- The time-dimension of the data provide further information on how changes in transaction costs affect retail prices over time in the Southern African region.
- The availability of data allows for re-use and replicability of the results thereof.

1. Data, experimental design, materials and methods

1.1. Data

The data provided is based on retail product prices underlying the consumer price index (CPI) in Botswana, Lesotho and South Africa, provided at the product level and varies across cities and across time.

Each product has several price records and has information on the date (month and year), city, product and unit codes and units of measurements of that product.

The data presented in this article covers the two periods (June 2004- May 2006) and (January 2007 – December 2008) for each of the three countries.

1.2. Experimental design, materials and methods

The data represent a quasi-experiment of two large macroeconomic policy reforms that were introduced in Botswana in May 2005 and in January 2008 [1]. The design is such that the retail product prices were observed a year before and after the introduction of each of the policy reforms [2]. A very detailed concordance of these products describes names, units and in some cases, brands using the product lists obtained from the Botswana, Lesotho and SA statistical offices. A set of regions in the three countries where the price data for the selected products were available for all periods were then identified (Table 1). Finally, the data accounts for the differences in tax rates on goods and services (sales tax and Value added tax) and exchange rates between Botswana and Lesotho and South Africa.

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