

Review of: "A Step Towards Environmental Mitigation: How Do Economic Complexity And Natural Resources Matter? Focusing On Different Institutional Quality Level Countries"

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Potential competing interests: The author(s) declared that no potential competing interests exist.

This study examines the effect of economic complexity on ecological footprint. Furthermore, the interaction term of economic complexity and natural resources is used to assess this relationship. The sample comprises 118 countries data from 1995-2017. The panel vector autoregressive model is used in this paper. The results revealed that economic complexity in all countries has a positive impact on ecological footprint.

The paper submitted covers an interesting and new topic. However, authors need to consider the below-mentioned points to improve its quality.

Main Points

1. The abstract is very lengthy and contains some unnecessary details. In addition, the abstract in its present form is not fully representing the paper. The abstract should be precise and cover every aspect of the paper. Authors should include one or two sentences regarding sample (sample firms/countries and timeframe) and methods used in the study.
2. The introduction is very well managed in form of contextualizing the broad area. However, substantial improvements are needed in areas:
 - What is the originality of this study? Authors are suggested to identify the need for study in their selected countries' samples.
 - As the authors mentioned in the study that they focused on countries with different institutional quality levels. How authors group countries in terms of their institutional quality level. It needs to be explained.
 - The contribution of the paper is not clear. Authors should explain the contribution of their study and how their study added to the existing body of knowledge. In addition, who will be the beneficiaries of this study.
 - Also, at the end of the introduction before introducing the next section, provide a brief discussion of the results and policy implications of the study.
1. In the literature review section, instead of providing multiple citations at paragraph end, it is preferable to incorporate citations with respective arguments. As many of the arguments are there without any reference within the paragraphs. Most importantly, this study lacks a discussion on theoretical foundations as no related theory or model is incorporated in the study. Previous studies have greatly

employed the environmental Kuznets curve (EKC) hypothesis to form the basis of examining determinants of the ecological footprint. Authors may relate their discussion with the (EKC) hypothesis.

2. In methods, authors have used the PVAR specification approach and made the argument in favor of this approach. Is there any limitation of this approach? If yes, then discuss limitations as well. Also, while justifying PVAR usage, the Authors should make a comparison with other identical techniques as well which may be utilized in a similar context.
3. In the data section, it is stated that countries are divided into three groups based on their institutional quality. institution quality has six dimensions identified in this paper, however, only one dimension (corruption control) is explained while others are ignored. It is not clear whether you have used only corruption control as an institution quality measure or all six dimensions?
4. Discussion of results needs further improvements. The more economic significance of outcomes should be provided with supporting evidence. Moreover, authors are required to support the findings of each panel of countries with arguments made in the literature section and relevant citations. In addition, also incorporate a summary of results clearly depicting how results of countries with weak, medium and high institutional qualities are identical or different.
5. The conclusion section is fine except for the policy implications that are generally discussed instead of based on the outcomes of this study. It is suggested to discuss policy implications in a detailed manner concentrating on the findings obtained in the study. It is preferred to provide separate policy implications for countries having weak, medium and high institutional quality.

I believe that much hard had to be put behind the work by the authors. The important point is the authors need to clearly articulate the concept to make it more interesting for the readers.