



Informal Cross-Border Trade Networks in Guinea-Bissau within ECOWAS Contexts: A Survey Analysis

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Abstract

Informal cross-border trade networks are integral to regional integration in West Africa, particularly within the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Guinea-Bissau serves as a significant case study for understanding these dynamics due to its strategic location and economic challenges. The study employs a structured questionnaire distributed across key regions in Guinea-Bissau to gather data from informal cross-border traders. Quantitative analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics to interpret the survey results. Findings indicate that approximately 75% of respondents engage in trade with neighboring countries, primarily Senegal and Gambia. The most commonly traded goods include agricultural products such as rice and palm oil, reflecting regional specialization. The study highlights significant informal cross-border trading activities in Guinea-Bissau, challenging conventional notions of market integration within ECOWAS. These findings underscore the need for more inclusive regulatory frameworks to support sustainable economic growth. Recommendations include developing targeted trade policies that address specific needs of informal traders and enhancing regional cooperation on border management to facilitate smoother cross-border transactions.

Keywords: *Geographical, regionalism, integration, ethno-geography, survey methodology, cross-cultural economics, community networks*

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