



Cross-Border Informal Trade Dynamics within ECOWAS: Nigeria's Integration Challenges and Opportunities

Omoloye Abiodun^{1,2}, Aderinokuru Adedeji^{1,3}, Balogun Oluwasanmi^{4,5}, Olukotun Sadiq^{5,6}

¹ Nigerian Institute of Advanced Legal Studies (NIALS)

² Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

³ Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

⁴ Babcock University

⁵ Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto

⁶ Department of Research, Babcock University

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Correspondence: oabiodun@aol.com

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Author notes

Omoloye Abiodun is affiliated with Nigerian Institute of Advanced Legal Studies (NIALS) and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.

Aderinokuru Adedeji is affiliated with Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.

Balogun Oluwasanmi is affiliated with Babcock University and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.

Olukotun Sadiq is affiliated with Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.

Abstract

Informal cross-border trade plays a significant role in regional integration within ECOWAS, particularly for Nigeria's economy. A mixed-methods approach combining qualitative interviews with quantitative data analysis to explore trends and patterns in Nigerian cross-border informal trade. Nigeria's informal cross-border trade constitutes approximately 20% of its total exports, highlighting the substantial economic impact of this sector within ECOWAS. While Nigeria faces challenges such as tax evasion and limited regulatory frameworks, it also presents opportunities for enhancing regional integration through targeted policy interventions. Nigeria should prioritise strengthening customs procedures, improving information sharing mechanisms among ECOWAS countries, and fostering a conducive business environment to enhance cross-border trade flows.

Keywords: *Nigerianization, Cross-Border Informality, Regional Integration, Economic Geography, Mercantile Networks, Quantitative Methods, Qualitative Research*

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