



Analysis of Informal Cross-Border Trade and Regional Integration in ECOWAS in South Africa: An African Perspective

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Abstract

This study addresses a current research gap in African Studies concerning Informal Cross-Border Trade and Regional Integration in ECOWAS in South Africa. The objective is to clarify key debates, identify practical implications, and outline a focused agenda for scholarship and policy. A mixed-methods design was used, combining survey and interview data collected over the study period. The analysis indicates persistent structural constraints alongside emerging local innovations; however, evidence remains uneven across contexts and sectors. The paper argues for context-specific approaches and stronger empirical foundations in future research. Stakeholders should prioritise inclusive, locally grounded strategies and improve data transparency. Informal Cross-Border Trade and Regional Integration in ECOWAS, South Africa, Africa, African Studies, mixed methods study This structured abstract provides a standardised summary to support rapid screening, indexing, and assessment of scholarly contribution.

Keywords: *Informal Cross-Border Trade and Regional Integration in ECOWAS, South Africa, Africa, African Studies*

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