



Informal Cross-Border Trade and Regional Integration in ECOWAS: A Qualitative Study in Ghana 2009

Banda Osei^{1,2}, Kwei Gyamfi¹, Dzodzi Amoako², Achimota Fosu^{3,4}

¹ University of Ghana, Legon

² Accra Technical University

³ Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, Food Research Institute (FRI)

⁴ Water Research Institute (WRI)

Published: 13 December 2009 | **Received:** 16 August 2009 | **Accepted:** 12 November 2009

Correspondence: bosei@gmail.com

DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.18898100](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18898100)

Author notes

Banda Osei is affiliated with University of Ghana, Legon and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.

Kwei Gyamfi is affiliated with University of Ghana, Legon and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.

Dzodzi Amoako is affiliated with Accra Technical University and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.

Achimota Fosu is affiliated with Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, Food Research Institute (FRI) and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.

Abstract

Informal cross-border trade plays a significant role in regional integration within ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States). In Ghana, this phenomenon is particularly pronounced as it serves as a bridge between formal and informal economic activities. Qualitative research methods were employed, including semi-structured interviews and participant observation, conducted among traders, government officials, and community leaders in selected regions of Ghana. The findings indicate that informal cross-border trade constitutes approximately 25% of total intra-regional commerce in Ghana. Key themes include the reliance on traditional networks for market access, challenges related to border controls, and the emergence of new regional trading hubs. This study highlights the importance of integrating informal cross-border traders into formal regional integration processes, suggesting that targeted policies could enhance economic resilience and inclusivity within ECOWAS. Policy recommendations include strengthening border management systems to reduce trade barriers, promoting education for informal traders on legal business practices, and fostering community-led initiatives to support sustainable development across borders. ECOWAS, Ghana, Regional Integration, Informal Trade, Cross-Border Commerce

Keywords: Geopolitical, Sub-Saharan, Mercantile, Ethnography, Postcolonial, Anthropology, Political Economy

ABSTRACT-ONLY PUBLICATION

This is an abstract-only publication. The complete research paper with full methodology, results, discussion, and references is available upon request.

✉ REQUEST FULL PAPER

Email: info@parj.africa

Request your copy of the full paper today!

SUBMIT YOUR RESEARCH

Are you a researcher in Africa? We welcome your submissions!

Join our community of African scholars and share your groundbreaking work.

Submit at: app.parj.africa



Scan to visit app.parj.africa

Open Access Scholarship from PARJ

Empowering African Research | Advancing Global Knowledge