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Traditional Market Days and The Development of Long Distance Trade in Nigeria

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Abstract:

This study examines the extent to which traditional market days influence the development of long distance trade in Nigeria. Two rural markets were selected for this study and they are Orie-Umuosu Nsulu market in Abia state and Afo-Igwe market in Anambra state. 100 copies of research instrument were distributed in each of the markets under study and our data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation and Linear Regression. Our findings show a significant relationship existing between traditional market days and long distance trade. The study further recommends a reawakening of the concept of history in every area of learning in Nigeria, both at the primary, secondary and tertiary institutions of learning as well as immortalizing past heroes who played significant roles in long distance trade in time past.

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Introduction

Long distance trade can be described as trade transaction done within long distance. Such distance could be within countries, regions and continents (Shokpeka&Nwaokocha, 2009). Long distance trade had started a long time ago even before the entity called Nigeria was formally instituted. Capitalists such as King Jaja of Opobo and Governor Nana of Itsekiri had engaged in trade internationally and were very successful (Rotimi &Ogen, 2008). According to Ekundare (1973), slave trade and export of palm oil and other products such as cocoa, groundnut etc characterized the foreign trade going on during the traditional market era. It was reported that in the year 1818, over 1465 tons of palm oil were exported from west Africa to European countries, this was further increased to 8164 tons in the year 1831. There was further increase to 15773 tons in the year 1840 and by the year 1850, it has increased to 21,722 tons. By the year 1860, over 40,216 tons of palm oil has been exported (Ekundare, 1973). Furthermore, it was estimated that in 1863, 97 vessels with a total tonnage of 29,591 had entered Lagos sea port, in 1880, 366 vessels with a total tonnage of 170,740 also entered Lagos. In 1890, 409 vessels with a total tonnage of 272,423 had entered Lagos sea port. In 1900, 526 vessels with total tonnage of 531,871 had also entered Lagos sea port (West African Year –Book, 1901). This shows that there had been an increasing rate of long distance trade going on even before Nigeria was formed. The likes of King Jaja of Opobo and Governor Nana of Itsekini had also excelled as capitalists within the Niger Delta region. According to Crowder (1968), King Jaja, apart from his exceptional business acumen, he had good knowledge of western values and he had sent one of his sons to Glasgow School to study. He was very fluent in English language and he lived inan European style house (Isichei, 1976). This was before the formation of Nigeria.

Traditional market days in Nigeria are filled with bitter stories related to slave trade and exploitation. According to Heap (2009), the arrival of Europeans had a negative effect on those living within the southern Nigeria, they often arrive with gin, guns, mirrors etc to lure the ruling class into whatever transaction they want because the early men were only used to tapping palm wine and fermenting grain beers. As a matter of fact, the rum and whisky imported from Europe ignited their minds towards making the slave trade a successful venture. The likes of King Jaja of Opobo had a good understanding of international trade and he could set up boundaries for European merchants and export palm oil at his preferred trade agreement. According to Fajana& Biggs (1976), King Jaja was referred to as the most enterprising and accomplished of all the merchant princes who were found within the coast of west Africa in the 19th century. He acted as a middleman between the palm produce sellers and the European merchants. Pedler (1974) further noted that king Jaja was the first Nigerian to ship palm oil to Birmingham and he also pioneered Nigeria's indigenous produce export trade. In 1891, colonial report in Lagos had it that within the year 1865-1869, 10,522 tons of palm oil was produced, 5,288 tons of palm oil was exported while 11,871 tons of palm kernels were also exported. Within 1870-1874, 18,443 tons of palm oil was produced, 4,791 tons of palm oil 2was exported and 20,748 tons of palm kernels were also exported. Within 1875-1879, 25,270 tons of palm oil was produced. 7,502 tons of palm oil was exported and 28,430 tons of palm kernel were also exported. Within 1880-1884, 23,937 tons of palm oil was produced, 6,865 tons of palm oil was exported while 26,929 tons of palm kernels were also exported between 1885-1889, 31,580 tons of palm oil was produced, 8,718 tons of palm oil was exported while 35,528 tons of palm kernels were also exported. This shows that before transaction on crude oil became prominent, export had already started in the entity today known as Nigeria.

Research Hypothesis

Ho: Traditional markets days does not influence long distance trade in Nigeria

Theoretical Framework

The base line theory adopted for this work is social exchange theory as proposed by Homans (1961), Emerson (1962) &Blau (1964). This theory can be defined as the exchange of tangible or intangible commodities which are more or less rewarding or costly between two or more persons. Homan (1961), believes that social behaviour is a form of social organization which is formed by social interaction. It relates how the behaviour of one party can influence the behaviour of the other. He was also of the view that social behaviouremerged through the social process of mutual reinforcement as well as the absence of mutual reinforcement. This theory relates to this work in the sense that the history of long distance trade can be traced to the palm oil, palm kernel, slave trade as well as cocoa, groundnut and other export from Africa to Europe. This trade was easilyfacilitated because of the existence of social needs. Those who lived within the traditional era in Nigeria had that social need. They needed the goods that were imported from Europe so badly such as Gin, mirror, gun, etc. they were so surprised because they never saw such things before. Even the African monarchs who existed in the early years such as king Jaja of Opobo, governor Nana of Itshkiri, etc had social needs. King Jaja sold his palm oil to the Europeans directly and he even had trade agreements that must be adhered to before any business is carried out successfully. Therefore, it is very clear that both King Jaja and the European had means of exchange and this is also covered in social exchange theory.

Traditional Market Days

Several literatures have examined the activities that occurred during the traditional marketing days even before the entity we have today became known as Nigeria. Authors such as Achebe (1958), Akakuru,Nwokedi& Edi (2015), Enyia & Kalu (2018), etc also examined the extent to which traditional marketing within the south east, Nigeria have given birth to so many of the modern marketing activities. Enyia & Kalu (2018) examined the extent to which traditional marketing days activities have led to today's market communication within the south east, and the historic implementation of the institutionalized market days by EzeNrijiofor I because it is believed that through his action, the implementation of the traditional market days such as Eke, Oye, Aforand Nkwowere first instituted. This study however examines further, how traditional market days have led to the institution of modern long distance trade in Nigeria. The activities of Europeans towards Africa as they searched for palm oil, palm kernel, groundnut, cocoa, slaves, etc constituted the first set of long distance trade in Nigeria. King Jaja of Opobo and Governor Nana of Itsekiri are very good examples of capitalists who dealt directly with the European.

Long Distance Trade

According to Ekundare (1973), long distance trade started in Nigeria even before the British came to colonize it. There were so many interactions between the Europeans and Africans which where undocumented and thus, it has limited the volume of information possessed by scholars going into research in such areas. However, with history mentioning the likes of king Jaja ofOpobo and Governor Nana of Itsekiri, one is bound to believe that individuals have actually acted as capitalist in the past and they had interacted with foreigners as well as participated in long distance trade. During the traditional days, means of international trade was mainly by sea but today, international trade have introduced new dimensions to international trade especially with the introduction of ICT which became prominent in the 20th century. Today, international trade is being facilitated with little or no cost and the rate of information has also increased by over 200%. This shows that long distance trade has been upgraded. According to a statistic by Blue books of statistics, the volume of spirit that were imported compared to agricultural export in south Nigeria from 1906 to 1913 had a minimum of 28.03% and a maximum of 39.37% excess value of agricultural export to gin import. Earlier long distance trade witnessed the slave trade whenhumanswere exchanged with mirrors,fire arms, etc because those who lived earlier envied the Europeans and wanted to live the way they lived.

Methodology

This study was conducted in two markets within Abia and Anambra states respectively and they are; OrieUmuosuNsulu market in Abia sate and AfoIgwe market in Anambra state. 100 copies of questionnaire were distributed to each of these markets (50 copies each). Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and hypothesis was tested using regression and Peaarson correlation because this paper is aimed at looking at cause-effect relationship. This was done using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Long_Distance_Trade	22.64	3.371	100
Traditional_Market_Days	18.87	3.684	100

Descriptive statistics shows that long distance trade has a mean of 22.64 and a standard deviation of 3.371 while traditional market days have a mean of 18.87 with a standard deviation of 3.684. This implies that each of our variables has a mean difference of 3.77 and 0.313 difference in standard deviation which is tolerable.

Table 2: Pearson Correlation matrix

		Long_Distance_Trade	Traditional_Market_Days
Pearson Correlation	Long_Distance_Trade	1.000	.645
	Traditional_Market_Days	.645	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Long_Distance_Trade	.	.000
	Traditional_Market_Days	.000	.
N	Long_Distance_Trade	100	100
	Traditional_Market_Days	100	100

Our Pearson correlation matrix show a significant coefficient of 0.645 and a p-value of 0.000 which is less than alpha of 0.05. Therefore we reject the null hypothesis and this implies that traditional market days significantly have an effect on long distance trade. This would also be confirmed using Regression.

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.645[a]	.416	.410	2.588	.416	69.935	1	98	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Traditional_Market_Days

Our model summary shows a regression coefficient (R) of 0.645 which is the same output gotten from our Pearson correlation. It also shows a coefficient of determinant (R Square) of 0.416 which implies that 41.6% of the actions of traditional market days account for long distance trade. It further shows a p-value of 0.000 which is less than 0.05. this is also the same value realized from Pearson correlation.

Table 4: ANOVA table

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	468.512	1	468.512	69.935	.000[b]
	Residual	656.528	98	6.699		
	Total	1125.040	99			

a. Dependent Variable: Long_Distance_Trade

b. Predictors: (Constant), Traditional_Market_Days

Our Anova table also shows a p-value of 0.000 which is also less than alpha of 0.05. this is also similar to the Pearson output. We would therefore reject the earlier stated null hypothesis.

Table 5: Regression Coefficient table

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	11.496	1.357		8.468	.000	8.802	14.190
	Traditional_Market_Days	.591	.071	.645	8.363	.000	.450	.731

a. Dependent Variable: Long_Distance_Trade

Our regression output also shows a coefficient of 0.645 which further confirms the output from our Pearson coefficient matrix. It further shows a p-value of 0.000 which is also less than alpha of 0.05. Therefore we reject the earlier stated null hypothesis.

Conclusion

This study has empirically shown that long distance trade as we see today is influenced by over 40% of the activities of traditional market days. It further shows that no matter how modernization comes to play, there is always a foundational influence which deals with the way and manner in which trade was carried out locally. Today, most of the trade transactions carried out in the past were long distance trade such as the transactions done by King Jaja of Opobo and Governor Nana if Itsekiri were both international trades which can also be regarded as long distance trade. This is supported by our test of hypothesis which shows a significant cause effect relationship existing between the two variables.

Recommendations

Based on the literatures that have been reviewed and hypotheses tested, the following recommendations would be made;

i. Most activities of past trades in Nigeria has really not come to the knowledge of Nigerians because history as a subject has not been taken very seriously. Therefore this study recommends a state of emergency on History as a subject so that our young people would appreciate their past heroes.
ii. Icons such as King Jaja of Opobo and Governor Nana of Itsekiri should be immortalized so that they can be emulated and modeled.
iii. International trade as a subject should be encouraged in primary, secondary and higher institutions of learning.
iv. This enlightenment should be further extended to rural markets so as to encourage them go global and make use of information and communication technology.

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