

**ASSESSING FRICTIONS WITHIN THE ECOWAS FREE TRADE PROTOCOL.  
THE CASE STUDY OF THE NIGERIAN BORDER CLOSURE ON TRADE  
RELATIONS WITH GHANA**

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## DECLARATION

I, Jacintha Ama Tamakloe declare that this dissertation is a product of a study conducted by me under the supervision of Dr. Emmanuel Codjoe. I further declare that no part of this dissertation has been presented anywhere for any purposes.



**DEDICATION**

This study is dedicated to my family and friends who contributed towards a successful completion



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## ABSTRACT

The research was aimed at assessing the frictions within the ECOWAS Free Trade Protocol, with a focus on the closure of the Nigerian boarder to trade relations with Ghana. A sample size of 10 Executives of GUTA and GEPA officials were interviewed. The research had three key objectives, and these were to identify the consequences of the border closure on Ghana's trade sector, to examine the effects and implications of border closure on Ghana's trading with Nigeria and to evaluate the lessons drawn from the closure of the border. For the first objective, the study findings indicated that, the Nigeria Border closure had had an adverse effect on ECOWAS Free Trade Policy. This study found out that again, the primary cause for the 28-days closure of Nigeria Border, was to stop the illegal importation of smuggled rice from Benin to Nigeria as well as the importation of other goods. The findings stated that, instead of the border closure to all, it could have been limited to a total ban of goods from Benin. The study's second objective focused on the effects and implications of the border closure on Ghana's trade sector. In assessing the effects and implications, findings pointed out that, there were several negative impact and implications for the Ghanaian trade sector. Some included low revenue, job loss and low trade flow. The third and final research objective of the study focused on the lessons learnt from the Nigeria border closure. The findings pointed out that, the Nigeria border closure had had a bad effect on ECOWAS free trade policy and Nigerians could have ban importation from Benin and dealt with only Benin instead of closing its border to all countries. It has also been learnt that Ghanaian traders must diversify its business market and not rely too much on Nigeria. Additionally, there is the need for regular consultation between Nigeria and Ghanaian authorities to ensure that, in the event of a future border closure, there would be another route for Ghanaian products to be allowed into the Nigeria market with proper labelling. Lastly, Nigeria must come out clear if they want to be part of the ETLs or not. The study therefore recommended that, ECOWAS states must respect all provisions in all protocols that they have signed unto at all times. The ECOWAS Commission should take advantage of this issue and embark on an intensive education for all its members on the provisions of the ELTS. Additionally, the ECOWAS commission should be bold enough to crack the whip in such instances to ensure that, this border closure that not repeat itself. Lastly, the ECOWAS Commission must initiate a dialogue which will end up in the signing of a trade treaty between Nigeria and Benin.



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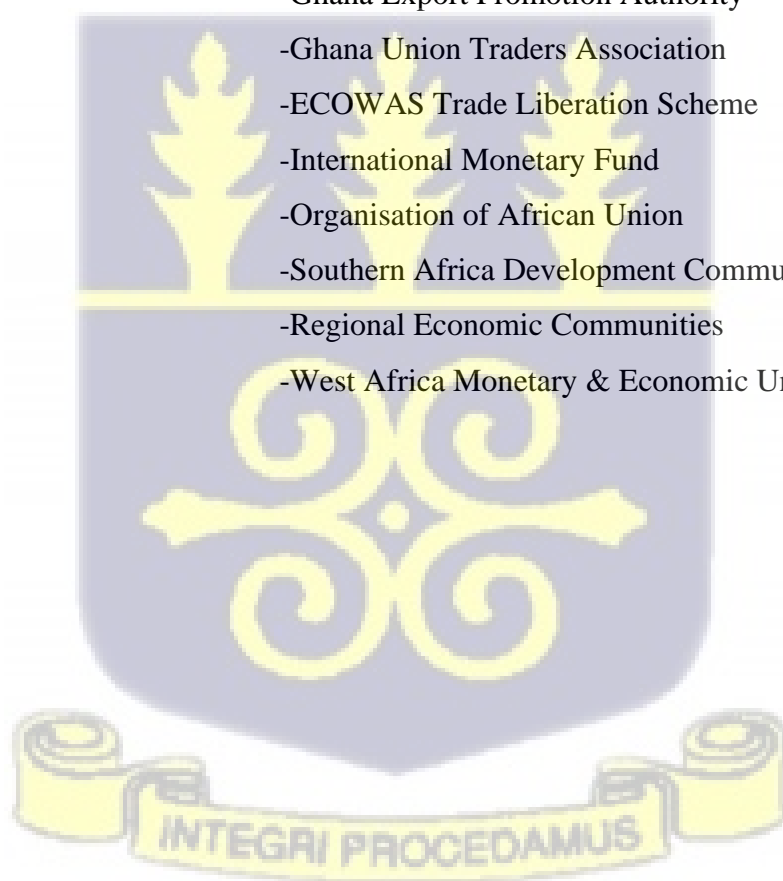
Table 1: Demographic characteristics of Respondents

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**ABBREVIATIONS**

AU	-African Union
CET	-Common External Tariff
CEN-SAD	-Community of Sahel-Saharan States
EAC	- Eastern Africa Community
ECA	-Economic Commission for Africa
EFTA	-ECOWAS Free Trade Area
ELTS	-ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme
EU	-European Union
ECOWAS	-Economic Community for West Africa
FTA	-Free Trade Area
GDP	-Gross Domestic Product
GEPA	-Ghana Export Promotion Authority
GUTA	-Ghana Union Traders Association
GNCCI	-ECOWAS Trade Liberation Scheme
IMF	-International Monetary Fund
OAU	-Organisation of African Union
SADC	-Southern Africa Development Community
REC	-Regional Economic Communities
UEOMA	-West Africa Monetary & Economic Union



## CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Background of the study

Economic Community of West Africa State – ECOWAS got established the year 1975 to promote collaboration, integration, and to improve the standard of living for its peoples, and maintenance of enhanced regional stability of the economy (ECOWAS Treaty, 1979). Additionally, it was aimed at improving good relationships within member countries, to help largely contribute to development and growth of Africa. The ECOWAS Treaty, which is a multiparty agreement, was endorsed by all ECOWAS Nations. The treaty was first signed in 1975 by the various member Heads of States and Government of the Economic Community – ECOWAS Treaty.1975. The revised treaty got signed in July 1993 in the Republic of Benin, Cotonou by ECOWAS Heads of State and Governments, with additional advances and directives for the Community. The endorsement of the new treaty demands the sovereign nations to agree on 93 distinct Articles, under which they have devoted to operate as a united regional economic bloc. ECOWAS is oriented towards trade and economic integration.

The Economic Trade Liberalization Scheme (ETLS), designed towards trade between ECOWAS, is the main instrument of the ECOWAS Free Trade Area (EFTA). Even though it was initially conceptualized of in 1979, it wasn't until 1990 that it was really put into practice. The agreement has been ratified by fifteen (15) of the nations that make up the ECOWAS area in West Africa. The objective of the ETLS is to open up new markets for goods and services in countries that are not signatories to the agreement. In addition to this objective, the ETLS seeks to expand investment opportunities for third-party nations and businesses, lower customs duties, and expedite the movement of goods through customs in order to speed up trade. This strategy for internal market liberalization goes back to 1983, although it has yet to be totally

applied. Secondly, in 2013, ECOWAS executed a common external tariff (CET). ECOWAS also established the West African Monetary and Economic Union (UEMOA) Shuaibu (2015).

According to the Olyiwola (2012), one of the main purposes for the formation of ECOWAS was to encourage trade among member states. Many documented reports on trade activities indicates the sad records of low ECOWAS trade have been particularly with regards to Intra-regional. As postulated in important regional policies contexts, improving Intra-regional trade will foster better economic revolution and growth as it offers prospects for economies of scale (Olyiwola, 2012).

By the setting up of ETLs and its implementation schedule, all trade barricades were supposed to be eliminated at the end of 1999; it did not go through as planned. In later part of 1999, Authorities of Heads of States and the ECOWAS Government review the state of affairs and approved of a fast-track method infused with the integrated objectives of the financial system of the Sub-Region and an announcement from ECOWAS Sub-Region on Free Trade Area (FTA), on January 1, 2021, as a scheduled date for conversion into Custom Union (Musila 2005). Although the Economic Community of West Africa States – ECOWAS was acknowledged as a Free Trade Area, with slated programmes to fully turn into Custom Union, there were issues of enactment gap from ECOWAS (Hanink & Owusu, 1998). Currently, most member states do not fully obey the rules and regulations required for the implementation of ECOWAS wide Free Trade Area (Hanink & Owusu, 1998). It is anticipated that the strategy would be carried out in a staged manner. The first phase will include a total liberalization of trade in handicrafts and raw materials, including things that have not been processed. The second stage will include the progressive liberalization of trade in industrial goods, as well as the establishment of a Common External Tariff (CET), which will ultimately result in the formation of a customs union.

Per reports of the “International Monetary Fund Direction of Trade Statistics (IMF, 2016) not more than 10 percent of ECOWAS countries export to it member countries in 2014. 2015, ECOWAS exports of goods and services of about 12 percent was in the Sub-Region and about 6 percent got to some other African nations and 80 percent went to the Western countries, this is according to (IMF, 2016). 2014 saw a major single country exportation of goods and services of ECOWAS members to India which saw an export value of USD\$16.73 billion. But China was their major source of import of raw materials valued at USD\$33.36 billion (IMF, 2016).

Ghana and Nigeria have been trading with each other more frequently in recent years, with trade tallying more than \$2.6 billion. However, the common of this occurs in the informal sector (Ayeni, 2020). According to Isah (2020), the Nigerian border closure was a weighty obstruction of AfCFTA’s intended single market. It must be noted that, the closure may deprive Nigeria of a necessary political and security assistance from its neighbours in fighting the Boko Haram insurgency. Adding that, there is the need for a collaborative approach to resolving trade disputes rather than unhelpful, protective methods that produce sub-optimal outcomes (Isah, 2020).

The Ghana Union Traders Association (GUTA) filed a petition with the Ghanaian government to close its trade borders in revenge for what they call Nigeria's "unfair treatment” to Ghanaian traders. GUTA well-ordered a shutdown of Nigerian owned businesses in early 2020. Although there were some government interventions, the President of GUTA, Mr. Joseph Obeng was not pleased with it, stating “if Nigerian officials are decaling Nigeria first, Ghanaian officials should likewise declare Ghana first”. Nevertheless, on June 19, 2020, armed men broke into Nigeria’s High Commission premise and damaged structures undergoing renovation. Nigerians in Ghana also staged a protest, urging the local authorities to intervene (Ayeni, 2020). Nigeria is a signatory to several global and regional agreements and border on free trading activities.

and transboundary persons movement. In view of this provision, protocols and actions taken by Nigeria and the penalties that have emerged, this study aims to investigate the implications and consequences of border closure concerning ECOWAS free trade protocols, but specifically the Nigeria-Ghana relationship.

### **1.1 Statement of Research Problem**

The August 20, 2019, “the Federal government of Nigeria ordered the closure of its land borders and established ‘Operation Ex-Swift’, which comprised the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS), Armed Forces, Nigeria Police and their other security Intelligence agencies” (Omale et al, 2020). The Operations Ex-Swift Response was an operation by the Nigeria government to close its border to limit the smuggling of rice, drugs and small light weapons. It was also to reduce kidnappings and deteriorating insecurity in the country (Attah, 2019).

According to Mwakidea (2020), the decision by Nigeria to shut down its land border was due to the absenteeism of their federal instituted structure which could oversee and help with policy conformity. This becomes especially essential for confirmation, authorization and observing the regulations of agreements between ECOWAS and the Africa Continental Free trade Area (AfCFTA). Per an interview, Nigeria's Comptroller-General Hameed Ali said, "Nigeria wanted to get its neighbours to comply with the ECOWAS protocol on transit goods." Nigeria claimed that since closing the border, it has earned more benefits than costs. "We found that our economy is slanted because Nigerians have not learned to consume what we create." As a result, our industries are unable to create and improve their output. "What we're attempting to do today by closing the border is to encourage Nigerians to consume what we produce and produce what we consume, because that is the only way our economy can grow" (Mwakideu,

2020; Uche, 2021). President Muhammadu Buhari also highlighted that the closure of the border had saved the government millions of dollars, reduced drug imports and the proliferation of weapons, and aided in the attainment of food security (Uche, 2021). In the case of Nigeria's border restrictions, Uche (2021) noted that, it questions the rationality and spirit of the ECOWAS Treaty, which allowed for goods and persons free/easy movement across West African states. It was learned that many travelers were stuck following the sudden closure of the busy Seme-border and Idiroko borders between Nigeria and the neighboring Republic of Benin (Uche, 2021).

Although Ghana and Nigeria do not directly share border, most traders from Ghana who are unable to board planes to overseas countries like China among others, largely travel to Nigeria to purchase goods (Torres & Seters, 2016). Most Ghana businesses enroute Abidjan and Lagos to the various markets of supply in the Sub-Regions, hence the closure of the Nigerian border prevented them from traveling (Ayeni2020). According to the Chief Executive Officer of the Ghana National Chamber of Commerce, the closure of Nigeria's border with Benin has resulted in huge losses. "When they provide certificate of origin for traders/exporters inside ECOWAS, they criticized it, claiming not being able to deliver their products to Nigeria across that border due to the shutdown. As a result, if they are not able to do so, they will be unable to sell their products, and anyone wanting to transport products to Ghana over that border will likewise be unable to do so. He went on to stress his members' displeasure, saying that "clearly, the income they are meant to receive, did not flow to them and it was taking a toll on their processes, and they have raised worry about it. Thus, the closure has reduced the income or revenue-generating capability of Ghanaian entrepreneurs (Aboagye, 2019).

The Kasapreko Company Limited, a local beverage manufacturing company headquartered in Ghana with supply chains extending into Nigeria and Benin, announced a \$2 million loss since

the border was closed (Sobowale, 2019). According to a study by FSDH Merchant Bank, several textile companies in the Northern city of Kano have shut down their shops because they are unable to sell to customers over the border in Niger (Simmonds, 2019). The trade between Nigeria and Ghana is critical because Ghana is the second-largest economy in West Africa, and therefore, the trade between these countries is certainly important (World Bank, 2021). It is therefore imperative to assess the consequences of the Nigerian border closure on trade relations with Ghana.

## 1.2 Research Question

The study would answer questions below:

1. What are consequences of border closure on ECOWAS Free Trade policy
2. What are the effects and implications of the border closure on Ghana's trading with Nigeria
3. What are the lessons drawn from the closure of the border.

## 1.3 Research Objectives

The specific objectives to be considered for this study are as follows:

1. To identify the consequences of the border closure on Ghana's trade sector
2. To examine the effects and implications of border closure on Ghana's trading with Nigeria
3. To evaluate the lessons drawn from the closure of the border.

#### **1.4 Scope of the Study**

The focus of the study was on the consequences the Nigeria border closure had on trade relations between Nigeria and Ghana in the context of the ECOWAS Free Trade Protocol. To sought to assess the effects the border closure had on businesses in both Ghana and Nigeria, as well as its implications to the ECOWAS Free Trade Protocol. Additionally, the study assessed the impact of such exercise to the full implementation of ECOWAS free trade agreement and local businesses.

#### **1.5 Rationale of the Study**

This research was envisioned to offer new knowledge, information, and policy perceptions that would guide ECOWAS and African nations' trade policies to provide an appropriate climate for free trade to positively play their developmental roles. The outcomes of this research would be used to examine and improve the quality of ECOWAS protocols or policies on regional and sub-regional integration. The study hopes the outcome/findings would contribute to a thorough understanding of the approaches employed by the Nigerian and Ghanaian governments to combat issues along the Nigeria-Ghana border, as well as the progress made in this area. Researchers would profit from the study as well since it specifies areas for further study `and leads to fresh insights. The findings of this study would help future researchers create a firm foundation for other investigations on study area.

#### **1.6 Theoretical Framework**

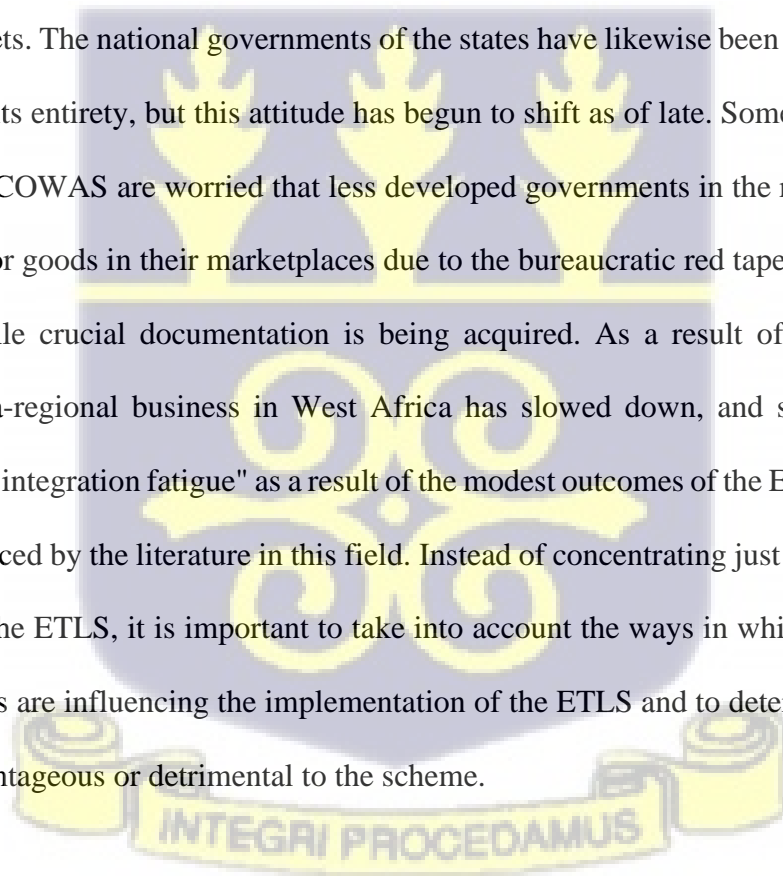
Swanson (2013) explicitly asserts, “The theoretical framework is the structure that can hold or support a theory of a research study”. The study was underpinned by two theories: Comparative Advantage Theory and the theory of Economic Integration.

**Comparative Advantage theory:** This concept of comparative advantage got proposed first by an Economist David Ricardo in the year 1817, in a book he titled 'On the Principles of Political Economy & Taxation' (3). He argues that free trade would persuade countries to concentrate in producing whatever they are relatively best at, resulting in the best of all conceivable worlds. Furthermore, Ricardo made a premise that production inputs such as technology, labour, and capital are not transportable across borders. According to his idea, free trade logically changes countries production factor. However, if the production factor is globally successful and it's useful in other countries, then free trade would induce for relocation to these countries, and this may not benefit the country they leave to (Acharyya & Kar. 2014). The differences in the relative prices of different goods and services are what drive international commerce. According to the theory of comparative advantage, a nation would focus its production efforts on those goods for which it has either the largest comparative advantage or the least comparative disadvantage. Therefore, a nation will import those goods in which it has a comparative disadvantage that is the smallest and export those commodities in which it has a comparative advantage that is the highest in terms of the market.

**Theory of Economic Integration:** Theory of Economic Integration is a branch off of economic with examining effect of different types or forms of incorporation on economies of member countries and the world at large. The fundamental theory of the Customs Union was first developed by Viner (1960). Mede & Lipsey (1987) later gave it a hypothetical basis for which the theory of Economic Integration stands. Viner's work showed how key the Customs Union on Free Trade Area do not all the time help welfare enhancement. It again showed the lower global economic welfare of Regional Integration but failed in giving compelling reasons to why some countries would enter such arrangements (Viner, 1960).

The theory of Integration again turns out to be concerned with the impacts had on economic growth in a country by integration. Presentation of endogenic grow of other theories to the theory of integration, showed how much showed how much the biggest benefit from integration can come as a lasting growth in regional growth. Integration theory became concerned with eh location impacts of integrations, considering how fast-growing concerns of theorist of trade are significant to geography. Recent patterns on export activities, integrating impacts of mobility factors of international economy of scales and competition in products determined a position in analyzing outcomes of integration (Baldwin & Wypolsz, (2006).

The ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme was seen as a crucial undertaking in driving the region's economic unity. Those who oppose the plan argue that it is difficult to adhere to the criteria that it sets. The national governments of the states have likewise been reluctant to carry out the plan in its entirety, but this attitude has begun to shift as of late. Some of the countries that make up ECOWAS are worried that less developed governments in the region may try to sell their inferior goods in their marketplaces due to the bureaucratic red tape that slows down the system while crucial documentation is being acquired. As a result of these and other criticisms, intra-regional business in West Africa has slowed down, and some nations are suffering from "integration fatigue" as a result of the modest outcomes of the ETLS. The study's scope is influenced by the literature in this field. Instead of concentrating just on the process of implementing the ETLS, it is important to take into account the ways in which the politics of individual states are influencing the implementation of the ETLS and to determine whether or not this is advantageous or detrimental to the scheme.



### **1.7 History of trading between Ghana and Nigeria.**

Within ECOWAS, Nigeria and Ghana enjoys wonderful and pleasant welcoming relationships close partners among West African regions. Ghana and Nigeria's combined populace and Gross Domestic Product reports for 61% and 68% within ECOWAS (Mombert & Francis 2010). Ghana and Nigeria share mutual values and mutual visions to the Sub- Continent. Ghana makes sure to reinforce and engage Nigeria on key internally and externally. Nigeria supports its partner Ghana when the need arises. The relationship that has existed between the two countries has acquired Ghana a valued partner in trade activities (Aluko, 1976). Per analysis of Aluko, (1976), the two countries' economies are strongly linked since as mutual non-Oil businesses increase between both countries in not less than \$15million in year 2000 to \$130 million just in 2010. Outside trade activities, there is a significant migration flow between Ghana and Nigeria, and this has gone on for decades. There have equally been hitches and occasional disturbances among both countries. There were again some economic differences both countries tried to undertake back in 2012, where they both implement laws against others citizens living in their countries (Aluko, 1976).

Oteghile & Obakhedo, (2011) have observed that in recent times, Nigeria and Ghana has been 'involved in democracy', where they have both been injured following sequences of military intrusions. They have equally shared soccer competition history. We are to bear in mind though, that relationships between Ghana Nigeria have not been very easy. Ghana ejected many Nigerians some time back and in response, Nigeria suspended it oil exportation to Ghana and also ejected over a million of Ghanaian citizens from their country back in 83 and 85 expelled again about 300,000 persons of Ghana. The Ghana Investment Promotion Council Art 1994 was used to restore relations between the two countries after Ghana tried to implement an act that collapsed some Nigerian businesses Oteghile & Obakhedo, (2011).

Olatunji, (2012), Nigeria and Ghana have for decades been involved in trading their goods and services to one another, having been ranked the two largest economies of among West African countries and their friendship is considered as vital for development. “The cordial relationship between Ghana and Nigeria suffered a setback from 2007 to 2009 and in 2012 where Nigeria owned businesses in Ghana were shut down by Ghanaian Authorities for alleged non-compliance with the 1994 investment law which place limitations on non-Ghanaians from engaging in retail trade and related businesses. The hitch affected volume of trade between the two countries, The problem was solved through dialogue by two Ministers of Trade and Industries of both countries” (Olatunji,2012).

### **1.8 Nigeria and Ghana’s Level of Compliance with ECOWAS Trade Liberalization**

**Scheme:** This section assesses the level of Ghana and Nigeria’s obedience with ETLs. According to (Oladimeji, 2013), these two countries have implemented measures for efficient operation of the programme however, levels of official management has been ineffective to the smooth running of the scheme (Oladimeji, 2013).

**Ghana:** According to Oladimeji (2013), “Ghana is one the best performing economies in West African region. It is gifted with natural resources and has roughly twice per capital output of the poorest countries in the region. The country has a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of \$18.06 billion with progress rate of 4.7% and per capital GPD of \$1600” (Oaldimeji, 2013). The country’s major cash crop is cocoa, that classifiably offers one-third of Ghana’s export earnings. Other major products are coconuts, timber, and palm produce such as shea nuts, coffee etc. Key industries include mining, lumber, light manufacturing, fishing, aluminum, and tourism. Ghana has since independence been the key lead on Africa’s integration (Oladimeji, 2013).

The former President of Ghana Dr. Kwame Nkrumah championed for political union among Africans and Ghana was at the forefront of this, being very influential in the establishment of Organization of African Unity (OAU) in the year 1963 which is now known as the Africa Union. Ghana was again the lead in the formation years of ECOWAS (Oladimeji, 2013). 'Export Trade played a key role in the growth of Ghana's economy. In 2012, USD\$7.33 billion worth of produce from Ghana got exported to its various export countries. Products are gold, timber, cocoa, manganese ore, industrial diamonds, tuna. Ghana's import rose to USD\$10.18 billion in 2010 (Oladimeji, 20213).

The country (Ghana) adopted ETLS and established organizations and structures for actual implementation of the programmes. In December 2010, the country has registered about 300 companies/ businesses and 900 produce (Mombert & Francis, 2010). With the propagation of vital information relating to ETLS to companies, 'Ghana is doing well and is working well towards having a national sensitization programmes on ETLS. However, the authorities of Ghana have complained about some matters of mutuality and other operational issues citing the existence of exclusion list of some members of states as well as the computation of value addition methods of certain goods of community origin' (Otoghile & Obakhedo, 2011). Now in spite of ECOWAS's Protocols on Free Movements of people and goods, Ghanaian security officers still delay movement and reports indicate there are usually long queues at the country's borders. Example to be able to cross the border with vehicles, one is required to produce an agreement certificate for an ECOWAS road transit vehicle, an inter-state transport permit, an insurance brown card, proof of inspection and declaration forms must be presented to enable travelers cross the border according to (Otoghile & Obakhedo, 2011). "And where suitable (in a transit of goods situation) a carnet TRIE/ISRT logbook, ISRT guarantee, container seal and agreement certificate for an ECOWAS road transit container are required (Otoghile & Obakhedo, 2011).

**Nigeria:** “Nigeria has one of the largest economies among ECOWAS countries. It has dominated the oil sector and part well vest in agricultural, trade and manufacturing among others. It is currently the country with the largest economy in Africa based on figures done in April, 2014. Nigeria’s manufacturing sector is the third largest on the continent and produces a large proportion of goods and services for the West Africa sub-regions. (Oladimeji, 20213). Although the country is a major Oil exporter, it is vest in other areas such as the agricultural sector, information, and communications technology, trade and services are also key parts of its economy. Nigeria upheld the inspiring development for decades with estimated records of 7.4% of the real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2013, and up to 6.7% in 2012. Figures from According to Oladimeji, Nigeria has the highest GDP among ECOWAS member countries (2013). Nigeria boasts a booming oil business as well as a traditional agricultural, commerce, and industrial sector. According to rebased figures released in April 2014, Nigeria is currently Africa's largest economy. Its manufacturing industry is the third largest on the continent, accounting for a considerable portion of the goods and services produced in the West African sub-region. While Nigeria is a major oil exporter, agriculture, information and communications technology, commerce, and services all play important roles in the country's economy. Nigeria has had exceptional development over the previous decade, with an estimated 7.4 percent real GDP growth in 2013, up from 6.7 percent in 2012. In 2009, the country's total exports were US\$45.43 billion. Crude oil, cocoa, and timber are the principal exports (Oladimeji, 2013). The ETLs has been adopted and implemented in Nigeria. As of the first half of 2011, the initiative had identified 568 businesses and 1,145 products (Oladimeji, 2013).

Nigeria is the ETLs's most active member, accounting for 50% of enterprises and 40% of products registered in the system. The scheme's implementation, however, is impeded by non-tariff barriers along transportation corridors and a lack of government cooperation. Additionally, the country prohibits the export of certain products to ensure self-sufficiency

(primarily maize, raw cassava, and raw timber), to promote value addition (primarily raw hides and skins, rough and sawn timber, scrap metals, unprocessed rubber latex, and rubber lumps), and to protect cultural heritage (primarily artifacts and antiquities) (Oladimeji, 2013).

### **1.9 Interest of ECOWAS member states in Free Movement and Trade**

Numerous ECOWAS member states first joined for a variety of reasons and benefits (Adepoju 2009; Okom and Udoaka 2012). There were no compelling reasons for a nation to join another; instead, they ranged from the political goal of avoiding global isolation (the Gambia) to economic or trade considerations (Nigeria and Cote d'Ivoire) to the preservation of Pan-Africanist beliefs (Ghana and Senegal), (Ojo 1980; Plenk 2015). Each country today faces a variety of risks associated with free movement, including the unpredictability of the security environment, labor market needs, trade and customs, and diplomatic ties with other governments. As a result, state interests in freedom of movement and, more particularly, in the development of the EU's border-control powers vary depending on the situation. For example, Niger has made a concerted effort to use the EU's commitment to enhancing its capacities in the face of grave security concerns, a weak regime, and a restricted state budget, allowing for state-building exercises in remote areas in particular. Collaboration with the EU on border control projects and other initiatives adds to the EU's political framework's strengthening while injecting temporary material and financial resources (Jegen and Zanker 2019).

Senegal and Ghana have also partnered on a number of EU-sponsored border enforcement activities, which they have embraced as a source of cash (Adam et al. 2019). Border solidification has been portrayed as enabling travel in the Gambian context, because internationally approved measures like the biometric screening at border crossings are seen as boosting the Senegalese government's credibility and hence its commitment to freedom of movement. Senegal totally encircles Gambia, which has historically maintained a strict border

policy with the country because to the long-running Casamance war and concerns about former President Yahya Jammeh's involvement. In contrast to this lack of interest in border security in countries such as Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Ghana, and the Gambia it was emphasized the importance of informal passage between border towns for traders and local populations (Jegen 2020).

### **1.10 Challenges facing Intra-ECOWAS trade**

Since its formation in 1975, ECOWAS has achieved a number of significant milestones. Nonetheless, it continues to struggle with the following unsolved issues:

**Lack of Implementation:** In order to promote sub-regional integration, the ECOWAS commission devised a framework for trade policy. The ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme (ETLS), as the Commission's principal vehicle for promoting the West African region as a candidate for an FTA, is based on this trade policy framework. The ETLS exempts agricultural products, artisanal handicrafts, and industrial items originating in member states from customs charges and other fees when they transit within the region. Later that year, in January 2015, the Common External Tariff (CET) was established as a condition for establishing a customs union. ECOWAS member nations, on the other hand, have made little progress in meeting their regional duties. The ETLS and CET are not well-regarded in the sub region, meaning that, despite the Commission's claims to have eliminated all barriers to the free movement of people, goods, and services, significant trade barriers persist. Numerous possibilities on the implementation's sub-lack region have been suggested. The first is a lack of competence to carry out specific regional responsibilities. Certain promises require solid administrative structures for proper execution; however, not all ECOWAS member nations have such institutions, resulting in implementation delays. Furthermore, no institutions exist to monitor sub regional trade policy.

**Multiple and Overlapping Memberships:** Multiple Organizational Memberships at the same time except for the Cape Verde Islands, each member of ECOWAS is also a member of another Regional Economic Community (RECs). As alluring as it may appear to be, membership in many RECs concurrently introduces a host of issues. Diverse membership creates a complicated web of contradictory obligations and standards, which in certain circumstances puts a large expense on members. According to the ECA (2004), the problems associated with integrating and harmonizing economic policies among member states "tend to conceal integration objectives, resulting in fruitless rivalry between nations and organizations."

**Official Trade Barriers:** Tariffs and import and export restrictions, such as quotas and bans, are examples of official trade obstacles. Governments in West Africa routinely impose such limitations (de Roquefeuil, 2014). ECOWAS's import restrictions have had a substantial impact on crops like as maize, wheat flour, rice, vegetable oil, livestock, and poultry. They can also be imposed for public health reasons (e.g., avian influenza), although such limitations are typically maintained long after the health risk has passed, suggesting that protective interests are involved as well (World Bank, 2015). Export limits, on the other hand, are mostly enforced on grains such as maize, millet, and rice. The majority of West African states enforce such limitations to ensure immediate food security, particularly during projected periods of food crisis. This, however, enables the country to preserve food for a little length of time. These limits can have a substantial influence on value investors' investment decisions, resulting in a long-run unfavorable outcome. Another reason governments prohibit exports of subsidized goods (input subsidies, machinery subsidies, and so on) is to avoid leakage, as is now the case with Senegalese rice (World Bank, 2015).

**Transportation and Infrastructure:** High transportation costs and limited road networks have a substantial impact on intra-ECOWAS business. This is especially devastating to farmers and producers in rural regions with such roads, since it significantly limits their market access. As the urban population grows and consumer preferences shift toward less preserved and higher-value products, the state of the connecting systems like roads, communication, market infrastructure, and transportation, becomes increasingly critical, all the more so given that an increasing proportion of the population lives near the coast, which is typically more connected to ports than the hinterland (FAO, 2015).

**Civil Wars and Political Tensions:** As West Africa shifted from inter-state to intra-state strife in the latter part of the twentieth century, a number of its economies collapsed. As a result, the mood of the sub-security zone is frequently described as hazardous and unpredictable. While not all wars are violent, those that have wreaked havoc on the local, state, and regional levels in West Africa have been regarded as such (Afisi 2009). For decades, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire, and Guinea-Bissau were destroyed by civil conflicts and continuing atrocities (Afolabi 2009).

While violent conflicts in the sub region are on the decline, recent insurgencies in the Sahel region, affecting the West African nations of Mali, Niger, and Mauritania, raised concerns about the re-emergence of internal and regional violent conflicts. To make matters worse, low-intensity conflicts such as Senegal's Casamance conflict, Ghana's continuing Dagbon chieftaincy dispute, and Nigeria's Niger Delta conflict, to name a few, are rising within relatively peaceful countries (Olonisakin 2011). These wars have led in "death and damage, internal displacement, a regional refugee crisis, poverty and disease, the growth of small arms and light weapons, human and drug trafficking, illegal natural resource exploitation, and banditry" (Afolabi 2009: 25). Significant chunks of development expenditure are always

redirected to peacekeeping activities during civil conflicts. According to Bamfo (2013), ECOWAS assigned soldiers from Ghana, Togo, Benin, Niger, and Senegal to help the 4,000 French forces in settling Liberia's civil war (ECA, 2004).

### **1.11 Summary of literature Review**

The examination of the literature analyzed opposition to the ECOWAS free trade agreement, with a special emphasis on the impact of Nigeria's border barrier on economic connections with Ghana. The literature review began with a history of trade between Ghana and Nigeria, then examined Ghana and Nigeria's compliance with ECOWAS's ELTIS, and concluded with an evaluation of ECOWAS member states' free movement and trade interests. Additionally, the literature identified barriers to intra-ECOWAS trade and identified the following as impediments to the ELTIS's success: the scheme's lack of implementation, ECOWAS members' membership in multiple and overlapping bodies, official trade barriers, insufficient infrastructure and transportation systems, and the sub-region's numerous civil wars that have occurred and will occur in the coming years.

### **1.12 Research Methodology**

The qualitative research approach was suitable since this research relies on narrative, exploratory, and non-numeric data. The process of gathering, analyzing, and interpreting non-numerical data, such as language, is known as qualitative research (Kellien, 2021; Sabrina et al, 2019). This strategy allows the researcher to generate insights into the topic by conducting semi-structured interviews (Yin, 2018). Qualitative research is practical, informative, and based on the experience of the people Marshall and Rossman (2016).

A qualitative study gave a descriptive insight into the relationship between the objectives of the study. Qualitative research may be used to better understand how a person experiences and

understands their social reality (Sabrina et al, 2019). Non-numerical data such as text, video, pictures, or audio recordings are examples of qualitative data. This sort of material may be obtained through diary entries or in-depth interviews and examined using thematic analysis.

Research methods can be approached in a variety of ways. Correlational designs; survey research; grounded theory; ethnographic studies; action research; narrative studies; oral and life histories, and consensual qualitative research are a few examples of these designs (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Phenomenological and multiple case studies were used in this study to investigate a real-world state within a specific context or scope. The researcher can provide context for a scenario or problem by using a multiple case study design (Barclay & Stoltz, 2016). Data collection and interpretation strategies are outlined in this study's research design.

An appropriate research design will enhance the study's credibility (Yin, 2018). The case study design requires a lot of time and attention to detail (Barclay & Stoltz, 2016). Another qualitative research strategy is phenomenology. This method relies on interviews with participants to gain an understanding of a phenomenon's real-world context (Barrow, 2017). For this study, the phenomenological design was ideal because it focuses on people's lived experiences, which were the focus of the research question (McNairy et al, 2019).

The demographic and sample of the research were all Ghanaian CEOs. Attendees included senior representatives from the Ghana Union of Traders Association (GUTA) and the Ghana Export Promotion Authority (GEPA). Due to the inability of interviewing the whole research population due to budget and time constraints, the study utilized a targeted sample size of ten (10) executives from GUTA and GEPA.

The investigation used both primary and secondary sources of data. Wilson (2010) defines primary data as information that is gathered directly by an investigator via the use of data collection devices. Primary data, according to Avasarikar (2007), is material that has been gathered for a specific reason and is tailored to the researcher's demands. This information has

never been previously made public. The study's primary data were acquired utilizing an interview guide in the field. Secondary data is information collected from a source other than the user. Annual reports, promotional materials, publicly available case studies, publications, journal articles, and newspaper stories, as well as government-printed documents, are all acceptable inclusions (Wilson, 2010). Secondary data for this study were acquired from policy papers, research findings, annual reports, and other publications relevant to the subject of the study.

The research obtained data by interviewing ten (10) individuals in an environment that was content and nonthreatening for the participants. Conducting interviews provides the researcher with the chance to acquire significant volumes of data and follow-up for clarity through the use of member checking (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Each interview took around 30 minutes. The time and venue of the interview were decided according to the participant's convenience. The research acquired the agreement of the participants before recording the interviews. The settings of the interviews were picked by the participants to minimize distractions. According to Schmidt (2016), participant-selected interview settings allow the researcher to concentrate on the participant's time restrictions, culture, space, and sentiments. The researcher developed a comfortable atmosphere in which the participants demonstrated a desire to engage and contribute information pertinent to the study subject. All interviews were at the participants' workplace where they felt safe and secure

The researcher transcribed the recorded interviews, and the transcripts and interpretations were shared with the participants through a planned phone conversation to validate the correctness and increase the validity of the study by attaining data saturation. Interviews with members may also aid in attaining data saturation (Yin, 2018). During the transcription procedure, there were no issues with the research. Participants confirmed the correctness of the materials; thus the researcher was not required to make any changes. Before data saturation, the researcher

planned to do follow-up interviews with members and revise the transcripts and explanations appropriately. The researcher did not need to conduct any further interviews and was able to reach data saturation.

The researcher categorized the data, which entails making sense of enormous amounts of data by reducing the raw data volume. After identifying noteworthy patterns, meaning was deduced from the data and a logical chain of evidence was established. The data were arranged and presented in a way that was compatible with the research objectives of the study using thematic analysis

### **1.13 Limitations of the Study**

To encourage total participation from research participants, the researcher got an introduction letter from the University and distributed copies to them, so establishing the study's legality and ensuring participants of the study's confidentiality. Due to the study participants' busy schedules, the researcher was forced to postpone a number of interviews.

### **1.14 Arrangement of Chapters**

This dissertation is comprised of four sections. The study's setting, problem statement, research questions, objectives, scope, and justification were explored in the first chapter. Additionally, Chapter One (1) included a review of the literature, data sources, research methodology, data management and analysis, and chapter organization. The second chapter covered the ECOWAS protocol on free movement of persons and its supplemental protocols, as well as an assessment of free movement of people and goods across Africa and a comparison of free movement of people and goods across African regional economic communities. Protocols regulating Nigeria's and Ghana's trade and commerce. The third chapter reviewed the data from the files and provided an in-depth analysis of the impact of Nigeria's border closure on Ghanaian

enterprises, as well as attempts to ensure free movement of persons and goods within ECOWAS. The last chapter discussed the study's results, conclusions, and suggestions.



## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter evaluates the ECOWAS trade convention's implementation. Additionally, it discusses the many ECOWAS mechanisms in place to ensure the free movement of people and products inside the bloc. Furthermore, the chapter investigates the movement of products and people throughout Africa's three primary economic zones. The Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Eastern African Community (EAC), and the Community of Sahel-Saharan States were the economic communities in question (CEN-SAD). The chapter concludes with a synopsis of the chapter's content.

#### 2.1 ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of Persons

ECOWAS was established in 1975 with the purpose of fostering economic and social progress among member nations in order to raise the living conditions of its citizens (ECOWAS Treaty, 1979). This was predicated on the assumption that effective financial cooperation and incorporation by other member states are critical for Member States' financial advancement. The requirement for cooperative expansion culminated in the conclusion of a flurry of treaties, the most notable of which are the Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons and Goods and the Protocol on the Right of Residence. For ninety days, the protocol's first phase permitted visa-free entrance to citizens of each member nation. As a result, visas and other entrance restrictions were eliminated. All member nations accepted the protocol's second phase in 1986. (property on the right). (ECOWAS Treaty of 1979).

**Progress in the Implementation of the Protocols:** This section discusses the difficulties and impediments found throughout the protocol's implementation. Whether the method is permitted or not, innumerable border inspections will continue. As a result, security agents at various checkpoints have harassed and extorted money from travelers (Adepoju, 2005). Additionally, the diversity of official languages at border crossings impedes mobility.

The protocol was reportedly introduced during a period of economic crisis in numerous member nations, leading in a significant inflow of West Africans into Nigeria. Between 1983 and 1985, when Nigeria's economy worsened, the government violated Protocol Articles 4 and 27 by deporting more than 1.3 million foreign people, the majority of them were Ghanaians (Adepoju, 2005). Apart from Nigeria, the following member nations have expelled migrants from West Africa since the protocol's inception: Côte d'Ivoire (1999), Senegal (1990), Liberia (1983), and Benin (1983). (1998). Adepoju (2005) defined organized codified formalized expressed formal as "organized codified formalized expressed formal." Delays in implementing measures of economic liberalization, such as tariff reductions, have slowed integration and the achievement of free movement of people (Abdoulahi, 2005). For example, tariff reductions on industrial items did not commence in 1981 as promised, and the 1999 and 2000 benefits did not materialize.

This is often because member states' economies are tiny and homogenous, according to Adepoju (2005). The protocol's failure to be fully implemented is attributed to member nations' diverse memberships and overlapping interests in other organizations, which can obstruct policy and effort cooperation significantly. Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Gambia are working to create a unified currency at the moment. As a result, the expulsion of citizens from member states and the terrible experiences of cross-border passengers reveal that the protocol on freedom of movement, which was intended to enhance sub-regional integration, is failing miserably in its implementation (Addoulahi, 2005).

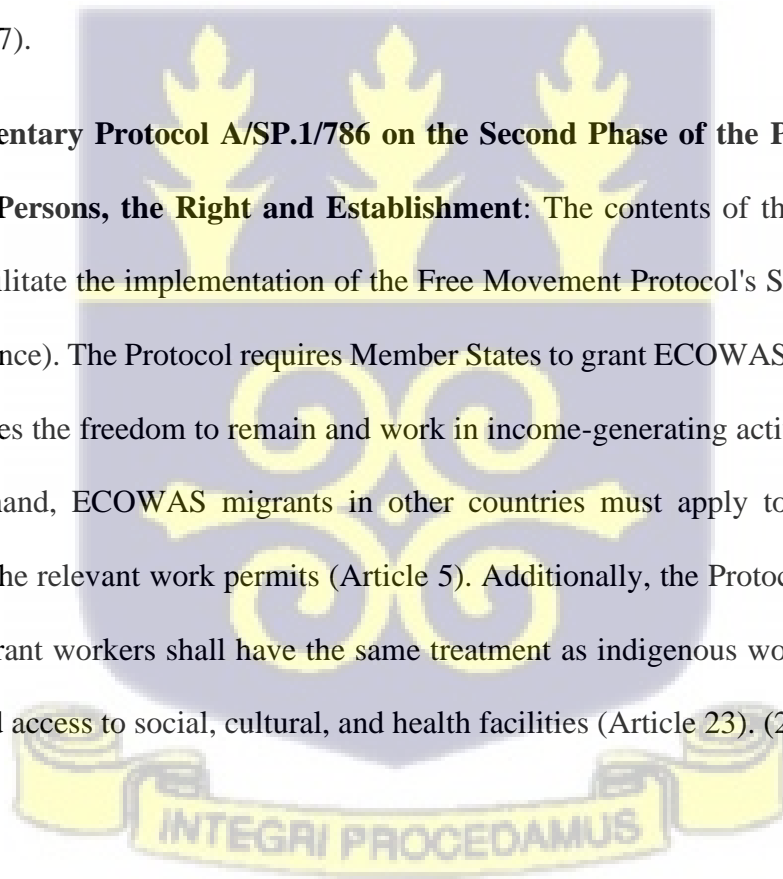
## 2.2 Supplementary Protocols related to ECOWAS

Awumbila et al. (2014) amended additional protocols developed to bolster the ECOWAS Free Movement Protocol. Additionally, the protocols listed below are included:

1985 Supplementary Protocols A/SP.1/7/85 on the Code of Conduct for the Implementation of the Protocol on Human Rights, Freedom of Movement, and Establishment:

**1985 Supplementary Protocol A/SP.1/7/85 on the Code of Conduct for the Implementation of the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, the Right of Residence and Establishment:** Article 2 of the Supplementary Protocol requires ECOWAS member states to provide their nationals with legal travel papers (1). Additionally, the contract includes provisions for the protection of deportees (Article 4) and unauthorized migrants in the region (Articles 5 and 7).

**1986 Supplementary Protocol A/SP.1/786 on the Second Phase of the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, the Right and Establishment:** The contents of this agreement are designed to facilitate the implementation of the Free Movement Protocol's Second Phase (i.e. Right of Residence). The Protocol requires Member States to grant ECOWAS citizens residing in other countries the freedom to remain and work in income-generating activities (Article 2). On the other hand, ECOWAS migrants in other countries must apply to the appropriate authorities for the relevant work permits (Article 5). Additionally, the Protocol stipulates that ECOWAS migrant workers shall have the same treatment as indigenous workers in terms of job security and access to social, cultural, and health facilities (Article 23). (2014) (Awumbila et al.).



**1989 Supplementary Protocol A/SP.1/6/89 amending and complementing the provisions of Article 7 of the Protocol on Free Movement, Right of Residence and Establishment:**

This Protocol changes Article 7 of the 1979 Protocol A/P.1/5/79 to reaffirm Member States' need to resolve disagreements peacefully about the Protocol's interpretation and application (Article 2).

**1990 Supplementary Protocol on the Implementation of the Third Phase (Right to Establishment) of the Protocol on Free Movement, Right of Residence, and**

**Establishment:** By giving the "Right of Establishment," this Protocol completes the third phase in implementing the Free Movement Protocol. The protocol grants ECOWAS citizens the right to settle or establish in another Member State "and to have access to economic activities, to conduct them, and to establish and manage enterprises, particularly businesses, under the same conditions as those defined by the host Member State's legislation for its own nationals." On the other hand, members are expected to adhere to the host country's laws.

**Decision C/DEC.3/12/92 on the Introduction of a Harmonized Immigration and Emigration Form in ECOWAS Member States:**

By standardizing the immigration and emigration forms used by ECOWAS member nations, the Protocol attempted to ease cross-border procedures. The treaty mandates that ECOWAS Member States develop an immigration and emigration form dubbed the "ECOWAS Member States Immigration and Emigration Form" (Article 1).

**The 2008 ECOWAS Common Approach on Migration:**

The ECOWAS Heads of State and Government adopted the ECOWAS Common Approach to address concerns regarding the ECOWAS Free Movement Protocol's implementation. While the agreement in its current form, scope, and substance is not legally binding and thus does not require ratification, it does provide recommendations and action plans for ECOWAS Member States to execute in order to

maintain sustainable migration management in West Africa. Six key principles govern the Common Approach:

- a. Mobility on an individual basis inside the ECOWAS zone
- b. Emphasizing the critical role of legal (regular) migration in economic growth
- c. Suppression of human trafficking
- d. Policy coherence
- e. Migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees have their rights respected; and
- b. Recognize migration's gender dimension.

### **2.3 Free Movement of People and Goods in Africa**

Individual freedom of movement in Africa is predicated on the aforementioned (IOM – UN Migration, 2005). According to the movement, it "reinforces people's freedom of movement, residence, and recognition within Member States' territory" (Lari, 2017).

According to a comprehensive study, the bulk of limitations on persons and goods movement continue to demand crossing borders only at authorized checkpoints and with a valid travel document or recognized identity card. These limitations are equivalent to those that apply outside the Schengen zone in the European Union and the European Economic Area (EEA) (IOM – UN Migration, 2005): "You should always be permitted to cross the border as an EU citizen with a valid national identity card or passport." "Because national authorities may request identification confirmation at any moment for security purposes, you should carry your identification document with you at all times" (EU, 2013; World Bank, 2015).

Additionally, CARICOM has achieved considerable advancements in the area of regional mobility (Haynes, 2016). "Upon arrival in a Member State, all CARICOM nationals should be granted six months of entry to enhance their sense of belonging and mobility within the

Caribbean Community, subject to Member States' right to deny entry to undesirable individuals and to prevent individuals from becoming a drain on public funds," the Caribbean Heads of Government declared in 2007. Caritas (2007) The Caribbean Court of Justice concurred, stating that pre-clearance and visa-free access are not susceptible to discretionary judgments at ports of entry by immigration officials (Caricom, 2007).

#### **2.4 Comparing Movement of Persons and Goods among Regional Communities in Africa**

This section assesses the processes for people and products migration between the four regional economic groups. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the East African Community (EAC), and the Community of Sahel-Saharan States are the four economic organizations mentioned (CEN-SAD).

The ECOWAS Treaty demands a "90-day visa-free stay, an ECOWAS passport, the removal of onerous border procedures, and [imposes] limits on resident permit holders" (Klavert, 2021). The ECOWAS Heads of State and Government met in March 2000 to discuss ways to further the Treaty's objectives. The summit's decision to create a "borderless subregion" was a watershed moment (Klavert, 2011). This was to be done in part by eliminating all barriers to passengers freely traveling on global routes inside ECOWAS and streamlining border procedures (Adepoju, 2011). Additionally, an agreement was reached to construct and utilize the ECOWAS travel certificate, as well as to streamline the passport components of each Community member nation to adhere to the ECOWAS document standard and design.

The Treaty and Protocol's goal of complete freedom of movement has been steadily achieved through this and other actions, such as the 1982 establishment of the ECOWAS Brown Card Motor Vehicle Insurance Scheme, which was created to "provide a common minimum level of insurance coverage for vehicles traveling between participating states" (AU, 2017).

Similarly, the East African Community (EAC) has made significant progress in establishing a customs union and promoting free mobility (AU, 2009). The EAC Treaty states that "Partner States resolve to take measures to facilitate the free movement of individuals, labor, and services, as well as to protect their citizens' right of establishment and residency within the community" (EAC, 2009). Additionally, the EAC Common Market Protocol urges partner nations to work in order to facilitate the free movement of commodities, people, labor, services, and money within the Community, as well as the exercise of individual establishment and resident rights (EAC, 2009).

SADC created a Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons in 1996; nevertheless, the draft Protocol was updated and ratified in 2005. The protocol's declared objective is to "create policies aimed at gradually dissolving constraints on people's mobility within the Region" (SADC, 2005). Due to the Protocol's pending implementation, the majority of SADC Member States have negotiated bilateral arrangements providing for visa-free travel for their people. The SADC Protocol allows for "legalized entry into the territory of another State Party without a visa for a maximum period of ninety (90) days per year for bona fide visits and following the laws of the State Party concerned; permanent and temporary residence in the territory of another State Party; and the establishment and employment in the territory of another State Party."

Likewise, the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD) has made less progress toward regional freedom of persons and things. Sudan, on the other hand, has struck a preliminary two-party deal with Libya (Maslowski, 2015). While an item is contained in the CEN-SAD standards, it has not been implemented as of yet. African RECs have achieved several successes as a consequence of Member States' political will (Bigo, 2009).

## 2.5 Conclusion

This chapter examined the ECOWAS Unrestricted Trade Area's core characteristics, as outlined by the ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme (ETLS), which stressed unrestricted movement of people, products, and things inside ECOWAS, as well as the elimination of all tariff and non-tariff trade obstacles. Furthermore, the chapter discussed international person and property rights, as well as individual and property rights among other African regional economic groups.



## CHAPTER THREE

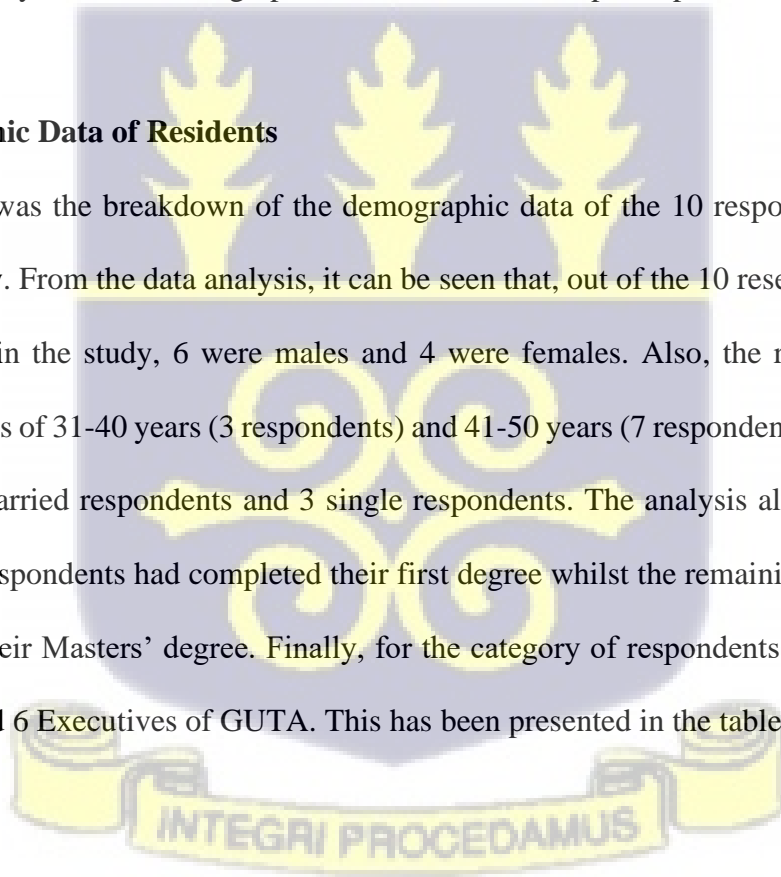
### AN ASSESSMENT OF THE NIGERIA BORDER CLOSURE ON GHANA'S TRADE SECTOR

#### 3.0 Introduction

This study was focused on assessing the frictions within the ECOWAS Free Trade Protocol, with a focus on the closure of the Nigerian boarder to trade relations with Ghana. A sample size of 10 Executives of GUTA and GEPA officials were interviewed and the data obtained had been edited and analyzed. This chapter contained the analyzed data that has been presented under themes emanating from the three main research objectives of the study. The chapter also presented an analysis of the demographic data of the research participants.

#### 3.1 Demographic Data of Residents

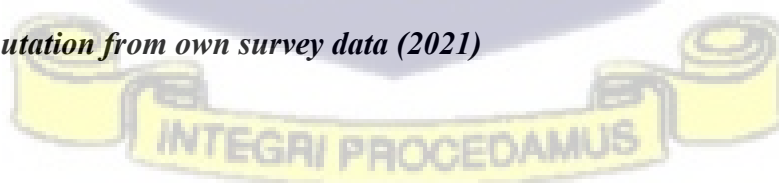
The following was the breakdown of the demographic data of the 10 respondents who took part in the study. From the data analysis, it can be seen that, out of the 10 research participants who took part in the study, 6 were males and 4 were females. Also, the respondents were between the ages of 31-40 years (3 respondents) and 41-50 years (7 respondents). Additionally, there were 8 married respondents and 3 single respondents. The analysis also showed that a majority of 7 respondents had completed their first degree whilst the remaining 3 respondents had obtained their Masters' degree. Finally, for the category of respondents, 4 were officials from GEPA and 6 Executives of GUTA. This has been presented in the table below:



**Table 1: Demographic characteristics of Respondents**

Variable	Responses & Frequency	
Gender	Males 6 respondents	Females 4 respondents
Age Range	31-40 years 3 respondents	41-50 years 7 respondents
Marital status	Single 2 respondents	Married 8 respondents
Educational Qualification	First degree 7 respondents	Masters 3 respondents
Category of Respondents	GUTA 6 respondents	GEPA 4 respondents
Positions of Respondents	For GUTA Executives, these were the following executives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Secretary,</li> <li>• Trade Relations Officer</li> <li>• Public Relations Officer</li> <li>• Resource Mobilization Officer</li> <li>• Programs &amp; Policies Officer</li> <li>• Monitoring &amp; Evaluation Officer</li> </ul>	For GEPA, the officials were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Trade Experts</li> <li>• Manager, Africa Trade Division</li> <li>• Tax &amp; Exemptions Manager</li> </ul>

*Author's computation from own survey data (2021)*



### 3.3 Main Findings

The findings of this research were broadly based on the following research objectives:

1. To identify the consequences of the border closure on ECOWAS Free trade policy
2. To examine the effects and implications of the border closure on Ghanaian traders' transportation to Nigeria
3. To evaluate the lessons drawn from the closure of the border.

A discussion of the findings has been presented below

### 3.4 Objective 1: Consequences of the Nigeria Border closure on ECOWAS Free Trade Policy

There are many reasons why cross-border commerce (ICBT) between Nigeria and its neighbors is not usually an attempt to avoid immigration and customs taxes but rather a result of regional structural and economic challenges (NBS, 2019). The informal economy is the largest in West Africa, and this is particularly evident in the Benin Republic, where it accounts for around 50% of GDP and 90% of employment (Golub and Mbaye, 2019). Informal cross-border trade in Sub Saharan West Africa is largely dominated by low-quality consumer goods and petroleum products, all of which have a direct impact on the region's food security. Since food security and poverty reduction are the primary goals of small-scale farmers and herders, it is best to view informal cross-border trade as a structural response by which these groups attempt to mitigate surpluses and shortages of staple foods, thereby reducing their vulnerability to market volatility.

The respondent stated that;

*The decision of the Nigerian government decided to close its land borders on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2019 for 28 days is upfront to the ideals of the ECOWAS Liberal Trade Scheme*

*(ELTS). It is also sad, that this is happening during the time that, the signing of the agreement to establish the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is taking place (Field Note, 2021)*

However, the respondents further claim that;

*The Nigerian government noted that the closure is to allow Nigeria's security forces to come up with a plan on how to curtail the incessant smuggling of banned goods, arms, and ammunition, other illegal imports especially rice smuggling Benin and its wider implications. No matter the reason, instead of closing the border, they could have banned imports from these specific countries such as Benin, and allowed other countries to continue to trade in and out of Nigeria (Field Note, 2021).*

The Benin-Togo corridor and the Niger Republic border serve as the primary conduits for the majority of ICBT traffic, though other countries in West Africa are also involved to varying degrees. For unrestricted access to the Nigerian market, Benin and Togo are fierce competitors. Nigeria and Togo's proximity and location discourage informal trade, but Togo retains a large ICBT via a framework of reduced taxes and customs, making imports and re-exports still advantageous, this support (Golub, 2019). Thus, the ICBT is carried out between Nigeria and Togo through the Benin-Nigeria border. Old vehicles and rice, which are heavily protected in Nigeria, are traded over the Nigeria-Benin border, and Benin imports petroleum products that were heavily subsidized in Nigeria until very recently.

The respondent further argued that

*Nigeria is West Africa's biggest market and closing its borders to ECOWAS states and I am sure, to other African countries meant that there was going to be a reduction in trade flow, and revenue generation for the exporting country and Nigeria as well as for*

*countries that produce to feed the Nigeria market, they will be badly affected. They have to look for alternative markets and that may result in goods going to waste among others. For Ghana, Nigeria is a higher importer of a lot of goods from Ghana and the closure of Nigeria's border is a big issue. Beyond trade, those involved in the transport business who ply the Ghana/Nigeria route will be affected too (Field Note, 2021)*

Also

*During the closure of the Nigeria border, there were a lot of job losses and you know what the impact of a job loss is for the breadwinner and his or her dependents, the society, and the nation as a whole. I am talking about traders and businesses men and women who had gone for loans to enable them to deliver goods to the Nigeria market with the expectation that, they will be able to pay off their loans after sales/delivery (Field Note, 2021)*

*I am talking about the long-distance driver who flies Accra-Lagos-Accra every other day with the anticipation that, he will make some good sales and take care of his dependents. I also talk about the several numbers of people in this supply chain business: warehouse operators, local lorry drivers, goods loaders, etc. All these people will be affected especially those who are paid daily or as per job", (Field Note, 2021).*

On the regional level, Nigeria is a member of two economic groups. Organizations like the Economic Community of the West African States and the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (ECOWAS). A total of 24 members are in ECOWAS, whereas CENSAD has 17 members. Côte d'Ivoire scored slightly above the regional average (0.5) and ECOWAS performed reasonably well with a regional average score of 0.43, according to ARII (2020). Each country's level of integration with its neighbors is measured using ARII (2020), which provides five

parameters for doing so. Trade integration, infrastructure integration, productive integration, free movement of people integration, and macroeconomic integration are a few of the many options available today. Nigeria is better integrated into the ECOWAS economic community (0.46 global ranking score) than it is into the CEN-SAD economic community (0.41 global ranking score). Disaggregation of regional integration further along the specified characteristics yields different outcomes. CEN-SAD reported that regional integration in Nigeria was greater than in ECOWAS, except for the "free movement of people" component. Individuals can now travel freely between Nigeria and the other member states of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) thanks to the ECOWAS protocol.

*As a trader, I think that the closure of the Nigeria border to other countries is not a good sign for trade liberation as we had to struggle to get some of the goods to and from the Nigeria market through unapproved routes and we put our lives at risk during that period. Additionally, goods from Nigeria were extremely expensive and if I am a Ghanaian and belong to ECOWAS and have to go through this struggle to be able to sell my wares, then what is the essence of ECOWAS and its free trade policies? Unfortunately, when this happens, it's the ordinary person who suffers because we, as traders, pass on the extra cost to them, and prices of goods also shot up. The economy is already hard, and we don't think it was fair for this to have happened (Field Note, 2021)*



### 3.5 Objective 2: Effects and implications of the border on Ghana's trading with Nigeria.

Since Ghana and Nigeria are the two most important trading partners in West Africa, their ties in ECOWAS have been exceptionally warm and friendly. In terms of population and GDP, they make up around 61% and 68% of the ECOWAS area. There are many similarities between Ghana and Nigeria, and both countries support each other in times of need in their respective countries and the continent as a whole. Nigeria has become one of Ghana's most important commercial partners as a result of this relationship. Since 2000, bilateral non-oil commerce between the two countries increased from less than \$15 million to more than \$130 million. This shows that the economies of the two countries are interdependent. There have always been large migratory movements between the two countries. However, the relationship between the two countries can be turbulent at times. ECOWAS treaties and protocols, to which both countries are signatories, were cited as a source of tension between the two countries in 2019 when they attempted to pass legislation that was deemed harmful to Nigerians doing business in Ghana. Nigerian import restrictions on a slew of goods have been an issue for Accra as well.

*Most African countries and in this case, ECOWAS countries are quick to sign protocols and conventions without understanding their full implications. As we speak, there are still exit border checks at most ECOWAS countries meanwhile, by the protocols, there must be free movement of goods and people. So one will ask him or herself, as a trader or a businessman, why do I still have to pay monies at the borders and be harassed at this border or that border or check point when I am informed that, there is supposed to be the free or easy way for the moving of people, goods and service within the ECOWAS countries (Field Note, 2021)*

The respondents further claim that;

*The Economic Community of West Africa States has it three major languages of French, English and Portuguese and will agree with me that, this can even be a challenge. How do you communicate in French when you get to Togo border on your way to Nigeria or vice versa? (Field Note, 2021)*

Ghana's recent economic policies, particularly in the context of the ECOWAS community, have been widely criticized, particularly in the context of the ECOWAS free trade pact. Ghana's Investment Promotion Council's demand for \$300,000 from international businesses operating in Ghana, including Nigerian businesses, nullifies the ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme promises. 'Protectionism,' as some commentators have referred to it, is a threat to the economic unity of the region. A number of economic laws enacted in Nigeria in the same spirit make doing business in Nigeria difficult for Ghanaian entrepreneurs.

It was in 2005, when President Olusegun Obasanjo's import embargo on 96 Ghanaian products rendered the ECOWAS liberalization drive meaningless because of the ban on textiles, garments, starch, and plastics. Successive administrations, including that of former President Jonathan, have done the same thing. Even though Nigeria and Ghana's relationship is gaining strength as a result of the treaty, it is not without its own difficulties, which have impeded the effective realization of an ideal of a secure, unified, powerful and economically prosperous sub region of West Africa.

A respondent claim that;

*I remember so well, the torture and killings that had occurred between Senegal and Gambia borders as well as the killing of the 44 Ghanaians in the Gambia by security agencies in 2005. All these are clear examples of harassment and difficulties faced by*

*citizens of member states in exercising their right to free movement within the ECOWAS sub-region (Field Note, 2021)*

However, they further claim that;

*The purpose of ECOWAS is to promote free trade and the free movement of goods and people. So as a trader, I expect that I can do business throughout ECOWAS without any struggle. Why will Nigeria being a major player in ECOWAS and knowing of the ECOWAS free trade policy close its land borders to everyone for 28 days? It is not only a big dent in the ECOWAS's efforts at promoting the free movement of goods and people but also the ECOWAS Commission. It was a coup d'etat, they will have issued a statement and sent envoys but nothing was done about this and we, as traders suffered a lot during the period (Field Note, 2021)*

The relationship between Nigeria and Ghana has run into several roadblocks over the years. It has been likened to brothers who eat with long spoons, according to a few descriptions. There has been some evidence that both countries are not fully committed to the success of ECOWAS, despite their contributions. Ghanaian authorities have banned the import of some of Ghana's products into their country because of alleged noncompliance with the 1994 investment law, which places restrictions and prohibits non-Ghanaians from engaging in retail trade and related businesses. Trade between the two countries was hindered by this obstacle.

An old mercantilist argument to protect domestic industry is one of many obstacles to Nigerian and Ghanaian commercial relations developing harmoniously. Based on the premise that large-scale foreign investment tends to disturb domestic social stability, this policy is implemented. Local industry protection has been an important part of West African nations' industrialization strategies since the era of indigenization. Protectionist industries do not advance because they

produce subpar goods or because they cannot compete. Since protected local sectors have little incentive to increase production and regulation, Kolapo (2012) claims that this is the case.

A respondent claims that;

*The essence of ETLS is to enable free movement of goods and people and Nigeria has closed its border. This means, the protocol is under siege. What will have happened if other ECOWAS states also close their borders to Nigeria? Will Nigeria be able to survive? It is not true that, during the 28 days border closure, Nigeria's economy was strengthened, it's a big lie (Field Note, 2021)*

As a result, it is important to point out that there is not enough trade between the two countries. As a result of the obnoxious Ghana Investment Law of 1994 and Nigeria's embargo on a number of Ghanaian products, trade between the two countries is declining. China, the United States, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, France, and India make up the bulk of Ghana's imports. As a result, Ghanaian and other exporters complain about the difficulty of gaining entry into the Nigerian market. According to a World Bank study from 2009, up to 15% of Nigeria's imports enter the country illegally, mostly near the Benin-Nigeria border, where Ghanaian goods are also imported. Additionally, Nigeria and Ghana's economic relations are stifled by the imposition of discriminatory and high taxes on products.

### **3.6 Objective 3: Lessons from the closure of the Border**

In the last several months, the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) imposed additional restrictions, including the ban of some imported commodities from reaching the official foreign currency market. During this time, the government closed land borders with her neighbors, who are all members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) except Cameroon.

Because Nigeria is a significant shareholder in ECOWAS and a key country for the achievement of the African Continental Trade Agreement, the closing of the border has sparked widespread public discussion. In several discussions, it is becoming clear that Nigeria's land border is the fulcrum of foreign commerce in West Africa and even Africa. In addition, due to the expansiveness of her border, widespread dumping of commodities and illicit commerce with her neighbors had become the norm, notwithstanding the negative impact on the development of her internal economy.

A respondents claims that;

*I remember so well, the torture and killings that had occurred between Senegal and Gambia borders as well as the killing of the 44 Ghanaians in the Gambia by security agencies in 2005. All these are clear examples of harassments and difficulties faced by citizens of member states in exercising their right to free movement within the ECOWAS sub-region (Field Note, 2021)*

Thus, border villages have become known for the nefarious actions of smugglers, who are supported tacitly by local indigenous people on the other side of the border. Therefore, there are individuals of mixed race who live, work, and facilitate illicit border commerce along the border. CBN and government should be commended for the security benefits and implications for Nigeria's domestic self-sufficiency that result from these choices. This is one of the few instances in which policy choices were taken only for the benefit of Nigeria and Nigerians. The border closure should be seen as a modified version of a policy of economic openness. Typically, market forces are permitted to decide output and trade levels in an open economy. Additionally, commodities and services flow freely in and out, and the economy has ties to other nations throughout the globe.

The respondent stated that;

*The purpose of ECOWAS is to promote free trade and the free movement of goods and people. So as a trader, I expect that I can do business throughout ECOWAS without any struggle. Why will Nigeria being a major player in ECOWAS and knowing of the ECOWAS free trade policy close its land borders to everyone for 28 days? It is not only a big dent in the ECOWAS's efforts at promoting the free movement of goods and people but also the ECOWAS Commission. It was a coup d'etat, they will have issued a statement and sent envoys but nothing was done about this and we, as traders suffered a lot during the period (Field Note, 2021)*

Regional commerce and travel, including human migration, are mostly undertaken by road transportation in West Africa. The ECOWAS treaty allows citizens of member nations unfettered entry to any country within the region for a 90-day residence term, which greatly facilitates human mobility. In contrast, a closed economy has no interaction with other economies. A closed economy is self-sufficient, meaning that neither imports nor exports are permitted. Since products and services are still permitted to be imported through air and sea, the government's present official posture is that of a quasi-open economy. Important is the evaluation of the policy's effects on the typical Nigerian on the street.

However, the respondents stated that;

*The essence of ETLs is to enable the free movement of goods and people and Nigeria has closed its border. This means the protocol is under siege. What will have happened if other ECOWAS states also close their borders to Nigeria? Will Nigeria be able to survive? It is not true that, during the 28 days of border closure, Nigeria's economy was strengthened, it's a big lie (Field Note, 2021)*

Regarding the import ban list, the CBN should give the micro sectoral effect of the policy, not necessarily on foreign exchange use decrease, but on individual sectors and/or firms impacted by the regulation. This will lead to a comprehensive review of whether the objective has been met. It may not come as a surprise that the products on the prohibited list are the ones being dumped at Nigeria's land borders. In addition, CBN can put a complete prohibition on foreign currency allocation for non-capital products. If such a strategy is enacted, the current industry will be required to get its raw materials from the domestic economy. Although such a move may cause the public some discomfort, it will ultimately lead to internal self-sufficiency. This author is of the view that the government should maintain a quasi-open economic policy for a fair period of time in the medium term so that the nation may analyze the true effect of globalization on the local economy, particularly the agricultural and industrial sectors.

The land border must remain closed till the end of the Buhari administration in 2023. During the rule of the Ming dynasty in the fifteenth century A.D., China closed its economy, which allowed her to build domestic capability. In the past, Armenia, North Korea, Macedonia, and Hungary have also blocked their borders for economic and political reasons. Nigeria may benefit from the experiences of China and other nations. To maintain the effectiveness of the strategy, the government must participate in ongoing personnel exchange. The personnel responsible for enforcing the policy should be rotated every three months. It is often claimed that border patrol agents are entangled in corruption and collusion with economic saboteurs and jobbers. This assertion is never backed by evidence or facts. It is mostly a popular prejudice towards customs officials serving their country. There may be rotten apples in each firm, but government decisions should not be based on three biases. This is why the introduction of rotational officer exchange would be beneficial. This should also be extended to the Central Bank of Nigeria, the Ministry of Finance, and other border-monitoring organizations.

Additionally, the effect of the policy on exports and export revenues should be studied. CBN should disclose data on exports crossing land borders about foreign exchange revenues. It is also possible that the land border is a source of income loss for the government if export paperwork procedures at the border are inadequate. Given the possibility of reverse dumping, which is damaging to earning capacity, it is possible that the majority of land export proceeds would not be returned to Nigeria. The Manufacturers Association of Nigeria and other self-regulatory groups should supply the government with information about the policy's potential effect on their members. This should provide the government with a chance to enhance and update the procedure of exporting data over land borders.

### **3.7 Conclusion**

The findings are pointing to the fact that the Nigeria border closure was not needed and in the view of the author, it was a hasty decision. It is anticipated that, in the arena and in the bit to promote trade among ECOWAS states, Nigeria will have exercised restraint and handed over the smuggling of rice from Benin unto their market to the ECOWAS commission to hand it. From the findings, Nigeria could have banned goods from Benin instead of closing its borders to every country. This action which has been condemned by many has affected the implementation of the ELTS which has not been too progressive. It is the hope of the author, that, the ECOWAS Commission will use the Nigeria border closure as a case study and strengthen its interactions with member states and education on the ELTS, especially its sanctions, quickly step in to deal with the rice smuggling from Benin and remind Nigeria of the implications of the occurrence of a similar action.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATION

#### 4.0 Introduction

This study is aimed at assessing the frictions within the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS) free trade protocols with the situation of the Nigeria border closure on trade relations together with Ghana the case study. The study approach adopted was qualitative research and purposive sampling techniques were used to select the sample size of ten 10 participants made up of Executives of the GUTA and officials from the Ghana Export Promotion Authority – GEPA, with the help of an interview guide, data was collected from research respondents, the data was then edited and analyzed and presented under the research objectives of the study. The chapter contained a summary of findings and a conclusion.

#### 4.1 Summary of Findings

The first objectives findings indicated that, the Nigerians closure of their border had an adverse toll on ECOWAS Free Trade Policy, which was supposed to promote and project free of easy movements of people and goods and services. From the analyzed data, the study found out, the key reason for the 28-days Nigerian border closure, which was to the illegal importation of smuggled rice from Benin to Nigeria as well as the importation of other goods. The findings noted that, instead of the border closure to all, it could have been limited to a total ban of goods from Benin. With Nigeria being the biggest market on the ECOWAS sub region, its border closure affected several traders from ECOWAS and non-ECOWAS countries. It also resulted in high prices of goods and as well as the use of unapproved routes to sell and buy from Nigeria. Beyond the traders and loss of revenue, other sectors such as transportation were also badly affected during the closure. Additionally, there were several job losses, low trade flows, and

low revenues for all countries that traded with Nigeria. Lastly, the border closure was upfront to the principles and values of the ELTS and the African Free Trade Agreement.

The study's second objective focused on the effects of border closure on Ghana's trade sector. In assessing the impact, the findings pointed out that, there were several challenges with the implementation of the free trade policy of ECOWAS. These include the existence of the border checks and the harassment and killings associated with goods and people's movements across the ECOWAS states. This issue of language barriers came up and findings questioned the closure of the border by Nigeria and wanted to find out if Nigeria could survive all other ECOWAS states and other non-ECOWAS states should they in turn, close their borders to Nigeria. The findings also brought to fore, the inadequacies of the ECOWAS Commission and its quick response to Coup d'états and slow response to other issues of importance such the Nigeria border closure.

The third and final research objective of the study focused on the lessons learnt from the Nigeria border closure. The findings pointed out that, Nigeria's closure of their border had a negative toll on other ECOWAS states and defeats the purpose of promotion of free movement of goods, services and of people. Other lessons learnt were that, Nigeria could have ban importation from Benin and dealt with only Benin instead of closing its border to all countries for 28 days. Another lesson learnt was that, Ghanaian traders must diversify its business market and not rely too much on Nigeria. Other markers could have been explored during such times so that the impact will not be greatly felt.

Additionally, there is the need for regular consultation between Nigeria and Ghanaian authorities to ensure that, in the event of a future border closure, there would be another route for Ghanaian products to be allowed into the Nigeria market with proper labelling. Lastly, Nigeria must come out clear if they want to be part of the ETLs or not. If they indeed want to

be part of ECOWAS and ELTS, they must then ensure their borders are opened to facilitate the movement of goods and persons. It again noted that should Nigeria repeat this act, sanctions would be applied.

#### **4.2 Conclusion**

It can be concluded that the Nigeria Border closure for 28 days had had an impact on the implementation of the ECOWAS free trade policy. Also, it contributed to job loss, low trade flow, hike in prices of goods, and exposed the weakness of the ECOWAS commission. It can also be concluded that ECOWAS Commission must be seen responding to threats of free movement of goods and people just as it would have responded to the cases of coup d'état in the sub-region. The findings called for a more proactive ECOWAS commission that can meet sanctions and ensure that its members fall in line with all of the protocols and conventions that member states have signed unto.

#### **4.3 Recommendations**

Below are the outcomes, following recommendations that have been made:

4.3.1 ECOWAS states must respect all provisions in all protocols that they have signed unto at all times. If there is a challenge, they should follow the laid down procedures to resolve it and not take any drastic decision that has consequences and implications on the entire ECOWAS.

4.3.2 ECOWAS Commission should take advantage of this issue and embark on an intensive education for all its members on the provisions of the ELTS. The intensive education should be aimed at reminding states about the principles of the policy and the opportunities for them to enforce bans (of importation of goods as well as the movement of people) just as in the case study.

4.3.3 ECOWAS commission should be bold enough to crack the whip in such instances to ensure that, this border closure that not repeat itself. It could have fined or suspended Nigeria for doing this. This will deter other ECOWAS states from doing something similar or worse in the future.

4.3.4 ECOWAS Commission and inter countries agencies should initiate a dialogue which will end up in the signing of a trade treaty between Nigeria and Benin. This will ensure that, Benin does not import smuggled rice into Nigeria and Nigeria will not have the cause to close its border in the new future. This treaty should be repeated for any other country that has been identified by Nigeria, has been behind the importation of any goods on their prohibited list.



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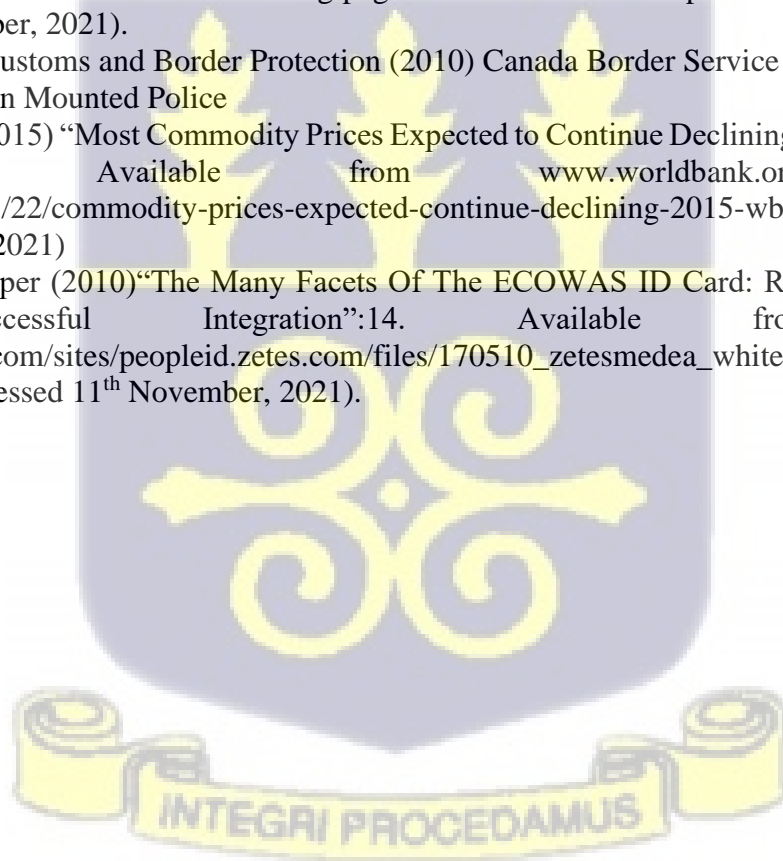
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**PPENDIX 1. – INTERVIEW GUIDE**

Hello,

I am a student from the University of Ghana, who is conducting a study on the topic “Assessing Frictions Within the ECOWAS Free Trade Protocol. The Case Study of the Nigeria Border Closure on Trade Relations with Ghana”. Information’s provide will be purposely for academic use and confidentiality is guaranteed.

Thank you.



**Section 1: Demographic Data**

1. Sex:  Male  Female
2. Age:  30-39  40-49  50-59  60 and above
3. Marital Status:  Single  Married  Divorced
4. Educational Qualification: Higher National Diploma/Diploma  First degree   
Masters/MBA
5. Category of Respondent:  Official of the Ghana Export Promotion  Major Trader



**Section 2: Main Questions**

6. What are the consequences of the Nigeria border closure on Ghana?
7. What do you think are the effects of the closure on the Ghanaian trade sector?
8. Did the border have any implications? Kindly share some of the implications.
9. What are the lessons learnt from the 28-day border closure of the Nigeria border?
10. What are your recommendations to Ghana, Nigeria and ECOWAS Commission on this issue?

