

Regional Integration and Trade Development in West Africa: A Review of Evidence from the FMCG Sector

¹Gabriel, Olayinka Enoch; ²Dixon-Ogbechi, B. N (Ph.D.);
³Mojisayo Abimbola; & ⁴Ayodeji Olaniyi

¹Department of Business Administration, Anchor University Ayobo Lagos

²Department of Business Administration, University of Lagos, Akoka Yaba Lagos

³Leeds Trinity University Horsforth Leeds LS18 5HD

⁴Department of Mass Communication, Anchor University Ayobo Lagos

For correspondence, email: gabrielolyinka@gmail.com

Abstract

Regional integration has emerged as a transformative force in the global economic landscape, representing one of the most significant developments in international relations. This paper reviews the literature on regional integration and trade development in West Africa with particular focus on the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector. This study adopted desk review, while a sample size of 93 sources was drawn from Google Scholar and JSTOR; exclusion/inclusion steps were used to determine the sample size, from journals, marketing textbooks, and E-books. Data collected from 93 relevant articles focus on regional integration and fast-moving consumers goods industries. The findings revealed that regional trade benefits are yet to have huge positive impacts on FCMG in Nigeria based on challenges such as lack of government investment in infrastructure, inability to curb informal trade, and prevalence of trade barriers. The study concluded that that regional integration and trade development offers the opportunity to firms to access to larger market. Although with factors that affected by FMCGs trade activities. Finally, the study recommends the need for Government of each member states to use their political will to urgently deal with the issues of corruption and infrastructure deficit among the regional members to ameliorate the current challenges faced by FCMG West Africa states. The study ECOWAS, should place greater attention on cross border activities for the benefits of FMCG firms operating in Nigeria and in West Africa.

Keywords: FMCG; Regional integration; Trade development; West Africa; ECOWAS; Cross-border trade

INTRODUCTION

The FMCG sector has an exceptional ability for exports especially for processed foods, beverages, and personal care items. Fast-moving consumers' goods (FMCG) are seen as items an individual and household spend their resources for consumption (Anupam & Sharma, 2012). The Nigerian stock exchange market reported that FMCG sector contribute 17% value of equity in its market capitalization (KPMG 2020). This shows the significance of the sector to the Nigerian economy. In addition, fast moving consumer goods are regularly purchased through retailers and smallholding channels, which is influenced by promotional tools by the producers (Mbuyazi, 2012). Thus, in Nigeria 71% of the FMCG firms' income comes from the base of the pyramid stratum (Lagos Business School, 2016). Documented evidence revealed that the FMCG firms in Nigeria are faced with some challenges both at the national and regional level (Lekhanya, Olajumoke, & Nirmala, 2017; Muthoni, 2017). These arises from diverse economic challenges imposed by depreciating value of the naira, poor social infrastructure, policy divergence, delayed salaries paid to workers and public employers (Lagos Business School, 2016).

In view of these, the study attempts to review regional integration and trade development effects on FMCG firms in Nigeria in terms of benefits and challenges. FMCGs firms are constrained to adopt competitive strategies for their operations in other to keep their businesses (Buil & Omundi, 2017; Suh & Lee, 2018). However, the expansion of FMCG firms in Nigeria into other countries have not profoundly found to be successful, despite the creation of regional integration and trade development to promote and develop the region's local businesses as well as to have uniform interregional trade, thus allowing the Member States to reverse to a cycle of significant external dependence (Jonathan & Sophie 2021). Therefore, regional integration has emerged as a transformative landscape, representing one of the most significant developments in international relations since the mid-20th century (Rivarola Puntigliano, 2017). While trade development represents phenomenon that transcends mere trade liberalization to include comprehensive strategies for collective economic advancement, institutional cooperation and shared prosperity among neighboring states (Onuwa & Adedire, 2024).

Besides, regional integration intentionally refers to improving people's welfare, creating resources, education, health sector and other Millennium Development Goals among (MDGs) economies (Anyanwu, 2014). Without integration and development FMCG industries would not be able to survive and have economic growth. However, regional integration at the Nigeria level is faced with some distributional challenges, such as decline in high cost of items, inaccessibility of the dollar in the economy weak regional institutional cooperation, and poor market structure which is affecting the disposable income of the people. Hence, the need for this study to examine regional integration and trade benefits and challenges faced by FMCG firms in Nigeria. Therefore, the study joined the scholarly discourse on regional integration by contributing to existing literatures to synthesize the impact of regional integration on FMCG firms in West Africa, identifying benefits, challenges and research gaps as it affects FMCG firms in Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Interregional Theory

According to Shaw and Jones (2005) interregional theory is premised on the geographical space where marketing activities of firms takes place. The school central thought is about providing understanding that marketing is a business action aimed at bridging geographical gaps among economic agents and nations (Ottum, 1993). The interregional theory has been incorporated to show the essential and fundamental relevance of regional trade and development among nations. The interregional theory is founded on its relevance in literatures indicating the benefits of the regional trade among nations of the world. The interregional, theory is a paradigm shift from other traditional schools, by focusing on how organization engaged in marketing activities across geographical location to deliver its products and services to targeted audience. Shaw and Jones (2005) stated that interregional theory explanation is premised on the geographical space where marketing activities of firms takes place. The theory central thought is about providing understanding that marketing is a business action aimed at bridging geographical gaps among economic agents and nations.

FMCG sector characteristics,

The fast-moving consumers' goods sector has been considered as one of the biggest and unarguably the largest in the globally with the production of various household products which are foods, drinks, personal care, electronics, and household goods among others (IBAN 2016). The fast-moving consumer (FMCG) industry is acknowledged as one of the most indispensable sectors with huge contribution extensively to Nigeria's GDP. The industry is accountable for the production of household items essential for daily livelihood; that is why different governments across the world including that of Nigeria gave special privilege to this sector to operate at a lowest amount capability in order to cater for the essential needs of their citizens (Barua 2020, KPMG 2020). In Nigeria food beverage and tobacco of the FMCG industry contribute up subsector 5% to Nigeria GDP in 2019.

In this case, the sector deals in household items (Park, 2015) that involves personal and household care and packaging (Stahel & Clift, 2015) as well as items that are frequently purchased at cheaper price, especially items with short lifespan than long-lasting commodities (Park, 2015b; Stahel & Clift, 2015). By implication the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) industry, mostly operate on small margin; as a result, the quantity of sales determines its performance (Bijuna & Sequeira, 2012). Most profit are realized from the people of low income estimated to be about 4.5 billion people with a collective expenditure of 50% to the tune of \$5 trillion (\$2.3 trillion) (IBAN, 2016). Arising from this account, fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) players knows that consumers are price sensitive as such these firms find ways to be cost efficient to be competitive. This is realized through cost effectiveness (Odumeru, 2013; Suhag et al., 2017).

Table 1: Summary of key characteristics of FMCG

FMCG industries	Food and beverages	individual (personal) care	Household care
Examples of Product	Cereal, bottled drinks, staple beers, pastries, energy drinks, etc	Skin care, make up, oral care and medicines	Laundry care, electronics, Furniture
FMCG Industries	Nasco, Kellogg's, Nestle, Dangote, Chi Limited and etc.	Coca Cola, Pepsi, Nestle, Cadbury, Guinness Breweries and etc	P&G, Unilever, PZ Cussons, SAB furnitures, Samsung, LG
Distributors	Shoprite, Game, Spar (Park' n' Shop), Price Supermarket, Ebeano, Ariya Stores, Just Rite, Grand Square, CityDia amongst others	Shoprite, Game, Spar (Park' n' Shop), Price Supermarket, Ebeano, Ariya Stores, Just Rite, Grand Square, CityDia amongst others	Shoprite, Game, Spar (Park' n' Shop), Price Supermarket, Ebeano, Ariya Stores, Just Rite, Grand Square, CityDia amongst others

Source: Lagos Business School (2016).

The table above indicates various fast moving consumer goods key characteristics with products sold. These consumables are categories represent food and beverages, individual care products and family care products. Most of these items are found in retail outlets such as Shoprite, Spar among others.

Benefits of Regional Integration and Trade development for FMCG

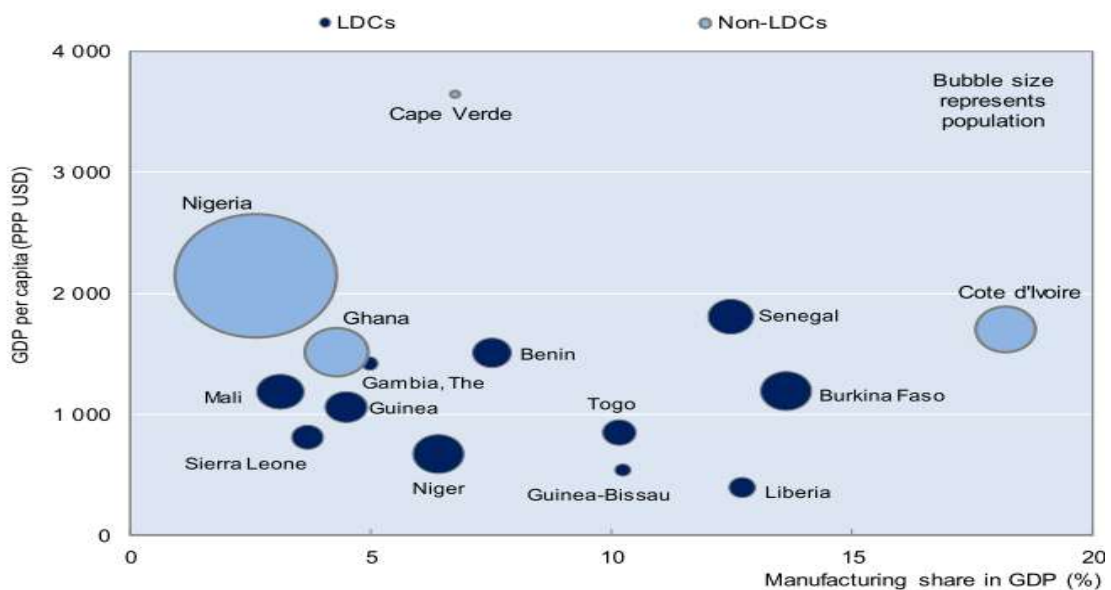
Regional integration has been found to provide some immense benefits to different nations by connecting markets and providing access to knowledge, technology, and investment. It was reported by DiCaprio et al (2017) that UNCTAD study put forward that regional trade agreement (RTAs) driver of international trade and strengthens relationship between member states. The study findings indicates that regional trade agreement in general leads to the growth of GDP per capita through bilateral and third-party relationship, with a lowering of inequality within countries

By implication regional trade agreement aimed at unrestricted movement, persons business, economic, productive and macroeconomic amalgamation as this is believed will be achieved through custom duties on import, exchange of exports and imports, growing GDP, and share of interregional goods as basis percentage for trade (African Regional Index, 2017). It is believed that progress can be recorded in economic development, productivity, governance and infrastructural growth dimensions (UNECA ARII 2019, World Bank CPIA 2019, Obasaju et al 2021). Therefore, regional integration is contextualized as social economic process that is

aimed at development and towards enhancing productivity (Anyanwu, 2014). Furthermore, regional trade and development was created to promote and develop the regions local businesses as well as to inform interregional trade, thus allowing the member states to increase their self-reliance and reverse the cycle of significant external dependence (Jonathan & Sophie 2021).

For example, the idea of regional of Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) commenced at the AU summit in 2015 seeking to establish an AEC by 2028 (Cheluget & Wright, 2017). The regional trade agreement seeks to create tariff –free economic zones that would encourage the growth of business, advance trade among different continents, promote industrialization, and job creation (Nsiah, 2020). Accordingly, trade integration is encapsulated in a country having right of entry to a different nation market, thus it can be considered as market penetration (Edwards, 2007). In this context, a Treaty was established which is known as economic community for West Africa states members. The creation of this treaty classified members into least developed countries (LDCs) with the exception of Nigeria, Ghana, Cape Verde and Cote d’Ivoire. Nigeria considerably accounts for over 73.5% of ECOWAS GDP, due to total exports resulting from petroleum and 51% of foods imports among ECOWAS member states. Similarly, countries like Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire are major ECOWAS food exporters, basically due to cocoa production, followed by Nigeria. ECOWAS members’ size and economic structure is depicted in the graph below;

Figure 1: Size and Economic Structure of the interregional body countries



Source:(E. Von Uexkull 2012)

For improved economic structure each country is mandated to engaged diversification of the economy, draws a trajectory towards industrialization and building value added economy. In this context, previous studies established there are benefits of interregional trade such include

productivity and growth benefits for firms (Ehigiamusoe & Lean, 2019). Also, it is believed that it will lead to the exclusion of tariff and non-tariff barriers between nations. Similarly, Vickers (2017) acknowledged that regional integration represents a comprehensive process that enables nations to have accesses to foreign market space to strengthen their economic, social, and political and security issues. It is believed that regional trade integration has become the main interest as firms and countries see it as opportunity to gain access to larger markets and cheap exports Pelkmans, 1986) cited in Jonathan and Sophie (2021). It was reported that regional Integration can be driving forces for innovative processes, tools, by connecting different nations harmoniously essentially surmount national restrictions (Olorunfoba et al 2019). One major benefits or primary reason of regional trade objectively is to encourage collective economic development and growth basically to achieve total transformation and improve people's standard of living (Panth 2020). As a result, previous studies indicate that regional economic integration provide the trade gain and efficiency opportunities, through exploiting economies of scales and reducing borders bottlenecks (De Melo & Tsikata, 2014). Also, regional trade agreement supports the use of local content, to deliver quality products; while retailers are advised to ensure local materials are infused in the marketing of FMCG goods; for example, the people lifestyles, and buying attitude (Siag & Choudhary, 2015).

Additionally, Pillay (2016), noted that membership of a trade union confers certain benefits to a nation, some of which include right of entry to new market by exploiting opportunities, achieving cost efficiency, entrance to overseas market and new innovation as well as tax harmonization to eliminate unhealthy tax competition. Similarly, Kazeem (2019) indicates that it is pivotal to tariffs benefits on goods within regional group, achieving return on investment, as well as product brands choice in Nigeria. As a result, it was stated that different categories of FMCG products are have continued to perform well in the Nigerian market (KPMG International, 2016). These categories of products include bottled water and soft drinks products are doing well in the Nigerian market. By implication there is increase in demand for bottled water and safe potable water due to rise in urban consumers (KPMG International, 2016). Besides, the FMCG sectors are taking advantage of the changing customers' lifestyle in West African countries. Siag and Choudhary (2015) reported that West African buyers are brand and quality conscious but affordability remain a key consideration to the purchase decision of the individual. Unilever Nigeria understood this principle so they sought to lower prices of its products and reduce pack sizes and thus targeting consumers with low income (KPMG, 2015). In addition, brand awareness has improved upon by some FMCG firms through leveraging on the use of appropriate communication strategies. Nestlé demonstrated this by penetrating West African countries with the use of home raw contents to sell the organization brand (KPMG, 2015).

Challenges of Regional Integration and Trade Development for FMCG

It is widely acknowledged that the benefits that comes from regional integration and trade development among countries in West Africa (Obasaju et al. 2021). This indicate that the region is plagued with is faced with trade development problems. In Nigeria the FMCG sector

is faced with bunch of challenges arising from decline in purchasing power of the people, scarce foreign currency (dollar), frail macroeconomic policy and fragile market structure in terms of increasing unemployment rate, fallen disposable earnings and deprived business feat according to (National Bureau of Statistics report, 2017). These national economic challenges are reflection of the poor regional system with weak infrastructures and decline foreign investors in a number of African nations (Siag & Choudhary, 2015). These weak infrastructures are power supplies and bad road networks that are unfavorably impacting on FMCG sector among member states (Siag & Choudhary, 2015). By implication, West Africa states still trail other developed regions with regards to quality and reliability of ports, roads, border crossing, energy, and ICT infrastructure (Harris, Chambers & Foresti, 2012).

Besides, ECOWAS (2013) report revealed that regulatory environment, transport cost and lack of funding pose the most difficult among other environmental factors in doing business for FMCG in Nigeria among other states. It was revealed that poor road network, roadblocks and request from customs and immigration officials are major problems (DeenSarray 2014). Also, it was indicated that these challenges give rise to cost of business operations which serve as disincentive to FMCG firms 'competitiveness in the region (Tuluy, 2016). Previous studies equally show firms that produce items like rice, poultry, sugar and milk are affected by trade challenges in the West Africa region (Njeru 2021; Nakaweesi 2021; The Citizen 2018; Blanshe 2021). It was reported that nestle makes use of Agricultural products from host country such as cocoa, soya bean, maize, palm olein, sorghum and other raw materials for the production of beverage products because of the effect of trade policies, political instability and exchange rate fluctuations (Nestle Nigeria, 2021). The consequences have made the likes of Nestle to locally use 75% of raw materials. However, it was reported that, there that there are other business factors that seem to support business success, despite the microenvironment factors factor affecting businesses in West Africa; These factors are seen as. corruption practices, shortages of human skills, stop-go policies, poor regulations and labour union issues. In this context, it was reported that West African countries still operate at the lowest level in terms of the World Bank's rating of Doing Business" rankings (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2012).

Besides, some of these challenges occur at the industrial level where there is divergence of polices leading to distributional conflicts among regional members (Chang & Andreoni 2020). Also, these distribution conflicts occur at the level of the economy while others play out at the firm level. For example, at the economy level, the Sugar industrial policy Master Plan of the Nigerian government aimed at growing local production of sugar from 40 000 tons to 1.7 million tons through a host of polices lead to the banning of sugar importation in order to boost local production. This was done through government polices to boost local produce which have three aspects such as; support for producers/suppliers, providing tax credits, subsidies, training grants). The outcome of this policy produced disagreement between the Nigerian business owners and numerous investors across the region who had earlier imported processed sugar into the country.

Also, the neglects of fully fledged market integration that was envisaged were due to individual country blockage by national politics. For example, the Nigerian government attempts to expand local rice production recently propel the need for a policy; this action destabilized the regional trade; and complete border closure to curb smuggling (Orjinmo 2019). It was reported that Rice Farmers investors and Association of Nigeria (RIFAN) completely supported the Government on the closure of the border, while urging the Nigerian government to allow the border closure stay for a long time (Adeyeye 2019; Pulse 2020; Tribune 2019; Vanguard 2020). Meanwhile, the border closure resulted into sharp drop in Benin Republic custom tax which formed the major revenue of the government (International Monetary Fund 2021).

To sum, the apparent delay in the execution of proposed regional plans is mainly the dilemma facing regional trade in West Africa. Also, the challenge that involves implementation has affected all aspects of regional trade and trade development (UNECA 2019a) for FMCG firms. The recent Africa Regional Integration Index Report (UNECA 2019a) by the African Union, African Development Bank and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa) studied the level of integration in eight different regional countries (RECs) using measures such as trade, production, macroeconomics, infrastructure, and the free movement of people), as well as a composite index made up of several indicators reflecting national efforts to achieve regional integration in Africa (UNECA 2019b). The score for West Africa, trade integration was found to be 0.4, while productive integration was 0.2. although West Africa also scored high for movement of people (0.73), only three countries Burkina Faso, Mali and Togo adhered to the Free Movement of Persons Protocol in West Africa. However, challenges from regional trade have not deterred some FMCG products compete with other brands in the Nigerian marketplace (KPMG International, 2016). The manufacturers of FMCG products have used concerted and strategic means to build this brand success by deploying different trades strategies such as that involves trade allowances, point-of-purchase, contest, displays, dealer listings, cooperative advertising, among others (Ezekiel et al., 2020; Okoye-Chine, 2021).

METHODOLOGY

The study adopts qualitative method with use of desk research design to review extant literatures essentially to provide depth of understanding on the regional integration, trade development and fast-moving consumers. This is considered suitable for the study based on the exploratory nature of the research. Secondary data were collected from Google scholar, Library database and University library through journal articles and relevant materials containing literatures on regional integration, trade development and fast-moving consumers. The list of databases searched, date range (2000–2025), the rationale for the choice of data based is remised on the recent materials and changes in regional integration policy due to changes in government, while that of trade development is premised on several economic changes across West Africa since.

The study employed the qualitative approach to establish the sample size through the use of exclusion and inclusion criteria through these screening steps; Journal articles that have relevant keywords which are regional integration, trade development and fast-moving

consumers' goods sector. Those written in English language were used and included. The screening steps, involves entails excluding articles written in non-English Language. Also, journal articles that do not have relevant keywords on interregional marketing thought, trade development and Fast-moving consumers' goods sector were excluded. Also, single author vs. multiple authors were screened based on the relevance of the study. Therefore, from the 113 materials that were originally chosen for the study 10 were excluded after the use of exclusion criteria in the selection process.

Thus 93 materials were found useable and incorporated for the review, through judgmental sampling technique based on the exclusion and inclusion criteria mentioned in 3.3.1. 105 materials were retrieved from various sources mentioned above from the materials retrieved, 12 were excluded for lack of depth on the subject matter. Therefore, data were collected from 93 relevant articles were review with focus on regional integration, trade development and fast-moving consumers goods industries from two electronics data base Google scholar, JSTOR in two data base the search key words used were regional integration, trade development and fast-moving consumers' goods sector. All the 93 reviewed were found relevant to the study as the sample size. The materials were coded as Y for benefits and X for Challenges of regional integration, trade development on fast-moving consumers. Thus, the percentage of materials sourced is at 82%. The fig (2) below depicts the details of material frame.

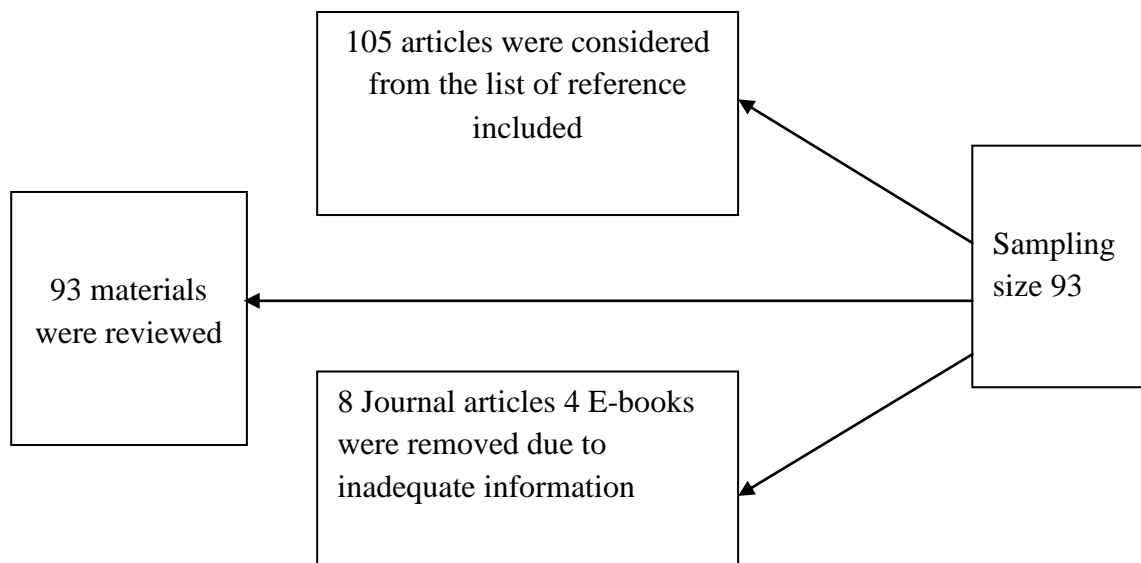


Figure 2: Researchers Computation. 2

The model explains the process the 93 reviewed were found relevant to the study as the sample size. Thus, the percentage of materials sourced is at 82%. This conceptual framework depicts the details of material frame.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2: Regional integration and trade Benefits to FMCG firms in Nigeria

S/N	Authors and date	Regional integration and trade development Benefits
1.	Ehigiamusoe and Lean, (2019).	Productivity and growth, removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers.
2.	Vickers (2017)	Firms to operates across market space
3.	Pelkmans, 1986) cited in Jonathan and Sophie (2021).	Access to larger markets and cheap exports for firms.
4.	Pillay (2016),	Access to larger markets, economies of scale benefits, foreign capital and technology benefits.
5.	KPMG, (2015).	Brand and product awareness
6.	KPMG, (2015).	Price adaptation. branding adaptation, meet low-income earners need and customers targeting,
7	Kazeem (2019)	Zero tariffs, increases trade, better returns and enhances consumer product choice.
8	KPMG International, (2016).	Product categories and sales increase,
9	Ottum, (1993)	Access to foreign markets and products varieties.
10	Grether (1950)	Exporting and importing of products

Researchers Computation 2025

Based on the literature reviewed, this table revealed the benefits that accompanied regional trade that can enhance the market performance of FMCG firms. This indicates that interregional, approach is a paradigm shift from other traditional schools, by focusing on how organization engaged in marketing activities across geographical location to deliver its products and services to targeted audience.

Table 3: Regional trade benefits based on percentage

S/n	Regional trade benefits	Frequency	Cumulative frequency
1	Market Access	5	(54%)
2	Product Choice	3	(35%)
3	Removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers	2	(25%)
4	Sales increase and return	2	(25%)
5	Product export and import	2	(25%)
6	Productivity and growth	1	(10%)
7	Foreign capital and technology	1	(10%)

Researchers Computation 2025

The table 3, explained access to larger markets and product choice have the highest frequencies followed by removal of tariff, and non-tariff, sales increase and returns, product imports and export, productivity and growth, while foreign capital and technology have the least frequencies. This agreed with previous study that regional trade integration has become the main interest as firms and countries see it as opportunity to gain access to larger markets and cheap exports (Pelkmans, 1986) cited in Jonathan and Sophie (2021). It was reported that regional integration can be driving forces for innovative processes, tools, by connecting different nations harmoniously essentially surmount national restrictions (Oloruntoba et al 2019).

The table below summarizes the regional integration and trade development factors that stands as impediments to business performance of Fast-moving consumers' goods industry.

Table 4: Regional integration and trade development challenges to FMCG industry

S/N	Challenges	Dominant areas
1.	Protectionist policy (Njeru 2021; Nakaweesi 2021; The Citizen 2018; Blanshe 2021).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges of trade agreement on items such as; • The challenge of import and export • The difficulty in the implementation of regional free trade
2.	Weak infrastructure (Siag & Choudhary, 2015; Tuluy, (2016).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges of weak infrastructures, • Poor electricity supplies and • Poor road networks across regional states. • weak energy infrastructure • high cost of doing business
3.	Low standard ports and corruption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low standard ports, • Lack of accessible roads,

S/N	Challenges	Dominant areas
	Harris, Chambers & Foresti, (2012; DeenSarray (2014).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • border crossing challenges • Poor ICT infrastructure • Roadblocks • Bribery among government officials
4.	Environmental constraints ECOWAS (2013)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High influence of environmental constraints such as; • Weak regulatory environment, • High transportation cost, and • lack of adequate funding among others
5	Exchange rate fluctuations (Nestle Nigeria, 2021).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • challenges of political instability • Exchange rate fluctuations.

The Table 4 revealed the barriers faced by fast moving consumers’ goods producers in Nigeria. And based on the literatures reviewed they can be arranged based on the magnitude of each of these challenges that comes with regional trade activities among firms operating across regional states starting from; protectionist policy, weak infrastructure, low standard ports and corruption, environmental constraints, and exchange rate fluctuations. The findings supported the work done by Ologunagbe (2023), that FMCG firm’s major in Nigeria profit margin dropped to the 10 year-low in the first quarter of 2023 and a decline foreign exchange loss of nearly ₦398 billion in 2023, negatively impacting their financial performance. This is evidenced from the Nigerian Exchange Limited which shows that nine FMCG firms recorded a sharp decline in revenue margin from 14.3 percent in the first quarter of 2013 to 10.3 percent in 2022, and a sharp decline to 4.9 percent in the same period of 2023.

IMPLICATION AND CONCLUSION

The study discovered that for FMCG forms interregional approach has provided access to larger, and product choice have the highest frequencies followed by removal of tariff, and non-tariff, sales increase and returns, product imports and export, productivity and growth, while foreign capital and technology have the least frequencies. This indicates that FMCG firms in Nigeria have the benefits of reaching other ECOWAS States based on interregional. The study findings established there are challenges faced by FMCG firms that comes with regional trade activities operating across regional states starting from; protectionist policy, weak infrastructure, low standard ports and corruption, environmental constraints, and exchange rate fluctuations. The study concluded that regional integration and trade development affects productivity and growth for FMCG firms in terms of reduction of tariff and non-tariff among challenges among countries. It was concluded that regional integration and trade development offers the opportunity to firms to access to larger market access. This is line with Pillay (2016) position that regional integration and trade development offers fast moving consumers goods firms’ access to other markets, access to foreign capital and technology in other countries. The

study concluded that regional integration and cross border trade has over reaching effects on FMCG firms in West Africa states that is richly endowed with resources to move economically ahead of others in the entire Africa. These challenges obviously should be nipped in the bud before it will snowball into economic woes. This would bring about deserved transformation of the sub region leading to economic development and growth.

Recommendations

- The study recommended that ECOWAS, should placed greater attention on cross border activities for the benefits of FMCG firms operating in Nigeria and in West Africa.
- The national ministries, should review the prevailing challenges of movement of goods and nipped it in the bud to make it relatively better for FMCG industry to operate.
- There should be collective effort by private sector in West Africa countries to ensure that trade development yield maximum benefits for each FMCG industry among member states.
- The study suggested that further empirical study can be carried out to provide deep seated understanding on the panel study of FMCG cross-border trade flows; firm-level surveys across four ECOWAS countries.

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