

The Role of International Border Market in Forging Regional Integration: With Reference to Kamba-Gaya International Border Market

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Abstract

The paper examines the role of international border market in forging regional integration, what has motivated it is the different socio-economic activities and the convergence of people from different social formation going on across the two borders where the international market is located. Regional integration is used as a rational response to the difficulties faced by the continent with small markets and landlocked countries. International border market is an arena of action and interaction operating from space between the states across the border. As an arena of action and interactions it shaped the nature of the needs and interest of different societies across the borders. The paper employs regional integration theory as its guiding principles in conducting the study. Content analysis and qualitative method of data analysis is employed as a methodology. The paper put forward some recommendations as a means of enhancing the growth and development of the market. The paper concludes that international border market can offer a deeper avenue for regional integration among different social formation across the border.

Keywords: *Role, International Border Market, Forging Regional Integration*

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Background to the Study

The creation of colonial borders over the past several hundred years and the subsequent partitioning of ethnic populations did not entail an end to social interaction between ethnically related communities now residing on each side of the borders. On the contrary, economic, social and political interactions have continued to thrive across the borders. Nuhu, (1989). The communities along these borders have unique relationship of friendships which is characterized by open border and people to people contact of culture and kinship from time immemorial and in a formal and informal manner. Nigeria and Niger allowed cross-border movement that organized the basis for business transactions across the border which equally supported by globalization and trade liberalization. It is evident, that the success of border markets is largely associated to the people engaged in trade, without an ingenious neighborhood of traders active in global business screen, border communities and municipalities can barely feign to be border markets

The purpose of this article is to examine the role played by the international border market in forging regional integration among different social formation along the Kamba-Gaya international border market. Due to the creation of international borders by the colonial powers thus, heterogeneous and homogenous societies and communities were forcibly divided into various European countries spheres of influence along this international border. International border market operates in a more open border sharing situation (Anghuie, 2004), the cross-flow of people and goods are proliferated in open cross-border boosting the international market on both sides which the effect of this has a nexus to socio-cultural sharing between people residing in cross-border regions.

Border markets are different in important respects from other markets. While regional and national markets draw their wealth from their hinterland, border markets owe their existence to the presence of border differentials and thrive at the point of convergence of transnational network. Most market evolve slowly border markets experience booms or declined due to variation in price differentials, exchange rates between countries, taxes between countries and bans of imports and exports unlike other markets that primarily owe their importance to the size and qualification of their labour pool, border markets are dependent on the business offered by the peripheral locations. Conceptual Clarification: Border, border market and regional integration.

Border: This is a region jointly shared by two nations that houses people with common social characteristics in spite of the political boundary between them.

Market: Is the sum total of all the buyers and sellers in the area or regions under consideration. The area may be the earth or countries, regions, states, or cities. The value, cost and price of items traded are as per forces of supply and demand in a market. The market may be a physical entity, or may be virtual. It may be local or global, perfect or imperfect

Border Market: Different from market: a border market is a complex network of transitional contacts, which represent the concrete entanglement of different kinds of relations, contacts

and people. It creates a community of interest from which each member stands to benefit. But they also heighten shared exposure to the potential detriment of all; this is true at the global level and the European level. It is even more true to countries sharing the same border or currency. A border market brings people together who by virtue of trading with each other share common interest.

Regional Integration: Regional integration is the process by which states within a particular region increase their level of interaction with regard to economic, security, political, or social and cultural issues. It is also regarded as the process through which national states “voluntarily mingle, merge and mix with their neighbors so as to lose the factual attributes of sovereignty while acquiring new techniques (Imogbile, 1986)

Theoretical Framework

For the purpose of this study, the paper employs regional integration theory as its guiding principles in studying the role of international border market in forging regional integration with reference to Kamba-Gaya international border market. The exponents of regional integration theory include: Earnest Haas; Lindberg; Taylor and a host of others.

Kanem, (1988), some of the early writers deliberated much on the notion whether integration pertains to a process or to an end product. “The attainment within a territory a sense of community and of institutions and practices strong enough and widespread enough to assure for a long time dependable expectations of peaceful change among its populations”

Schmitter, (1970) regional integration entails how national units or different countries located in a given territory come to share economic aspect which connotes cross-border trade for the development of such national units. The theory undergoes modifications and changes so as to formalized certain conditions so as to incorporate challenges of integration movement

Pentland, (1973) The theory is relevant to this work because of its emphasis on the integration process at international levels as primarily consensual or communication based issues like cross-border trading between countries. Of great relevance it encourages principles for development between integrating communities. It is on the basis of the above, that the paper finds it relevant to employ the theory as its guiding principles in analyzing the role of international border market in forging regional integration.

Methodology

Content analysis and qualitative method of data analysis was used in this work from the existing sources focusing on the role of international border market in forging regional integration framework. The instrument for data collection was document analysis; the application of qualitative method in this study could be justified on many grounds. First, qualitative method in this study was predicated on the fact that human behavior, intimate relationship, complex and sensitive social issues can be studied through qualitative method. In this regard, qualitative method could be serve as the lens through which regional integration could be carefully studied across these borders.

Related Literature

Pentland, (1973), regional integration as a process where by a group of people organized at the outset in two or more independent states come to constitute a political whole which can be described as a community. Hans Van Ginkel, cited in Pentland it is a process by which states within a particular regions increase their level of interactions with regards to economic, security, political and social and cultural issues.

Sanusi (1993), regional integration provides greater understanding of relations among nations, communities or strong cohesiveness among people. It also involves mutual ties, and a sense of group identity and self-awareness among people. Schmitter (1970), regional integration encompasses how national units of various countries located in a given territory come to share part or all of their decisional authority in terms of political, social and economic aspects which connotes the development of such national units.

Morten (1992), it is a procedure by which states within a particular region increase their level of interaction with regard to economic, security, political or social and cultural issues. Sesay and Omotosho (2011), connote deeper relationship, coordination of activities among member states. (Bardach, 2001) argued that it is a joint activity of two or more organizations, aimed at generating public values by working together. Integration across the border offers opportunities for social, economic and organizational development in border areas. It makes border areas competitive, vastly economically sustainable and highly integrated

Factors Motivating Integration

Historically, trade among states has consistently existed among these communities across the borders, though it has been conducted among its citizens and in an informal way. Since the world is expanding especially due to the expansion of territorial borders. These resulted in the establishment of formal agreements and structures that will accelerate economic and social development as in Africa. Immediately after the second world war, nations diversified efforts in search of peace, and to bring an end to war, the European Economic Community was established in order to integrate France and Germany's economy to the extent that they find it impossible to go to war this attest as an instance of the integration process, the German Custom Union of 1867, paved the way for German partial unification under Prussian leadership in the 1887(Alesina, 1999) Economic integration has resulted in countries establishing regional trade agreement within regions to facilitate and ease trade amongst them, for example AU established Regional Economic Communities (RECs). Shared societal values are also driving factor for integration, this is the case of with Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) so as to agitate for the abolition of apartheid

Culture: During the process of regional integration and continually increasing trade and interaction between citizens of member states, it is inevitable that different cultures will meet; all interaction takes place in cultural environment. It is through understanding the various possible cultural friction points and understanding of cultural environment in which integration is taking place and being tolerant of others culture that a lasting relationships and integration process can be fostered (Kachere, 2011)

Briggs, (1994) posits that there is a long and intimate relationship between culture and politics that regional integration is basically an act of politics. Briggs further stated that culture can oil the cogs of the political machine in a number of ways, but is only effective when employed sensitively; it can be used as a forum for set piece political messaging, and as a safe space for unofficial political relationship building and keep door open at difficult times.

Toomey, (1999) Cultural homogeneity is also an important precondition of regional integration. It involves engagement not only at government levels, but more importantly at citizen's level. Intercultural communication takes place when individuals influenced by different cultural communities negotiate shared meanings in interactions. Makasi and Govender (2013), explained “globalization as integration of markets, goods, services, and capital. The acceleration and intensification of interaction among the people, companies and government of different nations”.

Rothenberg, (2003), the converging needs of customers in the market around the world have created the opportunity for people to interact by passing values to one another because the opportunity to create the border market was necessitated by common human elements and interaction of people across the border

Theoretical Discussion

International border market operates in a more open border sharing situation (Devkota and Bhandari, 2018). The cross-border flow of people and goods are proliferated in open –border boosting the international border market in both sides of the border. Scott, (1999), the effect of interactions has a nexus to socio-cultural sharing between people residing in cross-border region. The two communities are interdependent in socio-cultural, historical and economic aspect which has direct relations to the exchange taking place in the border market and is shaped by a number of variables which is basically of social, cultural, economic and political in nature

Alkarim (2015). cultural negotiation takes place in international market, he revealed that cultural elements such as religion, language, social organization, law and politics, values, attitudes are highly demonstrated and passing among different groups of people in the international market. Azmi et, al; (2015) stated that language as part of cultural factor facilitates integration process among the border communities along the international market because language and cultural socialization profoundly influence how people see themselves and communicate with others.

Poudel, (2018) several medium of communication such as mouth to mouth communication are used in small business in the international market, he also stated that easy access to communication help in the integration of different communities across the international border. Darlay and Blankson, (2013) international border market influences free trade policies, business relationships, international negotiations among different societies from different nations and the net effect of these is strengthening of integration process. Johansson, (2000), international border market focused on the, coordination and integration of people from more than one country

Covarrubias, (2018). International border market facilitates the creation of families and relations across the border and the status of relationships emerges through inter-marriages which creates a feeling of belongings to a particular nationality. The boundary separates similar tribes in Nigeria with Niger most of these tribes have the same sociological, anthropological and historical background, they claimed to have come from the same origin, they have the same language, religion, ethnic and cultural background. It is very unusual to see some inhabitants residing in one country who have their close relatives in the other across the border, which in the long run some or most of the citizens of the two borders can claimed to be citizens of each country.

Migration along the border area temporarily and permanently on both of the border searching for an errand jobs was made easy because of the porous and open nature of the border couple with the border proximity which also encouraged the forging of integration process among the communities living side by side of the border. Proximity to a border is most often utilized in the social science as an agent that represents different social process, i.e. economic exchange or cross-cultural interaction.

The Roles of International Border Market

International border market merged historically distinct separated people in to one huge global market place and liberalized the economic activities of exchange of goods and funds; it removes cross-border trade barriers; and made the formation of the border market more feasible. Culture is a complex whole including knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs and other capabilities and habits created by men who are members of societies, however it makes a group of people to relate to each other through persistent interaction across the border market, in the process of interactions, there is an interactions of cultures, and thus a borrowing and diffusion of cultures among societies which is basically certain in the international border market).

Nigam (2009), states that the international border market facilitates cultural changes: cultural changes take place across the border. People are getting in to different cultures which is understood by every nation or individuals which can be termed as intermixing of cultures. People of the world are becoming less conscious about their nations culture and they have started emerging and integrating themselves in the world culture by the way of forging.

Kim, (2011) in this respect, cultural diplomacy ensured unity in diversity in African culture in the mid- 70s via FESTAC in Nigeria that called all Africans to celebrate their cultural jamborees. This has really created harmony and unity among African cultures and traditions as well better understanding within divergent African cultures. One fundamental development arising from the advancement of international border market is the way communities across the border are seeking cooperation with their neighbors, because of a highly developed means of communication and people to people contact is certainly increasing, countries are seeking economic stability by a way of diplomatic relations (Kim, 2011).

Through these instruments of communication and people to people contact, integration is taking place from interchange of world views, products, ideas, and other aspects particularly advancement in transportation, telecommunication, infrastructure, agriculture and cultural exchanges programmers' including the rise in the internet use across the border are the major role the international border market played and are considered a cause of interdependence of economic and cultural activities. Increasing diversity and boosting of tourism of the world. Al-Rodhan and Stoudann. (2006), affirmed that advancements economic improvement this is refers to the improvement in the quality of human life. In a more conventional way economic development means the changes in local economies capacity of wealth creation.

Dobler and Zeller (2009). African border markets are linked to the trade flows of raw materials, commodities and services that connect the world. In Africa border markets are sites that allows the transit of second-hand cars, cigarettes, and agricultural products such as onions, cereals, millet, rice; they served the functions of storage of different items before distribution regionally. Advanced international integration generates 'security community', in which a sense of community and 'we' feeling is key. Deutsch (1954), in this vision of the process underlying a security community, contact, communication and exchange between respective nationalities are essential. Gravelle, 2014) International border market served as an avenue of creating personal contact, cross-border mobility and economic linkages are seen as key to developing a sense of community between political units.

Findings

The growth and development of international border market in this region encourage buying and selling, as well as promoting tourism at the border. The market also served as an entity for maintaining and strengthening of traditional relationship between the families across the border. Traders from several villages from Niger, Nigeria and Benin Republic used different border routes on Sunday to join the market for businesses and some come to visit the market as tourist. The people who attend the market shared the same dialect. The trading activities across the boundary is termed as informal cross border trade it plays an important role in supporting the livelihood of the border communities, it also strengthens commercial ties, promote cultural understanding, and deepen community relationships. Putnam in Defillipis, (2001), the international market helps in nurturing amicable relations between neighbor.

World Bank (2007) the congregation of traders from both sides of the border transformed a number village in to towns and a varieties of consumer goods are produce like fruits, vegetables, spices, traditional medicine are sold at a relatively lower price The study discovered that, the international border market facilitate the creation of families and relations across the border. The status of the relationships represent through marriages, migration between Nigerians and Nigeriens along the border temporarily and permanently on both sides of the border became rampant as result of the creation of the international market, the porous nature of the border as well as its proximity and strong family link all these result to massive forging of the integration of both communities across the border, because people in the border have their close ties to the people in the other side of the border.

The paper also revealed that language as one of the cultural factors has contributed immensely to the forging of integration process among the communities in the international market. This is because language and cultural socialization profoundly influence how people see themselves as one and communicate with others across the international border. Poudel (2018) argued that easy access to communication has helped in the process of integration.

International border market concentrate on the interconnectivity of different cultures, it undertakes the process of integration among people. It changes the picture of the world economy by increasing cross-border trade, exchange of different currency, free flow of capital, movement of people and flow of information, it also introduces the concept of borderless and integration of the world economy.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Overall two conclusions flow from our discussion and analysis. First is that the peoples of modern day Nigeria and Niger are not strangers to each other and that a nexus of political, economic and above all cultural ties had existed for many hundreds of years. And second is that the international border market has helped to some extent in cementing the bonds of unity already in existence. This alone makes possible and indeed provides the basis for the forging of sub- regional integration and unity in and beyond our day. It is therefore obvious that there are sound historical and contemporary bases for sub-regional integration. What has so far prevented the full attainment of this is the absence of good leadership which possesses enough imagination, honesty, courage and dedication so as to be able to bring to a culmination the integration process that has been going on since the dawn of history.

The international border market has definitely contributed to the proliferation of regional trade. The paper recommends that both Nigeria and Niger should anchored on three pillars; full market integration, infrastructural development along the borders and industrialization to boost proliferation of goods and services.

1. Market integration initiatives have traditionally been the hallmark of African integration, with focus on tariff liberalization at individual level. Infrastructural development will focus on cross-border projects which will feature on regional cooperation. Industrialization was part of the early post-independence discussion on regional integration as a remedy to continental fragmentation.
2. Taking into consideration the diversity among the two states, the geographical configuration of the region including small economies and land-locked countries, trade facilitation should be taken seriously. Finally, the government of the two countries should encourage companies, the business class, interested individuals and organizations to invest in the area. Attention should also be given on the types of goods smuggled across the borders in order to checkmate smuggling activities.

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