

IMPACT OF LAND BORDER CLOSURE ON PERFORMANCE OF MANUFACTURING FIRMS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study examined the effect of the land border closure on the economic performance, using the manufacturing industry as a focal lens. The main objective is to expose the level of impact the border closure have left on Nigeria's manufacturing firm performance and the economy as a whole. The Border closure was analysed based on its elements ban on informal cross-border trade, Protectionism, and restriction on sub-regional integration. A comprehensive survey questionnaire was used to collect data from a total of 100 top management staff of 12 manufacturing companies found within the Suleja Abuja axis. Statistic Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22 was used to analyse data by running among other reliability tests, ANOVA, and Regression analysis. The results of the study indicated that ban on informal cross-border trade, Protectionism, and restriction on sub-regional integration all have a significant level of impact on performance level of all the manufacturing companies reviewed. It is therefore concluded in line with Omodunbi et al (2022) that, though the border closure had certain consequences which negate Nigeria's international trade treaties and commitments, created opportunities that assisted local industries to thrive, thereby leading to increase in the production of locally-made goods which aided the growth and development of the Nigerian Economy. This is however, not to negate the fact that the economy has to grapple with unprecedented level of inflation as a result of high reliance on foreign and imported products. It is therefore, recommended that the Nigerian

government should invest highly on local entrepreneurs and the Agricultural sector as this will encourage foreign and local investments aimed towards the progress of the Nigerian Economy.

Keywords: Land Border, Economy Performance, Manufacturing Companies

Introduction

The behavioral of states and nations is like that of humans. No country exists in an isolation, as each country has a reason and a cause to engage and interact with others for survival. It is this primordial interaction that begot international engagement in terms of trade, exchange and integration. International exchanges are made between nations and it is typically for the purpose of providing a country with commodities it does not have or otherwise producing sufficient amount of them in exchange for those that it produces in abundance. Such trade, functioning with various other economic plans, have the tendency to improve a nation's standard of living. Much of the modern history of international relations concern efforts to promote freer trade among countries. Nevertheless, no country leaves it's boundary at the mercy of people of other nations to ensure that they can bring in goods without some steps of control. Therefore, nations enact laws or policy measure(s) to control trade between their citizens and citizens of other nations.

The concept of international trade and industrial plan therefore is just one of the earliest branches of economic thought and idea. Government authorities, intellectuals, and economic experts have pondered the determinants of trade between nations, asked whether trade bring benefits or harms to a country, and more significantly, tried to identify what trade policy is ideal for any particular nation. There has likewise been a double view of international trade - recognition of the advantages of international exchange combined with a concern that certain domestic industries (or labours, or culture) would be harmed by foreign competitions. Relying on the weights place on the general gains from trade or on the losses of those harmed by imports, different verdicts regarding the desirability of having free trade was linked to technological developments although some narrow interests might be harmed; the general advantages to society are substantial. Still, as confirmed by intense arguments overtrade today, the tensions inherent in this double view of trade have never been overcome.

Nigeria which shares borders with Benin, Niger, Chad and Cameroon closed all its land boundaries in a bid to ensure total control over what enters the nation in October 2019 (Olatunji, 2019). The reason for this action in the view of the government was the smuggling of rice and various other contraband commodities into the country through its land borders. The subsidized petrol from Nigeria also finds it ways into the neighboring nations. Statistics have shown that between 25 to 35 percent of Nigerian fuel was smuggled abroad (see Olatunji, 2019) and this calls for a serious concern since the huge amount spent in favor of the subsidy was for Nigerian citizens alone.

The nations that share boundary with Nigeria include: Niger Republic with the population of over 26 million people (26,207,977), Republic of Chad with the population of 17.18 million people, Cameroon with 27.2 million people Benin Republic with the population of almost 14 million people (13,712,828) according to the UN 2023 Worldometer. This therefore, makes Nigeria a number of times the size of all its neighbors, and one of the most probable destination for importation from those countries. This nevertheless, does not show in Nigeria's import figures which offer additional support to the fact that such import were mainly smuggled into the nation. The closure of Nigeria's land border therefore increased the Government's income as more duties were accumulated on the increased volume of goods

that went into the nation lawfully with the ports, however the fall in the supply of rice resulted in food price inflation, which impacted strongly negatively on Nigerian consumers (Abia,2019).

Objective of the study

1. To determine the effectiveness of land border closure on economic performance in Nigeria
2. To determine different ways in which the government of Nigeria could control importation

Literature Review

Reasons for Nigeria's Land Border Closure

It should be noted that, Nigerian authorities have been inconsistent in defining the border closure policy. One time it says, the policy is about checking unbridled influx of smuggled goods, small arms and ammunition, another times it hinges it on curtailing illegal immigrants, boosting local production of food items and manufactured goods.

However, as confirmed, Nigeria was not only impulsive or abrupt in the implementation of the policy, it has overlooked its unpreparedness to risk it. And whatever is the formal reasons for the closure, they certainly won't be far from the following:

Smuggling of Premium Motor Spirit and Imported Rice

Petrol was being sneaked out from Nigeria where subsidies make the fuel half as cheap as in its neighbours and resold. The smuggling of banned imported rice from Thailand and India through the illegal routes into the country is counterproductive to the federal government's policy to protect local industries (manufacturing and agricultural sectors), boost local production and achieve food security, create jobs for teeming unemployed Nigerians and guarantee national security. The National President of the Rice Millers Association of Nigeria (RIMAN), Peter Dama raised an alarm over massive smuggling of foreign rice into the country, which endangers nation's economy and puts Nigerians' health at risk. These foreign rice sellers and distributors in the markets are themselves, economic saboteurs by accepting to market banned goods in the country, they should not be spared, as they are contributing to the destruction of our common wealth and our attempt to be self-sufficiency in national food security (Dama, 2021:16).

Illegal migrants into Nigeria

Nigeria does not have accurate data of other nationals living in the country. This can be attributed to the fact that some of them do not enter Nigeria through the right channel(s) for proper profiling and documentation about them. As a matter of fact, some of the illegal migrants come into the country through our porous land borders with our neighbours, hence there is no proper profiling and documentation about them. However, because of the country's inability to keep accurate data about other nationals who come into Nigeria, it becomes difficult to track down some of them who may engage in criminal activities such as banditry, armed robbery, herdsmen/farmers conflict, insurgency etc. which affect the national security of Nigeria. Minister of Interior, Rauf Aregbesola, opines that many of Nigeria's borders are artificial and thus difficult to manage. Aregbesola (2020) concludes that: Let me be clear and remind us of the fact that our boundaries are artificial. I know of a particular village in Ogun state where the boundary between Nigeria and Benin Republic cuts the palace of the traditional ruler of that town into two (Aregbesola, 2020).

Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons

In recent years, Nigeria has faced serious security challenges such as insurgency, militancy, banditry, armed robbery, kidnapping, herders/farmers clashes etc. that undermine our national security. Regrettably, successive regimes have not been able to unravel the sponsors and the means through which the hoodlums and criminals have access to the sophisticated arms and ammunition they use to carry out mayhem on their victims. These crimes illegally possess

deadly weapons such as AK 47 rifles, improvised explosive devices etc. and enter the country through our porous borders. Thus, “we have closed our borders here for more than a year, but arms and ammunition continued to flow illegally. As far as Libya remains unstable, so will the problem remain” (Buhari, 2021). The recent federal government partial closure of land borders with her neighbours was also aimed at reducing the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the country which were used to tinker the security architecture of the country.

Cross-border Crimes and Insecurity

Nigeria's International borders are, mostly, porous and unmanned. And this gives room to the perpetration of the most heinous sets of crime by elements that are clearly foreign. The chief of defence staff, Gen. Lucky Irabo, while delivering a lecture on “security, defence & development in Nigeria” at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA) in Lagos recently said that: "Our borders are largely unmanned. The penetrability of our vast unmanned land areas – the north-east and north-west zones, particularly Borno, Yobe, Sokoto, Zamfara, Katsina states – with neighbouring countries such as Niger Republic and Chad among others has continued to be a key source of criminality and violent crimes in those parts of the country”. He added that: "The porous nature of the borders has made it easily accessible for terrorists and bandits to enter the country to commit mayhem. For instance, there are about 364 approved international border points in Nigeria with about 261 in the north-east and north-west regions. Out of this 261 only 124 are manned leaving the remaining 137 unmanned by security agencies. Intelligence suggests that violence actors are using some of these normal border points to move freely from countries into Nigeria to cause mayhem".

General Implications of the Border Closure

Nigerian land borders closure has had major fallout in the country's international trade relations with other African countries because the African countries that are involved in the international trade businesses with Nigeria are retaliating against the Nigerian Government (Prabhakar, 2010). Nigeria land border closure was erratic with the country's multifaceted commitments with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Treaty and African Continental Free Trade Area (AFCFTA) Agreement, and these organizations see this as a key disturbance by Nigeria to the whole Africa in retrospect to transnational trade affairs (Prabhakar, 2010). The land borders closure has major consequences which affected the Nigerian Economy and they include the following:

Nigeria's economy deteriorated by 1.6 percent in 2019 likened to the preceding year as reported by IMF (International Monetary Fund) in 2019. The closure of the borders led to a worldwide increase in crude oil price in 2020 which affects the country's economic growth and the citizen's earnings when most of the country's population feed from hand to mouth and their means of livelihood became much more difficult. International Trade in Nigeria with other neighboring African countries will be difficult as no nation will be willing to do business with a country whose economy is highly unstable and unpredictable (Adeola, 2019).

Theoretical Framework

This study adopt three different but related theories to serve as its theoretical framework. They are reviewed below:

The Frustration -Aggression Theory

The Frustration- Aggression theory is a theory proposed by Dollard, Miller, Doob, Mowrer and Sears in 1939. It was further developed by Miller, Mowrer and Sear in 1941 and Berkowitz in 1969. The theory says that aggression is the result of blocking or frustrating a person's efforts to attain a goal (Friedman and Schustack, 1999). The theory developed by Dollard and colleagues says that frustration causes aggression, but when the source of the frustration cannot be challenged, the aggression gets displaced onto an innocent target. For

example, several riots and revolutions, conflicts and crises experienced in different parts of the world including Nigeria may be explained by this theory. Violence is usually carried out by poorer and more deprived sections of the society who probably express their bottled up frustration and anger through violence.

Taking a cue from proponents of this theory, the inability of the leadership at all levels in Nigeria to provide good governance has resulted in hoodlums and criminals leveraging on this failure by governments to engage in illegal activities such as smuggling of contraband imported rice and premium motor spirit, proliferation of small arms and light weapons, influx of illegal migrants into the country, trafficking in human beings and drugs that constitute serious threat to national security.

Empirical Review

Nwagu (2023) reviewed The Microeconomic Implication of Border Closure in Nigeria using a systematic review of previous literature methodology which collected sources from well-known databases. The study aims to present the ongoing implications resulting from border closure in Nigeria. The study found that Land border closure by President Muhammadu Buhari has positively impacted agriculture. Many other businesses are however, facing a downturn. Most companies export 100% of their output to West African markets. Several parts of the Nigerian border were closed after the ACFTA was signed in 2019. The closure has angered ACFTA critics. Based on the NBS, food inflation increased from 13.2% in August to 13.51% in September, and from 13.51% to 14.09% in October 2019. Consequently, the Study recommend that Border closure results in significant losses. The study recommended reducing production costs. Agricultural extension services can help farmers adapt to climate change, improve yields, and provide modern techniques.

Omodunbi, Olawole and Mohammed (2022) examine the Politics of Border Closure and Its Implications on the Nigerian Economy. The study made use of data mainly obtained from secondary sources which were acquired from books, articles, journals, newspapers and other published materials. The study uncovers that the closure of the land borders had certain consequences which negates Nigeria's international trade treaties and economy as certain African countries backfired against Nigeria due to the land border closure. Furthermore, the study observed that the Nigerian Economy is still faced with the problem of inflation as a result of high reliance on foreign and imported products, but since the land borders were closed, job opportunities were created and local industries have developed, thereby leading to increase in the production of locally-made goods which aids the growth and development of the Nigerian Economy. The study recommends that the Nigerian government should invest highly on local entrepreneurs and the Agricultural sector as this will encourage foreign and local investments aimed towards the progress of the Nigerian Economy.

Methodology

The study conducted a census of 12 manufacturing firms with a purposive population instead of adopting a sampling methodology. A total of 100 employees were studied. People selected in all the firms were solely management staff those who participates in management meetings. This was justified on the basis that the number of firms around the Study location is relatively few and the targeted respondents are just the management staff. The use of management staff was justified on the basis that they are oftenly more aware about the production and selling challenges their companies have to grapple with as a result of the border closure. However, the research Instrument used to collect, measure, and analyze data related to the research interests is SPSS. These tools are most commonly used in management and social sciences. The study adopted primary data. Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire.

The questionnaire used was the checklist type drawn in line with the five-point Likert's scale (which requested the respondents to state their feelings by checking its level from the

provided five scale options). The questionnaire consisted of two parts viz; section one which deals with the bio data of the respondents and section two which deals with three sections of questions aimed at collecting information that can help achieve the research objectives. The interpretation of the response scale is, thus: SA = Strongly Agreed; A = Agreed; UD = Undecided; DA = Disagreed; SDA = Strongly Disagreed. Furthermore, a total of one hundred (100) copies of questionnaires were distributed, out of which eighty-eight (88) were completed and returned; amounting to 88 percent rate of return. However, two copies of the returned questionnaire were removed because they were not duly completed as required. Thus, the number of questionnaires used for the purpose of analysis is eighty-six (86) and this however, conforms to the same size needed for this research exercise.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Return Rate of Questionnaire

S/N	Firm	Copies Distributed	Copies Retrieved
1	West African Royal Ceramic Ltd	8	7
2	Skytech Aluminum Coating and Roofingtiles Co. Ltd	8	7
3	Rosert Global Concert,	10	9
4	Lafarge Group	8	7
5	PW Group,	8	7
6	Cometstar Nigeria Ltd	8	7
7	Bannet Rolls	10	9
8	Zuma Paint and Chemical company,	8	7
10	Dunlop Nigeria Plc	8	7
11	Fri-fruits Ltd	8	7
12	Lion steel Group	8	7
Total		100	88

SOURCE: Questionnaire Administered 2024

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Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Sex

Category	Respondents	Percentage (%)
MALE	47	54.6
FEMALE	39	45.4
TOTAL	86	100

SOURCE: Questionnaire Administered in 2024

Table 2 above indicates respondent's sex distribution. It shows that 47 (56.6%) of the respondents were male while 39 (45.4%) were female. This means there are many male respondents than female.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status

Category	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Single	32	37.2
Married	40	46.5
Widow/widower	6	7.0
Divorce/Divorcee	8	9.3
TOTAL	86	100

SOURCE: Questionnaire Administered in 2024

Table 3 above indicates the distribution of respondents based on marital status. It shows: Single; 32 (37.2%), Married; 40 (46.5%), widow/widower; 6 (7.0%), divorced/divorcee; 8 (9.3%) respectively. This reveals that a good percentage of the top management staff in the banking sector are married individuals.

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents by Educational Qualification.

Category	Respondents	Percentage (%)
SSCE Holders	-	-
OND/NCE Holders	28	32.5
HND/B.SC Holders	46	53.5
Masters Holders	12	14.0
TOTAL	86	100

SOURCE: Questionnaire Administered in 2024

The educational qualification of the respondents shows: nil for SSCE holders, 28 (32.5%) for ND/NCE holders, 46 (53.5%) for HND/Bachelor's Degree holders, while 12 (14.0%) are Master's Degree holders respectively. This discloses the fact that majority of respondents are graduates. It further shows the educational competency of the top management members in the banking industry.

Table 5: Distribution of Respondents by Positions

Category	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Manager	12	13.9
Accountant	24	27.9
Auditor	12	13.9
HOD	24	27.9
Supervisor	14	16.3
TOTAL	86	100

SOURCE: Questionnaire Administered in 2024

Table 5 shows the distribution of respondents based on their designations at work and the data shows that: 12 (13.9%) were Managers, 24 (27.9%) were Accountants, 12 (13.9%) were internal auditors, 24 (27.9%) were HODs in various departments and 14 (16.3) were line supervisors. This discloses that there are more accountants among the respondents than other top management staff.

Descriptive Analysis

The research instrument collated descriptive data on each of the statements designed to address or provide statistic answer to the four research questions respectively. This data is further analyzed with the assistance of the SPSS 18 in order to expose the relationship between the research's independent variables (Ban on informal cross-border trade, Protectionism, Restriction on sub-regional integration) and dependent variables (Economic performance). The table below contains the results.

Table 6 Descriptive Statistics

Variables	Means	SD	Kurtosis	Skewness
Ban on informal cross-border trade	3.123	.823	1.632	-1.573
Protectionism	3.243	.864	-.821	.206
Restriction on sub-regional integration	3.322	.913	-.098	-.693
Economic performance	3.45	.748	-.138	.451

SOURCE: Author's Computation, 2024-Using SPSS Version, 18.

The table 6 above shows an average means of 3.0 for all of the variables which indicated a strong affirmative response on each statement designed to address the research questions targeted at the research variables. On variability, all the variables had reliability ranging between .679 and .838, on a standard deviation of between .748 and 1.023, which falls within the acceptable range (see Ubong & Salim, 2016). The symmetry of the result shows a relatively skewed distribution of the data set with the range of -.573 and .206, and a lightly-tailed kurtosis of between -.098 and 1.632. This is further subjected to the correlation analysis

in order to establish the exact correlation between the dependent and independent variables in clear statistical terms.

Correlation Analysis

The study sought to determine whether the land border closure has an effect on economic performance of the manufacturing sector, using selected manufacturing companies in Suleja-Abuja axis as a case study. This was tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient at 95% confidence level and findings presented in the table below:

Table 7 Correlation Analysis

	Pearson Correlation	Ban on informal cross-border trade	Protectionism	Restriction on sub-regional integration	Economic performance
Ban on informal cross-border trade		1.00	0.178	-0.161	-.594**
	Sig. (2 tailed)		0.255	0.302	0.00
Protectionism		0.178	1.00	0.089	-.401**
	Sig. (2 tailed)	0.255		0.572	0.008
Restriction on sub-regional integration		-0.161	0.089	1.00	.363*
	Sig. (2 tailed)	0.303	0.5723	0.303	0.017
Economic Performance		-.594**	-.401**	.363*	1.00
	Sig. (2 tailed)	0.00	0.008	0.017	

SOURCE: Author's Computation Using SPSS Version 18

Results in the above table reveal that the correlation between ban on informal cross-border trade and economic performance is positive and significant ($R = 1.594$, p value = 0.000). This implies that an increase in the implementation level of the ban element is associated with an increase in level of firm economic performance in terms of local manufacturing. The findings also reveal that the correlation between protectionism and economic performance is positive and significant ($R = 1.401$, p value = 0.008). This implies that an increase in the protectionism element is associated with an increase in level of firm economic performance in terms of local manufacturing. Restriction on sub-regional integration was found to be negatively correlated to economic performance ($R = -0.363$, p value = 0.017). This implies that an increase in the implementation level of the restriction element is associated with decrease in the level of firm economic performance in terms of local manufacturing.

Regression Output

As noted in chapter one, the study applied a multiple regression model to establish the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variables. The multiple regression analysis was used because there is more than one independent variable. The statistical output of the model application is presented as follows:

Model Result

The relationship between the predictor variables (Ban on informal cross-border trade, Protectionism, Restriction on sub-regional integration) and the dependent variable (economic performance) was investigated using the Multinomial Logistic Regression Analysis and the result is shown in the table below:

Table 8 Regression Output

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.115	.081	–	.033	.001
Ban on informal cross-border trade	.192	.071	.179	.100	.033
Protectionism	1.025	.064	1.048	.039	.016
Restriction on sub-regional integration	1.007	.059	1.001	.072	.043
Economic Performance	.305	.055	.050	.128	.045

SOURCE: Author's Computation Using SPSS Version 18

The regression analysis results presented in the above table indicates that the coefficient of determination (R squared) was 0.539 which implies that 53.9% of the changes in level of firm economic performance is explained by the independent variables (Ban on informal cross-border trade, Protectionism, Restriction on sub-regional integration) while 45.1 % of the variations in level of firm economic performance are explained by other factors not included in the model.

4.4.2 ANOVA Statistics

To measure the variance within the predictors (Ban on informal cross-border trade, Protectionism, Restriction on sub-regional integration) and between it and the dependent variable (economic performance) the study is further subjected to ANOVA test and the statistical result presented in the table below:

Table 8 ANOVA Statistic

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	122.807	4	84.249	216.603	.000 ^b
	Residual	1.346	208	.027		
	Total	124.153	212			

a. Dependent Variable: Economic performance

b. Predictors: (Constant): Land border closure

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.682 ^a	.665	.663	.16574	1.620

a. Predictors: (Constant), Land border closure

b. Dependent Variable: Economic performance

Model	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.845	.204		9.055	.000
	Workplace Innovation	.137	.041	.020	3.341	.017

a. Dependent Variable: Economic performance

SOURCE: Author's Computation Using SPSS Version 18

Conclusion

In line with the findings of the study, it is concluded that that, though the border closure had certain consequences which negates Nigeria's international trade treaties and commitments, it created opportunities that assisted local industries to thrive, thereby leading to increase in the production of locally-made goods which aids the growth and development of the Nigerian economy. This is however, not to negate the fact that the economy have to grapple with unprecedented level of inflation (as a result of high reliance on foreign and imported products), unemployment and untold hardship especially for communities on the borderlines. This conclusion is in line with Omodunbi et al (2022) who posited that the land border closure policy of the federal government has positive and negative implications. The positive implications are increase in revenue to the federal government through taxation, increase in the income of rice farmers, increase in investment in local rice production by both local and foreign investors. The negative implications include inflationary pressure, unemployment due to lay-offs by MAN, untold hardship to informal traders and closure of some companies, security challenges, significant political and security implications in the sub-region etc.

Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made.

- 1) Nigeria needs to strengthen its borders by increasing the capacity of border agents to do their job well and enforce laws and regulations effectively. This requires professional staff, creating systems of accountability that discourage corruption among border officials and pushing for the implementation of a common external tariff among ECOWAS states.
- 2) Stakeholders such as government officials, farmers, manufacturers, security personnel etc. should come to a round table discussion on how to address the issues on land border activities with a view to satisfying the various parties involved.
- 3) Security equipment and devices that can track down movement of persons and goods should be installed at border posts or areas to check and control smuggling and illegal migrants, as well as proliferation of small arms and light weapons.
- 4) Land border closure should be total and comprehensive, and not discriminatory. In other words, once the policy is made by the federal government, it should be for all our borders both north and south, and not for a particular region. In doing so, the expected results would be achieved.

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