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Ports Authority and Implementation of the National Policy in the International Trade Practices: Issues and Prospect in the 21st Century

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Abstract

The administration of the seaports in Nigeria rests solely on the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), who plays important role in international trade practices in conjunction with the maritime sector which also plays an active role in structuring of the economy of the nation. As observed recently, over 80% by volume and monetary value of exports and imports of goods and services pass through the Nigeria Seaports. In that regard, this paper examined the Nigeria ports Authority and its role in the implementation of the national policy on the international trade practices towards achieving a national goal. The paper looked at the impact of the port workers in the sea port operation in Nigeria. To analyze the issues raised, General Systems Theory was employed as our frame work of analysis. Documentary method of data collection was employed which anchored on secondary sources like text books, journal/articles, magazines, Newspapers, seminar/ conference material and internet sources, etc. In effect, the paper discovered that with the efforts of the Federal Government, Ports Authority, various agencies, individuals and Organizations, Nigeria sea ports are in a position to achieve the national “will” in seaport administration in Nigeria. Though some setbacks hindering effective and efficient implementation of the national policy on the sea ports operation were detected which include: Time management, Multiple security agencies/duplication of function within the ports, Poor maintenance of equipment, lack of co-ordination among the departments/security agencies within the Ports Complex, Unnecessary administrative bottleneck leading to corruption, as well as acceptance of gratification before services can be rendered to customers/ports user, etc. Based on the findings, the paper suggests that the Nigeria port management should facilitate the procurement and maintenance of the functional equipment in the Nigeria sea ports complex to enhance speedy cargo handling. In addition, more Warehouses/storage facilities should be built to accommodate incoming and outgoing goods and services therein. Most importantly, multiple security agencies in the ports complex should be reduce to the approved number by the Federal Government in line with the globe best practice. With this I believe, Federal Government policy on sea ports operation can be realize in the 21st century

Key words; Ports Authority, Nigeria Sea Ports, Policy, security agencies Wharfs

INTRODUCTION

The administration of the seaports in Nigeria rests solely on the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) who plays important role in international trade practices in conjunction with the maritime sector which also plays an active role in structuring of the economy of the nation (Nigeria Ports News (1995)). As observed, over 80% by volume and monetary value of exports and imports of goods and services pass through the Seaports. According to ports in Brief (1999:1), Eleagu and Akoye (2018) “Nigeria Seaports, like their counterparts in other parts of the world, has since their establishment accounted for over 99.27% by volume and

95% by value of the total import and exports of the country’s foreign trade”. Ports in Brief (1999), state that Nigeria Ports Authority operates under the supervision of the Federal Ministry of Transport with the responsibility of providing specific ports and harbor services for the country’s Maritime Industry. Presently, Nigerian Ports Authority controls eight (8) major ports excluding oil terminals with a cargo handling capacity of about 35 million tons per annum. In effect, the development of Seaport in Nigeria started in the mid-19th century, which led to the opening up of the Lagos Lagoon, and later the Apapa and Port-Harcourt sea ports respectively. This resulted to the establishment of the Nigerian Ports Authority in 1955, by

the Ports Act of 1954 to maintain the port, load and discharge cargo. The Nigeria Ports Authority commenced operation on the 1st of April 1992. On the 15th of June 1992, the Nigeria Port, Plc was incorporated. In October 1996, the organization was reverted to its former name "Nigeria Ports Authority" (NPA) in consideration of its full government ownership and its commercial status. Presently, Nigeria Ports Authority is under the supervision of the Federal Ministry of Transport, with the responsibility of providing specific ports and harbor services for the Country's Maritime Industry and to see that machines and equipment there in are functioning. Thus, the operations of Nigeria Ports Authority became fully commercialized in May 1992. In effect, Nigerian Ports Authority is a government agency that gives directives and feedback into the policy chamber of the Federal Government which guides in the effective and efficient administration of the Nigeria Ports System. Among these policies include,

1. The promulgation of the National Shipping Policy Decree 10 of 1987 which gave birth to the National Maritime Authority (NMA)
2. Decree 13 of 1987 which gave birth to Nigeria shipping council (NSC) and the adoption of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the United Front for protecting the importers and exporters.
3. The Nigeria Shippers Council (NSC) who advises the Federal Government on all matters relating to freight rates, terms of shipment, port charges and facilities and on problems of effective and efficient seaports operations,
4. Decree 13 of 1992, known as Custom and tariff,
5. Federal Ministry of Finance, 1996 guidelines on import and exports which concern the security of goods at the ports, among others

Despite the existence of these policies, the Nigeria Ports Authority is yet to meet up with the global best practices on port administration. However, this paper aims to examine, 'the role of Nigeria Ports Authority in the implementation of national policy on international trade practice, using Nigeria Sea ports as a study.

Conceptual Clarifications

Ports Authority;

Nigeria Ports Authority is a government agency that gives directives in response to the stimuli in the international arena and also acts as a feedback stream into the policy chamber of government. Nigeria Ports Authority is a government owned organization which is under the supervision of the Federal Ministry of Transport. It has the responsibility of providing specific ports and harbor services for the Country's Maritime Industry as well as the Provision and operation of cargo handling and Quays facilities, Pilot

Age and towage services, Supply of water and fuel to vessels at anchorage or mooring buoys, Repairs and maintenance of vessels and Dredging and contract dredging of water ways,

The concept of Policy

Here policy will be discuss in line with the government decision. Policy as a concept has to do with what the government has decided to do and what not to do at a given period of time, say four to five years or there about. It just depends on the issue on ground. Warf Rat: The term wharf rats as it is used in this work referrers to those unauthorized people who moves into the wharf premises without anything to be identified with, (ID card) to show that they are staff of one agency or the other who are authorized to work in the port premises. These group of people termed as wharf rats will find their way into the wharf complex only with the intention and aim to vandalize people's containers and do away with the valuables which may include, spare parts of all kinds of imported vehicles, machines and equipment, tin foods of all kind and most at time electronics parts or even electronics of a assorted types, among others, that were waiting for clearing. Nigeria Port News (1999), Eleagu and Akonye (2018) described these people as people without any business in the port complex who always move in and around the port premises engaging themselves in one form of sharp and criminal act or the other within the port complex

Theoretical perspective

The purpose of a theory is to explain, analyze, and predict possibly future trend of events and outcomes. To understand the role of Ports Authority in the implementation of government policy in the International trade practices and sea ports administration in Nigeria, we employed General Systems Theory as our frame work of analysis to enable us analyze the issues raise in the paper. Systems Theory is an interdisciplinary field which studies systems as a whole. It is an area of study specifically developed from the work of Ludwig Von Bertalanffy, a biologist as a basis for the field of study known as General Systems Theory, (1968) According to David Easton who propounded the General Systems Theory, the theory serves as the lens through which the activities of an organization is understood and explained. Systems Theory sees an organization like Nigeria ports Authority as a unified entity composed of interrelated parts, rather than dealing separately with various parts of the organization. In a General Systems Theory, the parts that make up a whole of Systems are called sub-systems. And each system in turn may be a sub-system of a larger whole. In this regard, Systems Theory enables the management of an organization to understand the activity of any part as it affects the activity of every other parts or segments. Going by the General Systems Theory, the job of a manager in an organization (like the NPA) is to ensure that all parts of the

organization are co-ordinate internally so that the organization's goal can be achieved. Above all, General Systems Theory stresses the point that the management of an organization like the NPA, cannot respond only to what administrative laws demand but must place what administrative laws dictate into perspective with other environmental pressure.

Application of the theory:

Relating General Systems Theory to this work, the theory sees Nigeria Sea ports as a unified and purposeful entity composed of interrelated parts, rather than dealing separately with various parts of the organization. The Theory gives the management of Ports Authority a way of looking at the Nigeria Sea Ports as a whole. The theory enable the Ports Authority management to understand the activity of the seaports workers as it affects the activity of other workers at the sea ports, Again, General Systems Theory examines Nigeria Ports Authority with a view to determining how the sea ports administration in Nigeria has been administered by the Ports Authority towards achieving a national goal in international trade practice, and how the management and administrative agencies of the Ports Authority interact with their environment. The theory equally makes possible the examination of formal administrative law prescription in the Nigeria sea ports and other agencies. The theory helps to explain how agencies of the sea ports survive in carrying out their assigned duties in a hostile environment of that nature.. David Easton who developed the systems model stresses that the survival of a system or systems persistence is actually dependent on how effective and efficient the focal actors like the Ports Authority managers or the administrative agencies of the Nigeria sea ports can carry out their duties. Easton believes that if an agency like Nigeria Ports Authority has real power in its environment to implement the Federal Government policies on the sea port administration in Nigeria, definitely the Federal Government objective must surely be realized. Moreover, Systems Theory provide a frame work within which Ports Authority can plan actions and anticipate consequences and at the same time allow the management or the government to understand unanticipated consequences as they may develop, (Eleagu and Akonye, 2018). With the systems perspective the management of Ports Authority can easily maintain a balance between the needs of the management of Nigeria sea ports. However, it is important to note that Systems Theory emphasizes on team work within the environment while striving to survive,

Development of Seaports in Nigeria

The development of a Seaport in Nigeria started in the mid-19th century, which led to the opening up of the Lagos Lagoon and later Apapa and Port-Harcourt sea ports respectively. This eventually led to the establishment of the

Nigeria Ports Authority in 1955, by the Ports Act of 1954 to maintain the ports as well as to load and discharge cargo, (Eleagu and Akonye, 2018). The Nigeria Ports Authority commenced operation on the 1st of April 1992. On the 15th of June 1992, the Nigeria Port, Plc was incorporated. In October 1996, the organization was reverted to its former name "Nigeria Ports Authority" (NPA) in consideration of its full government ownership and its commercial status. Presently, Nigeria Ports Authority is responsible for the provision of specific ports and harbor services for the Maritime Industry as well as the Provision and operation of cargo handling and Quays facilities for effective and efficient port administration. This is in pursuance of the Federal Government's efforts to ensure efficiency of Ports operation in Nigeria. Thus, the operations of Ports Authority became fully commercialized in May 1992 to enable it achieve the government objective in international trade practice in the 21st century.

REASONS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NIGERIA PORTS AUTHORITY

The very essence of Nigeria Ports Authority like their counterparts in other Countries is to ensure the realization of the Federal Government's objectives in sea ports operation in Nigeria. To that effect this body is responsible for the following functions: Provision of specific ports and harbor services for the Country's Maritime Industry, to facilitate the country's trade needs in the exportation and importation of goods/services, to cater for the Marine time trade in the Sub-region for goal actualization, to increase the handling capacity of the Seaports to meet the international standard, and to improve efficiency in international trade practices, among others. (Ports in Brief, 1999 and Akonye, 2018) In line with the above assertion, Nigeria Port Handbook (1995:35) state that:

To facilitate the maritime industry as the main channel of international trade practices, Seaports were established as public enterprises during the pre-independence era. that later gave rise to the establishment of Nigeria Ports Authority in 1955 by the Port Authority Act of 1954 as an autonomous Public Corporation to manage the Nigeria Seaports. By this Act, the Nigeria Ports Authority became an agency responsible for the implementation of the government policy on international trade practice and sea ports operation in Nigeria with the statutory function to provide a well mapped areas for administration buildings and Plants maintenance, to make available adequate storage warehousing, good roads/rails link with the hinter land, provision of protected berths, and cargo handling equipment, to facilitate the country's trade needs, to Carter for the marine time trades in sub-region,

- To increase the handling capacity of the Seaports,

- To improve efficiency in International Trade Practices,
- To ensure healthy competition and other ancillary services,
- To facilitate/enhance the expansion of International Trade and Tourism,
- To ensure that economic decisions are left to market forces subject to general Competitive principles, with the aim to maximize consumers' choice, needs, satisfaction, and job creation.
- To improve on the development of an efficient and productive Nigeria Maritime Industry capable of competing in international market. (Nigeria Port Handbook, 1995:35)
- In a related observation, Ani (1998:41), Eleagu and Akonye (2018) identified some of the sea port services in line with the government policy on sea ports operation in Nigeria in line with the world best practice. This includes:
 - Maintaining and having control over marine time services within a large public sector,
 - Incorporating economic activities ranging from banking, insurance, manufacturing, marketing, transport and marine time services, among others.

GOVERNMENT POLICY ON SEAPORTS OPERATION AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE PRACTICES

The maritime sector according to Nigeria Ports News (1995) Eleagu and Akonye (2018) plays an active role in the economic growth and development of Nigeria. This is because over 80% of monetary value of exports and imports of goods pass through the Seaports. According to Port in Brief (1999:1):

Nigeria Seaports, like their counterparts in other parts of the world, has since their establishment accounted for over 99.27% by volume and 95% by value of the total import and exports of the country's foreign trade.

Accordingly, the then managing Director of the Nigeria Ports Authority, Engineer Wali Ahmed, in his speech during an awareness workshop on "Total Quality Management" organized by International Centre for Management, Research and Training (CIMRAT) for principal managers stated his preparedness to provide a favorable environment for the installation of Total Quality Management (TQM) in the authority so as to cope with the challenges of the next millennium (Port in brief, 1999, and Eleagu and Akonye, 2018). In agreement with this view, the then Chairman of the Centre for Management, Research and Training (CIMRAT), Mr. Augustine Ahiauzu, in his remark, commended the management of Nigeria Ports Authority for the noble and timely acceptance of the concept of Total Quality Management (TQM) which he said would make the

Nigeria Ports Authority a model of what an efficiently managed organization should be and an example to other Nigeria public enterprises. Corroborating this idea, Kwanashio (1992: 315) observed that:

By 1985 the Federal Government alone had invested over #23 billion (Naira) in the establishment of public enterprises, like the Nigeria Ports Authority, This has been used as investment of furthering economic development, thereby ensuring balanced growth, promoting spatial equilibrium and facilitating capital accumulation within the economy.

Commenting on the contribution of Nigeria Sea Ports to the economic development and implementation of the national policy on international trade practice towards achieving "National will" in the 21st century, the Managing Director of Nigeria Ports Authority, Hadiza Bala Usman noted that the Nigeria Ports Authority management declared the sum of #299.56 billion as generated revenue for 2017 fiscal year, highest compared to the last five years (Guardian Newspaper of 7th February 2018). Hadiza further expressed her determination to improve the present state of infrastructure in the ports to meeting the world class standards. In a bid to see to the effective and efficient implementation of the Federal Government policy on sea ports administration in Nigeria, Hadiza Bala Usman stated that efforts is on top gear to make available more ware housing facilities in Apapa Ports Complex and other seaports in general. This is to make the Nigeria sea ports to come up to the world standard in this 21st century. In addition, the managing Director further stated that thirty three (33), ships laden with petroleum product, food items and other goods were expected to arrive at Apapa port and Tin-Can Island port in Lagos between January 29, to February 2018 as a way of boosting the economy of the country and in line with the government policy implementation on sea ports operation in the Nigeria. On the other hand, some of the Service Agencies who ensure that government policy on sea ports operation is implemented were commended and advised to put more effort in seeing that the government objectives are realized. Among these agencies include: The shipping companies, the importers and exporters, the clearing and forwarding licensing agencies, etc. These agencies accordingly plays major role in the implementation of government policy on international trade practices and sea ports operation in Nigeria as it concern trade and economic development of the country. For instance, the shipping companies haul goods across the world, while the importers and exporters own or hire ships that move the goods to the required Countries and ports. The forwarding and clearing agents ensure that dues and fees relevant to goods being exported are paid and necessary documents comprehensively signed and dispatched to the importer.

PORTS AUTHORITY AND POLICY IMPLEMENTATION ON SEA PORT OPERATION IN NIGERIA, (Its achievements so far)

The objectives of the Federal Government in the establishment of the Nigeria Ports Authority is to ensure the realization of the Federal Government's goal and target on sea ports operation in Nigeria in line with the world best practice. On that note, this body has been able to records some achievements to that effect, among these include:

The agency under the leadership of Hadiza Bala Usman as the New Managing Director of Nigeria Ports Authority has been able to reform the Nigeria sea ports which is said to be one of the most expensive in the world and which has been frustrating stakeholders and businesses all over the years.

- The agency has been able to implement the Executive Order in line with the one issued by the acting president, Yemi Osinbanjo
- Nigeria Ports Authority has succeeded in creating a good environment that makes business easier and cheaper across the nation's sea ports
- The agency has also reviewed the tariffs charged by terminal operators, thereby reduced the cost of doing business at the ports
- Nigeria Ports Authority is now busy in reviewing of the concession agreements entered with terminal operators about eleven years ago, with the aim to align the agreements with global best practice
- Nigeria Ports Authority has succeeded in tackling the issue of ports concessions. Thus, the landlord model that has been in place over 11 year has been successful and resolved
- Corrupt practices among the ports worker has reduced drastically
- The agency has also succeeded in the implementation of Open Budget System, (OBS) and Public Data Discrimination Programme, (PDDP)
- In a bid to rid the agency of corruption, the Nigeria Ports Authority had designed a memorandum of understanding, (MOU), with BudgIT, an Information Technology Network Firm to provide Nigeria with all the necessary information during its budget preparation and implementation
- Nigeria Ports Authority has also encouraged a Chinese company called Belt and Road, Spurs to seek for investment opportunity in Nigeria
- The agency had also succeeded in developing and upgrading existing port infrastructure, as well as improving performances therein
- Nigeria Ports Authority had put the rail way lines and its facilities in order, thereby making sure that goods are moved in and out of the ports through the

rail way line to the hinter land without wasting time.

- More warehouses have been built in all the Nigeria ports complexes to accommodate the incoming and outgoing goods across borders, etc, (This Day News Paper, July 12, 2017).

GOVERNMENT POLICY ON MULTIPLE SECURITY AGENCIES IN NIGERIA SEA PORTS (EFFECT ON THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE PRACTICES)

Despite all efforts made by various bodies and agencies towards achieving a national goal through Nigeria sea ports, the Nigeria Ports Authority is yet to meet up with the global best practices on port administration and international trade practices. Accordingly, the Nigeria Ports Authority has eighteen (18) Departments with Boards of Directors. This comprises a Chairman, the Managing Directors, and organizational secretary. In recognition to these roles played by these bodies towards effective implementation of the government policy on international trade practices and sea ports operations in Nigeria, various Nigeria Governments took some measures to streamline the Maritime activities in accordance with the international trade practices. It was on this ground that then Head of State, General Sani Abacha, in his 1996 budget speech, rolled out the features of 1996 ports reforms and policies which came at the peak of public outcry over the deplorable corrupt practices of security agencies in Apapa Port Complex in particular and other Nigeria Seaports, which resulted in the declining of revenue that manifested in low import and export services as well as in trade ratio and deficit balance of payment. This has always poses a serious challenge to ports management in policy implementation on the sea ports operation in Nigeria. Regrettably, it has been observed by the Ports News (1999) Eleagu and Akonye (2018), that the Nigeria Ports Authority has not been able to cope with the challenges necessary for the realization of the Federal Government objective in the establishment of the sea ports in Nigeria despite the huge capital and financial investments by the Federal Government, particularly in acquisition of equipment and training of personnel. This has led to different ports reforms/policies witnessed in the past. This is as a result of the problems in the administrative procedures in Apapa Port Complex in particular and other sea ports in Nigeria. In addition, Sarah (2000: 7) pointed out some of the problems hindering the Ports Authority from achieving the national goals, these include;

- National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA),
- Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA),
- Standard Organization of Nigeria (SON),
- National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC),

- Nigerian Customs Service (NCS), among others.

These security agencies according to Bello cause avoidable delays in the clearing of goods and rendering of services. This also leads to diversion of cargoes to neighboring seaports of other countries thereby hindering effective and efficient implementation of the government policy on the international trade practices and sea ports operation in Nigeria

GOVERNMENT POLICY ON THE SEA PORTS OPERATION AND APPROVED SECURITY AGENCIES IN THE NIGERIA SEA PORTS

Going by the deplorable conditions of the Nigeria sea ports caused by the activities of the multiple security agencies and ports congestion, Haynes et al (1997), lamented over the delays in cargo handling and clearing/forwarding of goods and services in the Nigeria sea Ports Complex caused by the administrative bottle necks, coupled with the activities of the multiple security agencies therein, which resulted in the ugly and awful experiences the importers and exporters encounter at the ports complex. Besides, the divided responsibilities of the ports staff in conjunction with the activities of the multiple security agencies had created an ugly scenario at the ports complexes in general. It was on that ground that the Nigeria Port News, (1999), revealed some of the approved government security agencies at the Nigeria seaports which include;- Nigeria Customs Service, the police, Nigerian Immigration Services, Authorized Destination Inspection Agents and, and Licensed Customs Agents. Presently, we have the following agencies and corporate bodies in all the Nigeria sea Ports Complex, they are-;

- The customs and excise department,
- The immigrations department,
- The State Security Agencies,
- The Navy,
- The Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation [NNPC],
- The National Fertilizer Company of Nigeria [NAFCON],
- The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency [NDLEA],
- The Police,
- The State Security Service,
- The Nigerian Standard Organization [SON],
- The National Maritime Authority [NMA] (Akonye, 2018).

According to Nigeria Port News (1999), the number of the security agencies in the Nigeria sea ports presently has exceeded the approved numbers by the Federal Government, thereby leading to administrative bottleneck at the sea ports, caused by the activities of the multiple security

agencies operating at the ports complex coupled with the cumbersome documentation and delivery procedure in the ports administration. Besides, the notorious customs long room which has been in operation for over a decade has now been shortened and renamed Customs Processing Centre, thereby resulting to the absence of reliable up to date data and the elongated documentary and delivery procedures which includes the involvement of numerous persons, a situation that always cause avoidable delays in cargo discharges, delivery and receipt. In addition, delays are also caused either by late arrival of documents, faulty documents; slow in processing consignments, as well as the sharp practices and high levels of extortions by government security agencies at the ports complex. More annoying is that, despite the presence of the various security agencies in and around the ports complex, the so called Wharf Rats always vandalize people's containers and do away with the valuables which include, spare parts of imported vehicles, machines and equipment among others, that were waiting for clearing. Accordingly, Nigeria Port News (1999), Eleagu and Akonye (2018) noted that there are people without any business in the ports complex. They always move in and around the port premises engaging themselves in one form of sharp and criminal act or the other within the ports complex. Moreover, Port users complained bitterly about the activities of the multiple security agencies in the ports complex which hampers the Port Authority in their policy implementation in achieving government objectives in sea ports operation in Nigeria.

WAYS TO ACHIEVE GOVERNMENT OBJECTIVES IN THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE PRACTICES AND SEA PORTS OPERATION IN NIGERIA (REMEDIES)

Going by the setbacks faced by the Nigeria Ports Authority in the implementation of the government policy on the sea port operation in Nigeria, Ani (1998:41) opined that The Federal Government in response to this issue, came up with the import duty reforms and policies which aimed at ensuring that, the Federal Government does not continue to lose revenue that would have been accrued from the seaports, as a result, some policies and reforms were introduced and this include;-

- Introduction of 24 hours operation in all the Nigeria seaports against the 16 hours former operation time.
- Clearance of goods within 48 hours. This means that, within 48 hours the custom officials operating in the ports should ensure that, they settled with the clearing agents so that the goods will be cleared off within 24 hours.
- Computerization of the operation of the Customs Services. This goes with the documentation of all

the activities/functions of the custom officials operating in the port for accessibility and verification.

- Installation of Hyper Scan X-Ray Scanning System in Apapa Port and Tin-Can Island Ports. This is a machine designed for detecting as well as ascertaining whether what is in the bill of lading is exactly what is in the container.
- Abolition of the Pre-shipment Inspection Agency. This is a body charged with the responsibility of examining the goods made for shipment to overseas before the shipment can be done. This is to know whether the goods are in line with the government types of goods for shipment.
- The withdrawal of the functions of the Professional Imports Duty Administration (PIDA) and Liberalization of the importation of goods, among others.

These policies and reforms were aimed at ensuring and improving Ship traffic and administrative bottlenecks in the ports' complex. In agreement with this view, National Orientation Agency (NOA), (1998:21) state that: The 1996 ports reforms/policies were meant to address some problems at Nigeria seaports as well as to specifically streamline the activities/operations of the various security agencies operating at the ports, as this affect the Ports Authority in carrying out their duties of policy implementation. These are to ensure that Federal Government realized its actual revenue from tariff and duties from the Nigeria sea ports. However, the reforms and policies as observed by National Orientation Agency, (NOA) (1998), were aimed at ensuring that, import and export cargos were cleared and forwarded respectively on time. To achieve this mission, the Nigeria Customs Service, one of the security agencies at the Nigeria sea Ports Complex lose part of its statutory revenue collection function to private accounting firm called Professional Import Duty Administration (PIDA). The reforms/policies further introduced the Pre-shipment Examination System to regulate the activities and operations of the various security agencies in the nation's seaports. Reacting on the reforms, Enebeli (1997: 22), observed that:

The reforms were in line with Nigeria Ports Authority's determination to ensure that the movements to the final destinations of imported and exported commodities are facilitated to avoid unnecessary delays.

Okoye (1997:20), in his paper titled "The Need to reorganize the marketing and traffic department of Nigeria sea Ports Complex" Lauded the contents of the reforms/policies and called for their implementations to the later. As okoye observed, these policies/reforms were characterized by confusions at the implementation stage with negative effects on the sea port administration.

WAYFORWARD

Suggesting ways of reducing, if not completely the administrative bottlenecks at the ports complex which has been a threat to "national will", Bello (2001), recommended that the number of security agencies at the ports complex should be reduce to only those required for effective ship and cargo handling operations in the ports' complex. To remedy this requires the following; The Federal Government should reduce the number of these security agencies/operatives, streamline and organize their activities and place them under one central control unit, all the port personnel and port users should be trained to be conversant with documents used in international trade practices because of the complicated nature of the exercise. The port management should intensify efforts on the job training for their subordinate staff at all levels in order to improve and sustain the efficiency and effectiveness in the services they render to port users. The Nigeria Ports Authority in general and Apapa port complex in particular should improve on the working condition of port staff. The port management should computerize its activities and provide better working conditions and environment for its workers, In order to enhance the realization/implementation of government reforms/policies at the ports, more ports should be established in order to decongest existing ones, thereby improving efficiency. On the poor conditions and inadequate state of equipment at the Nigeria sea ports in general, Ports Authority should facilitate the procurement and maintenance of functional existing equipment to enhance speedy cargo handling. Dock workers should adopt better working habit and ethics in order to help port users to understand the intricate services of Ports Authority. Officials of the Nigeria Ports Authority should always organize seminar/workshops with a view to updating the knowledge of port users. In order to improve on the operations of the sea ports complex, more Warehouses/storage facilities should be built to accommodate incoming and outgoing goods. Finally, fund should be made available for the construction of more warehouses/storage facilities, where this is not possible the port management should be authorized to plug back part of its huge profits into port development as well as construction of more warehouses/storage facilities.

Conclusion

Based on the above issues raised and discuss, the paper conclude that, since the activities of the Multiple Security Agencies and operatives in the Nigeria sea Port Complex hamper the efforts of Port Authority in the Port Administration and policy implementation of the Federal Government, the number of the multiple security agencies in the Nigeria sea ports complex should be reduce to the approved number by the federal government in line with the

global best practice, as the multi-nature of that, is a cog in the wheel of progress towards the actualization of the Federal Government objectives. Though some other inherent problems were detected which tend to contribute to ineffectiveness and inefficiency which ideally are not as a result of the failure on the part of the port management and staff, rather it stems from inexperience of most of the port users and operators. However, with the efforts of the Federal Government, Ports Authority, various agencies, individuals and Organizations, Nigeria sea ports are in a position to achieve the national “will” in seaport administration in Nigeria. Besides, the Ports management remarked that despite the obvious handicaps facing them, the management has continue to render services to its clients in line with the global best practice when it comes to sea ports administration in Nigeria and the globe at large. On the other hand, more Warehouses/storage facilities should be built to accommodate incoming and outgoing goods and services therein. Meanwhile, data collected for the paper was through secondary sources. With these I believe, Federal Government policy on sea ports operation international trade practices will be realize in the 21st century

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