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## EDITORIAL DESK

**T**he Centre for General Nigerian Studies has continued to be a frontier for knowledge dissemination through her series of publications, among other activities being performed by the directorate.

This volume 5 journal of Contemporary Issues in Nigerian Economy of March 2025 housed a total of 18 well researched articles from scholars across the geographical boundaries of the Africa sub region. The team of experienced editors subjected the articles to peer review, and their plagiarism checks have satisfied the guild of editors.

The journal is recommended to researchers, scholars, lecturers, and students to read, and the planners can leverage on recommendations as panacea to the doldrums confronting the socio-economic and educational spheres of the Sub Sahara Africa nations

I wish all the contributors and readers Barka Eid Fitri and Easter in advance

**Prof. M.O.B Mohammed FNAEAP**

*Lead Editor*

## CONTENTS

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| Socio-Economic Factors Influencing Effectiveness of Education in Rural Secondary Schools of Oyo State<br><b>Olufemi Adebayo, Abiona -----</b>  | <b>1-7</b>   |
| Principals' Administrative Skills as Correlate of Student Corrupt Practices in Lagos State Senior Secondary Schools, Nigeria<br><b>Sunday Akinremi LADIPO &amp; Lateefat Oludare YAHYA -----</b>   | <b>8-13</b>  |
| Judith Butler's Theory of Redemptive Equality as Basis for Addressing Inequality in Nigeria's Education Sector<br><b>Lucy Happiness OHANUMA -----</b>  | <b>14-22</b> |
| Ethical Leadership and Governance in African Educational Systems: A Comparative Study of Nigeria and Ghana<br><b>Eunice Modupe AYIBIOWU &amp; Mubashiru Olayiwola MOHAMMED-----</b>  | <b>23-30</b> |
| Influence of Welfare Packages on Teachers' Job Performance in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Lagos State, Nigeria<br><b>Hannah Fedenes ABRAHAM &amp; Lateefat Oludare YAHYA-----</b>   | <b>31-35</b> |
| Instructional Resources and Students' Academic Achievement in Practical Aspect of Biology in Oyo State, Nigeria<br><b>Olumide Temitayo AKINPELU &amp; Senimetu ILEUMA -----</b>  | <b>36-46</b> |
| Parenting Styles, Peer Influence and Socio-Economic Status as Correlates of Sexual Behaviours of Adolescent Students in Lagos State<br><b>Benjamin Akpezi ETOBRO &amp; Afusat Olakemi KOLADE-----</b>  | <b>47-57</b> |
| Enhancing University Accreditation Integrity in Nigeria: Challenges, Implications and Strategies<br><b>Adejoke Olabisi SHEYIN, Simon Iruoghene IMO-----</b>  | <b>58-63</b> |
| TRCN Ethical Codes, Teachers' Professional Conduct and Teaching Effectiveness in Public Secondary Schools in Lagos State, Nigeria<br><b>Abidat Oluwashola MOHAMMED &amp; Salmon Adeyinka ADEBANJO -----</b>  | <b>64-72</b> |
| Principal Strategic Leadership Approach as Correlate of Tackling Teacher Corrupt Practices in Lagos State Junior Secondary School, Nigeria<br><b>Taofeek Olawale SHITTU; Christiana Oluwatoyin FAWOLE &amp; Mubashiru Olayiwola MOHAMMED -----</b> | <b>73-79</b> |
| School Environment Indices and Secondary Schools Teachers' Job Effectiveness in Ekiti State, Nigeria<br><b>Akinwale Oludare DEHINOLA &amp; Senimetu ILEUMA-----</b>  | <b>80-89</b> |

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| Quality Assurance and Ethical Practices in Business, Entrepreneurship Education in Tertiary Institutions, Lagos State, Nigeria<br><b>Adenike Caroline IWUNO &amp; Mubashiru Olayiwola MOHAMMED-----</b>  | <b>90-97</b>   |
| School Facilities and Strategic Leadership as Determinant of Ethical Practices for Integrity and Peace<br><b>Musliudeen Dada RUFAI; Adawi Adeola ADELEKE &amp; Adetunji James ODULANO-----</b>   | <b>98-109</b>  |
| Principals' Transactional Leadership Style as Correlate of Teachers' Corrupt Practices in Federal Unity Schools of South West, Nigeria<br><b>Taofeek Olawale SHITTU; MaryAnn MBAMAONYEKWU &amp; Mubashiru Olayiwola MOHAMMED -----</b>   | <b>110-115</b> |
| Inculcating Vocational Education through the Curriculum in Public Junior Secondary School a Pathway to Eradicate Corruption from the Grassroots<br><b>Lateefat Oludare YAHYA; Ibukunale Modupeoluwa SALAMI; Deborah Abiodun BOLARINWA &amp; Morounfolu Oluwatoyin AKINDELE -----</b> | <b>116-123</b> |
| Acquisition of Equipment and Career Success among Graduate Fashion Design Practitioners in Oyo State<br><b>Lilian FAMOROTI &amp; Senimetu ILEUMA-----</b>  | <b>124-134</b> |
| Evaluating the Effects of Traffic Congestion on Logistic of Freight Distribution from Apapa Port, Lagos, Nigeria<br><b>Rafiu Oloruntoyin OLORUNNIMBE -----</b>   | <b>135-147</b> |
| Language: A Veritable Tool for Promoting Ethical Values and Peace in Nigeria<br><b>Sylvester Olajire IDOWU-----</b>  | <b>148-153</b> |

## **EVALUATING THE EFFECTS OF TRAFFIC CONGESTION ON LOGISTIC OF FREIGHT DISTRIBUTION FROM APAPA PORT, LAGOS, NIGERIA**

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### **Abstract**

*This study examined the effects of perennial traffic gridlock on the logistic on freight distribution from Apapa port, Lagos, Nigeria. The research objectives are to: investigate the causes of perennial delay of supply trucks at Apapa port; evaluate the strategic intervention adopted by government and others. The study relied on survey research design and convenient sampling technique for questionnaires administration. Descriptive statistical tools were used for analysis. The study found that 22% of the respondents reported that the cause of the traffic gridlock is bad road and drivers habit, 30% said it was caused by Customs delay and multiple government agencies at the port. Further, 60% of respondents indicated negative impact of congestion on freight distribution and supply chain disruption. The study therefore recommends among others, the provision of additional holding bays and loading point; and strict compliance of ETO operator with first applied first to service rule.*

**Keywords:** Eto e-truck technology, supply chain disruption, traffic gridlock, transit parks.

### **Introduction**

The Apapa Port Complex (comprising of Apapa Wharf & Tin-Can port) is the largest maritime gateway for Nigeria. The Sea port remains the main growth-pole and the determinant of not only Lagos State economy but also the Nigeria's economy. It is also the largest generator of revenue to the Nigerian nation after petroleum. Interestingly, if "Apapa is sick-Lagos is sick and if Lagos is sick- Nigeria feels the pain. Importantly, the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) is a federal government agency saddled with the responsibility of managing and controlling all ports (Apapa Wharf, Tin Can Island Port in Lagos, Calabar Port, Delta Port, Rivers Port at Port Harcourt, and Onne Port) operations in the country and this is carried out in conjunction with the Federal Ministry of Transport, Nigeria Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) and the Nigerian Shippers' Council.

The NPA started operations in April 1955 as enabled by the Nigeria Ports Act of 1954. However, by the early 1970s, the Lagos port was battling congestion, hence in 1973, the corporation entered into an agreement with the World Bank to finance expansion of facilities within the ports. In the same vein, ports reform programme was put in place to reduce inefficiency at the ports, which led

to the concession of about 24 terminals to private operators. This makes NPA to act as the landlord and provide common user facilities, technical oversight and other marine services (Obianyo, 2021). Importantly, concessionaire were not developing the port infrastructure at a pace commensurating with the volume of trade in the Lagos Port Complex, Apapa. Therefore It is a common knowledge to witness traffic gridlock at Apapa port on daily basis. This may be attributed to bad road, daily broken down trucks, absent of trailer parking facilities within Apapa port, low service capacity, container accidents coupled with incessant flooding since the last years. In the same vein, the Tank farms located within the Apapa port and its environ lack the required holding bay for trucks and also possesses limited service capacity for tanker loading activities. At the same time, the Nigeria Port Authority (NPA) too does not have adequate truck parking facility that can accommodate the high density of trucks waiting to load both container goods and petroleum products from the Apapa port.

The resultant effect is the continuous blockage of the access road to the port terminal and the unplanned delay of truck from getting access to their various loading terminals in Apapa Port Complex. As a result, many of these trucks and tankers end up using the main roads as their trailer parks when awaiting resumption of loading (Ogochukwu & Oyesiku, 2020). Further, many initiatives have been taken by Lagos and Federal governments, respectively to resolve Apapa gridlock in order to improve the turnaround time of trucks and tankers patronizing the Apapa port. However, the problem does not only persist, but it is growing at an alarming rate which has crippled Lagos State economy greatly and the nation's economy to a greater extent. Some of the previous initiatives include; the creation of few truck parks, special truck lane, restricting truck movements to a specified time zones, creation of special tasks force, establishment of ETO online truck management technology. Available evidence suggests that distribution trucks still spend days queuing to access their various loading terminals at Apapa Port and owners of loaded goods does not receive their goods at the stipulated time thereby disrupting the supply chain processes (Olorunnimbe, 2022). This is an indication that these initiatives have failed to address the problem, notwithstanding their good intentions, and therefore the need for this study.

Furthermore, this study is important to finding sustainable solution to today's challenges of supply chain disruption and logistics uncertainties in physical distribution of essential and energy products. It is of relevance to Nigeria port authority (NPA) and Port Terminal Operators for enhancing the efficiency of service points within the port and the improvement in the aspect of providing new technology application in the management of truck turnaround efficiency in Apapa port. This is expected to lead to improvement in the efficiency of supply chain distribution network for the nation. It will also help the Lagos State transport sector to formulate policy on articulated vehicle parks and road management to prevent perennial traffic congestion and eliminate the disruption of logistics activities and freight distribution in Nigeria.

Against this backdrop, it is the aim of this study to assess the effects of traffic gridlock on the logistic of freight distribution from Apapa port, Lagos State. In order to achieve this aim, the objectives include the investigation of the factors responsible for excessive waiting time of supply trucks at Apapa port; evaluation of the strategic intervention adopted by government and truck operators to reduce the access time to Apapa port terminal; and examination of the implications of this delay on the disruption of supply chain processes from the Apapa Port.

## **Literature review**

Since the beginning of the 1980s, cases of pipeline vandalism became noticeable across the states of Nigeria, especially at the Niger Delta axis and Lagos state. Pipeline vandals, apparently skilled in the act, pierced the high-pressure pipes with industrial tools and siphoned fuel into motor trucks or other containers for resale to the unsuspecting public (Okonjo-Iweala 2018). Such petroleum products as crude oil for refining, petroleum motor spirit (PMS), liquefied petroleum gas (cooking gas), were formerly pumped through the pipelines from the oilfields to refineries at Warri, Port Harcourt and Kaduna and from the refineries to the depots at Lagos, Oyo, Port-Harcourt, Kaduna, and others for distribution to other part of the country. However, the operations became dangerous to the environment and a huge loss to the economy because the illicit act of vandalism additionally caused oil spillages, inferno and deaths.

The recent increase in truck tankers related problems that keep generating severe congestion has hampered the supply chain process thereby leading to significant disruption in logistics of freight distribution from the Apapa port (*Aworemi, Abdul-Azeez, Oyedokun and Adewoye, 2009; Lawal and Ese, 2017; A.P Ajayi, 2017; Ogochukwu & Oyesiku, 2020; Olorunnimbe, Oni, Ege & Giwa, 2022*

. This congestion menace developed because of the need to complete the distribution chain using tankers and trucks to convey the products to petrol filling stations, production centers and other consumers across the country, instead of the pipelines and rail. Thus, in the process of loading and distribution of refined petroleum products, Ago, Pms, Kerosene and others, pipelines were discontinued as a result of constant attack on pipeline network and the continuous theft of pipeline products (Okonjo-Iweala 2018: 41). It is worthy to note that Nigeria used not less than 40millions liters of refined petroleum products daily since the 2014 (Eboh and Ejoh, 2014), and in 2016 for instance, Nigeria paid \$21 million per day and a total of \$8billion to import 18.8 billion liters of refined petroleum products, according to the National Bureau of Statistics (2017).

According the findings of Okon (2018), there is over 360% hike in haulage cost due Apapa gridlock which cause supply chain disruption in Lagos and its environs. For instance, a 40-feet container now cost N600,000 instead of the previous cost of N190,000 (a distance of 89km) from Apapa APM Terminal to Ibafo (before redeem church headquarters along Ibadan expressway). The consumer bears the ultimate cost (increase in goods prices). Indeed, as the traffic situation degenerated into chaos, a traffic management and enforcement team comprising the Police, the Federal Road Safety Corps, FRSC; Lagos State Transport Management Agency, LASTMA; the Nigerian Navy; the Nigerian Security and Civil Defense Corps, NSCDC, and NPA security officials was set up. Soldiers of the Nigerian Army were co-opted into the traffic enforcement team.

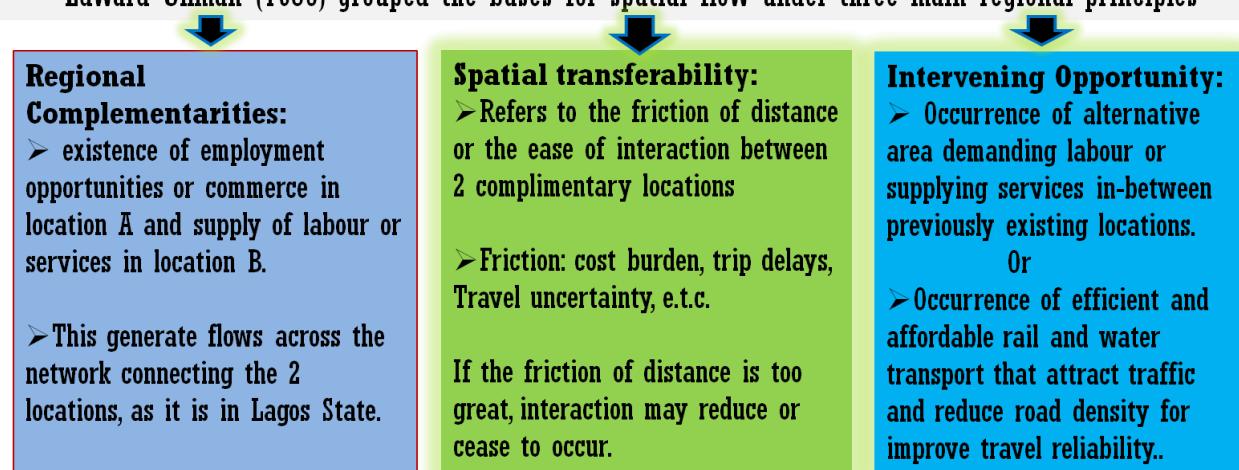
Unfortunately, the relief which motorists felt on account of interventions by these agencies, acting individually and as a team, was short-lived as the roads and bridges were later re-invaded and seized by these tankers and trucks. According vanguards report of 12<sup>th</sup> March, 2024, the actions of the tankers and trailers drivers on Apapa road traffic obstruction led the Special Adviser to the Governor (Mr. Olusola Babajide Sanwo-olu) of Lagos State on Transport matters (Mr. Sola Giwa) to lead team of officers of the Lagos State Transport Management Authority (LASTMA) and the Nigeria Police force to arrest and impound 75 tankers and trailers on Tuesday, March 12, 2024 along Oshodi – Apapa and Orile-Apapa expressways towards the port entrances. The Special Adviser reiterates that the traffic congestion deliberately being created by these trucks is paralyzing economic activities of the State thereby causing supply chain disruption in the State and in Nigeria generally.

In this same vein, the interview of the New Manager, Lagos Port Complex Apapa (Mr. Charles Okaga) by Abolanle Oluwatola of the Ships and Ports (2024) revealed that the major challenge to the new NPA administration is the transport management around Apapa Port Complex. The manager identified multiplicity of regulatory agencies duplicating the same work as lack of scanners for customs use causing manual examination of cargoes as the factors hampering the efficiency of the Apapa Port Complex. The manager affirmed that currently, the Apapa Port container terminal has average of 2 days vessel turnaround time, the bulk cargo terminal has average of 5 days vessel turnaround time, while the general cargo terminal has average of 7 days vessel turnaround time. These when compared with what obtained in Europe, America and Asia (with 11hours-1day vessel turnaround time, Gekara & Chhetri, 2013) are in efficient and may be the reasons for the delay in cargo loading and shipment from the Apapa port. Therefore further road enforcement and stakeholders engagement is required for further research and implementation of sustainable strategies for solving the Apapa traffic gridlock and freight logistics in Lagos State and Nigeria.

### Ullman's Theory of Spatial Interaction

This study utilized the Ullman's theory of spatial interaction (fig.1) and its three principles of complementarity, transferability and intervening opportunity which measure the possibility of business interaction, the ease of distribution of the goods being exchanged and the intervention of other port like terminals at another location that can reduce the density of use of Apapa port (Olorunnimbe, 2020).

Edward Ullman (1956) grouped the bases for spatial flow under three main regional principles



**Figure 1:** Principles of Spatial Interaction.

**Source:** Olorunnimbe, 2020.

### Methodology

The study relied on survey research design and the use of questionnaire (primary) and printed literature (secondary) for data gathering. The structured questionnaire as survey instrument developed was divided into three sections. Namely section A, B, and C. The section A sought for information relating to drivers socio-economic characteristics, section B considered the factors and causes of Apapa perennial traffic Gridlock while section C examines the effects and implication of the undue congestion on freight distribution from Apapa port and the attendant

supply chain disruption emanating from it. The reliability of the instrument was established by a pilot study of 10 copies of questionnaire was administered to eight Truck/tanker operators and two private car drivers along Ijora- Apapa and Oshodi-Apapa expressways to establish its reliability before commencing the actual questionnaire administration for the study. Using convenient sampling technique, a sample of 100 respondents was proportionately drawn from ten clusters (the 10 major sections of access routes to Apapa port entrances) from which a representative information was gotten using the questionnaire instrument. With the help of ten trained field assistance (each administering 10 copies of questionnaire), the respondents were drawn from Mile 2, Berger yard, Westminister, Coconut, Tincan gates, Creek road sections of the Oshodi-Apapa expressway and at Iganmu, ijora olopa, mobil road and on the bridge by Lillypond sections of the Ijora-Apapa expressway. Figure 2 presented the map showing the samle points and the location of Apapa Port complex with its area of influence. Descriptive statistics of frequency distribution, mean, median, mode and graphical analysis were used to analyze the data derived from the field study. The interview granted by the new Apapa Port Manager and administered by Ships and Ports officials in May, 2024 was also used to support the research results.

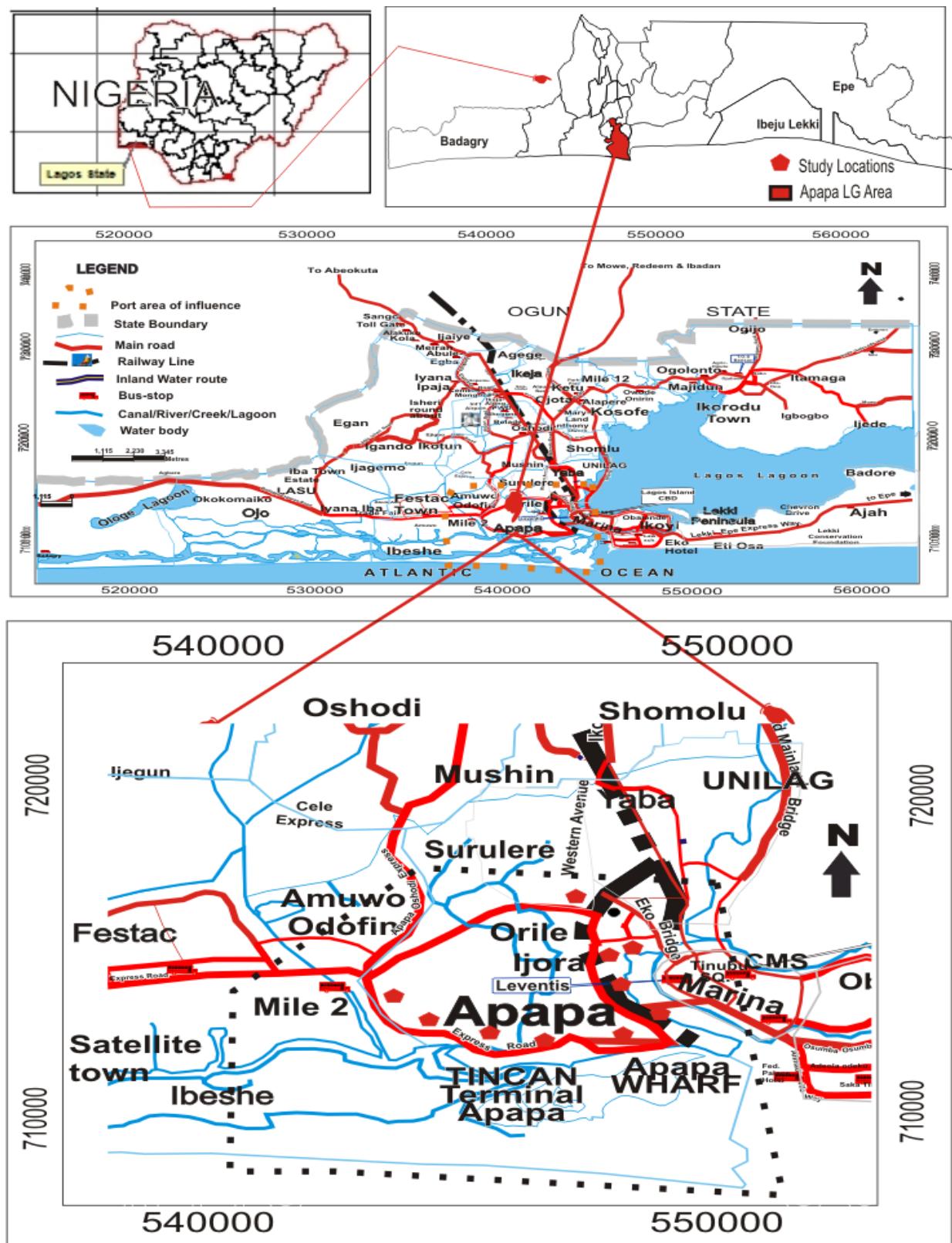


Figure 2: Location of Apapa Port within Nigeria and Lagos Metropolis.  
Source: Fieldwork, 2024

### Findings and Discussion

This section presents the research findings and analysis of data therein.

### **Socio-Economic Profile of Respondents.**

The findings from the fieldwork as shown in Table 1 revealed the dominance of male (92%) respondents over their female (8%) counterpart.

**Table 1: Socio-Economic Profile of Respondents**

|  | Frequency | Percentage |
|--|-----------|------------|
| <b>Sex Distribution of Respondents</b> |           |            |
| Male                                   | 92        | 92%        |
| Female                                 | 8         | 8%         |
| Total                                  | 100       | 100%       |
| <b>Age Distribution of Respondents</b> |           |            |
| 20-25                                  | 10        | 10%        |
| 26-30                                  | 20        | 20%        |
| 31-40                                  | 43        | 43%        |
| 41-50                                  | 21        | 21%        |
| 61 and above                           | 6         | 6%         |
| Total                                  | 100       | 100%       |
| <b>Educational Status of Drivers</b>   |           |            |
| SSCE                                   | 68        | 68%        |
| OND                                    | 20        | 20%        |
| B.SC/HND                               | 8         | 8%         |
| Others                                 | 4         | 4%         |
| Total                                  | 100       | 100%       |
| <b>Nature of Employment</b>            |           |            |
| Self employed                          | 8         | 8%         |
| Private company employed               | 92        | 92%        |
| Others                                 | 0         | 0%         |
| Total                                  | 100       | 100%       |
| <b>Types of Vehicle Operated</b>       |           |            |
| Tankers                                | 34%       |            |
| Trailer/trucks                         | 46%       |            |
| Private Car                            | 20%       |            |
| Total                                  | 100       | 100%       |
| <b>Income Level</b>                    |           |            |
| Low-N50,000-N200,000                   | 68        | 68%        |
| Medium-N201,000-500,000                | 24        | 24%        |
| high-N501,000 and above                | 8         | 8%         |
| Total                                  | 100       | 100%       |

**Source: Field survey (2024)**

This finding may be as a result of the violent nature of Operators-Union relationship in connection to dues and unexplainable money the operators are forced to pay. Apart from the above, observation has shown that the human energy requirement for truck driving and managing freight activities is beyond what majority of women can cope with. Further, the modal age of the

respondents is 31yrs - 40yrs. Although majority (86%) of the truck operator are within working age group of 26yr – 50yrs which is an indication that they possess the physical strength to undertake freight distribution activities.

Table 1 also depicted the educational distribution respondent Showing the majority (68%) possess WAEC/SSCE certificate. 20% are with OND certificate (some of whom could not find other jobs but knows how to drive truck learnt unofficially) and 8% had B.Sc./HND certificate degree while 4% falls in the “others” category. This outcome reflects the characteristics of less developed nations where the profession of driving is still regarded as low-profile employment which requires no special educational limitation to enter into. Furthermore, table 1.0 show that the majority (68%) of the respondents still falls in the low-income group which may be associated with the level of education they possess and the way society valued their services. Also, 28% were in the medium income level (Medium-N201,000-500,000), while the rest 4% are in the high-income level (501,000 and above) the implication of this is that level of reasoning and the urge to breakthrough financially by the majority of the respondents may be the leading cause of truck/tanker accident and illegal parking that obstructs traffic flow along the Apapa port entrances in Lagos State.

### **Causes/factors responsible for perennial traffic Gridlock Leading to Supply Chain Disruption from Apapa Port Complex.**

The research findings revealed in figure 3.0 shows that 22% of the respondents indicated that the causes of the traffic gridlock is bad road and bad driving habits of motorists towards the port entrances, 30% said it was caused by customs delay and the too many government agencies checking the truck loads, while the majority (38%) said it was as a result of lack of adequate loading bays/parking facility and increase in industries and tank firms around the Apapa port terminals. The rest 10% said it was as a result of the inefficiency/nepotism of online-trucks registration system technology (ETO-clearance).

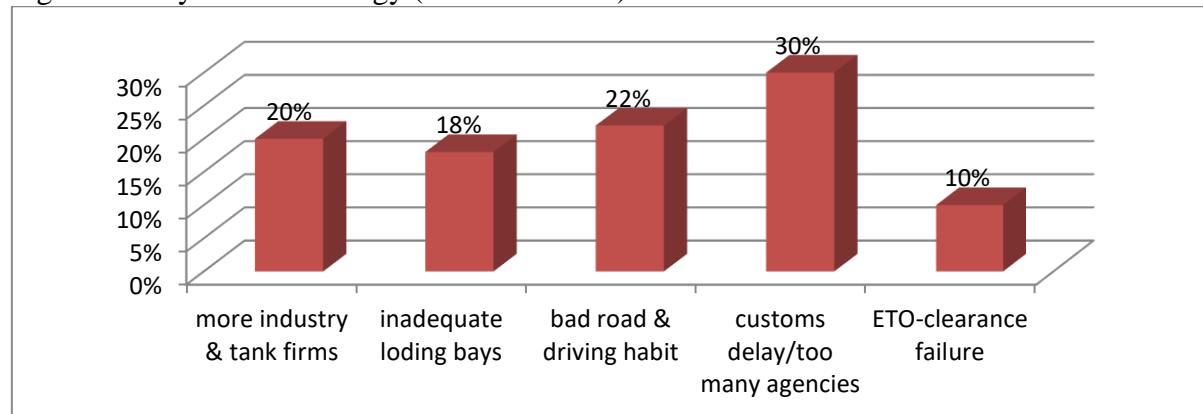
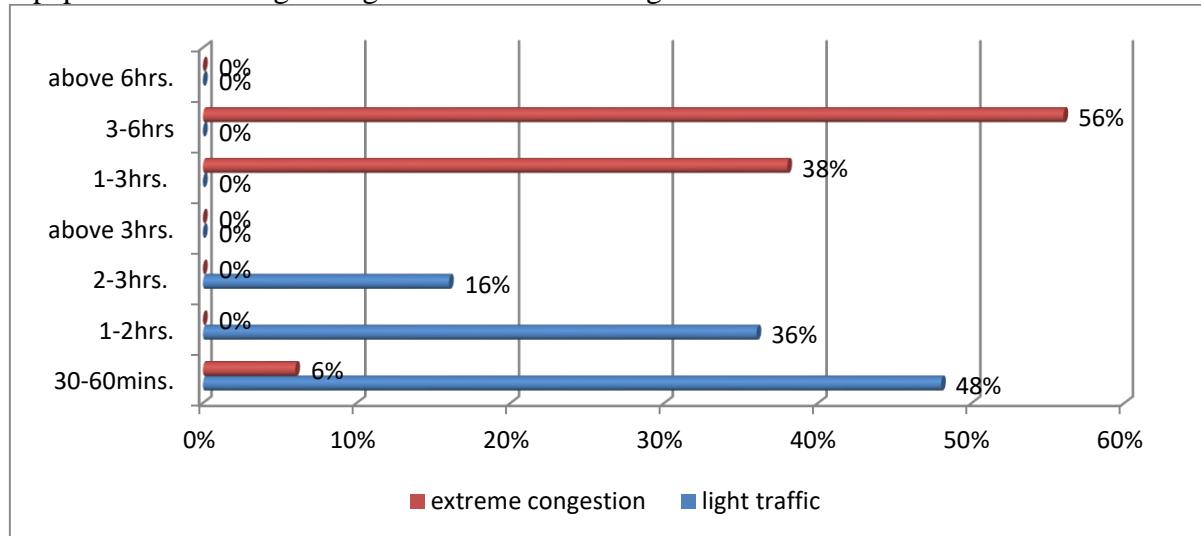


Figure 3: Causes of freight supply chain disruption from Apapa Port Complex, Lago State.  
Source: fieldwork, 2024.

### **Impact of Apapa Traffic Gridlock of Logistics of Freight and Supply Chain Disruption**

Considering the time spent by respondent in traveling to Apapa port when there is no congestion, figure 4.0 shows that majority (48%) of the respondents spent between 30-60 minutes from their various origins to Apapa port arena. Less majority (36%) spent 1-2 hours while the rest (16%) spent between 2-3 hours from their originating locations to Apapa port Arena. On the other hand, the majority (56%) of respondents spent 3-6 hours to get to Apapa port during heavily congested periods while less majority (38%) spent 1-3 hours from their originating zones to Apapa port

during congestion periods. More so, only 6% of the respondents spent 30-60 minutes getting to Apapa from their originating zones as shown in figure 4.0.

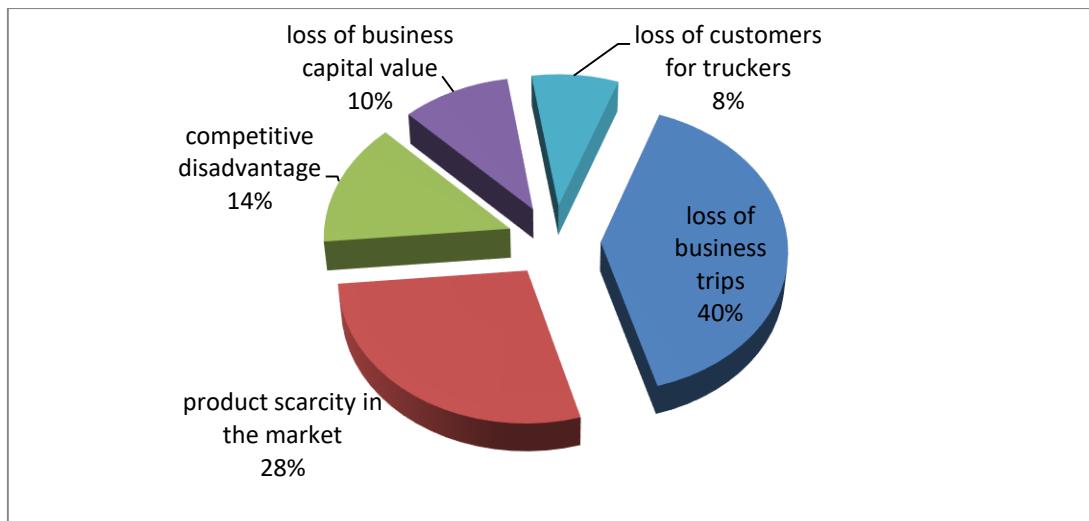


**Figure 4:** Respondents Travel Time from Origin to Apapa Port.

**Source:** fieldwork, 2024

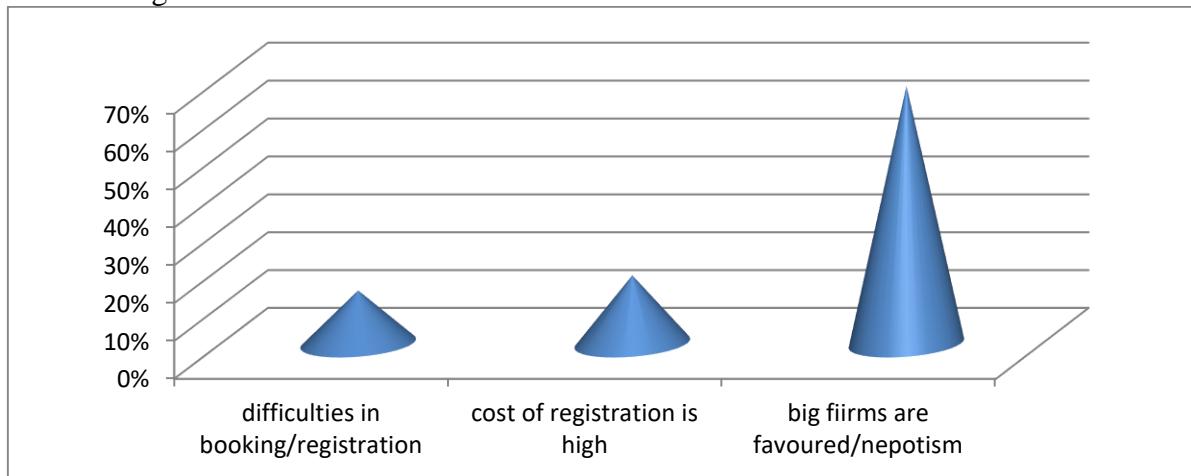
Furthermore, an evaluation of duration within which freight truck access and exit Apapa port terminals indicated that majority (70%) spent 6-10days, while 19% spent 11-15days. The least group (11%) spent 1-5days to enter and exit the Apapa port operations and services. In sharp contrast to the freight trucks operators, the majority (84%) of the Tanker operators spent 3-5day to access and exit the port complex. In like manner, the rest 16% spent 6-10days to traverse the Apapa port activities. This result buttress the observation of the respondents who said the traffic gridlock had a very negative impact on freight distribution and supply chain disruption because they spent days or weeks (in case of export distribution) to load or offload consignments from Apapa port.

However, all the respondents (100%) affirmed that the extreme traffic congestion along the port access roads negatively affect their businesses and truck delivery logistics from the Apapa port complex. A probe into the nature of impact as shown in figure 5.0, revealed that majority (40%) of the responses received indicated the loss of business trips/man hours as the major impact, followed by delayed product supply resulting in scarcity (28%), absence of product in the market leading to competitive disadvantages (14%), loss of business capital due to loss of naira value (10%) and loss of customers for smaller operators (8%).



**Figure 5:** Consequences of Apapa Port Perennial Traffic congestion on Supply Chain Disruption.  
**Source:** Fieldwork, 2024.

Importantly, 78% of the respondents confirmed that the ETO online truck access management technology is working but 22% of them disagreed that the technology is at disadvantaged to the small business operators while the big logistics firms uses connection to bypass truck queues and gain entrance through powerful links to the operator of the ETO-online truck clearance process as shown in figure 6.0.

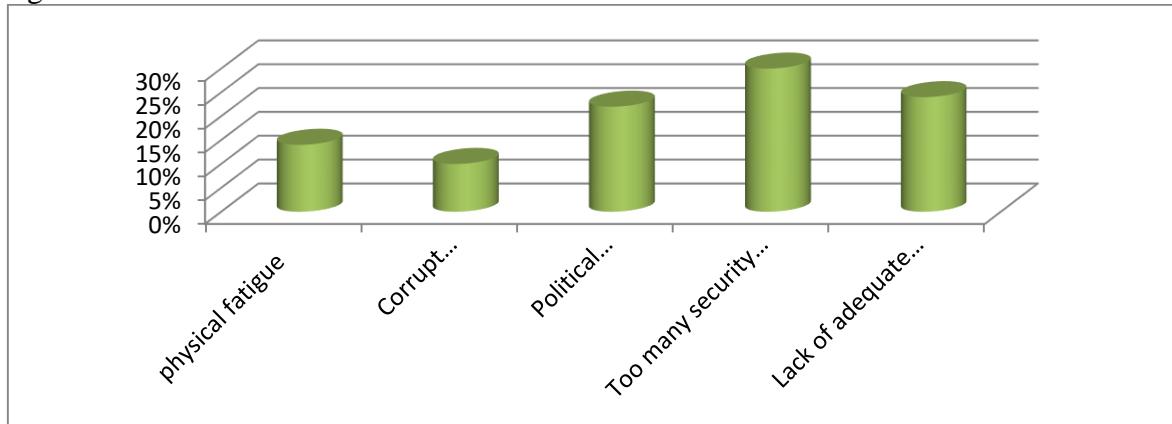


**Figure 6:** Challenges of ETO (trucks E-clearance) system in Apapa port Complex.  
**Source:** Fieldwork, 2024

This development has been found to further increase the supply chain failure of the small-scale freight operators while the big companies like DANGOTE, SIFAX, NUPENG, NATO and others are recording much success in their distribution network. Nonetheless, the result of the analysis of respondents' perception of traffic improvement experience due to rehabilitation of Apapa road revealed that majority (52%) did affirmed that the rehabilitation has to some extent reduced the extreme congestion been experience along Apapa port roads. While 36% of the respondents agreed to yes response. Only 12% decline the traffic improvement experiences by saying no. Also, the responses to the question whether transport management agencies do quickly and time respond

to emergency removal of accident/breakdown vehicles along Apapa road indicated yes by the fast majority (81%).

Importantly, the findings on the efficiency of the federal and state government task forces on Apapa traffic gridlock revealed that the strategy is not sustainable has majority (58%) says no while 42% says yes. The group who responded negatively concurred to the reasons presented in figure 7.0 below.



**Figure 7.0:** Reasons for non-sustainability of government task force on Apapa port roads Gridlock.  
**Source:** Fieldwork, 2024

Albeit the outcome of figure 7.0, the findings however shows that all respondents' plying Apapa roads should be educated and enlightenment on traffic rules and regulation to ensure safe driving and free traffic flow. At the same time, all respondents opined that enlightenment programme will help the drivers to use the roads well and prevent unnecessary obstruction of roads by trucks and tankers. Lastly, the measures presented in table 2.0 were suggested by respondents as sustainable strategies for solving the traffic congestion and supply chain disruption from Apapa port complex.

**Table 2: respondents' strategies for efficiently reducing operation delays at Apapa port area.**

| S/N | Strategies  | Percentage response |
|-----|---|---------------------|
| 1   | Reduce the number of examination agencies to reduce cargos clearance time.  | 45%                 |
| 2   | Reduce the number of check points and taskforce agencies along the Apapa port entrance roads to reduce traffic obstruction and delays                                   | 10%                 |
| 3   | Increase the number of container and tanker loading points within the Apapa Port premises to reduce traffic delays.   | 15%                 |
| 4   | Increase the parking facilities for trucks and tankers waiting in line to access the port premises.   | 10%                 |
| 5   | Decentralize the operations of the Tank Firms and vessel activity to other ports in Nigeria such as the Lekki Deep sea port, Onne port, Calabar port, Delta port e.t.c. | 20%                 |

**Source:** Fieldwork, 2024

Table 2 showed that the most supported strategy, with 45%, is the reduction of examination agencies to speed up cargo clearance. In contrast, reducing checkpoints and increasing parking facilities received the least support at 10% each, suggesting these are viewed as less impactful. Moderate support was given to increasing loading points (15%) and decentralising operations to other ports (20%). The mean response across strategies is 20%, with a median of 15% and a mode of 10%. A range of 35% and a standard deviation of 13.04% reflect significant variation in perceived effectiveness. The findings indicated a strong preference for streamlining administrative procedures, supported by complementary infrastructural and strategic decentralisation efforts. Therefore, these inherent advantages of perception data should be harnessed to improve the logistics of freight supply chain and port operations for Lagos and Nigeria businesses.

## Conclusion

This study has been able to prove that it is very difficult to achieve efficient logistics of freight distribution from Apapa Port considering the challenges of traffic delay, port access difficulties including extortions, truck online management technology ineffectiveness and others which create inefficiency and disruption of freight supply chain processes. It is believed that effective attention should be given to increased port loading bays, government agencies harmonization, truck park provision and decentralization of strategic port operation to other competing ports around Nigeria.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of this work, the study therefore recommended the following:

1. NPA, NIMASA and other Port stakeholders such as Ibru, Folawiyo, Dangote, Capital oil, Sahara Oil, Forte Oil, Nipco, Total, Mobil and others should provide additional holding bays or trailer parks around Apapa port to reduce the trip time of truck awaiting ETO clearance for loading;
2. Maritime operation stakeholders in APAPA should provide/create more loading points for trucks in order to increase service efficiency and elimination of truck queues at the Apapa terminals,
3. NPA should enforce strict compliance of ETO operator with first applied first to service rule rather than unwholesome practices of nepotism;
4. Federal government should strengthen the strategic use of barges to move containers to inland container terminals away from Apapa port in order to reduce truck volume to the Port.
5. The Federal government should strengthen the strategic rail integration policy to port operation in Nigeria as this will grossly reduce the volume of inflow trucks to Apapa port and prevent unintended disruption of supply chain activities.
6. Lagos State and Federal Governments should Fast Track their efforts at completing the rehabilitation of all access roads to the Apapa Port in order to improve traffic flow and eliminate supply chain process disruption.
7. Governments should carefully relocate Petroleum tank farms away from Apapa (to decongest Apapa Port) to outskirt of Lagos, especially around Epe and the Ibeju Lekki Deep Sea Port which is closer to the major national road arteries.

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