

## **Border Security Issues and Challenges of the Nigeria Customs Service**

**Babatunde Olomu,**

*Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Babcock University,  
Ogun State, Nigeria*

**Alao, David Oladimeji**

*PhD. Chief of staff to the President,  
Babcock University, Ogun State, Nigeria*

**Eyitayo Adewumi,**

*PhD. Department of Political Science and Public Administration,  
Babcock University, Ogun State, Nigeria*

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**Abstract:** Regulating migration flows and containing border disputes remain central to border security agencies across the world. The reality, however, is that controlling access to territories and citizens is difficult in the globalised security context, as technology has enabled the increased flow of goods, people and ideas across national boundaries, while global inter-connectedness has increased interactions between people around the world whether for work, sport or entertainment. The paradox lies, therefore, in the increased relevance of the Customs service agency with regard to securing the nation's borders despite the fact that their position is being challenged by transnational security actors and vulnerabilities as well as numerous inherent weaknesses from within the agency itself. Thus, in order to counter threats both from within and outside a state border, new patterns of security interaction are required. It is on this basis the study not only intend at identifying the major challenges militating against border security in the Nigeria Customs Service but also, to proffer solutions through insightful suggestions and recommendations.

**Keywords:** Challenges, Border Security, Nigeria Customs Service.

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### **Introduction**

Border security has attracted profound attention in many countries. In the United States of America, it is pursued in order to stop illicit smuggling of goods that are prohibited and deemed illegal from entering the United States. The European Union also offers a positive indication of how improved border related trade controls can contribute to both security and economic development (Andrews, 2007). Nigeria has her own share of border security challenges, which are made more complex by poverty, lack of good governance, corruption, chronic armed conflict, armed banditry, porous border security and transnational crimes.

Comparing the indicators from local neighbourhoods, analysts can anticipate crime trends and agencies can take preventive measures to intervene or mitigate the impact of those crimes. It is important to note that the nature and existence of border may likely impede crime prevention, investigation and detection among law enforcement agencies. The Nigeria Customs Service whose statutory function includes, but not limited to the collection of revenue and accounting for same, anti-smuggling operations, security functions and generating statistics for planning and budgetary purposes; combating illegal commercial activities and trade in illicit goods e.g. import of fake and substandard goods, combating infraction on intellectual property rights (IPR), combating illegitimate international trade in endangered species, combating illegal trade in arms and ammunitions, combating money laundering, combating trade in illicit drugs, combating illegal trade in cultural artefacts, combating importation of pornographic materials and combating importation of toxic/hazardous substances (Webb Fontaine, 2018). Also, added to this function of the Nigeria Custom Service is the lead Agency role the Service is expected to play in all matters relating to importation, exportation and fiscal policies guidelines of government, thus making the Nigeria Custom Service a lead Agency in the Implementation of the Nigeria Trade Hub (Adams, 2012; Mintah, 2015).

However, the Nigeria Custom Servicemay not be able to effectively carry out these enormous responsibilities if the inherent challenges besetting their border security operations remained too obscured to be adequately addressed. This situation is especially notable considering the porosity of the Nigerian border and a major aspect of their work which is collection of revenue from import and export duties. The Nigeria Customs

Service is saddled with a role which is constantly sabotaged by smugglers hence the need to have credible security mechanisms for preventing smuggling and directly increasing Nigeria's non-oil revenue. Important issues related to Nigeria Custom Service role in border security include the relevant sources of information needed for border security, inter agency cooperation towards the achievement of Nigerian border security, and adequately manned security system for border security sustainability. These aforementioned conditions seem to have culminated into the growth of extensive and complicated drug trafficking and human trafficking networks and large scale arms trade.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The issue of porosity of Nigeria's borders spanning a total land mass of 923, 768 square kilometres has remained a source of concern over the years (Asiwaju, 2011; Adeola&Fayomi, 2012; Akinyemi, 2013; Onuoha, 2013; Ewetan&Ese, 2014). The porous borders contributed and continued to encourage cross-border crimes, terrorist attacks, drug trafficking, illegal trade such as smuggling of contraband goods like shoes, frozen poultry products, duty non-paid cars and foreign parboiled rice (Akinyemi, 2013; Nwogu, 2013). This situation has also promoted the unrestrained influx of illegal migrants and cross border criminality through her Francophone neighbours, which seemed to be posing serious challenges for Law Enforcement Agencies to contend with. Nigeria shares 773 kilometres boundary with Benin Republic; 1,690 Kilometres with the Republic of Cameroon; 1, 497 Kilometres with Niger Republic; 85 Kilometres with Chad Republic and with the Republic of Guinea at the Gulf of Guinea (Salifu; 2013). Events at these border regions are crucial and fundamental in defining the nation's quest for security and socio-economic, cum political development (Asiwaju, 1996).

Recent events of increasing wave of insurgencies have further heightened anxiety about the efficacy of law enforcement across the country's borders. As it stands today, no Nigerian border can be described as truly water tight (*The Nation*, 2017) as the less than eighteen thousand (18,000) workforce of the Nigerian Customs Services, an Agency statutorily charged with responsibilities of anti – smuggling, revenue generation and security functions along Nigeria's land, air and sea borders are having challenges effectively policing the borders. Nigeria's poorly patterned borders and the lack of adequate personnel cum logistics to properly man the border have had negative effect on the security of our national frontiers (Adeola&Fayomi, 2012; Akinyemi, 2013; Ewetan&Ese, 2014).

Within a short spate of eight months (precisely January 22, 2017, May 23, 2017, September, 11, 2017 and September 21, 2017) a total of 2, 671 pump action rifles illegally imported into the country were intercepted by the Nigerian Customs Service, alongside other seizures with a total value of N12.7 billion (*Premium Times*, 2018). With government officials accepting that about 1, 479 illegal routes exist in Nigeria (*National Daily*, 2018) presupposing all manner of illegalities in the forms of illegal migration, drug trafficking, movement of contraband goods and its attendant implication exist at our national frontiers. Security agencies world over relies on both formal and informal information networks that could be converted to Intelligence report to boost their operations. However, in the situation where borders are porous, the need to go beyond the formal information networks and interrogate same alongside the informal information networks, towards securing the borders, becomes imperative.

Also, with the increasing need to improve upon non – oil revenue, the Nigerian Custom Service which is also saddled with the responsibilities of revenue generation has been brought under pressure. This situation is made critical with the recessive economic growth that Nigeria is experiencing, hence, the Nigerian government prefers to spend their way out of recession thereby putting pressure on revenue generating government agencies to generate more money into the coffers of the Federal government. This mission that has been partly handed to the Nigeria Custom Service may not be easily actualized considering the fact that the porosity of the Nigerian border contributes in no small measure to the loss of revenue.

### **Objectives of the Study**

Consequently, this study sets to identify the inherent challenges militating against border security agency with specific reference to the Nigeria Customs service. The specific objectives therefore include:

1. To identify the major factors militating against maintaining border security by the Nigeria customs service.
2. To explore the implications of these factors for national security in Nigeria.

### **Scope of the Study**

The content scope is limited the various challenges besetting maintaining border security by the Nigeria Custom Service. Thus geographically, the study is limited to Zone A Area Command in the South western Nigeria because the Zone account for about 80% of NCS revenue and it includes:

(a) Badagry/Seme Area command which is one of the busiest land borders in Nigeria in terms of volume of commercial activities across the borders, volume of people traversing the borders and revenue accruing to the Federal Government of Nigeria. (FGN). In Customs parlance, it is referred to as the Premier Land Border in Nigeria.

(b) Muritala Mohammed International Airport: This Command shares similar affinity /properties with Badagry/Seme Area Command of the NCS because it is referred to as the Premier Airport into the Nigerian. It also has a very high volume of commercial activities, international passengers, cargoes and generates substantial revenue into the offers' of the FGN.

The population for the study were basically drawn using purposive sampling technique in which the head of the Customs Intelligence Unit and two (2) customs area comptrollers from Seme and Muritala International Airport respectively were selected as internal participants for the personal interview (PI) session.

**Table 1: Internal Respondents Selected (Interviewees)**

Positions	Total
Head of the Customs Intelligence Unit (CIU)	1
Area Comptrollers	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2018.

**Table 2: Showing the Number of Administered Questionnaire of the Customs Intelligence Unit (CIU) Officers Distributed on a Command – by – by Command Basis**

Zone	Area Command	Questionnaire Administered
A	Apapa	15
	Tincan Island	13
	Muritala Mohammed Int. Airport	11
	Kirikiri Lighter Terminal	5
	Lilypond	5
	Lagos Industrial	4
	Seme	12
	Ogun	10
	Oyo/Osun	6
	Ondo/Ekiti	4
Kaduna/Katsina	6	
B	Sokoto/Kebbi/Zamfara	9
	Kano/Jigawa	6
	Niger/Kwara/Kogi	5
	FCT and CIU HQ Abuja	23
C	Anambra/Eboniyi/Enugu	4
	Imo/Abia	3
	PHI & Bayelsa	4
	PH2 – Onne	10
	Edo/Delta	5
	Cross Rivers/Akwabom/CFTS	7
D	Bauchi / Gombe	3
	Borno/Yobe	2
	Adamawa/Taraba	4
	Benue/Plateau/Nassarawa	2
Total No of Zones = 4	Total No Area of Commands = 25	Total Administered = 178

Source: Field Survey, 2018

### **Methodology**

The study adopts both qualitative and quantitative approach which is based on logical and statistical analysis.

**Qualitative Method:** The methodology enables the researcher to get to know the social world being studied using both Primary and secondary data. Primary sources include oral interview, while secondary sources adopted are in form of books, articles, journals, newsletters, publications from Nigeria Customs Services websites, as well as publications from the websites of other sister agencies. These sources of data are therefore maximized for the purpose of thorough and empirical analyses.

**Quantitative Method:** This deals with distribution of questionnaires to elicit useful information. Thus, in the course of this study, a total of one hundred and seventy eight (178) copies of questionnaire were distributed to officers in the Head of Customs Intelligence Unit, Nigerian Army, Nigeria Police, Nigeria Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Immigration Service, National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control and Standard Organisation of Nigeria (SON). However, only one hundred and forty two (142, 80%) copies of the questionnaire distributed were retrieved. Their responses were analysed based on two-scale response of Yes and No.

### **Literature Review or Conceptual Review**

Also for profound analysis, relevant literature were explored and interrogated. It was discovered that various scholars like Adekanye (1998), Babatunde (2009), Wali (2010), Asiwaju (2011), Adeola and Fayomi (2012), Onuoha (2013), Akinyemi (2013), Ewetan and Ese (2014), Odoma (2014), Okereke (2016), Adaramodu (2016) and among many others have attributed the inherent challenges within the border security operations in Nigeria and the Nigeria Customs Service specifically to issues like border porosity, inter-agency rivalry, poorly manned security system and Intelligence sharing weakness.

There is no gainsaying that the issue of border security is dominated by porosity; thus encouraging all sorts of cross border or trans-border criminal activities such as human trafficking, smuggling, drug trafficking, terrorism, arm robbery, money laundry and illicit arms trafficking. It is imperative to note that if a state cannot regulate what passes across its border, it cannot control what happens within it. It is on this basis Akinyemi (2013) argues that one of the main responsibilities of a state is the extent to which it controls its borders especially in the globalization era which has made transnational crimes easier. Consequently, the Boko-Haram attacks, killing, kidnapping and arms smuggling is not surprising, it is basically due to poor border security. No wonder, Scholars such as Stohl and Tuttle (2009), Nte (2011), Sunday, Oji and Okechukwu (2014) had further attributed the problematic issue of border insecurity in Nigeria to the diverse and vast nature of the country and her poor border management system.

Also, Adekanye (1998), Wali (2010), Odoma (2014), Okereke (2016) and Adaramodu (2016) have identified issues like unhealthy inter-agency rivalry and lack of synergy/information sharing which had sowed seeds of mutual distrusts especially in the conduct of inter-agencies operations. When rivalry occurs between agencies, it is described as 'inter-agency', e.g. Rivalry between the Customs and the Army or Police, the Army and Navy, Army and Air-force, or Navy and Air-force. Rivalry may also exist between Customs services (single or jointly) and the police or the other internal security agencies. When it occurs within an agency, is known as 'intra-agency', rivalry (Omoigui, 2006:11). Although granted unwholesome inter-agency rivalry is a global phenomenon, this seem to be more entrenched and glaring in Nigeria where gaffers tend to place self-aggrandizement ahead of national interest (Adekanye, 1998; Okereke, 2016). A prominent example is the failure of intelligence that characterised the 1<sup>st</sup> of October, 2010, bombing at the 50 years independence celebration in Abuja, resulting in the death of several persons. Adaramodu (2016) had attributed this failure to the existence of rivalry among the agencies.

Inter-agency rivalry constitutes an inherent challenge of inter-agency cooperation along border post in Nigeria. According to Omoigui (2006:66), agency rivalry is a state of competition, contention or emulation that exist within and between agencies for something of perceived value to the contending interest. This could be tangible or intangible recognition and other perceived 'benefits to self-esteem' which can be positive (good natured) or negative (associated with injurious consequence, for instance the inability to cooperate optimally in support of national defence and security objective). Bagdanos (2004) and Adekanye (1998) contends that rivalry could be due to differing individual perspectives, new strategic concept, powerful functional and regional orientations, and technological initiatives, with each having differing force structure implications.

Musa (2013) has explained that a country border management system becomes poor and ineffective when it encompasses the problem of inadequate personnel, patrol vehicles, surveillance helicopters and equipments as well as neglect or non-functioning of intelligence services. All these no doubt constitute basic features of Nigeria's major borders and waterways. For instance, J. M. Hazen and J. Horner (2007) while

exploring the issue of violence and insecurity in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria has observed that border security challenges in Nigeria have become worsened due to the fact that none of the security agent currently possesses the training, resources or personnel to perform their duties effectively due to lengthy and porous nature of Nigerian borders. Nte (2011) posits that there is a direct link between the acquisition of weapons like SALW and escalation conflicts into a full-brown war. The proliferation of small arms and light weapons is often one of the major security challenges currently facing Nigeria, Africa and indeed the world in general. The trafficking and wide availability of these weapons fuel communal conflict, political instability and pose a threat, not only to security, but also to sustainable development. According to him, the widespread proliferation of small arms is contributing to alarming levels of armed crime, and militancy.

It is on this basis Lt Col Sagir Musa (2013) argues that the vastness of the nation's borders in the face of these challenges bring to the fore the need for a rethink on the management and security of the Nigeria's borders and seaports – without which effective fight against insurgency, arms trafficking and proliferation will remain an optical illusion. Thus, there must be innovative technology and sound intelligence services that will help protect our borders. He further argues that the use of innovative technology – radars and alarm systems are major ways modern nations utilize to monitor and secure their borders. Some radar can be used as primary detection sensor for long remote surveillance platforms. The ability to detect slow moving targets, even in complex mountainous, thickly forested terrains and large open areas make some radars such as Blighter Radar ideal for remote surveillance and detection of vehicles and people trying to cross borders illegally. In remote areas, it is common for intruders to follow natural routes across the land, valleys, mountain paths or animal tracks. In these instances, Mobile Surveillance System provides a cost effective way of monitoring key areas with limited resources. Similarly, Blighter Radar, unlike traditional Air Surveillance Radar can effectively survey both the land and low air zone simultaneously.

In the same vein, Olusegun Adeniyi (2013) has linked the fundamental problem of border security, arms trafficking, and fight against terrorism in Nigeria to institutional fragmentation, intelligence and non-coordination of policy between and among security agencies. Indeed, these challenges are real and must be addressed in the fight against terrorism, arms proliferation and for border security to be effective.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The study adopts complex adaptive system and complexity theory as the theoretical framework for this research work. The theory is about 30 years old since inception, having being established by physicists, economists and others studying complexity at the Santafe Institute in New Mexico, USA sometimes around 1987. Four of its major theorists are Murray Gell-Mann, John H. Holland, W. Brian Arthur and Simon A. Levin.

Complex Adaptive system (CAS) could be defined as “a regularly interacting and interdependent group of parts, items, or people that form a unified whole with the purpose of establishing a goal” (Beerel, 2009), while a complex system is a large network of relatively simple components with no central control, in which emergent complex behaviour is exhibited (Mitchell, 2006). A complex adaptive system is a group of simple parts, items, or people that interact; and collectively influence the behaviour of the larger system, behaviour of which is irreducible to parts (Brownlee, 2007). Borders can be likened to a CAS because they are more than clear delineating lines separating countries. They serve as corridors, frontiers, areas, religious and political interfaces. They influence foreign relations, reflect values and fears, and also serve as economic hubs of any nation across the world. These relationships and dynamics create the complexity that a border showcases.

The term complex adaptive system epitomizes the fact that a perfect understanding of the individual parts does not automatically convey a perfect understanding of the whole systems behaviour. Mention must however be made that CAS is not a single theory as it encompasses more than one theoretical framework, seeking the answers to some fundamental questions about, living, adaptable, changeable systems. Complex adaptive systems are characterized by a high degree of adaptive capacity, giving them resilience in the face of perturbation.

Complex adaptive systems provide feedback loops which are quite important in analysis between agents. This is quite important in classifying borders as CAS in view of the capabilities to continuously give feedbacks. CAS are quite critical to comprehending the dynamics of interdependencies, relationship, and identification of effective performance measures that Borders portends. Issues of immigration, trade, crime, terrorism, drug trafficking, drug trafficking and enforcement behaviours are created and reinforced by system dynamics that CAS offers. What, where, when and how do social, economic, political, cultural or religious factors affect borders? How do these behaviours change overtime and space? These questions reflect system thinking and such answers can be used in developing patterns which makes sense. Moreover, fluctuations, changes and responses from the Borders as a system can be understood not to come from mechanistic processes, but from learned human behaviors and individual differences of border threats, identities, perceived fairness to policies, quality of information and desired security levels.

In summary, Complex Adaptive Systems and complexity theory is still at an emerging stage, however, this tools and concepts continue to develop rapidly and there is optimism over its ability to provide new insights into the fundamental questions facing humanity especially with regard to border security challenges.

### Discussion of Findings

The following findings are based on the stipulated objectives of the study. Thus, both qualitative and quantitative methods in form of oral interviews, questionnaire, books, journal articles, magazines, and newspapers were used. For the purpose of demystification, the findings will be examined under two major sub-headings, namely: Major challenges besetting border security operations of the NCS; and its Implications for maintaining national security in Nigeria.

#### Major Challenges Besetting Border Security Operations of the NCS

In the course of the research, it was discovered through oral interviews (as indicated in table 1 and table 2 below) that the major challenges militating against maintaining border security in the Nigeria Customs Service are: Lack of border demarcation between Nigeria and neighbouring countries, Nigerian government abandonment of border communities, threats of Boko Haram, inadequate resources and political interference.

**Table 2: Interviews on the Challenges Militating against Maintaining Border Security in the Nigeria Customs Service**

Interviewees	Comments
The First Interviewee (Internal)	(1) "There is no proper demarcation between we [sic] Nigeria and our neighbours." (2) "The Nigerian government has neglected...border communities. We are supposed to provide every amenity to discourage them from...cross border criminality, border smuggling, cross border terrorism... they feel as if they are not even part of the country. You don't see primary schools there, you don't see medical centres there, you don't see higher institutions there so they feel as if they are on their own and they feel... father has done smuggling...mother has done smuggling so the son must equally do it"
The Second Interviewee (Internal)	(1) "Boko Haram elements around us here, as such, this is a war zone" (2) "We always advise our officers and men that they should be careful...they should always watch their back, as they need to be alive to do the job" (3) "...Logistics...we have a vast terrain here ...I have very few operational vehicles. Terrain here is very vast as we require a lot of vehicles to effectively cover our vast terrain; I only have few and have to manage the few to get the best" (4) "Political interference is affecting our operations as we do receive a lot of interference from politicians"
The Third Interviewee (Internal)	(1) "From...stakeholders and those who are supposed to secure the border request for money and not [sic] being after security"

**Source: Field Data from Transcribed PIs (2018)**

A thorough overview of the interviewees' stance and the existing ideas in the literature review vividly demonstrate a perpetual linkages and synergies in the various foregoing opinions. This further affirmed the reality of these challenges among Nigeria security agencies in maintaining border security. It is therefore imperative for security agencies in their various specialities as regard border security to timely address those challenges.

Similarly, the one hundred and forty-two questionnaire retrieved was analysed through frequency percentage and it was discovered that the most common challenges that militated against maintaining border security by the Nigeria Customs Service were: porosity of the border (n= 121, 85.2 per cent), inadequate equipment (n= 88, 62 per cent), corruption (n= 82, 57.7 per cent) and lack of intelligence.

**Table 3: Questionnaire Analysis of the Challenges Militating against Border Security**

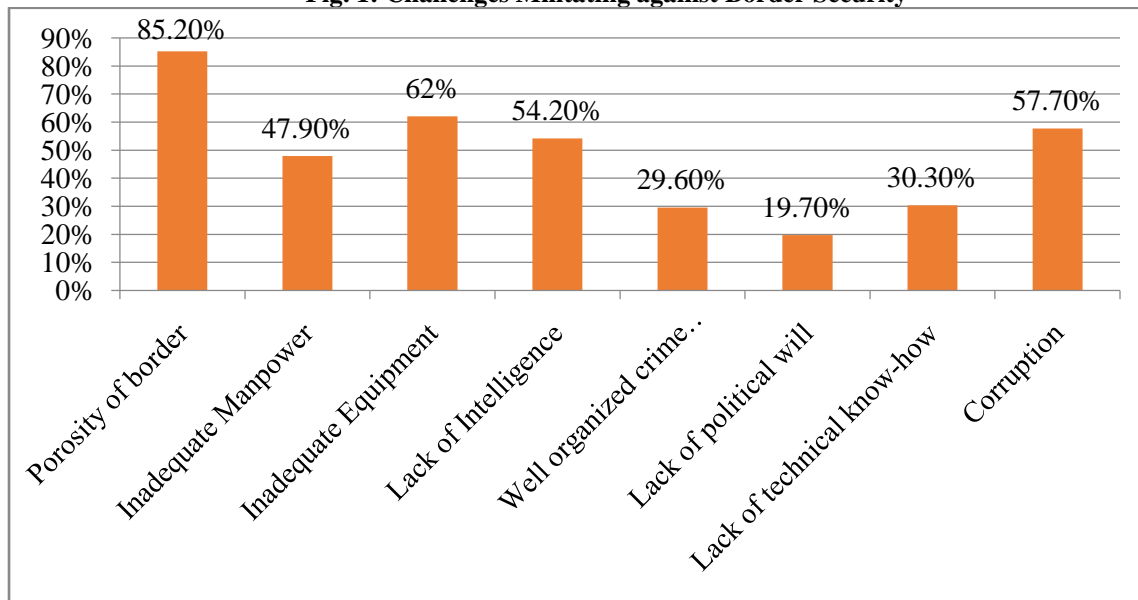
Items	Yes	No
Porosity of border	121(85.2%)	21(14.8%)
Inadequate Manpower	68(47.9%)	74(52.1%)
Inadequate Equipment	88(62%)	54(38%)
Lack of Intelligence	77(54.2%)	65(45.8%)

Well organized crime syndicates	42(29.6%)	100(70.4%)
Lack of political will	28(19.7%)	114(80.3%)
Lack of technical know-how	43(30.3%)	99(69.7%)
Corruption	82(57.7%)	60(42.3%)

Source: Field Data, 2018

N= 14

**Fig. 1: Challenges Militating against Border Security**



The challenges mostly faced by the Nigeria Customs Service as indicated in table 3 and figure 1 were: porosity of the border (n= 121, 85.2 per cent), inadequate equipment (n= 88, 62 per cent). The qualitative aspect of the study also corroborates these by pointing out lack of border demarcation between Nigeria and neighbouring countries, and inadequate resources as bane of maintaining border security by the Nigeria Customs Service.

The study has identified porosity of the border as the most palpable factor militating against maintaining a secure border by the Nigeria customs service. Probably this was why the Nigerian Federal Government sometimes in 2013 contemplated entering into private public partnership for border patrol across the Nigerian land borders (Asiwaju, 2013). This policy contemplation was to embark on a systematic fencing – in of Nigeria vis-à-vis her neighbours, notably, Benin and Niger in ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States), and Cameroun and Chad in ECCAS (Economic Community of Central African States), two of African Union’s five principal pillar Regional Economic Communities. This action was a compelling reminder of the ambitious effort of the FGN in 2001 for a systematic fencing of Nigeria’s land borders of over four thousand (4000) Kilometers, approximately 1000km with Benin; roughly 1500km with Niger; almost 100 with Chad; and about 2000 with Cameroun. The argument was that, had all the preceding Federal Administration considered the option earlier, the fencing and walling option would have been accomplished and all cross border security challenges would have become a forgotten issue. However, this is a fundamental mismatch with the inherently social structural nature of cross – border flows and exchange which is demonstrated by the complex adaptive system theorists, to which borders has been categorized as complex adaptive systems by the researcher, because they collectively influence the behaviour of the larger system, however, such behaviour are irreducible to parts (Brownlee, 2007). As a result, treating the behaviour of its parts, does not necessarily solve the problem. Consequently, fencing the entire land landscape bordering the country in my own view, will not in any way solve the problem at hand. Indeed, this project may likely end up creating fresh problems of greater magnitude and intensity than what is being experienced around the borders.

The question now remains, how can the problem of porosity of the Nigerian Borders identified as the most palpable factor militating agent border security, be addressed? In my view, I think addressing this problem lies in imbibing the tenets of complex adaptive system (CAS) and complexity theory. CAS are quite critical to comprehending the dynamics of interdependencies, relationship, and identification of effective performance

measures that Borders portends. Border Agencies should be assertive in enforcing the fiscal policies of government and at the same time cooperative and collaborating with the stakeholders around the border areas via a sustainable border – community relationship. As was noted in my literature review, a nation state that cannot regulate what passes its border, cannot equally control what happens within it. Rather than completely sealing or walling off the nations' borders, it is better to reposition the Nigerian Customs Service via provision of the requisite tools by the Federal Government, to enable the Service perform its statutory functions in line with international best practices. It was on this basis that Sagir (2013) argues that the vastness of the nation's borders in the face of challenges brings to fore the need for a rethink on the management and security of the Nigeria's borders and seaports without which an effective fight against insurgency, arms trafficking and proliferation will remain an optical illusion. He argues further that the need for innovative technology and sound intelligence platforms for border agencies remains a panacea to this problem.

Indeed, the findings of this study are to the benefit of society considering the fact that border security is very key to the development of most countries economically, socially, politically and in all other ramifications. As mentioned earlier, a country that cannot control what passes through her borders cannot equally control what goes on within the country. Similarly, the study of border security challenges will also benefit government as regards knowing the strength and weakness inherent in the security operations of the NCS. The greater demand for information exchange and sharing by law enforcement agencies especially the NCS justifies the need for more secured borders which is targeted at warding off terrorism influx from the borders/neighbouring countries, drug trafficking, illegal migration, human trafficking and most importantly, smuggling and revenue leakages through the nations' borders. Consequently, applying the recommendations proffered from the findings of this study, will ultimately result in stronger, more secured and more effective borders for the nation at large. Moreover, the need to replicate the study through a research on a different agency of government, global environment or a different country is also feasible. This only requires domesticating the methodology to suit the social milieu in question.

### **Implications for National Security**

Odoma Samuel (2014) has examined superiority struggles and inter agency feud as a factor of border insecurity in Nigeria. He argues that the problem of violence in Nigeria has become more worrisome as the security operatives whose duty it is to maintain peace, detect and suppress crimes have themselves become engulfed in violent conflicts, thereby giving criminals opportunity to unleash terror on the citizenry with impunity. Other consequences include loss of confidence and respect of the citizenry as well as lack of civil co-operation that these forces need to succeed in crime control.

More so, the vastness of Nigeria's borders further instigates many challenges besetting border security in Nigeria, which (as could be observed from the foregoing arguments) could be attributed to many factors. One of the prominent issue is poor border management. Border management, according to Olanrewaju (2015), means the procedures applied to persons and objects crossing the border to ensure that they comply with laws. It also means how different agencies are organized and how they fit into a unified concept of border management. Finally, it means how the physical infrastructure that accommodates the agencies is designed and managed. Thus, effective border management means ensuring that; one, everyone and everything that crosses the border is compliant with the laws, regulations, and procedures of the country; two, users are encourage to comply; and three, offenders are identified and stopped. These three things must be done without disrupting legitimate trade or causing unacceptable queues, delays at the border, or bottlenecks in the adjacent country (or within the country itself) (Olanrewaju, 2015).

Similarly, Caverty and Mauer (2009) have explained that the new spectrum of threats especially due to globalisation is dominated by three interrelated characteristics, namely: complexity, uncertainty and a diminishing impact of geographical space. According to them, "increased complexity increases uncertainty. Increased uncertainty increases the demand for information" (Caverty and Mauer, 2009:126). As the importance of national borders become challenged and the compression of space and time opens opportunities and vulnerabilities for the global security order, security actors are challenged to evolve to remain relevant to this new global security paradigm. Recognising that modern threats are frequently not geographically bounded, Gijds de Vries, the former EU Counter-terrorism Coordinator, noted that, in order to combat this threat, "national agencies must work across borders to be effective" (Melady and Hilsher, 2008:13).

### **Conclusion**

By and large, the porosity of Nigeria borders and the transnational nature of security threats in the modern climate considerably necessitate the need for changes in the way that the NCS operate. By implication, definitions of threats and vulnerabilities must determine the agenda of the Nigeria Customs Service. In other words, the nature of transnational security threats, such as terrorism, mercenaries, small arms proliferation, drug



smuggling and organised crime, as well as border porosity means that the security risk operates in and manifests from various locations despite national boundaries involving actors of various nationalities. Nigeria Customs officers therefore must have it in mind that they are monitoring threats to their national security interests and homelands that are far more diverse, complex, interconnected and dynamic than ever before (George, 2007). This further suggests that the individual actions of single government or customs service may prove ineffective in detecting, deterring or preventing insecurity except our security system sufficiently blend in with the dynamic nature of these threats.

### **Recommendations**

In spite of the numerous challenges of border security examined in this study, there are solutions through cogent suggestions and recommendations which are as follows:

- The NCS should be given adequate material and human resources in order to cope with the difficult Nigerian terrain and vastness. This will further enhance the capabilities of the NCS to perform its statutory roles. Aside the provision of patrol vehicles, arms and ammunition and enhanced welfare for the officers and men, other essential working tools like scanners and non-intrusive devices for cargo examination which have since broken down at the nations' ports should be provided as a matter of necessity
- Effective utilization or application of basic or essential elements of security, which include timely procurement of security intelligence, prompt identification of threats to both internal and national security with its attendant pro-active security arrangement, threat assessment, statement of aims/objectives of national security objectives and programmes' planning to be in line with the objectives of national security.
- Security liaison, and networking with other sister security departments towards achieving the national security objectives. This is equally important so as to fill intelligence gaps, minimize costs of intelligence collection, and establish diplomatic relations among states.
- Security agencies must always advise government based on the situation on ground for the overall improvement of security measures and adequate funding.
- Adequate training, incentives and equipment for the grooming of efficient and less compromising custom men and most active intelligence Service.

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