
ASSESSING ECOWAS PROTOCOL FREE MOVEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF NIGERIAN ECONOMY

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ABSTRACT

The alarming rate and growing incidence of unchecked or undocumented exodus of various nationals across borders has become more disheartening globally most especially in developing nations like Nigeria. The study examined **the effect of ECOWAS Protocol** on Nigeria's economic development. State First Approach was adopted as a theoretical framework. The method of data collection was premised on both primary and secondary methods of data collections. Questionnaire and Personal Interview were employed as instruments for primary data, while for secondary method, sources like research papers, policy papers, documents, journals, magazines, seminars, workshop papers and handbook were utilized. The study established that the lack of political will among ECOWAS members to submit part of their sovereignty and the lack of trust among member-states are challenges proper implementation of the policies and protocol under review. It was recommended that the commission should review the provisions of the movement of goods, persons and right of establishments, economic development and trade liberalization policies to meet up with the current economic needs of her member-states.

Keywords: Implementation, ECOWAS, Protocol, Challenges, Economic and Development

Introduction

The issue of economic and regional integration boils down to searching for the appropriate path to a sustainable economic growth and development, which has not been resolved for many several decades. However, protectionism is not a viable option for African countries including Nigeria because it failed many of them in the past (Bibi, 2021). Promoting economic growth and the appropriate methods to achieve that has been a topic for economic discourse and research for the past several decades. According to Jibrila (2023), modern economic development is a process of

continuous technological innovation, industrial upgrading and diversification, and of improvements in the various types of infrastructure and institutional arrangements that constitute the context for business development and creation of wealth. While past theories have long emphasized the significance of market mechanisms in getting relative prices right and therefore facilitating efficient factor allocations, the growth experience in many countries shows that governments often play a crucial role in facilitating industrial transformation.

Similarly, the significance of international trade and trade openness in the economic development of nations has long been documented in the literature. Of paramount importance is the concept of comparative advantages, which a country must be able to identify. In this contemporary globalized world, a country that is comparatively better at producing only natural resources without value addition, must be extremely careful when selecting partner countries. A country like Nigeria that has comparative advantage in the production of crude oil, has to be careful when choosing its trading partners. For example, trade between Nigeria and USA and Europe could be a good decision if the aim of Nigeria is to import capital equipment from these countries while exporting crude oil (Wapmuk& Ali, 2022). According to the African Union Foundation (2018), the African Continental Free Trade Area is a flagship project of Agenda 2063 and refers to a continental geographic zone where goods and services move among member states of the African Union (AU) with no restrictions. The AFCFTA aims to boost Intra-African trade by providing a comprehensive and mutually beneficial trade agreement among the member states, covering trade in goods and services, investment, intellectual property rights and competition policy. This is not the first Trade Agreement on the planet because globally, countries are concluding Mega-Regional Trade Agreements (MRTAs), thus reshaping and changing the global trading landscape in the process. The establishment of the AFCFTA will enable Africa to strengthen its position via-a-vis the rest of the world, speak with one voice and act in unanimity on all continental and international trade issues (Wapmuk& Ali, 2022). This study is carried out to assess the implementation of the ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of Goods and Persons and challenges it has caused for Nigeria's economic development.

Statement of the Problem

Several attempts have been made by many third world nations to bridge the trading imbalance between Developed and Underdeveloped nations of the world, including Africa. Yet, the conditions have gotten worse over the years (Akinkugbe, 2021). Africa is in fact seen as a dumping ground for unwanted technology, inferior goods and services as well as market for sell of ready-made goods (Ajibo, 2023). The international system has succeeded in making Africa, like other Third World Nations

the manufacturers of raw materials and consumers of finished goods and services from Europe which comes at a high cost. In other words, Global Capitalism and its accompanying treats of breaking international barriers have succeeded in kneeling African economies (Akinkugbe, 2021). The African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) is a landmark agreement adopted by the African Union (AU) in 2018 (Seti, & Daw, 2022). This agreement is aimed at creating a single market for goods and services on the African continent to boost intra-African trade. The AfCFTA agreement creates a market of about 1.2 billion people with a total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of over \$3 trillion (Seti& Daw. 2022). This agreement is expected to increase trade among African countries and promote socio-economic development on the continent. Despite the enormous potential benefits of the AfCFTA agreement, there are concerns about its implications on the member states. Specifically, the agreement may have negative implications on some sectors of the economy and on countries with weaker economies (Ajibo, 2023).

Objectives of the Study

- i. To investigate the challenges facing the implementation of the ECOWAS protocol on free of goods and persons for Nigeria's economic development.
- ii. To assess the efforts made by ECOWAS and the government of Nigeria to overcome the challenges facing the implementation of ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of goods and persons for an improved Nigeria's economic development.

Conceptual Framework

ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of Goods and Persons

The determination to accelerate regional development through economic integration was the primary objective of the heads of member states for the enactment of the protocol on Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Establishment in 1979. As such, the freedom of movement and residence was provided for by the initial Treaty (Chapter IV, Article 27) and strengthened by Protocol/A/P1/5/59 on the free movement of persons, the right of residence and establishment, signed in Dakar on 29 May 1979. The protocol seeks to remove every impediment to the movement of its citizens across borders (Adepoju, 2005) as free mobility which permits free movement of people, their goods and services are crucial to the attainment of a full economic union (Sowale, 2018). In line with the desire to accelerate the economic integration process across the region, the community was to establish a common market through the liberalization of trade; the adoption of a common external tariff and a common trade policy vis-à-vis third countries; and the removal, between the member States, of obstacles to the free movement of persons, goods, service and capital, and to the right

of residence and establishment (ECOWAS, 1993). In addition, Articles 59.2 and 59.3 of the ECOWAS Revised Treaty emphasizes that citizens of the community shall have the right of entry, residence and establishment and Member States undertake to recognize these rights of Community citizens in their territories under the provisions of the Protocols relating thereto (ECOWAS, 1993). To this end, in 1979, the ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Establishment was enacted as an instrument to enable free movement of ECOWAS citizens within the region and has since come to be the pillar upon which the ECOWAS regional agenda is built (Elumelu, 2015).

Economic Development

Economic development has to do with sense of morality of a country or wrong or right as Todaro (2011) explains, that is the expansion of a country's economy and social well-being of the people which includes freedom oppression, quality education system, better income, less poverty, cleaner environment, equality of opportunities, greater individual freedom and rich cultural life and also improvement of technology. Economic development can alleviate a country or people from a low standard of living to a suitable shelter. Economic factors that contribute towards economic development include capital, labor, natural resources and technology. Put differently, economic development can also be seen as a multi-dimensional process involving change in social structure, population attitude and national institution as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality and the eradication of poverty. Economic development is a development process that promotes the standard of living and the health of a particular country (Todaro & Smith, 2011).

Empirical Review of Related Literature

Clark (2014) examined the challenges facing the non-implementation of the 'ECOWAS' Protocol on the Free Movement of goods, services, persons and capital. In its finding, several problems including the lack of political commitments, administrative restrictions, civil conflicts, wars and terrorism are major obstacles to the implementation of the Protocol on free movement of goods, services, persons and capital in West Africa. Thus the study recommended that ECOWAS' leaders should seriously address those obstacles in the implementation of the Protocol. The second variable which is Nigeria's economic development was not referenced, thereby making it a gap to address. The study fails to identify the source of data collection used as well as theory the study was built on.

Teye, Awumbila and Nikoi (2019) examined the challenges to the implementation of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Protocol on Free

Movement, with particular reference to Ghana and Sierra Leone. The study was based on a desktop review and in-depth interviews with selected ECOWAS migrants and officials of institutions responsible for managing migration in Ghana and Sierra Leone. The findings suggested that Ghana and Sierra Leone have made modest progress in the implementation of the protocol. Apart from abolishing visa and entry requirements for 90 days, both countries have adopted the standardized ECOWAS Travel Certificate. Despite a few achievements, the following challenges affect the implementation of the free movement protocol in both countries: Policy ambiguities resulting from contradictions between national laws on employment and the ECOWAS Free Movement Protocol; harassment of migrants; migrants' lack of travel documents; low level of knowledge about the ECOWAS protocol; resource constraints; fears of competition with immigrants, especially in Ghana; securitization of migration and migrants; weak labour market and migration information systems, economic challenges and political instability. The study concluded that the future implementation outcomes of the ECOWAS protocol largely depend on the commitment of the member states and financial support that they receive from ECOWAS and its development partners. While ECOWAS should continue to lobby states to implement agreements and protocols, mechanisms must also evolve to deal with states that continue to violate the rights of citizens and migrants. The weakness of the study is that it was limited to Ghana and Sierra Leone while ignoring challenges the implementation of the ECOWAS protocol caused for Nigeria's economic development.

Ajiye (2019) examined the effectiveness of ECOWAS Protocols in the drive towards statehood. The study relied principally on secondary sources of data with extensive consultation of secondary material from the internet, published works of Non-governmental organizations, public and private libraries. It finds that some of ECOWAS policies towards statehood and regional integration have not been effective due to the peculiarities of inadequate funding by the members. The effectiveness or otherwise of ECOWAS to encourage cooperation and integration in the sub-region is however a bone of contention. The organization has been said to have achieved a lot in the area of peace building through mechanisms like the ECOMOG, while a little has been achieved in terms of economic cooperation or monetary integration. The emergence of economic blocs in Europe, North America, Asia, and the Pacific Rim, has created the urgency with which Africa, particularly West Africa, needs to review regional cooperation and integration efforts. Greater regional cooperation and integration efforts are perhaps one of the few flickers of hope left if Africa intends to contain its further marginalization in a world increasingly dominated by competing blocs. The extent to which the national constitutional frameworks within ECOWAS have affected the growth and development of

cooperation and integration has been under contention. This has brought up the argument of whether the constitutional frameworks are suitable for the Community objectives. Although the study did not acknowledge efforts made by ECOWAS and the government of Nigeria to overcome the challenges facing the implementation of ECOWAS protocol on free movement of goods and persons for an improved Nigeria's economic development, however the study recommended that there should be viable and sustainable enforcement mechanisms against member signatories to the ECOWAS Protocols to fulfill their financial obligations.

Theoretical Framework

The study adopted State First Approach as a theoretical framework. State First Approach is a theory of integration which claims that creation of centralized political institutions at the regional level is the best way to build social and economic community. The most outspoken proponent of this theory is Nkuruma (1963) in his book "Africa Must Unit" where he argues that African economic integration must proceed under sound political direction to permit the planning of complementary industrial development.

The amalgamationists position seems to be on how existing government can be persuaded to yield sovereignty to regional organizations. Nevertheless, amalgamationists emphasized that strong regional institutions offer a corrective to the purer forms of functionalism and interventionism which minimized their significance. The issue of solidarity and unity has been viewed as essential, not only as far as the continental integration agenda is concerned, but also given the fact that for them, not a single African country can change the socio-political and economic relations with the global system and countries controlling it (Ugwuja, 2019). Central to this view of solidarity and unity among African countries to achieve continental integration are several key issues: Applying the amalgationalist position to the explication of the lacklustre implementation of the ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement, the point needs to be made that it has been largely shaped by the character of politics in the ECOWAS member states. This is reflective in the reluctance of member states to transfer decision-making powers to the regional body which still lies squarely with the national governments of member states. In other words, there is a great tendency in the ECOWAS framework for the internal politics of the member states to intrude in the works of the community thereby stultifying the emergence of a truly supra-national entity which in itself is a desideratum for a proper regional integration. It is this that accounts for inability of the community to enact and enforce laws; its legislations and protocols are often left at the mercy of the national governments of member states to decide whether to enforce or not.

Methodology

This research adopted descriptive design to ensure accurate description of the phenomenon under study. ECOWAS Secretariat, Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Federal Ministry of Trade and Investment Headquarters, Abuja, Nigeria Export Promotion Council, Nigerian Chamber of Commerce, Nigeria Customs Service, Abuja, Nigeria Immigration Service Abuja. The total population of the study is two thousand and nineteen (2,019). **The Rakesh statistical model for determining sample size was employed in this study to arrive at a definite population size of four hundred (400).** This study adopted purposive sampling technique. The technique allowed the researcher to choose the sample on the basis of some predetermined characteristics such as deep knowledge of the issue under study.

Data Presentation and Interpretation of Results

Four hundred (400) copies of questionnaire were distributed to officials of ECOWAS Secretariat, Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Federal Ministry of Trade and Investment Headquarters, Abuja, Nigeria Export Promotion Council, Nigerian Chamber of Commerce, Nigeria Customs Service, Abuja, Nigeria Immigration Service Abuja while three hundred and seventy-six (376) copies of questionnaire were filled and retrieved. Thus 376 out of the 400 copies of questionnaire were used to analyze the data.

Table 1: Challenges of the ECOWAS Protocol

| Options | Frequency | % |
|--|------------|------------|
| Lack of Political Will among Member-states | 89 | 24 |
| Bribery & corruption of security operatives at the borders | 51 | 13 |
| Inadequate understanding of the Free Movement Protocol | 52 | 14 |
| The lack of good roads and well developed seaports | 86 | 23 |
| All of the above | 98 | 26 |
| Total | 376 | 100 |

Source: Field Data, January (2023).

As seen on table 1 above shows that there are numerous challenges facing the implementation of the ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of Goods and Persons for Nigeria's economic development: eighty-nine (89) respondents representing twenty-four (24%) indicated lack of Political Will among Member-states; eighty-six (86) respondents representing twenty-three (23%) said lack of good roads and well developed seaports; fifty-two (52) respondents accounting for fourteen (14%) ticked inadequate understanding of the Free Movement Protocol; fifty-one (51) respondents representing thirteen (13%) percent pointed to Bribery & corruption of security operatives at the borders while those who indicated all of the above constituted the majority with ninety-eight (98) representing twenty-six (26%) percent.

The above result is in tandem with an interview response conducted with a staff of the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs who noted that there has been a gross lack of political will on the part of Africa states to translate goals and objectives into reality. A major impediment to operationalising supranationalism in Africa is the fact that regional institutions are not independent enough to implement integration initiatives. These institutions are expected to operate in accordance with the whims of member states which are often run by dictators with personal interests at heart, rather than to fulfil the ambitious objectives of the organisation. It is thus not uncommon to see the dissolution or derailment of integration initiatives based on the change of government in member states, or personal differences among heads of state (Interviewed January 16th 2023).

Elumelu (2015) conducted a study on 3,000 sampled migrants across the three borders within the ECOWAS region revealed numerous problems impeding free movement of persons across the sub-region. According to him, politically, some of the major problems working against free movement include the reluctance on the part of national governments and the perceived notions of relinquishing sovereignty that leads to the lack of political will to fully implement agreements signed by ECOWAS Heads of State. More often than not, member states still invoke their sovereign right to govern despite their commitment to the protocol. The result, therefore, is that they are mostly unwilling to put adequate structures on the ground to implement the Free Movement Protocol. This has left acute gaps for corrupt security operatives and their proxies to hijack the process and enact their laws which run parallel to community laws, all under the watch of the leaders who signed the protocol. Going further, a staff of the Federal Ministry of Trade and Investment Headquarters, Abuja submitted that:

Countries can hide behind national order and security concerns to refuse granting of residence permits... Practically anything can fall under public security. I mean if I get up and say that you are against the security of the state so I'm deporting you that is it, I don't have to explain to you how you are against the security of this state. So that provision gives a leeway for nations to manipulate the system depending on whether they want you or they don't want you (Interviewed January 20th 2023).

Opanike and Aduloju (2016) argue that the Nigeria-Niger border has become transit zones for all forms of trans-border crimes. Thousands are dying at the hands of human traffickers who trafficked people from Nigeria to Europe through the desert via Nigeria-Niger-Algeria-Libya borders. They opined that the problem lies with the poor implementation of the protocol, and as such trans-border criminals are now taking undue advantage of the protocol'. To this end, Ochoga (2019) corroborated this position further: The protocol has not helped the security landscape of the sub-region.

It constitutes more security concerns than boosting regional trade and economic development. Furthermore, the border security agents have turned border security into private business, encouraging smuggling of contrabands into Nigeria with just a tip of tokens.

The statements above show that some of the ECOWAS citizens do not have adequate understanding of the Free Movement Protocol. The statements also indicate that harassment at the borders is linked to the lack of travel documents. However, the accounts of some migrants suggest that it is indeed the harassment at the borders that make people reluctant to acquire travel documents. They asserted that border officials are more interested in the money they extort from people than travel documents and given that travellers who have all their travel documents are also required to make unofficial payments, there is no incentive to acquire travel documents.

Table 2 Tabular representation of Progress and Challenges in Nigeria's implementation of the Free Movement Protocol

| Indicator/Item | Key Characteristics, Achievements, and Gaps |
|---|---|
| Economic Features | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Strong economy in West Africa due to large markets, human capital, and the presence of opportunities both in the formal and informal sectors. - Economic hegemon in West Africa |
| Migration Profile | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Important migrant destination for migrants in West Africa - The Bulk of the migrants in Nigeria from ECOWAS countries are from Benin, Ghana, and Mali |
| Progress with Implementation of the Free Movement Protocol and Key Achievements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ratified the Free Movement Protocol of 1979 and its supplementary protocols - Abolished visa and entry requirements for 90 days - Uses the ECOWAS Common Passport - Adoption of the ECOWAS Brown Card Motor Vehicle Insurance Scheme - Adoption of the use of biometric identity cards |
| Gaps/Challenges | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prioritization of national interests over the ECOWAS regional agenda - Divergences in certain areas of national laws and policies from ECOWAS laws on migration - Ineffective border management systems - Knowledge and information deficit regarding ECOWAS policies and laws on migration on the part of security operatives |

Source: Joseph (2021).

There is a strong nexus between the effective implementation of integration initiatives and the autonomy of regional institutions. The ability of these institutions to act above member states in respect of specific areas of common interests ensures that integration is firmly placed in capable and neutral hands and insulated from the vagaries of national politics. It also guarantees that integration proceeds at a significant pace since decisions will not always be taken unanimously or by consensus.

Table 3: Temporal closure of border, adoption of ECOWAS Common External Tariff, import restriction and Joint Border Patrol are the obvious effort made by ECOWAS

| Option | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------|------------|-------------|
| Strongly Agree | 189 | 50% |
| Agree | 168 | 45% |
| Disagree | 10 | 3% |
| Strongly Disagree | 9 | 2% |
| Undecided | - | - |
| Total | 376 | 100% |

Source: Field Data, January (2023).

Table 3 reveals that temporal closure of border, adoption of ECOWAS Common External Tariff, import restriction and Joint Border Patrol such as Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) are the obvious effort made by ECOWAS and the government of Nigeria to overcome the challenges facing the implementation of ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of goods and persons for an improved Nigeria's economic development. This is supported by one hundred and eighty-nine (189) respondents or fifty (50%) percent who strongly agreed and those who agreed are one hundred and sixty-eight (168) representing forty-five (45%). Ten (10) respondents representing three (3%) percent disagreed while nine (9) respondents or two (2%) percent strongly disagreed.

Ascertaining this, an official of the ECOWAS Secretariat exposed that:

The analysis is in agreement with the submission by Golub, Mbaye, & Golubski, (2019) who noted that, more recently, in August 2019, the Federal Government of Nigeria under President Mohammed Buhari announced the closure of land borders mostly to tackle the case of rice smuggling from Benin Republic. Given Nigeria's larger population, economy, and natural resource wealth, Benin adopted a strategy centered on being an "entrepôt state," i.e., serving as a trading hub, importing goods and re-exporting them legally but most often illegally to Nigeria, thus profiting from distortions in Nigeria's economy. As the fifth-largest importer of rice in the world with a population of only about 12million, smugglers from Benin illegally sell over 90% of this imported rice without paying customs duties, tax, or other forms of duties traders trading legally across the borders ought to pay. Not

only has this resulted in a loss of government revenue, but created several distortions in the Nigerian market economy especially in the agricultural sector.

The major justifications given for the recent closure of borders are the quest to protect national security, protect infant industries, and checkmate illegal activities and the importation of contraband goods. There has been an outcry from the regional community as stakeholders claim that the border closure goes against all trade and free movement treaties signed by Nigeria at the regional level. Ghana, Niger, Chad, and Benin have all experienced economic downturns in one way or the other as Nigeria's 200million inhabitants provide a large market for producers in these countries and according to the ECOWAS Commission Chairman, it has also had a negative impact on the volume of inter-community trade between 2019 and 2020. The border closure suggests two things – one is that with Nigeria being the “regional hegemon” it can dictate what it does by flouting the rules and the other is that it is a breach of the protocol. The question is what smaller member states can do to Nigeria if it breaches the protocol. There is a kind of counter imbalance between how Nigeria behaves and its role within the community as Nigeria contributes about 60% of the community levy and its regional power status is adversely affecting how it behaves.

Discussion of Findings

- i. The study established that the lack of political will among ECOWAS members to submit part of their sovereignty, lack of trust among member-states, refusal to fully implement the free movement of goods, persons and right of establishment provisions by member-states, language barrier, and colonial differences are challenges to proper implementation of the policies and protocol under review. This means that research proposition one (1) which states that **several challenges are** facing the full implementation of ECOWAS protocol on free movement of goods and persons for Nigeria's economic development.
- ii. In ascertaining the measures put in place by ECOWAS and the government of Nigeria in order to forestall or overcome the challenges facing the implementation of ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of Persons and Goods for an improved Nigeria's economic development, respondents have applauded the federal government of Nigeria and other stakeholders in their efforts to regulate the illegal movement and trade through porous borders. To the respondent, most security agents have been sufficiently deployed. Government has also Adoption of ECOWAS Common External Tariff, border closure, import restriction, Joint Border Patrol such as Multinational Joint Task

Force (MNJTF), among other relevant regional security measures. With this the Nigerian Government has listed higher import revenue, lower domestic fuel consumption and increased rice production by local farmers among the gains of the closure of the country's land borders. Therefore, the finding is in agreement with research proposition two (2) that temporal closure of border is the obvious effort made by ECOWAS and the government of Nigeria to overcome the challenges facing the implementation of ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of goods and persons for an improved Nigeria's economic development.

Conclusion

The ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement has succeeded to remove the border lines instituted by colonialists indicating a tremendous acceptance to the idea of economic integration in the sub-region. However, the general economic downturn of ECOWAS member-states is responsible for the backlash between ECOWAS migrants and their host states. Even though the enactment of the Protocol of Free Movement, Right of Residency and Establishment was to accelerate the economic cooperation and integration of member states of Economic Community of West African States, thereby creating a sustainable economic development that will impact positively on the lives and wellbeing of citizens. However, the issue of economic crisis and security challenges confronting member's states of ECOWAS has not helped the members to engage in collective effort at implementing the measures for the overall interest of the member states as envisaged.

As with any other regional agreement/treaty all over the world, the implementation of the ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence, and Establishment comes with its challenges; however, the reaction to these challenges ultimately determine the nature of results gotten from the ECOWAS integration agenda. About Nigeria, and other states within the region, it becomes pertinent to see these challenges not as stumbling blocks to the furtherance of national interests or national security, but as an opportunity to find joint solutions to problems that affect all.

Recommendations

- i. Though there have been previous joint initiatives aimed at facilitating the implementation of the Protocol on Free Movement including the ECOWAS Common Approach on Migration, the ECOWAS Cross Border Cooperation Fund, as well the establishment of monitoring units at selected border posts, the Government of Nigeria should work more in collaboration with neighboring member states to find joint solutions aimed at tackling the

ineffective border management systems, smuggling, and illegal migration rather than adopting protectionist policies that do not augur well for regional integration in the long run.

- ii. The commission should review the provisions of the movement of goods, persons and right of establishments, economic development and trade liberalization policies to meet up with the current economic needs of her member-states, it should be complimented by full implementation of ECOWAS Common External Tariff so that foreign investors/traders will be indifferent as to which of the ECOWAS Member State to trade with, and also support it with other trade facilitation policies that will lead to reduction in the trade cost and the number of days that will be required for preparing documents for export.

Limitations of the Study

The study is limited by the inability of the researcher to physically interview the various Heads of States and Government in Africa to get their opinion on the workability of the treaty as well as their personal opinion on what they feel could constitute an impediment to its success. The study is further limited by the inability of some respondents to fill and return completed questionnaire despite efforts by the researcher to get to them to complete them.

Suggestion for Further Study

The study suggest that a study should be conducted on ECOWAS free trade and international trade between Nigeria and Ghana, Sudan and Niger

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