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Building sustainable policy framework for transport development: A review of national transport policy initiatives in Nigeria

AbdulGaniyu Femi Sumaila *

Department of Transport Management Technology, Federal University of Technology, Minna, Nigeria

Abstract

This paper is concerned with building a sustainable policy framework for transport development in Nigeria. Its objective is to review the country's transport policy initiatives in order to understand the extent to which it addresses Nigeria's mobility and transportation problems. From published materials and official government documents and files, the study identifies four national policy initiatives which are reviewed and analysed with regard to their context, contents, and consequences. The study reveals that while the policy initiatives could be said to be adequate and comprehensive in terms of their context and contents, the major challenge is implementation of recommended solutions. The study therefore provides a general checklist to guide policy direction, while advocating for policy-based researches and empirical studies in order to provide the data base for formulation of a sustainable national transport policy for Nigeria.

Keywords: Policy thrust, Policy goals, Deregulation, Privatization, Integrated transport

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* Corresponding author. E-mail address: drsumaila56@yahoo.com

1. Introduction

Since independence in 1960, the Nigerian transport system has continued to wallow in crisis, and confronted by myriads of problems even to the point of near paralysis. Such problems can be summarized to include the following among others:

- I. Poor and inadequate planning
- II. Weak intermodal coordination
- III. Insufficient public transport to cope with ever increasing demand for movement
- IV. Urban traffic congestion
- V. Neglect of rural transport
- VI. Safety and security challenges
- VII. Environmental pollution

Table 1 highlights the main issues and their associated problems at modal level. The nature, magnitude and dimensions of these problems including their possible solutions do not only feature prominently in both official and research documents on Nigeria, but are also placed in the front burner of major discourse on Nigeria. What has remained disturbing today is the continuing inability of the various solutions to effect significant improvement in the transport system. Rather the situation appears to be getting worse (Sumaila, 2008).

It is being argued that the mobility crisis has been exacerbated by the fact that there is yet no clearly articulated policy for transport development in Nigeria. This position is anchored on the general consensus that there exists in the transport system today an imbalance between resource allocations to the various modes, gross inadequacy of existing infrastructural facilities, and the misalignment between the objectives of transport parastatals, and operators, and the material and organisational resources for them. These, no doubt, are fundamental issues which a national policy should strive to address and resolve. It can therefore be concluded that the persistent inefficiencies in the Nigerian transport system may be due to, or attributable to policy inconsistencies, defects and weaknesses which have resulted in piece-meal and uncoordinated transport programme planning and implementation.

This paper therefore provides an evaluation of the country's transport policy initiatives in order to understand the extent to which they were fashioned to address Nigeria's mobility crisis. The paper therefore proposes a checklist of policy areas encompassing the wide variety of concerns that directly impact on mobility improvement and transport efficiently which should form the central focus of a new National Transport Policy for Nigeria.

Table 1. Issues and Problems in Nigerian Transport System

Issues	Air	Maritime	Rail	Road	Pipelines	Inland Waterways
Infrastructure	.many Uneconomic Airports .Poor airport Facilities .Poor and inadequate Maintenance	.Uneconomic Seaports .Old Port Facilities .Poor Port Access .Unmaintained Terminal Facilities	.Old, narrow Gauge .Poor gradient, many curves .Dilapidated Rail Stations .Poor Communication and Signalling System	.Poorly Maintained Roads .Poor Rural Access and Interchange Facilities .Poor Road Complimentary Facilities	.poorly protected and ageing pipes Poor distribution .Poor Road links to depots	.Shallow channels .Seasonal water Levels .Presence of sand bars .Numerous wrecks and weeds.
Vehicle	.Ageing Aircrafts .Low Fleet	.Preponderance of Foreign Vessels	.Ageing Locomotives and wagons .Unavailability to spare parts	.Numerous small capacity Vehicles .Old Rickety Vehicles		.Unsafe Local boats
Operations	.Low Level of Indigenous Participation .Funding problems .heavy debt burdens	.low Level of Indigenous Participation .Poor Handling .Excessive Government Participation	Poor Operations and Management .Poor Funding .Large staff Strength .Huge Pension	.Numerous operators .Inadequate skills .Increasing accidents and high Fatalities	.pipeline vandalization	.Unorganized Operators
Policy/ Planning	.Absence of integrated Policy .Institutional Conflicts	.Institutional Frictions .Excessive Bureaucracy .Poor Plan Implementation	.Absence of Road Policy .Poor planning	.Uncoordinated Road Development .Erratic Funding	.No Integrated Policy	.Poorly Integrated

Source: From Sumaila 2008

2. Imperative of transport policy

A policy can be conceptualized as a set of ideas, guidelines, goals, aspirations, and vision for better society. Based on this conceptualization, Tolly and Turton,(1995) conceive of transport policy as the process of regulating and controlling the provision of transport with a view to facilitating the efficient operation of the economic, social and political life of any country at the lowest social cost. Indeed, Transport Policy is the framework for transport regulation and control implying a rule – setting function on the part of the government with a view to providing a rational, efficient, comfortable, safe and cost- effective transport

system. Thus, according to Oyesiku (2004), transport policy forms the basis for the planning and direction of growth of the transport system and the extent to which the planning and provision of transport provide appropriate solutions. He argues that the approaches to transport provision as well as the efficiency of the transport system are directly related to the nature and dynamism of the transport policy of a country.

Transport policy is generally a response to the needs of a society and this is what makes it flexible and dynamic. Based on the values of a society, a policy outlines what transport the society wants, how it wants it and how to go about it. Thus, transport policy has many cross-sectional implications which make its goals largely interdependent (Sumaila, 2008).

Hodgson (2012) argues that transport policy is designed to specifically deal with and focus on general societal phenomenon of mobility which is the very nature of today's society as against seeing mobility as a mere characteristic of the society. Indeed transport policy treats mobility as a core trait of the modern world. According to him, the goal of transport policy is therefore not to change mobility itself, but rather the pattern of mobility in order to find a way to make the said nature of today's society compactable with actual society. He concludes that this complexity of political goals in transport policy makes the question of policy design outstandingly interesting for policy research.

Mercado et al. (2007) have provided an analytic framework to evaluate transport policies within and across countries. This framework focuses on three elements of a policy, namely; Context, Content, and Consequence. They argue that such analytic framework and dissection of policy goals and values are important in understanding why specific transport strategies are adopted over the other and why variations occur across countries. Thus, from a policy analyst's perspective, this implies a conscious need to situate existing or proposed policies within the country's framing of the policy problem.

According to them, transportation policies are analysed with respect to the context upon which they were formulated. These include the institutional set-up and policy motivations derived from the country's socio-economic and political circumstances. While the institutional analysis evaluates the country's general government structure and how sub-national entities fit into the policy formulation and implementation process, policy motivations are analysed in terms of the country's transport framework messages such as their-end goals.

With regard to policy contents, they are summed up in terms of policy objectives, approaches and solutions, while consequence relates to the policy outcomes and performance of policy solutions. They posit that often policy intentions can be undermined by the actual implementation of adopted programme approaches and solutions bringing about poor outcomes or unintended consequences

3. Methodology

Information for the study was obtained wholly from published materials and official Government documents and files. The National Planning Commission, Federal Ministry of Transport, and its Parastatals, and the Bureau for Public Enterprises were the main sources of data. Independent reports and studies from government, academic institutions, research institutes, foreign and local consultancy groups were used to

supplement the investigation and fill gaps that exist in government documents. From these sources, the following policy documents were obtained.

i. The 1965 Statement of Policy on Transport.

This was the first attempt by the Federal Government of Nigeria to express concern about the operating condition of the Nigeria's transport system. The policy statement was an outcome of the Stanford Research Institute study commissioned by the Federal Government in 1961.

ii. 1993 Transport Policy for Nigeria.

In response to the extreme malfunctioning of the nation's transport system and the complexities of the associated problems, the document emerged as the first National Transport Policy christened "Moving out of crisis"

iii. The 2003 Draft National Transport Policy Document.

This was commissioned by the Federal Ministry of Transport to address the visible competition between transport modes especially Road and Rail transport. But this document exists today only in draft form.

iv. The 2008 Draft National Transport Policy.

This document was commissioned by the Bureau for Public Enterprises following the decision of government to withdraw from provision of services including transport. Like the 2003 document, it also did not go beyond the draft stage.

It must be pointed out that though the 2003 and 2008 policy initiatives may not be regarded as official policy documents for the country, we observed that government investment and funding decisions, including management techniques during the period reflected the aspirations and desires expressed in these draft documents. We therefore included them in our analysis.

The study therefore focused on the evaluation of these four policy initiatives. The analytic framework derives from the evaluation elements used by Mercado et al (2007) but with some modifications. Our evaluation of the policy initiatives therefore concentrated on their thrusts and goals; their objectives, approaches and solutions, and their implementation. The evaluation was carried out within the context of the impact of these policy initiatives on transport efficiency and mobility improvement in the country. The results of the evaluation are discussed in what follows,

4. Evaluation of the Policy Initiatives

4.1. Policy thrusts and goals

Given the trends in the political, economic and social circumstances of the country, it is not surprising to find distinct thrusts as well as diverging mindsets and visions in the policy initiatives. On the other hand, it is

interesting to note that these initiatives are in many respects in unison in terms of policy goals. Table 2 encapsulates these nuances in policy thrusts, visions and goals.

Table 2. Policy Thrusts and Goals

Policy Initiatives	Policy Thrusts	Goals
1965 Statement	National Coordination	Coordination of Allocation of Resources
1993 Policy	Modal Development	Adequacy and Efficiency
2003 (Draft) Policy	Integrated Transport	Adequacy, Efficiency, Affordability, Safety, and Environmental Friendliness
2008 (Draft) Policy	Deregulation	Market – Driven Transport System

Source; Analysis of Policy Documents, 2012

With regard to policy thrusts, the 1965 Statement was based on the vision of national coordination of transport development. It was envisioned that transport should be a matter of national not sectional concern, which Nigeria should approach on the basis of the entire nation's needs and resources. Any other approach will result in duplication and wastage of resources which Nigeria cannot afford (FRN, 1965). Consequently the policy had as its goal the coordination of resource allocation to the modes of transport. Unfortunately, the thrust and goals of this policy led to the emergence of sub- sectoral policies resulting in fragmented evolution of the transportation system and consequently tremendous decay and breakdown of the system in the 1970s and 80s. Indeed by the 1990s, the World Bank had noted a mobility crisis in Nigeria.

On the basis of these developments, the 1993 National Transport Policy emerged with its thrust on modal development to be achieved within the context of the twin goals of adequacy and efficiency. In pursuance of this, the government embarked on gigantic transport facility construction and rehabilitation with the result that different sub- sectors continued to grow and develop independently.

In swift response to this, the Draft Transport Policy of 2003 had as its thrust integrated transport while retaining as fundamental goals the provision of adequate, safe , efficient and environmentally – friendly transport system. In enunciating this policy thrust, inspirations must have been drawn from the United Kingdom's experience where it was stated inter alia that “...we cannot go on as we were, trying to build more and more new roads to cope with growing level of traffic. Instead, we must have more real transport choice , better buses and trains , a better deal for the motorist, better maintained roads, a railway working for the passenger, more money for public transport, more freight on the railway and safer and more secure transport system. Developing and integrated transport policy therefore represents a major shift in direction.

We don't just want to stop traffic problems getting worse; we actually want to make things better for people and goods on the move (DETR, 1998).

Integrated transport policy thrust also addressed one of the country's central concerns which was tackling intermodal competition evidenced in the neglect of certain modes such as rail and inland waterway transport. The country was burdened with over-reliance on road transport to the extent that about 90% of both people and goods movement in the country was road-based. It was therefore the desire of government to embark on network integration, intermodal operation and achieve seamless transport system.

Following a shift in Government economic policy and in line with global best practice, the thrust of the 2008 draft policy was Privatization and Deregulation with the goal of a market-driven transport system. This was based on the conviction that Government has "no business with doing business". It must therefore transfer the responsibilities of its direct involvement in the functioning of the transport system to the private sector.

It can be concluded from the foregoing analysis that the four policy initiatives had well defined thrusts and goals which in each case attempted to provide a framework for tackling prevailing transportation problems within the socio- economic and political realities of the country.

4.2. Policy objectives

The policy thrusts and goals discussed in the previous sub-section find translation in the specific objectives of the policy initiatives Table 3 comprehensively summarizes the objectives on modal basis. Each of the policy initiatives expressed specific objectives to reflect the varying needs and circumstances of each mode of transport. For instance, the objective of diversifying funding sources for road construction and maintenance expressed in the 1965 document was restated in the 1993 policy initiative with the addition of reorganising road transport industry and paying attention to road- vehicle interface. The 2003 and 2008 draft documents on the other hand expressed the objective of encouraging private participation in road construction and maintenance and especially leaving public transport operation in the hands of the private sector.

These objectives were targeted at exploring alternative sources of funds for road construction and maintenance especially in the face of dwindling government funds arising from increased competition and resource demands by other sectors of the economy. It was therefore envisaged that private sector involvement in all aspects of road transport and indeed in all modes of transport would be a viable government strategy.

Similarly the objective stated for other modes of transport place emphasis on modal growth and development through increased funding and structural reorganisation, while private sector participation in the development and operation of the modes was given prominence in the policy initiatives. Safety and environmental quality and friendliness were uniquely emphasised in the initiatives for all modes. All these were meant to address problems identified as hindering the operational efficiency of the transport system.

Table 3. Policy objectives

Policy Initiative	General	Road	Rail	Maritime and Water	Air	Pipeline
1965 statement	.promote coordination.	.Diversify funding sources for Construction and Maintenance.	.Promote mutual Cooperation between shippers and Railway Corporation	.Identification of the developmental needs of water transport.	.Increase funding of Air transport.	
1993	.Promote mode-based development programmes. .Show concerns for environmental quality. .Encourage Professionalism in transport.	.Explore new sources of funding .Encourage intermodal approach to freight transport .Pay attention to road-vehicle interface. .Re-organize road transport industry.	.Promote better use of existing rail assets .Adoption of commercial approach to rail Management	.improve institutional structure and operational features of seaports .Ensure efficient and adequate access to ports by all modes. .Control and improve customs clearing and documentation procedures .Monitor the role of River and Coastal Ports .Encourage private sector participation in Inland Waterways.	.Promote economic utilization of Airport Facilities .Encourage the running of Local routes .Intensify the supervision of private airlines. .avail the country of the opportunities of technological development in the industry.	.Recognizes pipelines as major means of transport .Encourage its use for transportation of liquid products. .Provide regulatory measures for the security and safety of infrastructure and persons in the sub-sector.

Policy Initiative	General	Road	Rail	Maritime and Water	Air	Pipeline
2003	.Introduce discipline of market economy to transport. .attract private sector investment .Government as enabler rather than provider of service	.Encourage private participation in road construction. .Strengthen traffic law enforcement .Leaves public transport operation with the private sector.	.resuscitate rail transport. .Identify areas of private sector involvement.	.To improve port efficiency .Harmonize laws of agencies and resolve conflicts. .To prepare an Inland waterways masterPlan.	.Identification of existing problems and bottlenecks in the sector. .Reorganize existing airports.	.Encourage integration into National Transport System.
2008	Privatization and commercialization of road facilities.	.Private sector to participate in road construction and maintenance.	.Carry out rehabilitation and modernization of rail line. .Serve as attractive means of high-speed passenger movement.	.Eliminate multiplicity of government agencies in ports .Rehabilitate existing ports. .Ensures Policy stability. .To implement inland waterways masterPlan.	Encourage private sector participation in provision of airport facilities. .Strengthen existing domestic Airlines.	.Ensure integration into National Transport System.

Source: Analysis of Policy Documents 2012

4.3. Policy approaches and solutions

Transport objectives become more diverse when translated to more specific approaches, and solutions. Table 4 takes stock of the various approaches, recommended solutions, and instruments of the four policy initiatives, and specifies them for each mode of transport. They are discussed as follows.

Table 4. Policy Approaches and Solutions

Policy Initiatives	General	Road	Rail	Maritime/ Water	Air	Pipelines
1965 Statement	.establishment of Transport Coordination and Policy Implementation Unit in Ministry of Transport and Aviation	.Prohibit heavy axle load vehicle on the roads. .introduce fuel and vehicle taxes .Establish Elite Police Road Patrol.	.Marketing Boards to transport their products through railway	.Develop Baro as an Inland Port.	.Provide Continuous subsidy for Nigerian Airways.	
1993 Policy	.select two Universities as centres of Excellence for Transport studies .Regular conduct of Studies	.introduce user charges as Funding Sources. .Establish Government Industry Initiative Productivity Council .Run Courses, Seminars and Workshops for Operators in conjunction with Nigerian Institute of Transport Technology, Zaria.	.Carry out rehabilitation of rail assets	.Fund National Maritime Authority and Nigerian shippers Council. .Provide road and Rail access to ports. .Institute Customs Clearing and Documentation System .Carry out Capital dredging and Cannalization of Inland waterways.	.Classify Nigerian Air Ports into International, National and Local. .Distribute domestic routes between public and private carriers. .Provide adequate equipment and qualified manpower to manage them.	.Extend pipelines to all states, major urban centres and industrial, agricultural and commercial centres.
2003	.Adopt Public Private Partnership approach. .Creation of National Council on Transport for policy implementation	.Adopt performance based maintenance Management Programme. .Increase funding of Road Safety	.Modernize the locomotives .Clear the rail lines of obstruction	.carry out Port Reforms. .Eliminate Revenue leakages in the Ports.	.Carry out an audit of existing Airlines.	.Secure the nations Pipelines

Policy Initiatives	General	Road	Rail	Maritime/ Water	Air	Pipelines
		Agencies				
2008	.Concessioning of Transport Infrastructural facilities	.Road concessioning for Construction and Maintenance. .Private transport Operations	.Change the narrow-gauge system to standard gauge. .Concession viable rail lines.	.Adopt the LandLord Port Model. .Concession existing Ports. .Implement Inland Water Ways MasterPlan.	.Concession existing Airports .Sale of Nigerian Airways.	.allocate liquid and semi-liquid products to pipelines

Source: Analysis of Policy Documents 2012

The first set of solutions concerns modal development and operations. All the policy initiatives recognized the need to promote modal development by specifying measures covering funding improvement for all modes, rehabilitation and modernisation of rail assets, concessioning of roads for construction and maintenance, road and rail access to Seaports, capital dredging and canalization of Inland Waterways, Airport modernization and provision of state-of-the-art equipment, and extension of pipelines to all states, and activity centres in the country. Of all the policy initiatives, the 1993 National Transport Policy showed the most aggressive stance on modal development. The Policy also spelt out economic instruments such as road user charges, port charges and both aeronautic and non-aeronautic charges at the nation's airports, as sources of funds.

Another set of solutions relates to improvement in transport services. Such solutions include reduced government involvement in service provision, directive to Marketing Boards to transport their products through railway, training of private transport operators to improve their efficiency, and distribution of domestic air routes between public and private carriers with direct incentives to indigenous operators and direct allocation of liquid and semi-liquid products to pipelines. While most of these solutions cater for general transport service improvement at modal levels, there are those that were designed to specifically meet the mobility needs of urban and rural dwellers. These were specially highlighted in 1993 and 2003 documents which recommended the establishment of Federal Urban Transport Board to be responsible for solving urban movement problems at any level. There were also solutions relating to enforcement of traffic management measures, rules and regulations in order to improve traffic discipline, integrating the use of urban transport system (buses, rail, water and Para-transit among others), and the provision of adequate interchange points to take care of this integration. Incentives to operators plying rural routes were recommended in the 2008 policy initiative.

Institutional reforms and policy management solutions were also clearly expressed in the policy initiatives. For instance while the 1965 document recommended the establishment of Transport Coordination and Policy Implementation Unit in the Ministry of Transport and Aviation, the 2003 policy recommended the creation of National Council on Transport for policy implementation which was also restated in subsequent policy initiatives. At modal levels, an Elite Police Road Patrol was to be created, while concessioning was to be adopted as a management tool for Road, Rail, Airports and Seaports in the country. There was also the adoption of the Landlord Port Model for management of the Nation's Seaports whose practical application would entail comprehensive port reforms.

4.4. Policy implementation

A major challenge facing transport development in the country today has to do with the implementation of policy recommendations. The process of policy formulation may partly be responsible for this. The 1965 policy statement was more or less the summary statement of a research report. Expectedly, the policy guides were not strictly followed while its various approaches and instruments adopted and used by government made worse the transportation system within about two decades that followed. In the same vein, the 2003 and 2008 policy initiatives though comprehensively conceived, did not go beyond the draft form implying that implementation of their recommendations were strictly not binding on government. What these translate to is that only the 1993 document could strictly be said to be the only National Transport Policy Document for the country.

A major fall – out of this development is that policy implementation has been based on the whims and caprices of the various Honourable Ministers of Transport that have served the country since Independence. The matter is made worse by the unstable and perhaps confusing institutional mechanism for transport sector administration and management in the country. Table 5 presents a listing of key government ministries, parastatals, and sub-national entities with defined responsibilities for transport. Though government has continuously constituted Inter-Ministerial Committees to handle policy implementation, they have been generally ineffective due to undue bureaucracy. At the Ministry level, the National Council on Transport has been meeting for many years, but its effectiveness is hampered by the Constitution which assigns specific responsibilities to each of the three tiers of government namely Federal, State, and Local Government Councils. In addition, representations of other relevant Ministries in such meetings have been generally poor. All these make coordination of policy solutions generally weak.

The Nigerian experience has shown that implementation of policy solutions has continued to be done haphazardly. Though Transport Coordination Department exists in the Federal Ministry of Transport, it continues to undergo functional changes just as the Ministry itself has continued to transit variously from a single Ministry of Transport and Aviation to their separation, then to the creation of a mega Ministry of Transportation comprising Transport, Aviation and Works Ministries before its present demerger to their former independent status. In 2002 the Federal Ministry of Transport commissioned the preparation of a Master Plan for Integrated Transport Infrastructure (MITI) with the objective of achieving network integration in the country. This objective formed the main thrust of the 2003 Draft Policy. But while this was

being prepared, three different modal plans were in progress namely the 25-year Rail Vision plan, National Inland Waterway Plan and the Port Master Plan. Following the commissioning of the 2008 policy initiative, the Bureau for Public Enterprises pushed for the establishment of a National Transport Regulatory Commission. This is now being coordinated in the Presidency under a National Mass Transit Programme.

Table 5. Institutional Framework for Transport Matters

Key National Transport Institution	Key Parastatals	State and Local Authorities
Federal Ministry of Transport	.Nigerian Ports PLC .Nigerian Railway Corporation .National Inland Waterways Authority .Nigerian Shippers Council .Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency .Nigerian Institute of Transport Technology .Nigerian Maritime Academy	.State Ministry of Transport .Urban Transport Agencies .Local Government Councils
Federal Ministry of Aviation	.Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria .Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority .Nigerian Airspace Management Agency .Nigerian College of Aviation Technology	
Federal Ministry of Works	.Federal Road Maintenance Agency	

Source: National Planning Commission, 2012

Today, government is taking a holistic approach to rebuilding the Nation's Transport infrastructural facilities and improving its service delivery capacity through a reform process aimed at introducing market economy in order to attract private sector investment and initiative in a true Public - Private - Partnership (PPP) arrangement. This places part of the task to invest, own, and manage different elements of the transport system on the shoulders of the private sector but in partnership with Government who will provide an overall enabling environment. The envisaged synergy recognizes the following investment options.

- a) Outright Privatization
- b) Equality Participation
- c) Concessioning in the forms of
 - i. Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT)
 - ii. Build, Operate and Own (BOO)
 - iii. Build, Transfer and Operate (BTO)
 - iv. Build, Own, Operate and Transfer (BOOT)
 - v. Design, Build, Finance and Operate (DBFO)
 - vi. Design, Construct, Maintain and Finance (DCMF)

This initiative conceptualized and fashioned out as the Medium Term Strategy for transport development focuses on the following.

- a) Road Construction, Rehabilitation and Maintenance.
- b) Rehabilitation of Rail infrastructure and Rolling stock and construction of new lines on Standard Gauge.
- c) Development and Rehabilitation of Inland Waterways and Terminal Facilities.
- d) Development of Ports Infrastructure and management of operations.
- e) Development of Air Terminal facilities and Runways.
- f) Development of Intermodal transport facilities and operations.

The implementation of these programmes is also being done in an uncoordinated manner. Road rehabilitation and maintenance are being handled by the Federal Ministry of Works through the Federal Road Maintenance Agency (FERMA) while priority highways are being identified for concessioning. Railway Rehabilitation and Modernization Projects are also being carried out in preparation for concessioning of three main lines, while the Eight Seaports of the country have been delineated into 25 terminals and concessioned to Private Operators. The capital dredging of Lower River Niger is in progress while Inland River Ports are being developed. Airport facilities are being privatized while the National carrier - the Nigerian Airways has being sold.

5. Recommendations and Conclusion

This study has provided a framework for analysing and evaluating the country's national Transport Policy Initiatives. The paper traced the evolution of transport policy in Nigeria and identified four policy initiatives which were evaluated. The policies were evaluated within the framework of their context (thrust and goals); contents (objectives, approaches and solutions) and consequence (implementation and outcomes)

The study showed that the policy initiatives evolved in response to the needs of the country while their thrusts and goals were fashioned out within the context of her socio- economic and political realities. The objectives, approaches, and recommended solutions were targeted at solving the problems and addressing emerging issues in the country's transport system. The study concludes that while the policy initiatives could be said to be adequate and comprehensive in terms of their context and contents, the major challenge relates to their Implementation which was not only tardy but spasmodic with little or no consequences and outcomes. The fact that the problems and challenges which the policy initiatives sought to solve and address are still inherent and visible in the transport system today implies that their goals, objectives, approaches and solutions are as relevant today as they were at time of formulation.

The study identified some factors affecting the implementation of National transport policy to include the status of each of the policy initiatives, the rather unwieldy institutional mechanism for handling transport matters, the constitutional responsibilities assigned to the three tiers of government and the confusion arising therein, and the series of action plans initiated at various modal levels. This study believes that these problems are attributable to the sheer absence of a comprehensive and current National Transport Policy. Officially, the last and only policy available today is the 1993 National Transport Policy. No doubt, over a period of twenty years, visible changes in the socio- economic, political and demographic variables of the country have taken place. These variables would definitely affect the direction of government policy on transport, hence fresh lines of action must be taken.

Deregulation is now the global practise which the nation has adopted and must pursue. The current reforms of government especially privatization and commercialization of major public transport enterprises must be supported by a sound national transport policy. Core issues such as the type of transport infrastructure we require to meet the mobility needs of different sectors and different population segments, how such infrastructure is to be provided, the service delivery approaches to be adopted, the institutional reforms and policy management initiatives required, legal and human capacity needs, and the safety and environmental quality measures required must be thoroughly and comprehensively treated by a National Policy. These policy areas therefore serve as a general checklist in the current conceptualization and rethinking of transport policy in the country.

Nigeria's current vision and policy framework for transportation should acknowledge the country's unique mobility challenge as a major force that will shape economy and society, a societal change that transportation policy has to adopt in the future alongside the other modern challenges arising from globalisation, urbanization, and high technology explosion. Nigerian policy makers would also need to support more policy – based researches and empirical studies in policy formulation, design and implementation strategies. The problem of dearth and unavailability of data in Nigeria to undertake transport research deserves emphasis as this provides the greatest impediment to evidence – based policy research. The option is to undertake a nation-wide Transportation Survey for a more holistic characterisation of Nigerian transportation system. This would provide the data base for the formulation of an enduring and sustainable National Transport Policy. This would enable the country to look beyond the threshold of hope to consider the future of transportation and the transportation of the future in Nigeria. In these lie the challenges of building a sustainable policy framework for transport development in Nigeria.

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