

THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL CONFLICT ON SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT IN NIGERIA: A CASE STUDY OF THE NIGERIAN PORTS AUTHORITY (NPA)

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ABSTRACT

This research paper discusses how social conflict affects supply chain management in Nigeria with a certain focus on the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) as one of the key nodes in the logistics network of the country. Although Nigerian ports have become very important in promoting international trade, their effectiveness is often compromised by the social conflicts that frequently exist between the labour unions, host communities, and regulatory institutions. Using a recent literature (2020-2024), the study follows a qualitative analytical approach to examine the nature, drivers, and consequences of these conflicts on the performance of supply chains. The results indicate that social conflicts have a major negative impact on the logistics activities, add to the operational expenses, and undermine the cooperation of the supply chain players. The causes of the delays and congestion of cargo and the decrease in reliability of the port services are labour strikes, community agitations, and institutional inefficiencies which contribute to the delays and congestion of cargo and the decrease in reliability of the port

services. In addition, the research points out that bad governance, insufficient corporate social responsibility, and technological non-integration contribute to the challenges. In the paper, a conceptual model that illustrates the relationship between social conflict and supply chain outcomes is proposed, with the moderating factors being the role of governance, stakeholder engagement, and digital innovation. It concludes that social conflict should be addressed to enhance supply chain resilience, enhance trade competitiveness and sustainable economic development in Nigeria.

KEYWORDS: Social Conflict; Supply Chain Management; Nigerian Ports Authority; Port Congestion; Logistics Disruption; Governance; Stakeholder Engagement; Nigeria

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1. Introduction

Supply chain management (SCM) has become an important factor of economic growth, trade efficiency and industrial productivity within the developing economies and in Nigeria in particular. The port system in Nigeria is a very critical feature that helps in the flow of goods, services, and resources within and outside the country. As the backbone of the operations and the regulator of the ports in Nigeria, the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) is at the centre of making the port operations efficient in terms of cargo handling, logistics coordination, and distribution networks. Nevertheless, the continued occurrence of social conflicts in Nigerian ports continues to raise the risk of ineffective supply chain management, which impacts operations, raises transaction costs, and negatively affects overall economic performance.

The notion of social conflict, in the context of supply chains, is the tensions, conflicts, and disruptions between the interactions between stakeholders, including workers, host communities, government agents, and the operators of the private sector. These conflicts can be in different forms like labour strikes, community agitations, militancy, corruption related disputes and institutional inefficiencies. Marshall et al. (2018) find that behavioural, political, and economic factors are often the drivers of social conflict risks in supply chains, and can have a significant impact on coordination and trust among actors. In Nigeria, structural issues such as poor governance, lack of infrastructures, and socio-economic inequalities further complicate these dynamics in Nigeria.

The Nigerian port context is a special case to investigate the overlapping of social conflict and supply chain management. Ports are important nexuses in the global supply chains, which connects producers, distributors, and consumers in international borders. The effective work of the ports is based on the flawless coordination of the actions of many stakeholders, such as shipping companies, customs officials, freight forwarders, and port workers. In Nigeria, however, social conflicts often disrupt this coordination, disrupting the operational flow and lowering the reliability of the system. Oyedijo et al. (2021) observe that institutional bottlenecks and socio-political instabilities usually limit supply chain systems in Africa, especially in Nigeria, and such limitations limit their effectiveness.

Among the key consequences of social conflict in Nigeria ports, the interference of logistics operations can be mentioned. Strikes, protests or security threats can cause increased lead times, congestion and losses to businesses. Ijeomah (2021) emphasizes that inefficiencies in supply chain management in the oil and gas industry in Nigeria, which is closely related to the operations of the ports, are frequently enhanced by the conflicts between the stakeholders and a lack of information sharing. These upheavals not only impact the local business but also reduce the competitiveness of Nigeria in international trade as international partners turn to more viable logistic environments.

Moreover, social conflicts are also a source of more operational risks and costs in the supply chains. Situations of conflict can be associated with extra security measures, insurance fees, and contingency planning, which impose financial liabilities on companies. Olatunji and Ayoola (2024) highlight that in order to mitigate supply chain vulnerabilities in Nigeria, it is important to address the underlying social and institutional risks, such as conflict-related disruptions. Supply chains are vulnerable to uncertainties that may affect the resilience and sustainability of the supply chain without effective conflict management strategies.

The dimension of social conflict in the Nigerian ports that is critical is its effect on relationship and collaboration between the stakeholders. The success of supply chain management depends greatly on the levels of trust, transparency and collaboration between the participants. Nevertheless, conflicts undermine these supports and cause relationships to be broken and unwillingness to exchange information may occur. Ibrahim (2020) stands on the claim that effective risk information sharing in supply chains requires relational behaviours and trust, and their lack can be a significant performance hindrance. Mistrust amongst port users, government agencies and host communities are common causes of inefficiencies and delays in the Nigerian context.

Beyond this, social conflicts in port environments strongly correlate with wider problems of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and community involvement. Host communities surrounding port locations normally complain about issues pertaining to environmental degradation, unemployment and infrastructure development. Based on their research, Gbali et al. (2021) say that insufficient CSR practices by corporations may further contribute to the tensions

and result in conflicts that disrupt the activity of supply chains. To address these issues, a more inclusive and participatory way of governing supply chains, in which the interest of all the stakeholders is taken into account, is needed.

This is increased by the growing complexity of international supply chains, which consequently increases the effects of local social conflicts. With an increasingly globalized economy, any disruption in the port sector of Nigeria can have a knock-on effect on regional and international markets. Orji et al. (2020) emphasize the fact that social sustainability is a crucial concept in the supply chain because the solution to social issues is the key to the long-term efficiency and competitiveness. In this connection, the knowledge and control of social conflict are not only a local need but a global need.

This paper, therefore, attempts to analyze the influence of social conflict on managing the supply chain in Nigeria with a special emphasis on the Nigerian Ports Authority. The study will help to understand how these issues impact the performance of the supply chain and how it is possible to increase the resilience and performance of the port system. The study also adds to the growing literature on supply chain management in emerging economies that social dynamics are important in determining the end result of operations.

2. Social Conflict in Nigerian Ports.

2.1 Conceptualising the Social Conflict within Port Environments.

Social conflict in port settings means the unending tensions, disagreements and struggles between different stakeholders in the operations of the sea. In the Nigerian context, these conflicts are due to the competing interests between the government agencies, the private port operators, labour unions, host communities and international trade actors. Ports are complex systems in their nature, with economic, political, and social processes intertwining, making them highly vulnerable to conflict dynamics. According to Marshall et al. (2018), behavioural tendencies, power imbalances, and opportunistic practices are often the basis of social conflict in supply chains and can disrupt coordination and efficiency.

These social conflict situations in the ports of Nigeria are not incidental but they are structural in nature as they are embedded within the operational and governance structures. This has resulted in jurisdictional conflicts and inefficiency due to the multiplicity of the actors and the overlap of the roles. As an example, cargo clearance may be delayed due to disagreements between customs authorities and freight forwarders regarding compliance with the regulations. Equally, wage and working conditions disputes between the port management and the labour unions often lead to strikes and work stoppages. These disagreements show how delicate the relationship between the stakeholders in the port system can be.

Furthermore, the social conflict in ports can be interpreted in terms of vulnerability of supply chains. Olatunji and Ayoola (2024) suggest that vulnerabilities in the supply chains of Nigeria are closely related to socio-political risks, such as conflicts that interrupt the continuity of operations. In that respect, social conflict is a contributory factor and a resultant effect of systemic inefficiencies, such that it creates a cycle of instability that cripples supply chain performance. These conceptual infrastructures are important in the analysis of how conflicts are produced and influence port operations in Nigeria.

2.2 Motivators of Social Conflict at the ports in Nigeria.

The causes of social conflict in Nigerian ports are complex in nature and include economic, institutional, and socio-cultural causes. Economic inequality is one of the main factors (especially the perceived marginalisation of host communities around port areas); Such communities are usually characterized by environmental degradation, lack of jobs, and inadequate infrastructure, which results to grievances and protests towards port authorities and the privately owned operators. According to Gbali et al. (2021), a lack of responsiveness to the concerns of the community by effective corporate social responsibility initiatives may lead to a build-up of tensions culminating into full-fledged conflicts.

Institutional weaknesses too are a major factor in driving social conflict. The port governance system in Nigeria is typified by bureaucratic inefficiencies, overlapping mandates and corruption and thus creates chances in conflict between the stakeholders. According to Oyedijo et al. (2021), institutional bottlenecks characterize the supply chain systems in Nigeria and limit their ability to

achieve effective coordination and transparency. As an example, the lack of document and clearance procedures results in conflicts between port users and regulatory agencies as stakeholders seek to negotiate complex and even opaque processes.

The second important force is labour related problems in the port system. Dockworkers, logistics workers and other port workers tend to resort to industrial action due to poor working conditions, wage issues and job security. Such labour disputes may severely inconvenience the running of ports and have a trickle down effect on the supply chain. Mpuon et al. (2024) emphasize that channel conflict management is a key to the performance in supply chains, especially in those sectors when human labour is at the centre stage.

Furthermore, security risks including militancy, piracy and vandalism are some of the factors that contribute to social conflict, in the Nigerian ports. These problems are more pronounced in the Niger Delta region where economic deprivation and political grievances have historically contributed to instability. Ajiboye (2023) shows that armed conflicts and insecurity can interfere with supply chains in the agro-food sector of the Nigerian economy, which is also the case with the operations of ports. These security-related tussles do not only pose a threat to the safety of both personnel and assets, but also raise operational risks and costs.

2.3 Stakeholders and Conflict Dynamics in Nigerian Ports.

To come to understanding of the concept of social conflict in the port of Nigeria, it is necessary to conduct an extensive analysis of the actors involved in interest and the dynamics of the relationships between them. The key stakeholders are government agencies (e.g. Nigerian Ports Authority), customs services, and maritime regulatory bodies; the private sector (shipping companies and terminal operators), labour unions, and the host communities. The interests, goals, and spheres of influence of each of these actors are usually different, and they may easily conflict. The Nigerian Ports Authority is at the heart of the management of the port activities, and the co-ordination of the stakeholder activities. But due to its success, it is always faced with clashes with other government agencies and even the individual operators. As an example, the conflicts over the regulatory power and sharing of revenues may generate tensions that impede the process of decision-making and efficient operation. According to Abubakar and Okoli (2025),

conflicts in the field of supply chain management in the public sector may complicate the implementation of the contracts and the resolution of the disputes, further complicating the inefficiencies.

The other main actors in the conflict landscape are the private sector players such as shipping companies and freight forwarders. Most of these actors find themselves faced with issues of regulatory compliance, cost burdens, and delays in operations, which may result in conflict with government agencies and other stakeholders. The absence of trust and transparency in these relationships only exacerbates the conflict dynamics since the parties may adopt opportunistic behaviours in order to safeguard their interests.

Another key stakeholder group is labour unions whose power is enormous in determining how the port operates. Their strength lies in their ability to mobilise strikes and protests to make them formidable players in the conflict arena. Although their actions are usually motivated by valid concerns, such as fair wages and safe working conditions, they also can be the source of operational disruptions and supply chain inefficiencies.

Host communities, in contrast, are the most marginalised stakeholders, but they are of great importance in terms of influencing the social environment of port operations. Community and port conflicts are usually caused by such issues as environmental degradation, land use disputes and absence of economic inclusion. Uduji et al. (2026) note that the social consideration such as gender sensitivity and the involvement of the community should be considered in supply chain management to minimize conflicts and ensure sustainability.

3. Background of the Nigerian Ports Authority and Nigerian Ports.

3.1 History of the Development of the Nigerian Ports and Institutional Framework.

The history of the development of the Nigerian port system is tightly connected with the economic course of the country in the time of the colonization process and in the period of the country independence. The modern port administration of Nigeria started during the British colonialist rule, whereby ports were established whose main purpose was to facilitate the exportation of raw materials, and the importation of manufactured goods. The major trade points

like the cities of Lagos, Port Harcourt, and Calabar became the epicenter of trade, and the cornerstone of the maritime economy in Nigeria. As the need to centralise and modernise the operation of ports increased to meet the growing trade demands and enhance efficiency, so did the need to centralise and modernise the operation of the ports in 1960, following independence in the year 1960.

This saw the creation of the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) in 1954 under the Ports Act which came into full effect after independence. The NPA had the mandate to manage, operate and develop ports in Nigeria to ensure the delivery of proper infrastructure and services to maritime trade. The Authority has been at the forefront of coordination of port operations, regulation of stakeholders and maintenance of navigational routes over the years.

The institutional framework of the Nigerian ports have changed a great deal especially since the advent of port reforms in the early 2000s. These reforms saw the introduction of landlord port model where the NPA owns the infrastructure but the cargo operations are handled by the terminal operators who are privately owned. This was done to enhance efficiency, lure the development of private investment, and lead to reduced government interference in the day to day running of the government. Nevertheless, regardless of these reforms, the problem of overlapping of regulations, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and corruption remains and often contributes to the delays in operations and conflicts within the port system (Oyedijo et al., 2021).

3.2 Organization and functions of the Nigerian Ports Authority.

Nigerian Ports Authority is a government owned agency under the Federal Ministry of Marine and Blue Economy which is charged with the responsibility of overseeing port administration in the country. Its fundamental operations involve maintenance of port infrastructure, channel dredging, offering marine services, and controlling of port activities. NPA also secures safety and security in the port settings alongside other agencies like customs, immigration and maritime security agencies. The port system in Nigeria has several major ports with some of them being the Lagos Port Complex (Apapa), Tin Can Island Port, Onne Port, Port Harcourt Port, Warri Port and Calabar Port. Of these, ports of Lagos are the most important ports in terms of cargo traffic and the ports carry a large part of the imports and exports of Nigeria. However, the high level of

activities in Lagos has resulted to congestion, straining infrastructures, and vulnerability to disruptions. The NPA operates in a multi-stakeholder environment, which includes shipping companies, freight forwarders, customs officials, and logistics providers. This sophisticated network demands proper coordination in facilitating smooth cargo flow and in minimising delays. Nevertheless, as Ijeomah (2021) notes, the inefficiencies in the coordination and information sharing within the supply chain system in Nigeria often hinder its operations, especially in sectors closely related with the activities of the port operations like oil and gas.

Some of the areas that have been enhanced by the introduction of the privation terminal operators are the speed of cargo handling and the modernisation of equipment. However, the co-existence of both the public and the private actors has also brought about new issues such as the conflict in terms of tariffs, standard of services and compliance with regulations. Abubakar and Okoli (2025) note that conflicts in the public sector supply chain management, especially those in contractual and service delivery, can have a significant impact on operational outcomes.

3.3 Economic Importance and Strategic Position of the Nigerian Ports.

The ports in Nigeria act as the critical nodes both in the domestic and international supply chains where trade flows are necessary to promote economic growth. Nigeria, being a major oil exporting country and one of the largest economies in Africa, heavily depends on its ports to transport crude oil, petroleum products, agricultural goods, and manufactured imports. The productivity of port operations thus has a direct implication with regards to trade competitiveness, revenue generation as well as industrial growth.

The Nigerian Ports Authority is an important revenue generation organ to the government in terms of port charges, lease agreements and other service charges. Moreover, ports play a role in job creation, both directly through the work of ports, and indirectly through the related industries such as logistics, transportation, warehousing, etc. The effectiveness of efficient supply chain systems in increasing the income generation and economic performance in Nigeria by Christian Ikechukwu et al. (2025) highlights the significance of the broader implications of port performance.

In addition to economic services, the ports of Nigeria also play a strategic role in the integration of trade in the region in West Africa. They also act as transit hubs to neighbouring countries that are landlocked and hence enhance the role of Nigeria as a regional trade hub. Nonetheless, continued lack of efficiency and discontinuities in the port system have constrained the potential of the country to maximise on these opportunities. Okafor et al. (2024) observe that supply chain management lapses in different sectors in Nigeria have continued to hamper productivity and competitiveness.

Moreover, the constantly growing complexity of global supply chains further imposes extra pressure on the ports of Nigeria in order to conform to the international standards of efficiency, security and sustainability. Orji and colleagues (2020) highlight the importance of considering social sustainability in the supply chain management, especially in the logistics and freight service. In the case of Nigeria, this involves solving social conflict, bettering the relationship between stakeholders, and improving the governance structures.

4. The Significant Types of Social Conflict that has impacted the ports of Nigeria

4.1 Labour and industrial conflicts.

One of the most long term and disruptive types of social conflict that affects Nigerian ports is labour and industrial conflicts. These disputes normally emerge between the port workers, the labour unions and the port management over issues like wages, working conditions, job security as well as union recognition. Since the operations of port operations are labour intensive, any disruption in the activities of the workforce and especially strikes or protests can lead to a stalemate of the cargo handling and logistics operations.

Historically, dockworkers and maritime unions have been very influential in Nigeria, and in most cases they have resorted to industrial actions to enforce their demands. Although such measures are at times justified by the poor working conditions and poor welfare facilities, they often lead to serious operational delays. According to Mpuon et al. (2024), the unresolved channel conflicts within the supply chains may have a significant negative impact on the marketing and operational performance, particularly in the sectors where the human capital is critical. These

disruptions in the port context manifest themselves in congestion, demurrage fee, and loss of business confidence.

Moreover, the casualisation of port labour after the port concession reforms usually contributes to the worsening of labour conflicts. Terminal operators are viewed by many workers as more interested in profit than in taking care of its employees, thus creating mistrust and resistance. This dynamic leads to a cycle of repeated conflicts that result in productivity, and in the overall performance of the port system. As a result, labour-related disputes continue being one of the primary issues to normal port operations and effective supply chain management in Nigeria.

4.2 Community based conflict and environmental grievance.

The other prominent type of social conflict that is occurring in ports that are located in Nigeria is based on the conflict between the port authorities, the operators who are privately owned, and the host communities. Such conflicts are usually based on environmental degradation, land use conflicts, and perceived socio-economic marginalisation. Negative externalities in form of pollution, noise, traffic congestion and loss of livelihoods are common in communities that are located around port areas, without the corresponding benefits in terms of employment or development of infrastructures.

Gbali et al. (2021) emphasize that poor corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities of corporations working in host communities may aggravate grievances and result in conflict. In most instances, the activities of community protests, blockades and sabotage interfere with the access roads to the ports and logistics networks, thus affecting the transportation of goods. Not only can these disruptions delay the processes in the supply chain, but they also raise the operational risks and costs of businesses.

Moreover, the Niger Delta region, where some of these ports are situated, has experienced a lot of conflicts that are usually associated with other socio-political challenges like control of resources and environmental justice. Ajiboye (2023) shows that the lack of insecurity and armed conflict can greatly destabilize the supply chains in Nigeria, which is also observed in the port operations. Community-based conflicts are thus not only a localised but also a systemic issue

that would not only impact the immediate port operations, but also the overall ecosystem of the supply chain.

To deal with these conflicts, it is important to be more inclusive in the way decisions are made regarding the port, and to have the host communities actively involved in the decision-making process and beneficiaries of the economic activities of the port. Unless such measures are in place, community grievances will tend to remain, and this will continue to pose a constant risk to port operations and stability of supply chains.

4.3 Institutional and Regulatory Conflicts.

Another important type of social conflict in Nigerian ports is the institutional and regulatory conflicts. These fights occur due to overlapping of mandates, bureaucratic inefficiencies and lack of coordination among the government agencies involved in the operations of the ports. The major players including customs, port, immigration, and maritime regulators usually work in fractured systems, causing jurisdiction conflicts and performance inconsistencies.

According to Oyedijo et al. (2021), institutional bottlenecks are one of the key constraints to supply chain systems in Nigeria, since they impede effective coordination and transparency. At the port environment, this is evident through delays in clearing of cargo, duplication of processes and conflicting regulations. These inefficiencies present corruption and rent-seeking behaviour opportunities, further aggravating conflicts among stakeholders.

Furthermore, the tensions between the actors of the public and the private sectors have become even stronger with the introduction of the landlord port model. Conflict over tariffs, service standards, and contractual terms is a common occurrence between the Nigerian Ports Authority and the terminal operators (who are privately owned). Abubakar and Okoli (2025) also highlight the fact that disagreements in the supply chains of the public sector can make the execution of the contract complicated and the efficiency of the operations decreasing.

These conflicts in the institutions not only interrupt operation of the port but also undermine trust among the stakeholders leaving collaboration even more challenging. The absence of a coherent

system of governance remains one of the biggest obstacles to effective supply chain management in ports in Nigeria.

5. The impact of Social Conflict on Supply Chain Management.

5.1 Interruption of Logistics and Operational Efficiency.

Among the most direct and obvious effects of social conflict on supply chain management in the Nigerian ports, the derailment of the logistics operations stands out. Supply chains are dependent on the timely flow of goods between origin and destination and any disruption in port systems can cause a lot of delays. Closures of ports, congestion, and longer dwell times of cargo are common outcomes of labour strikes, community protests and security threats.

These interruptions have ripple effects throughout the entire supply chain and impact manufacturers, distributors, and consumers. According to Ijeomah (2021), inefficiencies in the systems of supply chains in Nigeria, especially the ones related to the operations of ports, are frequently aggravated by conflicts and ineffective coordination. As an example, the slow clearance of cargo may cause production halt in industries that rely on imported raw materials and consequently low productivity.

Moreover, the disruption resulting in congestion enhances the risks of cargo damage, theft and loss which further compromises supply chain reliability. To counter these risks business organizations are often compelled to re-align their logistics strategies, which may include rerouting of shipments or increasing their inventory levels. Nevertheless, these changes come at a price, decreasing the overall efficiency and competitiveness.

5.2 Increased Costs and Supply Chain Risks

The cost of the supply chain activities in the Nigerian ports is significantly increased by social conflict. Conflicts scenarios can always require extra spending on security, insurance and contingency planning. As an example, when the companies are unprotected, they might be forced to hire their own security personnel or invest in tracking technologies due to the risks of theft of their goods. Olatunji and Ayoola (2024) highlight the fact that to overcome the supply chain

vulnerabilities in Nigeria, it is necessary to focus on socio-political risks, such as disruptions related to conflicts. Such risks increase the cost of operation which in turn is transferred to the consumer in terms of high prices. In a very competitive world market, such increases in costs may make Nigeria less appealing as a trade destination. Moreover, social conflicts also bring about uncertainty hence it is not easy that businesses can plan and forecast. The unpredictable disruptions that supply chain managers have to contend with make it difficult to manage inventory, demand forecasting, and resources allocation. Okafor et al. (2022) emphasize that any lapses in supply chain management, especially the ones related to external risks, may severely hamper performance in the industries of Nigeria. The overall impact of these costs increment and risks is the decreased resiliency of the supply chain. Such firms are more susceptible to shocks and less capable of quickly responding to disruptions, thus influencing long run sustainability.

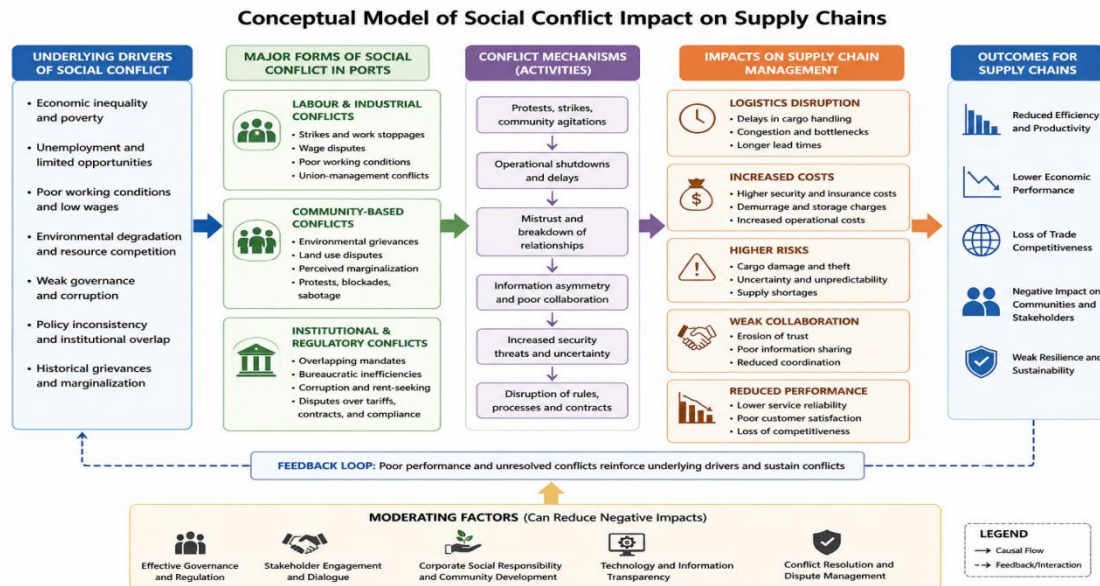
5.3 Breakdown of Collaboration and Information Flow

Supply chain management requires a well-established cooperation and information exchange between the stakeholders. Nonetheless, social conflict compromises these important factors by undermining trust and developing antagonistic relationships. The struggles between government agencies, private operators, labour unions and communities in the ports of Nigeria often lead to poor communication and lack of cooperation. Ibrahim (2020) contends that to successfully share risk information in supply chains, relational behaviours and trust are necessary. In case of conflict, the stakeholders are not readily willing to share information as they fear being exploited or treated unfairly. This inefficiency is caused by lack of transparency because decisions are made based on incomplete or inaccurate data.

Moreover, the absence of collaboration hinders the implementation of integrated supply chain solutions, such as digital tracking systems and coordinated logistics planning. According to Oyedijo et al. (2022), collaboration is one of the major drivers of the supply chain performance, especially in the emerging markets where the institutional challenges are widespread. Unless proper cooperation is made, the endeavours to modernise and streamline the operations of ports are likely to encounter serious challenges. Moreover, the conflicts may break the long-term relationships between the stakeholders and it is hard to develop partnerships and alliances which are needed in order to integrate the supply chain. This fragmentation reduces the overall

effectiveness of the supply chain, limiting its ability to respond to changing market demands and external shocks.

6. Conceptual Model of Social Conflict Impact on Supply Chains



7. Key Recommendations

1. Enhancing Institutional Co-ordination and Governance Structures.

One such crucial move that will go a long way in reducing social strife in the ports of Nigeria is the creation of a more coherent and integrated governance structure. Due to the multiplicity of agencies operating within the port system, roles can be duplicated, regulatory inconsistencies and inter agency conflict can be experienced. A significant number of bureaucratic bottlenecks could be minimized by streamlining the responsibilities through more definite policy guidelines and adopting a one-window approach to port documentation. Oyedijo et al. (2021) assert that better coordination increases transparency and operational efficiency in supply chains. As such, institutional reforms that ensure accountability, lessen corruption, and streamline regulatory procedures are critical towards reducing conflict and enhancing supply chain performance.

2. Improving Labour Relations and Workforce Welfare.

Considering the rate of labour-related disturbances within the ports of Nigeria, there is need to focus on enhancing the industrial relations. The proactive approach to engagement with labour unions should be embraced by port authorities and private terminal operators, which should be focused on dialogue, fair wage system, and better working conditions. Formal conflict resolution mechanisms can be established, which include arbitration panels and redress mechanisms of grievances, which can help in resolving conflicts before they turn into strikes. Mpuon et al. (2024) point out that conflict management in supply chain channels is a significant aspect that enhances operational performance. Training of the workforce and job security will also breed trust and minimise chances of industrial unrest.

3. Encouraging Communal Interaction and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

To tackle the issue of community-based conflicts, a more participatory and inclusive approach to port governance is needed. A proactive approach should be taken by port authorities and private operators to engage the host communities through sustainable CSR programmes such as development of infrastructure, creation of employment opportunities and environmental protection programmes. Gbali et al. (2021) emphasize that effective CSR activities can also be a conflict prevention and community stabilization tool. The stakeholders can mitigate any grievances and create a more conducive operation environment by including local communities in the economic benefits of port operations thus increasing supply chain continuity.

4. Technology of Transparency and risk management.

Digital technologies may have a transformative role in social conflict reduction and enhancing supply chain efficiency. Port community systems, real-time cargo tracking, and blockchain-based documentation can help to make the processes more transparent, minimize human interventions, and reduce the possibility of corruption. Orji et al. (2020) mention that the enhancement of communication and information sharing between stakeholders through the help of digital tools is also important to achieve effective coordination of the supply chain. Also, predictive analytics can be used to determine the potential risks of conflict and facilitate proactive mitigation actions, which increases supply chain resilience.

8. Conclusion

In Nigeria, especially in the port sector, which is a major entry point to international trade, social conflict has remained a major challenge to effective supply chain management. This paper has shown that the impacts of the conflicts related to labour disputes, community grievances, and institutional inefficiencies have far reaching implications to the operations of the ports and the overall performance of the supply chain. These conflicts not only interfere with logistics operations, but also raise operational costs and undermine the cooperation of the main stakeholders, which reduces the effectiveness and competitiveness of the maritime sector in Nigeria.

The solution to these challenges must be a multi-faceted and strategic response that entails considering conflict management as an element of supply chain planning and governance. Enhancing institutional coordination, labour relations and community engagement are also necessary measures towards developing a more stable and efficient port environment. Also, transparency and decrease in chances of conflict can be promoted by adopting digital technologies to improve communication and accountability.

To sum it up, despite the enormous potential of Nigerian ports as the drivers of economic growth, their success will be determined by the possibility of controlling and reducing the impact of social conflict. Nigeria can develop a more resilient and sustainable system of supply chain that could sustain long-term development by introducing targeted reforms and ensuring inclusive stakeholder participation.

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