

NIGERIAN TEXTILE INDUSTRY: A TOOL FOR ACTUALISING ECONOMIC STABILITY AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

The Nigerian textile industries (indigenous and modern) which have sustained the national economy for more than three decades are dying by the day without any hope of resurrection. This paper therefore examines factors that are responsible for the dwindling and near extinction of the textile industry in Nigeria and its implications for national growth and development. The paper specifically is focused on the viability of the Nigerian textile industries as an alternative for revenue generation and a tool for economic empowerment. The study adopts an art historical method based on interviews, archival records, print and electronic media; while the data was critically analysed using the modernisation and dependency theory of development. Findings reveal that trade liberalisation, Nigeria's policy on textile imports, desire for foreign textiles over home-made ones which lead to poor patronage, neglect of agricultural sector, unstable power supply, and lack of technical proficiency, among others are factors responsible for the gradual extinction of the industry. The study submits that a well-developed and effectively managed textile industry will impart positively on the nation's economy and ensure the sustainability of Nigerian textile industry; more so, it will drastically reduce the tide of unemployment in Nigeria.

Key Words/Phrases: Nigerian Textiles, Alternative Economy, Employment, Development, Industry

1. Introduction

Nigeria is one of the few developing economies endowed with diverse natural and human resources that could make it a leading economy in the world within two decades of its independence. The social, physical and infrastructural developments in the post independence era in 1960 guarantee an upward, stable increase in its economic profile. In fact, the trend then, given the surplus natural resources, attest to the potentialities of the country and its peoples, and possibility of being ahead of other developing countries in Africa and beyond. This is expected to ensure steady increase and stability in its political economy on one hand and provide job security to its teeming population on the other hand. Nigeria is the most populous nation in Africa and the fifth in the world. The oil boom era of the 1970s stalemated the steady growth and promising future of Nigeria political economy. The discovery of the black gold prior to independence at Oloibiri (present-day Bayelsa State) in 1959 and subsequent exploration, processing and marketing of crude oil signalled the subtle and steady slide into economic extravagancy and over-dependence on an oil-powered economy (Banger, A.R, 2005). The negligence of other aspects of the economy such as agriculture (cocoa, groundnut, palm); textiles, art and crafts among others in pre and post independent Nigeria were gradually undermined through inadequate funding. The unpleasant scenario, over the decades, has resulted into an economy that is oil-based, thereby making other sectors of Nigeria's economy largely unsustainable; hence, the country remains a developing economy. The present socio-economic status of the Nigerian state can be appropriately and conceptually appreciated in the context of the trends in global economies and development.

The concept of development has to do with the identification of basic needs to the individuals, families, interest groups, communities as well as their competencies or abilities to meet these needs, which are channeled or targeted towards gradual growth (Ogunduyile, 2002). National development can therefore be actualized when a nation's total resources: human, environmental or material are appropriately and effectively harnessed to move the country from the status quo to a higher stratum. The development of a nation cannot be discussed without the factors that contribute to such development. These contributions are usually embedded in diverse areas of a nation's economy. The need to actualize and stabilize Nigerian economy implies harnessing all resources and factors that can reshape its economy to achieving a purposeful growth. In this regard, textile industries have been identified as a dependable employer of labour and a source of financial security for most Nigerian youths (Aremu, 2014).

Textile is a general term which refers to any material made of interlacing of fibers such as fabric, cloth, carpet, and belt among others. Generally, it is a flexible woven material consisting of a network of natural or artificial fibers which are often referred to as thread or yarn. The importance of textiles to human sustenance, and the socio-cultural and economic development of a nation cannot be over emphasized. Apart from food and shelter, textile (clothing) has been identified as the most important in the hierarchy of man's need. In Nigeria, the production of textiles had flourished at both cottage and industrial levels. Studies show that the industry had been a major employer of labour (about 60% of the labour force) in the manufacturing sector and contributed immensely to the socio-economic and cultural development of the country (Asaju, (2004), Oloyede.(2014), Makinde,(2006). It is unfortunate; however, that the current economic low-ebb in Nigeria has developed adversarial forces clamping the proper functioning of the textile industry as a resourceful economic contributor. It becomes germane at this point to briefly trace the history of this development overtime.

The first modern textile mill in Nigeria, Kaduna Textile Mill, was started in 1956 in Kaduna, northern Nigeria. The primary reason for setting up the mill was to process the cotton that was being produced in the northern part of the country. By the 1970s and the 1980s, the Nigerian textile industry had grown to become the third largest in Africa (Abimbola, 2010). A report by the United Nations University (U.N.U.) states that in 1987, there were 37 textile firms in the country, operating 716,000 spindles and 17,541 looms. This was the golden period of Nigeria's textile industry. Between 1985 and 1991, it recorded an annual growth of 67%, and as at 1991, it employed about 25% of workers in the manufacturing sector (Banger). Unfortunately, the industry's relevance to national economic growth had decreased drastically in recent times. Hence, certain nagging questions naturally come to mind. What could have been responsible for the dwindling fortune of Nigerian textile industry? What led the industry - which was once the largest employer of labour in the manufacturing sector of the country - to become one that desperately needs help? How can we salvage the economic downturn of the industry or what could be done to bring it back from the brink?

2. Research Problem

The factors delimiting the viability and sustainability of the Nigerian textile industry has been copiously examined and analysed while possible solutions to fix the recurrent and debilitating problems facing the industry have been proffered from previous studies (Osobu, (2004), Eneji et al (2012), Afuye,(2014) Aremu,(2014) and Oloyede, (2014). As lofty and laudable these submissions are, the Nigerian textile industry has refused to grow due to Over dependency of Nigerian nation on the developed (countries (China, Japan, U.S.A) of the world as a factor militating against the industry which is not adequately captured in previous studies which is the focus of this paper.

However, none of the previous studies really linked the sudden misfortune of Nigerian textile industry to over-dependency on oil (the black gold), which equally and simultaneously opened up the country for sudden economic fortune. At the sight of 'unexpectedly overflowing economy', the leaders of the day became prodigious in spending and less innovative and strategic in planning and policy implementation. The oil boom of the 1970s injected a lot of money into the economy which increased the purchasing power of the government and citizens who gradually developed a cultic taste and hedonistic tendency for comfort as an expression of wealth and class. It suddenly became a burden for the government to plan and work towards the development of other sectors of Nigeria's economy such as agriculture and the textile industry; while it became easy to promote an oil-based economy which later jeopardized the economic viability of the country by neglecting and eventually crippling other sectors of the economy.

Consequently, a country that cannot provide gainful and sustainable employment for her teeming population like Nigeria stands the risk of perpetual economic instability and dependency on established economies of the world. In the light of the above, this paper asserts that Nigerian textile industries became dysfunctional because of the narrow and myopic economic policies that promote oil and gas industry at the expense of other sectors of the economy. Over-dependency on foreign goods and services, an unpatriotic attitude particularly promoted by the ruling class and elite's death the final blow that wrecked the dwindling fortune and viability of the Nigerian textile industry. If strategically revamped and repositioned, the industry promises to be an alternative means of promoting economic stability and effective tool for taming the wild tide of unemployment among the youth in the country. The paper therefore examines Eisenstaedt's (1966) modernisation and dependency theories in relation to the potentialities of Nigerian textile industry, and its projected impact on employment provision and national development?

3. Conceptual Clarification

This study is pivoted on the conceptual understanding of modernisation and dependency which in turn determine the level of development and growth in a nation's economy. With respect to this study, the twin-concept helps to clarify the place of Nigerian textile industry in the international competitive economies and arrangements in which Nigeria has little or no control.

3.1 Modernisation theory

The theory explains the processes of transformation from traditional or underdeveloped societies to modern societies. Eisenstadt (1966), a major proponent of the theory defines modernisation as "the process of change towards those types of social, economic, and political systems that have developed in Western Europe and North America from the 17th century to the 19th century, which later spread to other European countries and then to South America, Asia and Africa in the 19th and 20th centuries". Modernization theory is a major perspective in the sociology of national development and underdevelopment since the 1950s. Primary attention has focused on ways in which past and present pre-modern societies become modern through processes of economic growth and change in social, political, and cultural structures (references).

In general, modernization theorists are concerned with economic growth within societies as indicated, for example, by measures of gross national product. Mechanization or industrialization is ingredients in the process of economic growth. Modernization theorists study the social, political, and cultural consequences of economic growth and the conditions that are important for industrialization and economic growth to occur. Indeed, a degree of circularity often characterizes discussions of social and economic change that is involved in modernization processes because of the notion, embedded in most modernization theories, of the functional compatibility of component parts.

3.2 Dependency Theory

This study uses dependency economic theory to explain how the theory helps in the correct examination of the dependency of the Nigerian economy on international competitive market systems over which Nigeria has little control. Dependency theory is hinged on the notion that there is a "center" of wealthy nations and a "periphery" of poor and underdeveloped states, (Vincent, 2006). Dependency theorists postulates that resources are extracted from the periphery and flow towards the center in order to sustain the economic growth and wealth of the latter, and the poverty of the former. The main point here is that the economic development of the periphery (Nigeria) is made difficult or impossible by the domination of the global economy which is under the control of the capitalist powers. Also, the main argument of the liberal economic theory is that economic liberalization will help in the increase of flow of foreign investment into developing countries, as a result of the easing of trade and exchange restrictions. The notion is that, in the process of homogenizing the political economy of every member state of the international community, the objective of creating a market society in a global scale is within reach (Biersteker, 1993). Again, one of the major objectives of liberalization is to reduce the resource gap in the LDCs, by improving the trade balance and encouraging a net capital inflow. Thus, the growing importance of international organizations such as the G7, IMF, WB, and WTO is indicative of the influence of liberal economic internationalism in the post-cold war period (Van and Biessen, 1996). However, these powerful transnational bodies, which embody free trade liberalism as their governing ideology, impose free market structures on developing societies. Liberalism creates dependency and stifles the infant industry in the periphery to the advantage of the centre. Since they are the primary organizations which formalize and institutionalize market relationships between states; they lock peripheral states into agreements, which force them to lower their protective barriers

(GATT and NAFTA for instance), thereby preventing developing nations from developing trade profiles which diverge from the model dictated by the supposed “comparative advantage” (Burchill, 1996). All these were part of the factors that made the Nigerian textile industry and economy weak and therefore necessitate excessive dependence on imports of manufactures and exports of raw materials.

. Eburajolo (2010), the first Nigerian Group Managing Director of Kewalram/Chanrai, blamed the decline of the textile industry on the hasty accession of Nigeria to the WTO in 1995, as a result of which made Nigeria to remove the protection on the local textile industry which was yet to stand on its feet confirmed the dependency of Nigeria on world economic power. In addition, the decline of the industry was accelerated when the country ended its Multi Fiber Agreement with WTO and the subsequent accession of China to the WTO, both of which happened within four years of each other. These factors led to the closure of many textile industries and the dismissal of many textile workers thereby increasing the rate of unemployment in the country.

3.3 Development Theory:

There seems to be divergent views on the definition and usage of the concept of development. Development according to Adam, (1992) is a social condition within a nation, in which the authentic needs of its population are satisfied by the rational and sustainable use of natural resources and systems. This utilization of natural resources is based on a technology, which respects the cultural features of the population of a given country. Conceptually, development deals with the identification of human basic needs of individuals, families, interest groups, communities as well as their competencies or abilities to meet these needs, which are channeled or targeted towards gradual growth (Ogunduyile, 2002).

Development, as explored in this study, refers to gradual growth of indigenous knowledge and technology, harnessing the natural resources for industrial expansion that will provide for psychological, socio-economic and environmental needs of the society (reference). In economic terms, the above definition connotes that for the population of a country, there are employment opportunities, satisfaction -at least- of basic needs, and the achievement of a positive rate of distribution and redistribution of national wealth. Also in a political sense this definition emphasizes that governmental systems have legitimacy not only in terms of the law, but also in terms of providing social benefits (employment) for the majority of the population (NPC)

Development according to Alvin (1991) is governed by many factors that influence the result of developmental efforts. He states further that there must be a strong driving motive and essential conditions for that change to occur. Development - capital, technology, and supporting infrastructure - to achieve targeted change. In response to the above; one needs to ask and provide answers to the following questions; does Nigeria have resources (human and material), capital, technology and supporting infrastructure? How has it been able to harness the resources, has Nigeria been able to develop her indigenous technology?

Looking at the current social and economic situation in Nigeria, one will readily agree that Nigeria is endowed bountifully with materials (human and materials), and technology but failed to organize them for her development. Adam (1995)ⁱ refers to development as a social condition within a nation, in which the authentic needs of its population are satisfied by the rational and sustainable use of natural resources and systems. This utilization of natural resources is based on a technology, which respects the cultural features of the population of a given country.

In affirmation, Afuye (2014) in a newspaper article examines the state of Nigeria’s economy and queries the country’s refusal to develop like the United States, China, Australia and other established economies. He remarked that “despite the fact that the country is endowed with diverse and infinite

resources, both human and material, long years of negligence and adverse policies have led to the under-utilisation of these resources. These resources have not been effectively utilised in order to yield maximum economic benefits". The closure of more than 80% of Nigerian textile industry in the late 1980s and the 1990s is a validation of the above assertion, which unfortunately, constitutes the fundamental factors of unemployment and poverty in Nigeria.

Likewise, Faleye (2013) identifies some of the causes that are responsible for the dwindling fortune and closure of a large number of Nigerian textile industries. Absence of a trade union among the textile industry workers/artists relegated the sector to a subsistence level, in addition to poor government policies on importation which opened the industry to unhealthy competition from foreign textile firms. The massive importation of textiles in the pre and post independent Nigeria, even till now, has adversely affected the existing market for textile industries at cottage and technological advanced levels. This of course led to capital increase and low savings, thereby eroding the pre-condition for the industrial revolution in the sector (Adisa, 2013). The above summarizes the status and growth of Nigerian textile industries today. Can the industry grow without developing its operational structure and how significant can this growth be to national development? *Growth* and *development* are often lumped together. When industry grows, it shows an increase in size, number and workers, which result in more employment opportunity for the unemployed. Economic growth is typically just a number, often GDP (gross domestic product), but it is often the only thing that is touted as a measure of success which translates to development.

With the increasing level of unemployment in Nigeria, the opinion of Asaju (2014) is very relevant. According to him; "Growth is quantitative and a significant level of measure for or an indicator of national development. Therefore, when textile industry develops, it might improve on how it interacts with its members, what kind of influence it holds in its community, or it can streamline certain processes to meet the overall needs of the people that are involved. If an economic situation develops, not only can profits increase, but, for industries, the workers conditions are improved, difficulties in operations get resolved, individual employees can be trained beyond their current station, which in turn helps the industry. Economic development in a community or country leads to better overall living standards and opportunities to improve. Thus, meaningful development is achievable if only it is based on effective and optimum utilization of available human and material resources with adequate and appropriate technology that respect individual culture such as Nigeria. Approaching this from a pragmatic point of view, growth can only happen when we harness all the resources together and utilize them for national development. The Nigerian textile industry (both traditional and modern) has the potentials for national development when properly harnessed and protected.

4. Nigerian Textile Industry: An Overview

4.1 Traditional Textiles

Nigerian traditional textiles can be classified as woven, non-woven, dyed or patterned which are decorated and designed structurally at the surface. These include; "Aso Oke" (Yoruba)' Akwete, (Igbo) "Okene, (Ebira) Ashiasha (Tiv) and Adire (Yoruba) among others. Basically, these textiles are structurally decorated and produced on both vertical and horizontal looms that are exclusively handled by women and men weavers in the society. These fabrics have age long qualities such as high durability, unique textures and traditional designs. They are traditionally used on special occasions such as burial, wedding, naming, house warming and chieftaincy installation ceremonies among others. The surface decorated ones like Adire are produced by the process of dyeing, printing and direct application of other elements of finishing unto the

surface of the locally woven fabric. These fabrics are often used as daily wears and in rare cases for casual and social outings. Sometimes they equally serve as commercial and domestic items, (furnishing) such as window blind, bed spread, pillow cases, table cover, fashion and school bags, and the likes. These surface decorated fabrics appear in a variety of complimentary, cool, warm, harmonious and contrasting colours with designs that are mainly from traditional sources (Makinde 2005).

Today the range of designs in these traditional woven fabrics has expanded. Many of the designs have metamorphosed from ordinary plain weaves to advanced and complicated weaves that imitate diamond, sateen, and twills patterns of industrial woven textiles among others. Wider strips of Aso-oke are produced from cottage foot powered looms which are now in vogue while yarns of different colour shades are skillfully used in its production. This is an advancement over the limitation of indigo dyes and its shades as earlier practiced. These developments, as noted by Okeke (2002) might not be separated from Nigeria's contact with foreign culture and materials in her developmental history.

4.2 Modern Textiles

The Nigerian Textile Industry is the third largest in Africa after Egypt and South Africa (MNT (2007): The industry, which currently accounts for about 25 per cent of manufacturing passed through various phases of growth. Import Substitution (IS) policies induced steady growth in the 1960s, which gave way to rapid growth, averaging 12.5 per cent, in the 1970s when the economy was booming the recession of the mid 1980s took its toll: the cumulative textile production index (1972 = 100) declined from 427.1 in 1982 to 171.1 in 1984. The industry recovered in the late 1980s, achieving an annual growth of about 67 per cent between 1985 and 1991, with synthetic textiles alone accounting for about 80 per cent of the recorded growth. The industry is the largest employer of labour in the manufacturing sector. Capacity utilization improved between 1986 and 1991. And, with the backward integration programme instituted by many firms in the industry following the strict government directive on the issue in the mid-1980s, the level of domestic sourcing of raw materials was put at about 64 per cent in 1991, a steady improvement from 52 per cent in 1987 and 57 per cent in 1988.

Industrial textiles refer to textiles produced through the use of automated electronic machines which usually come in a variety of colours, designs, and quality. This became possible due to a number of factors. Traditionally, Nigeria is noted for the production of cotton, silk and other fibers, which are primary materials for the textile industries. However, the situation has changed today; Nigeria now relies on imported raw materials and foreign technology to make the industry function. According to Bhattacharya (1980), the first textile mill in Nigeria was established in 1956 and between 1960 and 1988; the country has witnessed a fast growth of the industry as a result of her rich stable economy arising from her oil-wealth (petroleum/oil boom).

The Nigerian textiles fail to impact on the world market because; it is still struggling to meet up with the basis of its establishment. This in effect provided an opportunity for the importation of foreign substitutes (textiles) to the country. The surface decorations found on most Nigerian factory-produced textiles have been discovered to have foreign influences (motifs) particularly from Java, Indonesia and India. For instance the technique of covering the whole surface of a fabric with dominating patterns of flowers, plants, leaves among others are legacies from Java in Asia. Notably, Nigerian markets are now flooded with many of these foreign designs; thus jeopardizing the African Wax Print types which conventionally has the main and subordinate motifs that often serve as texture in the background in the fabric. Other mechanically produced printed fabric known as dress print characteristically contains small motifs that are randomly distributed on the surface of the fabrics. These surface decorations with abstract or floral motifs are best described as 'all over patterns'. Other prints produced by the industry include super print, real wax, brocade, and other weaves from jacquard loom; off-loom weaves such as baby/cupion lace, shirting, and suiting materials.

The textile industries in Nigeria became blossomed precisely from 1957 to 1972 when other textile mills like Oodua Textile Mill in Ado-Ekiti, Aba Textile Mill in Aba, Arewa and United Textiles in Kaduna were established. Others include Afprint, Enpee PLC, Aswani and Five Stars Textile Mills in Lagos (NUTGTWN, 2006). The current state of Nigerian textile industries is worrisome because; most textile industries in the country today had already folded up or dying by the day. The reasons for this unfortunate trend are not farfetched.

5.0 Nigerian Textile Industry today

As at 1987, the 37 textile mills in Nigeria were operating 716000 spindles and 17541 looms. However the output of the sector has never exceeded 55% of annual domestic consumption, allowing for a thriving in imported or mostly smuggled textiles (NUTGTWN, 2006). A survey of technological gaps in the textile industries in Nigeria revealed that only 12 mills (industry), representing 61% of the total capacity spin only cotton while 25% of the existing mills are integrated mills (supply reference). It has also been observed that most of the industry operates on low spinning capacity and they are generally lagging behind technologically without any hope for improvements in the weaving mills. Also, labour productivity in spinning operations is not high because of low capacity utilization and inadequate provision for on-the-job training. Low productivity levels also limit export capacities. Notably, with substantially liberated economic policies that Nigeria offers to avoid quota restrictions under the Multi Fibre Agreement (MFA), foreign entrepreneurs are induced, mostly from Asian countries, to establish export-oriented plants in the country.

The long years of negligence and adverse policies have led to the under-utilization of these resources, despite abundant human and material resources in the country. These resources have not been effectively utilized in order to yield maximum economic benefits to aid national development. This has been confirmed to be one of the primary causes of unemployment and poverty in Nigeria and a clear index of underdevelopment. In essence, the Textile Industry has been confirmed to be the most affected in Nigeria today. Statistics have also shown that about 85% of the industries are already dead while their employees were pushed out of job (Textile Report, 2005). This is critical to the nation's development hence, the need to re-access the factors that are responsible for the dwindling and ailing textile industries in the country with a view to revamping it for national development.

According to Osobu, (2014) employment in the textile industries has been on a downward trend for decades as evident in the table below. Beginning from 1999, the textile industry shows a significant reduction in the number of functional textile industries till date. This situation, no doubt created a significant loss of jobs and population increase in the unemployment market.

Years	Estimated number of Textile Industries in Nigeria
1992-1995	124
1996-1999	112
2000-2003	60
2004-2007	45
2008-2011	40
2012-2015	33

Table 1: Growth and Decline of the Nigerian Textile Industry Source: Ahmed, 2014

Unemployment according to ILO (2007) has been identified as one of the most critical socio-economic problems facing Nigeria in the last decade. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (2011) the unemployment rate in Nigeria increased to 23.90 in 2011 from 21.10 while the unemployment rate averaged 14.60 per cent from 2006 until 2011, reaching an all time high of 23.90 per cent in 2011 and a record low of 5.30 per cent in 2006. In practical terms, widespread poverty, youth restiveness, socio-disorder and criminal activities in the textile sector are now prevalent in the country. Sanni et al (2012) suggest reasons for these negative developments which include; lack of production of basic textile materials and tools at home, dependency on foreign experts, importation of textile materials, high cost of electricity, water, chemicals, dyes and affordability of the end products by the target users. Others include; government liberality on textile importations, inadequate laws to protect copy rights and simulations.

5.1 Discussions and Findings

It is no gainsaying that the Nigerian textile industry has the potentialities to contribute profitably to human capacity development, revenue generation (through exports) and to sustain the national economy. Unfortunately, the industry had been undermined for more than three decades and could not measure up to its potentials. Is there any hope of resuscitating the industry to fulfilling its potentials? Any critically concerned mind on the problems of the Nigerian nation and the textile industry will be prompted to ask these questions. How viable is the Nigerian textile industry to revenue generation and economic empowerment of the peoples of Nigeria? This critical discourse examines factors responsible for the deplorable state of the Nigerian textile industry and its implications for national growth and well-being of the Nigerian citizen while suggestions are raised to rescue the situation. These factors include inadequacy of locally-produced raw materials, manpower development, taste and fashion for foreign textiles, dependency on foreign technology, and production of low quality materials, among others.

5.2 Inadequacy of Locally Produced Raw Materials

Availability of raw materials is the major factor of consideration when proposing the establishment of a textile industry. The basic raw materials for effective textile productions like cotton, silk, dyestuff, chemicals among others are not readily available at home. Where available, the quality is low, inadequate and not of commercial quantity for the industry's full production capacity (Oloyede, 2014) Even the petrol chemical based products such as polymer, dyes and other synthetic materials (which were later introduced and now being used in Nigeria) are scarcely available despite the fact that Nigeria is a big oil-producing nation. A recent visit to Chinese Textile Company in Lagos revealed that the raw materials used by most of these textile industries are imported due to the country's inability to produce them and the factor of liberalization policy of the nation (personal communication, 2015).

Eneji et al, (2012) working closely to modernization theory comment thus; "Liberalism creates dependency which stifles the infant industry in the periphery to the advantage of the centre. Since they are the primary organizations which formalize and institutionalize market relationships between states; they lock peripheral states into agreements, which force them to lower their protective barriers thereby preventing developing nations from developing trade profiles which diverge from the model dictated by the supposed "comparative advantage" (Burchill, 1996) These factors subsequently determined the level of dependency on foreign textiles on one hand, and the exportation of locally-produced raw materials on the other hand, which in turn weaken economic viability of the Nigerian textile industry. At this juncture, it should be noted that when raw materials are imported to produce any finished products the disadvantages are many; the prices of such finished products are always high increase in the rate of unemployment while the country's

level of skilled manpower is usually reduced. Also the country's socio-economic status would be adversely affected. Without doubt, this will narrow down the country's course of development. This trend can be curtailed through effective engagement of the youths in textile production processes, and if sustained will curb youth restiveness and violence. It should be noted however, that the mass youth unemployment in the country has aided political violent and fuelled Boko Haram insurgency and violence in the northeast of Nigeria.

In view of the above, this paper suggests that all hands (stake holders) must be on deck to ensure that consistent and concerted efforts with adequate machineries are put in place to ensure optimum production of textile raw materials (cotton, silk, and indigo leaf) locally by empowering farmers to go back to the land. This also means more jobs for the youths. After all, it is on record that the growth and availability of cotton in Nigeria gave birth to the establishment of the defunct textile development scheme by the colonial Federal Government in the 1940's. Consequently, the hand looms weaving training centers at Ado-Ekiti established in 1946 and later at Oyo, Ogbomoso, Auch, Ilorin, Aba, Kano and Sokoto in 1949 were established (Ahmed, 2014).

The local production of silk material for fabric production should be re-visited and encouraged to further enrich the nation's economy which is at the mercy of foreign nations. Silk is an historical textile material that shot some important nations of the world like China, Italy and France into fame and prosperity (Carlos, 1985). No wonder, while stressing the role of sericulture in Nigerian economy, Ogunduyile (2001) states in unequivocal terms that:

“The Nigerian economy cannot be over emphasized. Silk is an important raw material for the country's textiles and clothing industry. Apart from its national high luster, silk has been regarded as “queen of fibres” and could contribute immensely to fashion and clothing. Silk is a vital raw material for Nigeria textile industry as well as being a source of foreign exchange earner. In addition, the industry could provide not only silk materials for the Nigeria markets but also in terms of import substitution”.

The production of silk starts from the cultivation of mulberry tree for the feeding of the silkworms before other processes follow. This and the growth of cotton will no doubt reduce the unemployment level while the export of finished textiles also impact positively on the country's economy through foreign exchange in addition to its primary role as clothing and furnishings.

5.3 Manpower Development

In the 1920s, textile industries in Nigeria employed and trained their factory staff on the job to satisfy the principle of manpower development. However, only expatriates (foreign experts) were usually allowed to man the sensitive sections of the industry in order to keep Nigerians away from understanding the secret and basic technological workings and operations of the industry to the advantage of the colonial masters (Ahmed, D, 2014). A similar situation still persisted even after many decades of the Nigerian nation as a free state. Investigation carried out by the researcher reveals that, some of the Nigerian University and Polytechnic trained graduates were not employed and where employed, have their freedoms censored while their interaction is curtailed, restricted or confined to just a particular section of the industry. Many a times, a non-existing position is advertised as vacant for designers who may be asked to submit design works for assessment in consideration for the advertised position. It has been alleged that such submitted designs were only scanned and saved electronically for future use without the applicant's consent.

Technically, modern textile industry has a complex set-up that needs to be handled with utmost care. Most of its units are independent and so, it requires different skilled personnel to handle them. This includes designers, spinners, engineers, technologists, chemists and marketing experts, while the whole units are integrated as one. When these professionals are adequately employed, it is also required that experts are given intermittent on-the-job training to update their knowledge in respect of the latest development in their respective sections for the industry to witness growth. They should be given attractive remuneration to get their best as a worker in the productive sector of our economy. The wages of workers in Nigeria have been described as low compared with their foreign counterparts (Obembe, 1966).

5.4 Dependency on foreign technology

Nigerian textile mills depend heavily on foreign technology (machines) and accessories. This practice becomes problematic and costly to the nation's economy due to high cost of importation of materials and tools, non-availability of spare parts for the replacement of worn-out or damaged tools, coupled with poor maintenance culture arising from inadequate knowledge of its components (Ohiorehuan, 2001). Often, these machines wear out with use and age while the unserviceable ones are often cannibalized in an attempt to put the working machines in good shape. This invariably affects production and quality of products that often leads to abandonments of local textiles for the imported ones as better substitute.

There is need to intensify efforts in Nigeria's technological development with special focus on the ones needed in the industrial sector. Meanwhile concentration and emphasis could be on the fabrication of spare parts and the modification of the existing machines in order to move forward. In reaction to the above the federal government in partnership with an India company established the Nigeria machines tools industry in 1980 at Oshogbo, even though it has not achieved the set goals.

5.5 Low Patronage and Low Quality Products

Investigations conducted among some selected consumers in Nigerian markets revealed that more than 70% of the people prefer imported textiles against locally produced ones. Price and quality have been observed to be the determining factors for consumer's choice of goods (Ogundele, 2000). As earlier pointed out, the non-availability of local raw materials, high cost and epileptic supply of electricity, old and dysfunctional machinery and brand designs are factors responsible for high cost of production which cause the prices of products to rise. These have also resulted to low quality products especially when compared with the imported "smuggled" ones. The concomitant effect of all these is that smuggling has become a "booming industry".

To address this ugly situation, all the aforementioned factors need to be considered for necessary action while government make and enforce laws to support, promote and protect the Nigeria textiles industries by providing adequate funding, personnel and enabling policies. Also, our political leaders should be encouraged to adopt made in Nigeria textiles as an official dress like ex-President of Nigeria (Olusegun Obasanjo) and a few others are doing. This will encourage more citizens to patronize locally-produced textile products. Government should also provide fund for approved institutions to enable them run relevant textile educational programmes, to improve the various categories of textile workers to enable them contribute positively to the growth, process and fabrication of a true Nigerian textiles that will function to achieve the goals of its establishment.

6. Conclusion

Nigerian textile mills have the capability of making the nation grow if given proper handling and attention. Both traditional and contemporary textiles are essential to national growth. The financing of the industry would clearly have to be taken seriously; else, the issuance of the kinds of bonds that the government usually presents through the United Bank for Africa will no longer be valid. Many industry insiders also complain about the lack of Low Pour Fuel Oil (LPFO or black oil), which is required by the industry. This trend is scandalous in an oil-producing country. Also, the problems of power, transportation and other basic infrastructures have weakened the industry's potentials. We would imagine that this is one thing that could be taken care of, given some will to do so. It is almost redundant these days to mention power, transportation and other basic infrastructure. But yes, these are going to be crucial to any resuscitative attempts.

The Nigerian government's determination and political will to be active players in the industry will help to fully realize its potentials. It is opined that there is the potential to grow the textile industry, with some government determination and a push by actors in the textile industry. It should not be forgotten that under AGOA, the United States market is open to Nigeria. Therefore, anyone who invests in production for export can gain the advantage. The patronage of smuggled textiles by Nigerians indicates that there is a good market for textile products. The fact that Nigeria is already acknowledged as a big market makes this a worthwhile venture. (How can the menace – smuggling – be stopped) All this optimism is hinged on the belief that the Nigerian government and the textile industry in general are willing to work together to produce a conducive environment. The involvement of the Indians and Chinese might just be the catalyst that is needed

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