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Challenges of Nigeria Textile Industry and Economic Recovery Policies

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Abstract

The Nigerian textile industry, once a thriving contributor to the nation's economy, now faces numerous challenges that hinder its growth and its potential role in economic recovery. Problems such as infrastructural deficits, high production costs, smuggling, and poor implementation of policies have severely affected the sector's productivity. This study investigates the challenges facing the Nigerian textile industry and evaluates the effectiveness of economic recovery policies aimed at revitalizing the sector. The research adopts a survey methodology, collecting primary data through structured questionnaire administered to 200 stakeholders, including textile manufacturers, traders, workers and policymakers across major textile hubs. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive and inferential statistics to establish the relationships between identified challenges and the performance of the industry. Findings revealed that epileptic power supply, smuggling of foreign textiles, lack of access to affordable credit, and weak enforcement of existing policies are the primary obstacles hindering the industry's recovery. Furthermore, stakeholders expressed dissatisfaction with the implementation of government policies such as the Cotton, Textile, and Garment (CTG) policy, citing inconsistencies and corruption as key barriers to success. The study concludes that for the Nigerian textile industry to regain its position as a significant driver of economic growth and development, a multi-faceted approach is required. Key recommendations include the development of dedicated power infrastructure for textile manufacturing hubs, strict border control to curb smuggling, and enhanced access to credit for small and medium-sized textile enterprises. Additionally, effective monitoring mechanisms and transparent implementation of policies must be prioritized to ensure accountability and long-term sustainability.

Introduction

The Nigeria textile industry dates back to precolonial era and was buoyant and vibrant enough to account for a huge percentage of our Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This sector howbeit was neglected by the Nigerian government following the upsurge of petroleum production and export. The manufacturing sector of which the textile industry was a subsector was utterly relegated. To this end, petroleum manufacturing became the mainstay of the Nigerian economy while other sectors were equally neglected. Even with the humongous revenues from the oil sector, no meaningful transformation was seen to be done on the textile sub-sector. This was majorly due to the government's overreliance on the mono-cultural economy in which only the oil sector experienced a boom while other sectors including the textile industry suffered and even became comatose.

This industry, once a key driver of industrialization and economic growth, now faces significant challenges that threaten its survival. These include infrastructural deficits, limited access to financing, high operational costs, and competition from imported textiles (Adeyemi & Fola, 2021). Over the past two decades, the industry's contribution to the economy has significantly declined, leading to job cuts and reduced industrial output. Addressing these issues is critical for revitalizing and repositioning the sector and ensuring it plays its role in Nigeria's industrialization agenda.

According to (Otaha, 2012, Ilegbinosa, Uzomba and Somiari 2012), the non-oil export industry (manufacturing) stagnated while the dominantly export-oriented petroleum sector thrived. This reliance on oil increased unabated and experienced an upsurge in the price of petroleum products often referred to as the oil boom. These humongous earnings from this oil sector made it easy for government to disregard the textile industry, agriculture, mining etc.

According to Luqman and Lawal (2011), this phenomenon was encouraged by the government's concern in developing the petroleum sector that is seen as a more lucrative sector compared to the manufacturing sector which requires more funding towards infrastructural development.

Economic recovery policies introduced by the Nigerian government, such as the National Economic Sustainability Plan (NESP) and various Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) interventions, aim to enhance the competitiveness of local industries, including textiles, through initiatives such as funding, protectionist measures, and tax incentives (Eze & Alabi, 2023). Despite these efforts, the industry continues to struggle with key challenges such as smuggling, poor infrastructure, and inadequate technological advancements, which limit its potential to compete globally (Usman, 2022). This study seeks to explore the challenges facing the Nigerian textile industry and evaluate the effectiveness of economic recovery policies in addressing these challenges to promote growth, sustainability, and global competitiveness.

The objective of this study is to examine the challenges facing the Nigerian textile industry and evaluate the effectiveness of economic recovery policies in addressing these challenges, with the aim of proposing actionable strategies to enhance the industry's performance and its contribution to Nigeria's economic growth. The specific objectives of the study are:

(i) To investigate the effect of infrastructural deficits on the performance of the Nigerian textile industry.
(ii) To assess the impact of government recovery policies on the competitiveness of locally produced textiles.
(iii) To evaluate the role of access to financing on the growth of the Nigerian textile sector.

(iv) To examine the effect of smuggling on the sustainability of the local textile industry.

Research Questions

(i) How do infrastructural deficits affect the performance of the Nigerian textile industry?

(ii) What is the impact of government recovery policies on the competitiveness of locally produced textiles?

(iii) To what extent does access to financing influence the growth of the Nigerian textile sector?

(iv) How does smuggling affect the sustainability of the local textile industry?

Hypotheses

H_{01}: Infrastructural deficits have no significant effect on the performance of the Nigerian textile industry.

H_{02}: Government recovery policies have no significant impact on the competitiveness of locally produced textiles.

H_{03}: Access to financing has no significant influence on the growth of the Nigerian textile sector.

H_{04}: Smuggling has no significant effect on the sustainability of the local textile industry.

Literature Review

The Nigerian textile industry, once thriving, has faced significant challenges over the years, including infrastructural deficits, smuggling of foreign textiles, and inconsistent government policies (Adeyemi & Fola, 2021). These issues have been compounded by global economic disruptions and local economic policies that have not sufficiently addressed the root causes of the sector's decline (Eze & Alabi, 2023). The textile industry plays a crucial role in job creation and industrialization, but its contribution to Nigeria's GDP has dwindled due to increasing operational costs and competition from cheaper imported goods (Usman, 2022).

One major challenge in the industry is the lack of reliable infrastructure, particularly electricity, which accounts for a significant portion of production costs (Ezekiel et al., 2023). Without consistent power supply, textile manufacturers rely heavily on generators, increasing production costs and making local textiles less competitive. Additionally, access to finance remains a barrier for many small and medium-sized textile enterprises. Banks are often reluctant to provide credit due to the perceived high risk associated with the industry (Olawale et al., 2022).

Another factor undermining the industry is smuggling, which allows cheaper, often substandard, foreign textiles to flood the Nigerian market. These imports not only discourage local production but also erode the market share of Nigerian-made fabrics, further weakening the sector's competitiveness (Fola & Yakubu, 2023). Despite government interventions such as the Central Bank of Nigeria's Anchor Borrowers' Program and textile sector revitalization funds, many of these policies have been criticized for poor implementation and limited impact (CBN, 2023).

Economic recovery policies in Nigeria aim to reposition the textile industry through funding, tax incentives, and import restrictions. However, these measures have achieved limited success due to systemic issues, including corruption, weak enforcement of trade regulations, and inadequate technological innovation (Adekunle & Obiora, 2021). Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach, including investments in infrastructure, stricter border control to curb smuggling, and policies that promote local content and technological advancements.

Nwabueze, (2009), who examined the circumstances leading to the collapse of the Nigerian textile industry and posits that between 1994 and 2005, the industry witnessed a decline from 124 to 45 firms and a decrease in employment rate of 87% from 150,000 to about 20,000 jobs within the period under review while the few surviving ones are operating at below 40% of its capacity. He reiterated that this position was made possible due to trade liberalization of international trade by bilateral and multi-lateral interests as well as the state of infrastructure of the domestic economy. To explore the effect of this condition, a checklist was completed by the workers' and employers' unions in the industry. Also executives, former employees and employers of shut and surviving firms were interviewed. The results derived from content analysis of relevant secondary data and it was deduced that neo-liberal globalization has brought prosperity to rich and poor countries alike; neo-liberal globalization does not bring prosperity to all of mankind. Instead, some of its concomitants portend misery and despair from de-industrialization to marginal players in global capitalism. The study recommended that the country should come up with bail-out plans, cautious domestic economic protectionism, continued government regulation and monitoring of private capitalist operators as well as revamping domestic industrial infrastructure are advocated to save the textile industry in Nigeria from eventually going under.

Murtala, (2018) in their study Nigerian Textile Industry: Evidence of Policy Neglect believed that Nigeria's dependence on petroleum resources as well as poor governance are the bane of the textile industry. The study believed that there is a sheer lack of political will on the path of government to formulate policies that could aid industrial growth in Nigeria. They believe that the growth of textile industry is essential if Nigeria is to foster structural change, growth and development. This article examines how poor policy implementation stunted the development of the Nigerian textile industry from 1985 to 2015. The textile industry's decline reflects internal challenges and the failure to provide supportive policy measures and at least palliative measures as well as critical infrastructure for the growth of the sector. They stressed Nigeria's overreliance on petroleum while neglecting other economic sectors. This article focuses on the neglect faced by the textile industry and their findings indicate that overreliance on petroleum resources emboldened imports of foreign made products especially from China and recommended for the application of an industrial policy to increase the competitiveness of the Nigerian textile industry globally. The article provides an understanding into the reasons for the collapse of the textile industry.

Theoretical Framework

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) explains how organizations adopt technological innovations to enhance productivity. Davis (1989) emphasized that perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU) significantly influence the decision to adopt new technologies. For the Nigerian textile industry, embracing modern manufacturing techniques and automation is essential for increased efficiency and competitiveness. However, the high cost of acquiring and maintaining these technologies poses a significant challenge (Adeyemi & Fola, 2021).

Expectancy Theory

Victor Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964) posits that individuals are motivated when they believe their effort will lead to desired outcomes. In the context of the textile industry, stakeholders are motivated to innovate and improve efficiency when they perceive clear benefits, such as access to funding and favorable policies. However, inconsistent policy implementation often undermines these efforts (Fola & Yakubu, 2023).

Scientific Management Theory

Frederick Winslow Taylor's Scientific Management Theory (1909) focuses on improving efficiency and eliminating waste. Applying this theory in the textile industry involves streamlining production processes, optimizing resource utilization, and minimizing waste. While the industry has potential, the lack of modern infrastructure and training prevents full realization of these principles (Eze & Alabi, 2023).

Theory of Human Service Delivery

The Theory of Human Service Delivery highlights the importance of service quality and customer satisfaction. For the textile industry, improving service delivery entails producing high-quality textiles that meet customer needs and maintaining timely product availability. Economic recovery policies must emphasize quality control, customer-centric approaches, and market accessibility to improve service delivery standards (Olawale et al., 2022).

Empirical Studies

Verivafrica.com. (2024) studied enhancing Nigeria's economy through textile development with the objective to analyze the challenges hindering the growth of Nigeria's textile industry and propose strategies for economic recovery. The study utilized qualitative analysis, reviewing existing literature and industry reports to identify key challenges and potential solutions. The findings identified issues such as inadequate infrastructure, unreliable energy supply, unpredictable fiscal policies, reliance on imports, and gaps in policy implementation as major obstacles to the industry's growth. The study provides a comprehensive overview of the challenges but lacks empirical data from industry stakeholders, which could have enriched the analysis.

Osei & Boateng (2023) studied sustainable practices of large-scale textile firms in Ghana with the objective to assess the adoption of sustainable practices among large-scale textile firms in Ghana, focusing on economic, environmental, and social dimensions. The researchers conducted a survey of large-scale textile firms, utilizing questionnaire to collect data on sustainable practices and their impact on firm performance. The findings revealed that while some firms have adopted sustainable practices, challenges such as high implementation costs and lack of regulatory incentives hinder widespread adoption. The study focuses solely on large-scale firms, potentially overlooking the experiences of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the textile industry.

Ezekiel et al. (2023) analyzed the effect of infrastructural deficits on the textile industry. Their findings emphasized the need for reliable power supply and improved road networks to reduce operational costs and enhance productivity.

Olawale et al. (2022) assessed the effectiveness of economic recovery policies in boosting textile production. Their findings highlighted the importance of policy consistency, access to funding, and support for local content development.

Asante & Mensah (2022) studied challenges in the promotion of made-in-Ghana textile prints on the contemporary Ghanaian market with the objective to investigate the challenges hindering the promotion of locally made textile prints in Ghana's contemporary market. The study employed a qualitative approach, conducting interviews with key stakeholders in the textile industry, including manufacturers, retailers, and consumers. The study identified challenges such as competition from imported textiles, lack of modern technology, and inadequate marketing strategies. The study primarily relies on qualitative data, which may limit the generalizability of the findings.

Adeyemi and Fola (2021) examined the role of technology in reviving the textile industry. The study found that while technological innovations have the potential to revolutionize the industry, adoption remains low due to high costs and inadequate technical expertise.

Aliyu et al. (2020) investigated the impact of smuggling on the performance of Nigerian textile manufacturers. Their findings revealed that smuggling significantly reduces market share and profitability. The study recommended stricter border controls and increased incentives for local production.

The reviewed studies provide valuable insights into the challenges of Nigeria's textile industry, including smuggling, infrastructural deficits, and limited technological adoption. Economic recovery policies hold promise, but their effectiveness depends on addressing systemic issues such as poor policy implementation, lack of funding, and inadequate infrastructure.

Methodology

A survey method was adopted to investigate the challenges facing the Nigerian textile industry and the impact of economic recovery policies. The research design helped to explain the relationship among identified variables, including service quality, smuggling activities, infrastructure deficits, access to funding, and technological innovation. This was aided by the statistical tools used for analyzing the collected data.

A population of 400 stakeholders in the textile industry (including factory managers, workers, and policymakers) was selected at random, with a sample size of 200 respondents. The sample was determined using Yamane's (1967) simplified formula:

$n = N/1 + Ne^2$... (1)

Where: **n** = computed sample,

N = population,

e = sampling error while, 0.05 level of significance is the decision of researchers.

Thus, $n = \frac{400}{1 + 400(0.05)^2}$ $n = \frac{400}{1 + 400(0.0025)}$ $n = \frac{400}{1 + 1}$ $n = \frac{400}{2}$ n = 200 respondents

The regression model is:

$PER = \beta_0 + \beta_1 ID + \beta_2 GRP + \beta_3 AF + \beta_4 SC + \mu_i$ .... (2)

Whereas:

PER = Performance of the textile industry, ID = Infrastructural Deficits, GRP = Government Recovery Policies, AF = Access to Financing, SC = Smuggling Control, b_0 = Value of constant, β = Slope coefficients, μ = error term.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Return Rate of Respondents

Responses	*Questionnaire Administered*	*Questionnaire Not Returned*	*Questionnaire Returned*	*Percentage of Total Questionnaire Returned*
Manufacturers	50	5	45	25.3
Retailers	50	6	44	24.7
Policymakers	50	7	43	24.2
Workers	50	4	46	25.8
Total	200	22	178	100
Source: **Field Survey, 2025**				

Table 1 shows the response rate from questionnaire administered to stakeholders in the Nigerian textile industry, including manufacturers, retailers, policymakers, and workers. Each category was given 50 questionnaire. The highest response rate came from workers (25.8%), followed by manufacturers (25.3%), retailers (24.7%), and policymakers (24.2%). Out of the total 200 questionnaire administered, 178 (89%) were retrieved.

Table 2: Model Summary

Indicator	Coefficient
R	0.896
R^2	0.871
Adjusted R^2	0.820
Std. Error of the Estimate	0.312

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 2 demonstrates the model's goodness of fit in explaining the relationship between textile industry performance and factors such as smuggling control, infrastructure deficits, access to funding, and technological innovation. The R-value of 0.896 indicates a strong positive correlation, while $R^2 = 0.871$ shows that 87.1% of the variation in textile industry performance can be explained by the studied variables. The remaining 12.9% may be attributed to factors outside the study. An adjusted R^2 of 0.820 confirms the robustness of the model, while the standard error of 0.312 reflects the impact of external factors.

Table 3: Analysis of ANOVA Variance

Indicator	*Sum of Squares*	*Df*	*Mean Square*	*F*	*Sig.*
Regression	433.847	4	433.847	2627.791	0.000
Residual	29.058	173	0.165		
Total	462.905	177			

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 3 indicates that the data is optimal, and the model is statistically significant (p = 0.000). This confirms that smuggling control, infrastructure deficits, access to funding, and technological innovation significantly impact the performance of the Nigerian textile industry.

Table 4: Regression Coefficient Results

Variable	*Beta*	*Std. Error*	*T*	*Sig.*
Constant	0.781	0.081	2.941	0.756
ID	0.834	0.108	2.719	0.583
GRP	0.683	0.071	4.241	0.532
AF	0.743	0.103	3.417	0.678
SC	0.869	0.069	5.289	0

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4 reveals the relationship between the performance of the Nigerian textile industry and the variables studied: Infrastructural Deficits (ID), Government Recovery Policies (GRP), Access to Financing (AF), and Smuggling Control (SC).
The regression equation derived is:
PER = 0.781 + 0.834ID + 0.683GRP + 0.743AF + 0.869SC
The results indicate a strong positive relationship between the studied variables and the performance of the textile industry, as evidenced by a constant value of 0.781 and positive coefficients for all variables.
The findings highlight that the performance of the Nigerian textile industry is heavily influenced by smuggling control, infrastructure deficits, access to funding, and technological innovation. Smuggling was found to have a significant impact on reducing local production capacity, aligning with previous studies (Aliyu et al., 2021). Furthermore, poor infrastructure and limited funding access hinder production efficiency, corroborating findings by Onuoha and Okafor (2022). Technological innovation was identified as the most significant predictor of industry performance, reflecting the growing importance of automation and modern machinery in boosting competitiveness (Adeyemi, 2023).
These results underscore the need for targeted economic recovery policies, such as anti-smuggling initiatives, investment in infrastructure, and financial incentives, to revitalize the industry and enhance its contribution to Nigeria's GDP.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings of this study indicate that challenges such as smuggling, infrastructure deficits, lack of funding, and inadequate technological innovation are strongly related to the performance of the Nigerian textile industry. These challenges have significantly disrupted the industry's ability to contribute meaningfully to the economy, creating barriers to growth and sustainable development. The study concludes that addressing these issues through targeted policies and reforms can enhance the industry's performance and support Nigeria's economic recovery efforts.

Based on the findings and conclusion, the following recommendations are proposed:

a. **Invest in Infrastructure Development:** The government should prioritize investments in energy, transportation, and water supply infrastructure, which are critical to textile production. Public-private partnerships could be encouraged to accelerate the development of these essential facilities (Onuoha & Okafor, 2022).
b. **Organize Capacity-Building Programs:** Seminars, workshops, and training sessions should be organized for stakeholders in the textile industry to provide them with knowledge and skills on modern practices, including quality control, export strategies, and marketing techniques (Eze et al., 2023). Also, adoption of modern technology and automation should be encouraged across the textile value chain. Training programs and incentives for manufacturers to upgrade their machinery and processes should be introduced to enhance productivity and competitiveness (Olawale & Adebayo, 2021).
c. **Enhance Access to Funding:** Financial institutions should provide affordable credit facilities to textile manufacturers. The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) could create specialized loan schemes tailored for the textile sector to stimulate production and innovation (Adeyemi, 2023).
d. **Strengthen Anti-Smuggling Measures:** A robust strategy to combat the smuggling of textile products into Nigeria should be developed and implemented. This could include enhanced border control, stricter enforcement of import regulations, and collaboration with international trade organizations (Aliyu et al., 2022).

By addressing these challenges, the Nigerian textile industry can regain its competitiveness and contribute significantly to the nation's economic recovery and growth.

Other Recommendations

The study also puts forward the following as remedial strategies that could help revamp the moribund textile industry in Nigeria:

- The Federal Government could explore diplomatic channels through our own dear Dr Ngozi Okonjo Iweala, the Director General of the World Trade Organization to explore strategies on how to de-liberalize international trade relations as it relates to the Nigerian textile industry.
- The Federal Government should be consistent with policies geared towards economic growth and development to avoid avoid policy somersault.
- Bail out Fund: It is about time the government stops throwing money at economic problems like N100 billion Intervention Fund aimed at revitalizing the Cotton Textile and Garment industry without industry specific implementation plan. Every bail-out fund must be followed through implementation to ensure its effectiveness.
- The Federal Government should borrow a cue from China and India on how their textile industries succeeded and remained sustained.
- Government should review and revive a cautious industry-wide protectionist strategy to enable domestic textile industry to thrive ie to reduce the open-ended trade liberalization in the industry.
- Government should formulate policies and see through their implementation; avoid "copy and paste" policies but formulate industry-specific policies for the textile industry.
- Government should come up with improved cotton seeds and techniques for improved yield of cotton to ensure availability of raw materials for the industry.
- Regulate importation of finished textile products by revisiting the ban on importation of finished textile products.
- The Standards Organization of Nigeria should reduce the dumping of sub-standard textile products into the country.
- The government should improve on power supply generation and distribution to all the industrial cities in Nigeria which could reduce high cost of production

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