CHINA'S MARKET EXPANSION AND IMPACTS ON NIGERIA'S TEXTILE INDUSTRY

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Abstract

This study analyses the various ways in which China's market expansion impacts Nigeria's textile industry. Two major surviving textile firms in Nigeria were studied: Sunflag Textile Manufacturing Company and the United Nigerian Textile Manufacturing Company. The study made use of documentary research and a qualitative case study, where an interview was employed as the research tool. Global economic integration/trade liberalization formed the theoretical basis for analysis. Findings reveal that China's market expansion driven by globalisation impacts significantly on Nigeria's textile industry. For instance, the influx of Chinese cheap textiles (80 per cent of textiles in the Nigerian market today are imported from China) and the re-export of textiles imported from China by neighbouring states such as the Benin Republic to Nigeria through smuggling has led to an almost total collapse of Nigeria's textile industry. China has also taken advantage of the country's huge infrastructure deficit and government neglect of the textile sector to replicate Nigerian unique Wax print known as Ankara, thereby displacing local producers. Thus, the once-thriving manufacturing textile sector has become moribund as Chinese textiles take over the Nigerian market. The study recommends that the Nigerian government should support (financially) the distressed/collapsed firms and also upgrade the country's infrastructure particularly the power sector for the remaining textile firms to survive and compete successfully in a globalised world.

Keywords: China, Market, Expansion, Impacts, Nigeria, Textile, Industry

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Introduction

TThe economic expansion of South-South countries remains one of the significant features of the observed shift in the global economy, "from North to South" (Kappel, 2011: 10). At the end of the Cold War, new economic powers such as China emerged in the international arena. For instance, the Chinese economy grew at a rate of almost 10 per cent annually at the turn of the 21st century (Woo, 2012: 4). With its economic transformation, China that once ran a closed economy began to go global (or what China called zou chu qu). It has been transcending beyond borders to seek resources, markets, and investment partnerships to sustain rapid economic growth.

Following the death of Mao Tse Tung (Chinese leader when the Communist Party ascended into power in 1949) in 1976, the succeeding leader, Deng Xiaoping began economic reform in 1978. When Deng assumed leadership, the Chinese economy was in a bad shape. China's role in the world market was insignificant; its share of world trade was barely half of 1 per cent, much lower than in the 1920s, or even in the 1950s, and ranked 30th in the league table of exporters (cited in Cable and Ferdinand, 1994). However, over the past several decades, China's [world] trade has expanded at a breakneck pace (ChinaPower, 2019). In 1995, for instance, the value of China's imports and exports of goods totalled $280.9 billion or 3 per cent of global trade; by 2018, its total trade in goods had jumped to $4.6 trillion or 12.4 per cent of global trade (ChinaPower, 2019). Unlike the Maoist era, when China's trade policies served its leaders' political goals, they now aim at access to markets as part of China's larger domestic development strategy (Eisenman, 2012). Scholarly attention has been paid to China's growing influence in Africa (Osondu-Oti, 2016; Osondu-Oti, 2018; Osondu-Oti, 2020a; Mitchell, 2011; Naidu, 2010; Alden, 2009; Brautigam, 2009; Lauren, 2008).

Often referred to as the "Asian Driver" of global economic change (Development Centre Studies, 2006: 2), China has been pointed as playing the leading role in Africa and its growing footprint on the continent is perceived as "transforming Africa's international relations in a significant way" (Cheru and Obi, 2010). Since 2000, China became Africa's largest trade partner, and Chinese investment and finance flows to Africa grew significantly (ICTSD, 2018). From 2003 to 2018, the number of China's foreign direct investment (FDI) annual flows to Africa surged from US$75 million in 2003 to US$5.4 billion in 2018 (China Africa Research Initiative, 2020). Chinese enterprises have made a significant investment in Africa and have also established trade links/channels of trade between China and Africa. Natural resources feature prominently in Africa's economic ties and exports to China and trade in manufactured goods dominates China's exports to Africa.

In 2018, the largest African exporter to China was Angola, [export was dominated by oil, accounting for 50 per cent] (China Africa Research Initiative, 2018), followed by Sudan, the Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, and Nigeria. China's industrial energy consumption accounts for about 70% of the total energy consumption, making the industry the biggest consumer of energy in China (Dadi, 2006), which also brought China closer to African oil producers. Africa became the major destination for China's crude oil quest due to increasing instability in the Middle East. While resources have underpinned China's foray into Africa, [a shift has occurred] no longer planned by the government in Beijing but shaped by the market (Davies, 2015). Economic links between China and Africa have increased dramatically over the past 20 years (Chen and Nord, 2018). Trade has risen more than 40-fold since the mid-1990s, and China is now Sub-Saharan Africa's largest trading partner. Currently, China's exports to Africa rose to 7.9 per cent to US$113.2 billion as Beijing seeks new markets to offset the impact of the trade war with the United States (Nyabiage, 2020).

Nigeria, for instance, has become a top destination for Chinese investment in Sub-Saharan Africa (Economic and Commercial Office of the Embassy of the Peoples Republic of China in the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014). Over 110 Chinese companies have invested in Nigeria, covering various sectors such as trade, project contracting, agricultural development, manufacturing, food processing, and fishery (Economic and Commercial Office of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014). Bilateral trade between Nigeria and China totalled US$ 10.78 billion, exceeding US$10 billion for the first time in 2011 (Economic and Commercial Office of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Nigeria, 2014). In 2012, bilateral trade stood at US$10.57 billion, accounting for 5.3% of China's total trade with Africa (Economic and Commercial Office of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014). In 2018, the Nigeria-China trade volume hits $85billion US dollars (Echono, 2018). China is Nigeria's largest source of imports and the second-largest trading partner (Popoola, 2019). China's increasing incursion into the Nigerian market means that businesses have to contend with a new competitor. China is challenging both Africa's traditional partners and locally-owned businesses and firms in Nigeria. In the past 15 years [and counting], the rapid and pervasive entry of Chinese capital and companies into Africa has had a big impact on the continent (Davies, 2015).

The literature on China-Africa relations has expanded focusing on areas such as China's investment (Feng and Pilling, 2020; Herrero, 2020; Sow, 2018, French, 2010) and credit to Africa (Osondu-Oti, 2020b; Brennan, 2020; Xu, 2020, Acker, 2020; Osondu-Oti, 2015; Brautigam, 2009; Wang, 2007). Its increasing exports to Africa (China Africa Research Initiative, 2020; Pigato and Tang, 2015; Nowak, 2016; Ighobor, 2013; Gamache et al, 2013; Information Office of the State Council, People's Republic of China, 2010) are noteworthy. For example, among China's main exports to Africa such as cotton fabrics, footwear, motorcycles, machinery and electronics, textile and apparel, hi-tech products, electric motors, and generators (Broadman, 2007), the impacts of China's textile exports on Africa's textile industry are of great concern.

While African countries are mainly producers of primary products and importers of finished goods, the case of the textile industry is different. It is a well-established manufacturing sector in Africa as of the 1960s. For example, in Nigeria, the textile industry was one of the booming manufacturing sectors in the 1980s and the second largest employer of labour in the country before the 1990s. Today, China's market expansion is believed to be leading to de-industrialisation (Osondu-Oti, 2014). No doubt, the Nigerian textile industry has been faced with various challenges attributed to various factors such as lack of financial support by the government (Yahaya, 2019; Muhammad et al, 2018), unfavourable business environment (the United States International Trade Commission, 2009) and of course international free trade (Akinrinade and Ogen, 2008) advocated by the West at the end of the Cold War, and captured by China.

Thus, there is a need to examine the impacts of China's market expansion on Nigeria's textile industry. This study, with a particular focus on two major textile firms in Nigeria, analyses the various forms/manner China's market expansion impacts Nigeria's textile industry. The remaining sections of the paper are as follows. Section II contains the research methodology. Section III explains China's market expansion using the interlinked theory of global economic integration/trade liberalisation. Section IV gives an overview of Nigeria's textile industry from the time of the country's independence up to (and beyond) the 1990s when trade liberalisation and China's market expansion became pronounced. Section V analyses China's market expansion and the forms/manner in which it impacts Nigeria's textile firms. Section VI is the conclusion and recommendations.

Research Methodology

This study uses a qualitative case study and documentary research approaches. A qualitative case study is a research methodology that helps in the exploration of a phenomenon within some particular context through various data sources to reveal multiple facets of the phenomenon (Baxter and Jack 2008). Two textile firms in Nigeria were used as case studies: Sunflag Textile manufacturing Company and the United Nigeria Textile Company. Both are two major surviving firms and are situated in the country's major commercial city, Lagos. While a qualitative case study method involves a range of empirical data collection tools used to answer the research question (s), the main tool employed in this study is the interview. The researcher sought the views of the textile companies' senior staff. It also sought the views of economic experts and staff/representatives of textile/trade-related associations such as the Association of Textile Manufacturers in Nigeria, Manufacturers Association of Nigeria, National Association of Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture, and Nigeria-China Chamber of Commerce. The interview questions used to collect data were drafted in line with the main topic. For example, the following questions were asked: Is China's market expansion in Africa a threat to Nigeria's textile industry? In what forms/manners do China's market expansion impacts (have impacted) on the textile manufacturing firms? Is China's market expansion the only and major challenge facing the textile firms? Data obtained from various sources were content analyzed. Respondents' views and accounts were taken into consideration and literature was used to move back and forth for interpretation of collected empirical materials. Documentary research is also used to consolidate the primary data and to create a larger narrative using multiple documents on China's market expansion and textile firms in Africa. Documentary research relates to content analysis research, which involves the systematic reading and analysis of the body of relevant texts.

Theoretical Framework

China's market expansion is situated within the theory of global economic integration and free-market principles of trade liberalisation which are discussed below.

Global Economic Integration/Trade Liberalisation

Global integration is intertwined with the concept of globalisation (Osondu-Oti, 2020a) and trade liberalisation. The word "globalization" has been used to describe the phenomenally rapid expansion of many sorts of global interaction (cited in Osondu-

Oti, 2020a) including economic, social, cultural, and technological linkages. Global integration is not a new phenomenon although the pace of economic globalization was particularly rapid during the past century (Mussa, 2000). Social scientists and historians have proposed many different starting points for the history of globalization (Northrup, 2009). Practitioners of some academic disciplines, economists, in particular, are inclined to shorter timeframes, whereas historians are likely to describe a much longer process, and sometimes the starting point reflects ideological debates over Marxism or cultural wars over Eurocentrism (Northrup, 2009). Scholars have also pointed out how discussions of globalization connect to or mirror earlier debates about modernization, underdevelopment, and the rise of the West (Northrup, 2009).

However, [large extent] of global integration [and trade liberalisation] came sharply into focus with the collapse of communism in 1989 (Sachs and Warner, 1995), and the reign of capitalism thereafter. With the rise of capitalism, the gospel of integration, interdependency, and trade liberalisation was constantly preached for all countries to embrace. Both the United States (the winner of the Cold War) and the United Kingdom (major ally) championed global integration and freer trade (Osondu-Oti, 2020a) globally. Globalisation then became linked to the spread of capitalism (Ibrahim, 2013) and free trade. Before the Cold War, two close observers of the capitalist revolution in Western Europe, Marx and Engels predicted that because of superior economic efficiency, capitalism would eventually sweep through the entire world, compelling other societies to restructure along the lines of Western Europe (cited in Sachs and Warner, 1995). With the United States (leading power bloc at the end of the Second World War) winning the Cold War, "capitalism no doubt spread to nearly the entire world" (Sachs and Warner, 1995).

Globalization is ideologically and fundamentally old because it appeals to relentless competition in the pursuit of profit (Akinrinade and Ogen, 2003), which has guided economic relations among states since ancient times. Conceptually, it is new because it is primarily driven by new information and communication technology (Arifalo and Ogen, 2003), which have helped economies to become greatly integrated/connected. Economies have become more interdependent with the greater movement of labour and capital in a globalised world. As Tandon (1998) pointed out, globalization seeks to remove all national barriers to the free movement of international capital, [which is the main aim of trade liberalisation - removing barriers to trade between different countries and encouraging free trade].

Although there are many aspects of globalisation, most analyses of recent globalization concentrate on economic factors for understandable reasons (Northrup, 2009). First, the great importance of the free flow of goods and currencies in promoting and sustaining global integration is beyond dispute (Northrup, 2009). Second, the increasing use of global economic integration to describe globalisation and other interrelated concepts such as trade liberalisation and capitalism. Economic globalisation reflects the continuing expansion and integration of market frontiers, the spread of business, trade, and investment across national borders, and the unification of national markets and individual economies to form one big global economy within the international market. It is also called economic internationalism, which is the opposite of localization/economic nationalism. In defining economic globalisation, the emphasis is placed on economic internationalism, which is associated also with terms such as capitalism, laissez-faire, economic liberalism, and free trade (Osondu-Oti, 2020a). The premise of economic internationalism is to promote international free economic interchange promoted by trade liberalisation.

Since the end of the Cold War, countries have increasingly adopted free trade by opening markets, reducing tariff and non-tariff barriers. For instance, in the last two decades, China has consistently and vigorously pursued free-market principles as ably espoused in the prevailing global economic strategy (Akinrinade and Ogen, 2008). After the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) was created in 1947, the world trading system benefited from eight rounds of multilateral trade liberalization and unilateral and regional liberalization. Indeed, the last of these eight rounds (the so-called

"Uruguay Round" completed in 1994) led to the establishment of the World Trade Organization (WTO) to help administer the growing body of multilateral trade agreements (IMF Staff, 2001). Many countries of the world including once economically isolated countries (such as China) joined the World Trade Organisation- the train of trade liberalisation. As noted by Banton (2019), the outcome of trade liberalization and the resulting integration among countries is also called globalization. Countries today are sharing the proceeds/ benefits of trade liberalisation, although gains are uneven. While countries like China and India have become successful because they embraced market liberalisation and other market-oriented reforms, progress has been less rapid for many other countries, particularly in Africa and the Middle East (IMF Staff, 2001).

In other words, trade liberalisation has its advantages and disadvantages and has not benefitted countries equally. While trade liberalisation allows countries to specialise in producing the goods and services where they have a comparative advantage (produce at the lowest opportunity cost), thereby enabling a net gain in economic welfare, it has also been damaging for some developing economies that cannot compete with developed economies. It is agreed that if a country liberalises its trade, it will make the country more attractive for inward investment, and also foreign multinationals who can produce and sell closer to these new emerging markets, but in times of trade liberalisation, some industries could decline, instead of growing when faced with internal challenges such as lack of adequate infrastructure. Such a decline could result in structural unemployment. Also, when industries and workers suffer from the decline due to the inability to compete, it could be difficult to compensate workers who lose out to the international competition.

Trade liberalization could pose a threat to developing nations or economies because they are forced to compete in the same market as stronger economies or nations. This challenge can stifle established local industries or the failure of newly developed industries (Banton, 2019). While many developing countries have liberalised trade in the hope that greater international exposure will improve the performance of local firms, gains from trade liberalisation are far from uniform within countries (Sanfilippo and Sundaram, 2018) and sectors. As China builds its economy and expands its market to gain from open trade, Africa firms have been hard-pressed and are struggling to survive the international competition. That is why trade protectionists are in favour of infant industry protection instead of liberalisation of all sectors because protection would help developing economies protect new/infant industries. Critics believe that trade liberalization costs jobs and depresses wages, and proponents believe it spurs competition and growth. China's economic expansion is no doubt driven by post-Cold War trade liberalisation principles and the adoption of market reforms as well as integration into the global economy (particularly seen in its accession to the World Trade Organisation in 2001). Has trade liberalisation been beneficial or detrimental to Nigeria's textile industry, especially in times of market expansion of China? This would be analysed in subsequent sections.

Overview of Nigeria's Textile Sector: 1960s to Date

Nigerian textile industry existed before Western incursion and colonialism in Africa. As noted by Murtala et al (2017), the communities in the upper and lower Niger River were famous for the production of a variety of textiles that embodied artistry and aesthetic appeal. With the advent of colonialism, "pre-colonial commerce were truncated, and as a result, stifled much textile industrial growth destroying the regional trade and markets for textiles and other manufactured goods" (Murtala et al, 2017). However, the Kano trading company developed the first textile mills in 1952. In 1956, Kaduna Textiles Mills was established and it was the first modern textile firm to be established in Nigeria (Akinrinade and Ogen, 2008). With the end of colonial rule, the country saw the establishment of more textile industries in both the northern and southern parts of the country. The establishment of the textile industry was "viewed as part of the Federal [government] policy of promoting Import-Substitution Industrialisation from the 1960s to the 1970s" (Murtala et al, 2017). In 1964, for example, United Nigerian Textile Limited was established. Towards the end of the

1960s, other Companies like Afprint, Enpee, Asaba Textiles, and Aswani Textiles came into existence. As of the mid-1980s, over 175 textile companies were operating in the country (Olanrewaju, 2019), and toward the end of the 1980s, the Nigerian textile industry could boast of 200 textile industries (Akinrinade and Ogen, 2008).

The [Nigerian textile] industry was once the largest employer of labour after the Federal Government (Akinrinade and Ogen, 2008) and served a large domestic market as well as export markets within the region and to the EU (the United States International Trade Commission, 2009). Indeed, the industry [in the 1970s and 1980s] was the second largest textile industry in Africa, second only to that of Egypt (Akinrinade and Ogen, 2008). At the time, the industry was protected by the Federal Government who introduced a ban on imported textile products (Oseghale, 2019). As a result, the industry between 1985 and 1991 recorded an annual growth of 67 per cent (Oseghale, 2019). Also, following strict government policies in the mid-80s, sourcing of local raw materials for the production of textiles maintained a steady growth from 52 per cent in 1987 to 57 per cent in 1988 to 64 per cent in 1991 (Oseghale, 2019). Synthetic textiles alone accounted for about 80 per cent of the recorded growth (Oseghale, 2019).

From the mid-1990s, the industry began to gradually collapse and by the year 2000, it contracted significantly. For example, in 1996, the industry employed about 137,000 workers, but by 2000, the workforce had shrunk to 83,000 and further declined to 24,000 in 2008 (United Nations Industrial Development Organisation, 2009). The general decline of the textile industry is attributed to many factors including China's market expansion after the final phase-out of quotas for the major textile markets. For example, with the end of the Multi Fibre Agreement/Arrangement (MFA) in 2005, competing textile products from world-leading manufacturers such as China as well as smuggling of products from neighbouring countries threaten local products. The MFA was a framework for bilateral agreements or unilateral actions that established quotas limiting imports into countries whose domestic industries were facing serious damage from rapidly increasing imports.

According to Muhammad et al (2018) textile industry's decline also reflects internal challenges and the failure to provide supportive policy measures and critical infrastructure for the growth of the sector. Epileptic power and water supply problems resulting in high costs of diesel for production also contributed to the decline of the sector. According to the United States International Trade Commission (2009) report, textile manufacturers in Nigeria face high electricity costs, unreliable supply, or power outages. Diesel used for backup generators is very expensive just as the fuel oil used for steam generation. In a survey of business environment obstacles faced by enterprises in Nigeria, 76 per cent of firms identified electricity as a major constraint (United States International Trade Commission, 2009) and it has impacted greatly on their strength to compete successfully with products from other countries. In a recent September 2020 release by the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria, Nigerian manufacturers spend 38 per cent of operating costs on electricity.

Also, industry sources indicate that it has become difficult to be cost-competitive in the production of yarn, fabric, and finished apparel compared with large Asian suppliers, such as China, India, and Bangladesh, particularly following an increase in Asia's exports to Africa after the phase-out of quotas in the United States and European Union markets in 2005 (United States International Trade Commission). At present, Nigeria spends about N170 billion yearly, to import textiles and readymade clothing (Oseghale, 2019). In a nutshell, the remaining textile industry in Nigeria is currently struggling to survive. In what forms or manners have China's market expansion contributed to the decline of the textile sector in Nigeria? This is examined below.

Discussion

The major questions this study addressed are: Is China market expansion a threat to Nigeria's textile industry? In what forms/manners is China's market expansion impacting (or have impacted)

Nigeria's textile industry? Is China's market expansion the only and major challenge facing the textile firms? To critically analyse these questions, secondary materials were consulted and two major textile firms were studied where the author interacted with senior staff of these firms. The author also interacted with representatives of trade-related associations such as the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria, Nigerian Association of textile manufacturers, Nigeria-Chinese Chamber of Commerce, etc. The findings of the research are analysed/discussed based on the research questions but in no particular order. However, all questions were captured and addressed in the discussion below.

China's Market Expansion and Impacts on Nigeria's Textile Industry: Research Findings

After the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, China had a highly concentrated planned economic system, but starting from 1978, China engaged in fundamental reform of its economy (Osondu, 2014). It migrated from a planned economy into a market-oriented economy, which China called the Second Revolution. [††]Before the reform and opening, China was in a closed or semi-closed state with little economic interaction with the international community (Bei and Gang, 2010). Its reform was followed by positive economic growth, opening up of its economy to the world, and greater expansion of its markets beyond its borders. In the early 1990s, China emerged as one of the fastest-growing economies in the world, and by mid-2000, it became the second-largest economy in the world surpassing Germany, France, and Japan.

With the transformation in China's economy, China adopted the first African Policy paper (also called the White Paper) in 2005 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, People's Republic of China, 2006) and the second Policy paper in 2015 (China, 2015) as strategies to aid

†† The First Revolution is the Ascension of China's Communist Party (CCP) into Power in 1949.

the pursuit of its economic activities and to consolidate its interests in Africa. China sets out its new policy for Africa, incorporating all aspects of relations with Africa, ranging from economic, political, social-cultural, military et cetera. The White Papers pointed out the new direction of China's relations with Africa in the 21st century, with much emphasis on economic cooperation. No doubt, economic relations between China and Africa have grown exponentially in trade and investments, often driven by China. Earlier in the year 2000, China established the first-ever Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), where it declared its renewed interests in Africa. Today, China meets with African leaders on a triennial basis under the umbrella of FOCAC, with ministerial meetings held at various times in a year. With an economy that grew at almost 10 per cent in early 2000, China overtook Africa's traditional partners in Europe and America to emerge as Africa's largest trading partner. Being the second-largest continent after Asia, Africa is of great attraction to China because of its large market.

For a country like Nigeria that has the largest market in Africa, China's market expansion has become visible. The growth in China's economy resulted in a sharp growth in trade with Nigeria where trade rose from $12 billion in 2002 to nearly $40 billion in 2006 (Mawdsley, 2007). Today, there is a triple increase in China-Nigeria's trade, dominated by China's exports to Nigeria (Osondu, 2014). In 2011 for instance, Nigeria imported 1 trillion naira worth of goods from China (Nigeria Bureau of Statistics, 2011). Nigeria's imports from China in the second and third quarter of 2019 stood at N2.2 trillion (Okon, 2019) and has continued to increase yearly, even though China is not on the list of the top 10 countries Nigeria exports its products. According to the United Nations COMTRADE (2018) database on international trade, Nigeria's exports to China were US$1.04 Billion in 2018 (cited in Trading Economics, 2018).

The dramatic growth in the relationship between Africa and China is also part of the profound transformation taking place in the global political economy in the twenty-first century (Murtala et al, 2017). China's accession into the World Trade Organisation (WTO) contributed immensely to the increase in China's exports to Nigeria. In 2001, China became a member of WTO. The main goal of WTO remains trade liberalization among its member countries. Nigeria has been a member of WTO since 1995. Thus, with China's accession to WTO in 2001 and Nigeria being a member, China now enjoys the most favoured nation benefits. The advent of globalization/ trade liberalisation saw Asian countries particularly China exporting textile fabrics to Nigeria without hindrance (Akinrinade and Oge, 2008). In Africa, [and Nigeria to be specific], the economic impact of globalisation is seen in the expanding predominance of Chinese manufactured goods in local markets (Murtala et al, 2017).

More Chinese goods are now seen in the Nigerian market ranging from electronics, footwear, textiles, generators, mobile phones, motorcycles, lightings, and fixtures, etc. China has become the manufacturing factory of the world and this is contributing to its quest for new markets, not only in Africa but all over the world. Most goods sold abroad today are manufactured both in quantity and quality in China (Ke and Jun, 2004). Nigeria currently imports from China more than any other country in the world (Osondu, 2014) and is only behind South Africa in the importation of Chinese goods in Africa. Nigerian textile market has been witnessing a significant incursion of Chinese textiles. Available evidence shows that China's growing global competitiveness and its offensives in the Nigerian textile market have damaging impacts on the Nigerian economy (Akinrinade and Ogen, 2008). In what forms or ways then is China's market expansion damaging, impacting (or have impacted) Nigeria's textile industry?

First, one of the ways in which China's market expansion impacted (and still impacts) Nigeria's textile firms is through China's invasion of Nigeria's market by its products brought either by the Chinese or imported by Nigerian businessmen. The increase in the Chinese-Nigerian textile trade became physically evident in Nigeria in the late 1990s, with Chinese textile companies setting up offices in Lagos and Kano, and Nigerian traders and businessmen setting up offices in Guangzhou, China (Renne, 2015). However, compared to Chineseowned firms manufacturing in the country, Nigeria witnesses increased shipments of Chinese manufactured textile from China by Chinese company representatives, brokers, and traders, as well as by Nigerian traders and businessmen (both in Nigeria and China) to meet consumer demands (Personal Conversation with Emechetta, 2014). China's quest for a new market in Nigeria is evident in the establishment of China Town in Lagos, Nigeria in 2005, where 70 per cent of products sold in the Town are textiles imported from China (Osondu, 2014). With the emergence of China Town, it is not the only influx of Chinese goods that Nigeria is witnessing but growing numbers of Chinese immigrants' workers who now settle, trade, and conduct their businesses in Nigeria. Some have also entered into agreements with Nigeria's state governments to establish free trade zones, as seen in Lagos (where a new textile mill is being constructed), Ogun, and Calabar (Personal Conversation with Emechetta, 2014).

According to Corkin (2006), China is suffering from industrial overproduction and market saturation in many sectors, [including textile]. As a result, China needs external markets to sell the goods being churned out by its industry. China is also the largest producer of textiles in the world and since the early 1990s has been the largest exporter of textiles in the world (Ke and Jun, 2004). A fairly, large part of China's manufacturing capacity is producing goods for the international end consumer markets (Dadi, 2006). Textile materials from China now account for more than 80% of the textiles in the Nigerian market (Akinrinade and Ogen, 2008), and increased imports of Chinese textiles are linked to the decline of the Nigerian textile manufacturing industry (Renne, 2015). These imports have considerably weakened the sector and consequently forced it to regress (Murtala et al, 2017). In an interview with the Director-General Nigerian Textile and Garment Industries Association, he noted that the capacity of Nigerian textile companies was up to 1.5 billion linear meters in the 1980s but today it is only producing 250 million linear meters with 80 per cent of the market taking over by foreign fabrics, mainly from China (Personal Communication, Olarenwaju, 2014). According to Adebayo, the Human Resource

Manager of the United Nigerian Textile Company, in an interaction with the author, it was gathered that in the 1980s, the United Nigerian Textile company has about 80 per cent production but currently, it has gone down to only 30 per cent. Capacity utilization of the general textile industry is estimated at less than 20% with companies employing barely 18,000 workers less than the 250,000 previously employed (Murtala et al, 2017).

It was also gathered that Nigeria is not the only country suffering from the influx of Chinese textiles. In an interaction with the President Nigeria-Chinese Chamber of Commerce, Mr Emechetta noted that China's large exports of textile goods are felt all over the world including Europe and North America. The developed economies are complaining of over flooding of markets with Chinese textile and apparel. For instance, in 2006, six hundred thousand people were retrenched in textile industries in Europe due to lack of demand for their products following the influx of cheap Chinese textiles (Emechetta, 2013). Also, China exports over $70 billion worth of apparel to the United States (US) every year (Emechetta, 2014). The current trade war between China and the United States stems primarily from the threat China's market expansion poses to US domestic industries.

Many lost their jobs in South Africa and some textile industries were shut down due to the influx of Chinese textiles (Osondu, 2014). In 2006, for example, there was a huge protest in Zambia against the flooding of local markets with 'made in China' goods which threatened the local, small-scale industries as well as retailers (Modi and Shekhawat, 2009:34). The Zambia opposition candidate, Michael Sata in the 2006 Presidential election campaigned on an anti-Chinese platform (Modi and Shekhawat, 2009:34). The Democratic Republic of Congo also witnessed the expulsion of about 600 Chinese and the closure of their industrial units (Modi and Shekhawat, 2009: 34), due to the inability of local industries to withstand competition from Chinese products. The influx of Chinese products into the Nigerian market is seriously undermining the competitiveness of the nation's already distressed textile manufacturing sector that lacks adequate support from the government. According to Mr Endurance, Research Economist with Manufacturers Association of Nigeria, the influx of Chinese textile goods has led to the loss of more than 50,000 jobs in the textile sector and the eventual closure of almost all textile industries in Nigeria (Personal Communication, March 5, 2014). In his words, "manufacturers have had it rough and tough following the influx of Chinese goods" (Endurance, 2014). Endurance (2014) noted that the multiplier effect of the influx of Chinese products on local industries ranges from low-capacity utilization (average of 40 per cent); low and declining contribution to national output (an average of 4 per cent), negative real growth rates, and low-value addition due to high imports dependence.

Second, the increasing patronage of Chinese textile by Nigerians due to the cheap nature of its products (Olanrewaju, 2014), has caused the displacement of local products. China has one of the cheapest labour in the world although it is changing because according to Plekhanov (2017) hourly manufacturing wages in China in 2016 exceeded those in every major Latin American economy except Chile and were at around 70 per cent of the level in weaker Eurozone countries, such as Portugal. However, it was China's cheap labor that was considered the main factor behind the Chinese economic miracle, propelling the country to the status of the world's factory and shifting global supply chains (Plekhanov, 2017). Standing in the way of Nigeria's benefit from free trade is a widespread infrastructural dearth, which has also impacted the cost of production and market sales.

Good infrastructural services are closely related to economic growth (see Oyejide, 2000), and these are lacking in Nigeria. According to World Bank (2007), delays in obtaining necessary connections to electricity in West Africa can average up to 80 days, and electricity outages occur on average 91 days per year, leading to loss of output due to outages (see Kanang, 2014). For example, energy consumption in West African countries such as Nigeria is the lowest in the world with only 20% of urban households and 6% of rural households having access to electricity (Elliot, 2011 cited in Osondu-

Oti, 2020c). Inadequate power supply in Nigeria results in higher costs of producing Nigerian textiles as power supply accounts for 45 per cent of the production costs (Oseghale, 2019). Good roads and rail networks are also absent. The adequacy, efficiency, and costs of key infrastructural services, such as transport, communication, and energy have major implications for the ease or difficulty with which the country can successfully benefit from global economic integration. Basic physical infrastructure deficit severely compromises Nigeria's prospects for economic development in a globalised world. According to the Executive Secretary Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA), Umar Gambo Jibrin, $3 trillion is needed to solve Nigeria's infrastructure deficit and engender development in the next 30 years (cited in Ajimotokan and Orizu, 2019). At present, Nigeria spends about N170 billion yearly, to import textiles and readymade clothing (Oseghale, 2019), and China is the destination market.

China's advanced or high-rated infrastructure provided a good business environment for its manufacturers when compared to Nigeria. China's sustained high economic growth and increased competitiveness in manufacturing have been underpinned by a massive development of physical infrastructure (Sahoo et al, 2010). Infrastructure development and economic growth are mutually pursued. Infrastructure development in China has rapidly upgraded within the last five years (the Tenth Five-Year Plan) (Chuan, 2008). From the late 1990s to 2005, 100 million Chinese benefited from power and telecommunications upgrades (Chen et al, 2013). Between 2001 and 2004, investment in rural roads grew by a massive 51 per cent annually (Chen et al, 2013). In recent years, the Chinese government has used substantial infrastructure spending to hedge against flagging economic growth (Chen et al, 2013). Thus, China has taken advantage of Nigeria's inadequate infrastructure and the attendant high cost of production and supply to displace Nigeria's local manufactures with its cheap textiles. Local producers are not only contending with the influx of Chinese textiles but with cheaper products that consumers [particularly middle and low-income earners] are eager to patronize, to the disadvantage of local textiles that are unable to compete successfully. Poor infrastructure and lack of competitiveness have also prevented the Nigerian textile industry from taking advantage of the United States Africa Growth and Opportunity Act that came into place in the year 2000 and has been extended to the year 2025. China has grabbed that opportunity by the opening of its firms in African countries such as Lesotho and exporting to the United States, and taking over markets to the chagrin of Nigerian firms.

Nigeria's "Sunflag" Textile Manufacturing Company established in 1961 used to be one of the largest textile companies in the whole of West Africa with world-class manufacturing facilities but the company has become a shadow of itself today. In an interaction with Mr Adesina, the Marketing Manager of Sunflag Textile Company, he narrated the industry's ordeal since the increasing arrival of Chinse textile in the 1990s:

> When the Chinese started coming into the Nigerian market, Chinese businessmen would sell a container for 2 million Naira that a Nigerian importer usually sells at 10 million Naira. This became a very big disadvantage for textile manufacturers in Nigeria because Nigerian textile marketers/retailers/consumers now prefer Chinese cheap goods. Sunflag's production that was initially put at 1 million linear meters went down to 300 thousand and has continued to decline (Personal Communication, 2014)

As of the mid-1980s, there were over 170 members of the Association of Nigerian Textile Manufacturers but today there are less than 20 (with only 10 textile manufacturing firms and the remaining manufacturing accessories such as sewing threads, linings, etc.) (Personal Communication Olanrewaju, December 18, 2019). In a country like Nigeria that emerged as the poverty capital of the world, citizens would prefer cheaper products as they struggle to survive the "harsh" economic situation (Olanrewaju, 2019). In an earlier interview with the Director-General, National Association of Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines, and Agriculture (NACCIMA), Dr John Isemede, pointed out that:

> Products that could not be afforded a few years ago by the majority of Nigerians now come at a very cheaper rate from China for Nigerian consumers. With the low per-capita income of the Nigerian population, Chinese cheap goods remain acceptable to many, and Nigerians prefer to go for them (Isemede, 2011)

Textile firms in Nigeria are facing serious marketing problems as a result of low consumer demand emanating from declining real incomes and weak purchasing power. The demand of the international market for China's cheap and good-quality products has driven the sustained growth of Chinese exports (Dadi, 2006). According to Corkin (2006), products and services that Chinese companies offer are considerably less expensive than those of European Corporations (Corkin, 2006), and the same applies to African products. The intricacies involved in globalisation trends, which encourage the pursuit of profit regardless of consequences have proved to be harmful to the textile manufacturing sector in Nigeria (Murtala et al, 2017).

Third, the smuggling of second-hand/used clothing textiles from neighbouring states is impacting negatively the textile sector in Nigeria. Global integration is no doubt an avenue for firms/businesses to expand and penetrate external markets, but sometimes neighbouring states and "closer markets" that have regional trade liberalisation schemes can take advantage of non-border restrictions to smuggle foreign-made fabrics. For example, taking advantage of Nigeria's larger population, economy, and natural resource wealth and [ECOWAS liberalisation scheme], "Benin adopted a strategy centered on being "entrepôt state," that is, serving as a trading hub, importing goods, and re-exporting them legally but most often illegally to Nigeria" (Golub et al, 2019).

Re-exporting involves importing goods and subsequently shipping them to other countries with no additional processing or packaging, except for transport services (Golub, 2012 cited in Osondu-Oti, 2020). Informal trade activities are flourishing in West Africa and Nigeria's large market is a target for its neighbours. Informal trade activities involve three types of flows- smuggling of imports from other continents, usually entering through the port without being recorded, exports and imports of locally produced products within the region, and unofficial re-exports of legally imported products (Golub, 2012). Although Nigeria prohibits imports of ethnic printed fabric and used clothing, these items are allegedly smuggled into the country in large quantities (Murtala et al, 2017) either by the Chinese or African counterparts. In 2015, Premium Times Nigeria reported that the Nigeria Customs Service Anti-smuggling Taskforce in Kano arrested three Chinese nationals for illegally importing printed textile materials worth billions of Naira to Nigeria (Premium Times, 2015). According to Mudashir (2015), N315 billion worth of textile materials were allegedly smuggled into the country by Chinese nationals.

In Nigeria, smuggling is aided by the country's porous borders used for unofficial re-exports of Chinese textiles from ECOWAS member countries. At the moment, the Nigeria Customs Service is battling to end a $1.2 billion smuggled textile industry and as noted by Oseghale (2019), it is a war the Custom Service is most certainly not winning with the numerous creeks and pathways into the country. Nigeria is awash with contraband. Chatham House, a British think-tank, reckons that at least 70% of trade between Africa's biggest economy and its neighbours goes unrecorded (see The Economist, 2016). In 2010, the World Bank estimated that 2 billion worth of textiles is squirreled into Nigeria every year (The Economist, 2016). Widespread smuggling of textiles into Nigeria has certainly not helped matters as Benin, specializes as a gateway for contraband goods to the rest of the African continent (Emmanuel, 2015). Benin's economic activity is the transshipment of contraband (Oseghale, 2019). At the Benin ports, the counterfeit consignments are loaded onto trucks and either driven straight over the land border between Benin and western Nigeria or up through Niger and round to the border post with its taciturn chief (Oseghale, 2019). The trade is estimated to be worth about $2bn a year, equivalent to about a fifth of all annual recorded imports of textiles, clothing, fabric, and yarn into the whole of sub-Saharan Africa (Oseghale, 2019). Benin's economy is heavily reliant on the informal re-export and transit trade with Nigeria, which accounts for about 20% of its GDP, or national income (Landry and Colette, 2019 cited in Osondu-Oti, 2020), and this poses a great threat to the textile industry in Nigeria.

Less than a decade after the adoption of full-blown neo-liberal economic reforms by the Nigerian government, the textile sector has become largely moribund (Akinrinade and Ogen, 2008). The argument that opening up economies to the global economy is essential in enabling many developing countries to develop competitive advantages in the manufacture of certain products (IMF Staff, 2001), has proved the opposite for Nigeria's textile sector. According to the Director-General of the Raw Materials Research and Development Council (RMRDC), Professor Hussaini D. Ibrahim, smuggling/dumping is the largest threat to the existing textile manufacturers, noting that the practice is flourishing because of the permissiveness of Nigeria's immediate neighbours and the laxity of the country's border control which gives smugglers and their agents a thoroughfare into the country (cited in Yahaya, 2019).

Fourth, another way that China's market expansion impacts Nigeria's textile firms are through the displacement of its products in the international market. When the Multifibre agreement ended in 2005, quotas placed on developing countries were removed, and China had the opportunity to export its textile to the developed world market without restriction. As a result, China took over European markets and African markets, which were major markets of exports by Nigerian firms. The Multifibre Arrangement (MFA) was an international trade agreement on textiles and clothing that was in place from 1974 to 2004. Under the Multifibre Arrangement (MFA), the United States and the European Union (EU) restricted imports from developing countries to protect their domestic textile industries. Each developing country signatory was assigned quotas (numerically limited quantities) on the amount of clothing and textile exports that could be exported to the U.S. and EU (Kenton, 2019). Although China ranked first in the exports of textile since 1980, the MFA restricted its exports, thereby creating an opportunity for other countries in Africa, but with the end of the MFA in 2005, Nigerian textile firms faced a herculean task of penetrating the market of their traditional partners in Europe and Africa. Nigerian textile exports once focused on the EU market (United States International Trade Commission, 2009) and the African market but it has been taken over by China. Also, Nigeria's textile firms have not benefitted from the United States Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) due to internal external factors such as the taking over of its market by China both within the country and in the United States (Emechetta, 2014). However, the current trade war between China and the United States could be a blessing to the remaining textile firms in Nigeria if other earlier issues discussed such as infrastructure deficits and financial support are tackled by the Nigerian government.

Fifth, China's replication of Nigerian brand products called African Print/Wax print is also a big challenge to Nigerian textile firms. African print is the most commonly used textile in the language of dress across West and Central Africa (Warritay, 2017). In Nigeria, African print is known as "Ankara" and has been manufactured locally since the 1960s (Warritay, 2017) but as world textiles manufacturing centers moved to China, India, and Korea, cheaper varieties of African print begin to circulate (Warritay, 2017), threatening the local production. In a recent feature documentary on Wax Print by British-Nigerian filmmaker and fashion designer Aiwan Obinyan, Chinese companies began making inroads into the wax-print market in the 1970s, but the materials they produced at the time were inferior but by the 1990s they improved their technique by poaching designers from the big companies and resorting to other tactics (cited in Nwoye, 2018). Today, emerging Chinese manufacturers like Hi-Target and Supreme are wax print companies in their own right with distinct designs produced at a very high standard and sold cheaply (Nwoye, 2018).

According to Emmanuel (2015), the Chinese have successfully copied garments in the local style, to the chagrin of Nigerian producers who simply cannot compete. Although seen as Chinese fabric, they are believed to be counterfeited trademarked African prints (United

States International Trade Commission, 2009), which China has reproduced causing strong distress to the Nigerian local producers. The Deputy Human Resource Manager, United Nigerian Textile Plc, Mr. Adebayo in an interaction with the author stated that although its Company has survived since 1971, the production of the company has reduced drastically and the number of staff has reduced too. He maintained that copying of locally made Ankara that is unique to Africa by the Chinese has caused the firm greater loss (Adebayo, 2019). According to Nwoye (2018), Ankara is a fabric that represents African authenticity and helps people in other far-flung corners of the world connect with the continent but the fate of the fabric today poses even more challenges to its African identity. China's incursion into the wax print trade-from counterfeiting to establishing legitimate wax print factories threatens the Africanness of the fabric, especially as local manufacturers struggle to produce and claim ownership of a material whose main consumers are Africans (Nwoye, 2018). However, the casualties of China's encroachment into the Ankara business extend beyond manufacturers, as famous wax print distributors known as Mama Benzes (or Nana Benzes) are going out of business (Nwoye, 2018) because of the rise of cheap but quality wax prints from China.

Sixth, Nigeria's textile firms' inability to meet up technological advancement in the era of trade liberalisation and lifting of import bans. When Nigeria joined WTO in 1995, it became glaring that it would not be able to compete with countries like China that have advanced technologically (Emechetta, 2014). In Nigeria, textile and apparel inputs are still produced on some outdated machinery (the United States International Trade Commission, 2009), resulting in low-quality outputs. The country also faces cotton quality issues in the international market (United States International Trade Commission, 2009). The inability of Nigeria to keep up with technological advancements in textile production was further worsened when Nigeria abolished import policies that had previously protected its textile industry from external competition in the 1980s. Thus, with the import restriction policy lifted, cheaper textile imports, majorly from Asia such as China, Indonesia, India, Malaysia, Japan, and Singapore flooded the Nigerian market (Oseghale, 2019), with China taking the lead (Osondu, 2014). Although Nigeria was once the largest cotton producer in Sub-Saharan Africa (United States International Trade Commission, 2009), its production has contracted significantly. Available evidence reveals that China's market expansion is a major factor that led to the demise of many textile industries in Nigeria. China impacts Nigeria's textile in significant ways although poor infrastructure and government neglect of the sector contribute to China taking over Nigeria's textile market and the eventual decline of the industry.

Conclusion and Recommendations

At the beginning of the 1990s, China emerged as an economic force in the international arena and expanded beyond its borders significantly in the area of trade. Having emerged as the manufacturing centre of the world, China's export tripled in Africa. China has the advantage of exporting cheap manufactured goods, and as result, African businessmen made China its destination market for imports of manufactured goods. For instance, China is the largest source of import market for Nigeria. With the increasing penetration of Chinese goods such as textiles into Nigeria's market, the country's textile industry began to collapse. An industry that once boasted of 200 firms can hardly boast of 20 today. Data gathered revealed that there are various ways China's market expansion have impacted and still impacts Nigeria's textile industry such as smuggling from neighbouring states; the influx of textile materials from China due to trade liberalisation and its accession into WTO; cheaper Chinese goods when compared with Nigerian manufactured textiles; China's replication of Nigeria's known brands such as Ankara and the displacement of Nigeria's products in African and European markets. While China is a major threat to Nigeria's textile industry, other hindrances to growth cannot be attributed to the Chinese such as unsteady power supply which has caused manufacturers to close down their businesses because of the high cost of operating with diesel or fuel and lack of government support of the sector. It is therefore recommended that Nigeria upgrades its infrastructure and supports the textile sector to avoid total collapse and to help revive the collapsed firms.

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