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Paul Ihuoma Oluikpe
Central Bank of Nigeria, PIOLUIKPE@cbn.gov.ng

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Leveraging Import Substitution for Economic Expansion: the case of Nigeria

Paul I. Oluike (Ph.D)
Associate Head, Financial Inclusion Secretariat
Development Finance Department
Central Bank of Nigeria

Abstract

Objective

The objective of this paper is to describe the import substitution policies of Nigeria with a historical and analytical outlook with a view to amplifying its dimensions of impact, and recommending potential options for optimizing policy and implementation.

Method

The methodology adopted for this paper is descriptive and historical analysis. Comparisons were drawn from various countries policies such as Chile, Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, India, South Korea, and the Philippines and outcomes are highlighted, and then extrapolated to the Nigerian context with a view to understanding the local context in the light of peer country implementation.

Findings

The results from the implementation of Nigeria's import substitution policies have been varied and undulated. Specifically, in recent times, the 41 items policy, may be mixed in the short term, but strongly indicates a good outcome in the long run for the country. Domestic production, especially of commodities is on the uptick since the inception of the 41 items policy, and various other sectors, like manufacturing are witnessing significant gains in capacity expansion due to increased local demand.

Major Recommendation

The Central Bank of Nigeria should harmonize its 41 items policy with other foreign exchange, currency management, and financial markets policies to ensure a coordinated focus and to forestall counteractions in outcomes on several simultaneous policy tracks. It should also measure the impact of the 41 items policy to examine and ensure that while preserving forex on one hand, the impact is not blunted on other fronts by hemorrhaging foreign exchange through leakages, roundtripping and transfer pricing.

***Keywords**: Import substitution; Economic Policy; Monetary policy; Fiscal Policy; Economic Expansion*

1.0 Introduction

Import substitution as an economic concept involves the conceptualization and application of macroeconomic policies within the national space of a country to spur the domestic production of goods and services in place of importing the same from abroad (Bruton, 1998). The ideological grounding for import substitution could be traced to the scholastic opponents of the classical political economy theory and the neoclassical theory. These economic schools of thought spawned the free trade ideology which provided the impetus for globalization and free movement of capital and labour currently witnessed in this milieu (Casaburi, 1998). However, the opponents of free trade argue that collapsing or blurring boundaries, subordinating national regulation and policy to a global system of rules would imperil nascent industries in poor and developing countries who do not have the internal capacity to compete on an even keel with developed and industrialized nations who on their part, have had a headstart in industrialization even before the colonial era.

These imbalances and disparity in capabilities, resources, technology and access to global markets ensure that countries do not come to the table as equal partners. In the global market for goods and services, the least developed countries (LDCs) come cap in hand with very little choice, as their products are mostly low-value primary products often poorly priced. On the other hand, the developed nations come to the market with an advantage, the financial capabilities, and leverage to dictate the prices of goods and services, and forcing the hand of vulnerable countries to accept handouts, and below-par valuations of their products. In return, the LDCs import secondary products generated from their primary exports, exactly from these same countries, at premium rates considering the value added principle. In the process, foreign exchange is dissipated, the reserves are depleted, and the local currency is pressured and devalued, leading to inflation, falling standards of living, and system fragility. Time after time, the story of economic recessions in most developing nations often follow the torturous trajectory of import dependency, exportation of raw materials, with very little manufacturing base to earn foreign exchange. Hence, recessions are attracted to such one-sided trade ecosystems, like the bee to honey, given the inevitable fragility of all other critical fundamentals in such economies.

This state of affairs, since after decolonization, has forced the hand of developing countries like Argentina, India, Chile, South Korea, Brazil, Philippines and Nigeria amongst numerous others, to adopt import substitution policies to stimulate local industrialization, in a bid to throw off the yoke of dependency from industrialized nations. As veritable and noble as this enterprise sounds, the results have been mixed and undulated. Against this backdrop, this paper therefore examines the import substitution strategies of Nigeria, with the intent of stimulating economic expansion. Section 2 of the paper would explore the literature of import substitution, while section 3 would specifically focus, highlight and expatiate on the import substitution policies conceptualized and implemented by Nigeria. Section 4 would provide treatment for the current 41 items foreign exchange policy of Nigeria and the outcomes so far in terms of stimulating domestic production. Finally, section 5 would discuss and recommend additional policies for deepening and expanding local manufacturing in Nigeria.

2.0 Literature Review

The literature of economic development is replete with cases of import substitution, stemming mainly from the dependency theories of development (Corporaso, 1980; Palma, 1978). Import substitution (IS) is defined as a trade policy that seeks to substitute imports with locally produced goods with the intention of stimulating domestic economic growth, conserving foreign exchange, developing local expertise and capability, encouraging local technology and also increasing foreign exchange earnings through exports of excess capacity (Bruton, 1989).

Import substitution is an inward oriented and self-contained trade disposition that seeks to redirect attention to internal mechanisms for generating growth as opposed to a liberal, outward and exports-oriented approach for generating economic growth.

Both paradigms in the current global trade context are not mutually exclusive. But to understand the mindset of the early proponents of the IS theory and practice, we need to take a brief retrospective glance at the 1940s era.

2.1 Historical Overview

The story of import substitution has been staggered but began in the 1940s when the debate around the role of international activities in explaining growth or its absence in the least developed countries (LDCs) came to the fore (Bruton, 1998).

The First and Second World Wars played key roles in sensitizing colonies to assert themselves and fend off continued colonialist domination and encroachments. Europe was tottering on the brink of collapse but for the intervention of the USA, after two massively resource intensive fratricidal wars (World War 1 and 2). The wars exposed the fault lines in colonialist domination and the unsustainable hegemony over colonies. Most of the European powers were broke and looking for new growth areas and synergies. Unfortunately, the colonies were also evolving politically and socially, and coupled with the massive resources required to run large and complex bureaucracies in the colonies, especially by Britain, events soon conspired to lend much voice to the louder agitations for independence. The colonial system quickly unraveled thereafter and soon, in Africa for example, nascent and independent countries began to emerge often with radical ideologists as leaders such as Patrice Lumumba in the Congo, Julius Nyerere in Tanzania, Kwameh Nkrumah in Ghana, Jomo Kenyatta in Kenya, Nnamdi Azikiwe in Nigeria and many others (Ogujiuba,Nwogwugwu, U and Dike, 2011; Adewale, 2017). The stage was set for a complete repudiation of the colonialists and their imperialist economic intentions, or so they thought.

2.2 IS Policy Background

The economic debates of the era increasingly began to focus on the reasons for underdevelopment in Africa and other countries where the colonialists held sway. Reasons were adduced as to why Africa for example, despite European incursions and interruptions in their internal governance, had remained underdeveloped and impoverished. The prosperity and development of the foreign homelands had not translated to equivalent economic prosperity for their colonial outposts. A lot of moral outrage accompanied these debates in intellectual and policy circles. Theorists and academics of the 1950s and 1960s in developing countries saw very little relevance from neoclassical economics in terms of development and economic growth. This distrust rested on several major planks:

(a) It was said that neoclassical economics was very static and was only concerned with the efficient allocation of resources, whereas the problems of developing countries were more acute than simple allocation of resources, and reached deeper into how to generate and increase the resources themselves (Bruton, 1998). The division of labour between the North and South countries had seemed to doom the later to abject poverty, hence, Ricardo's (1772-1823) comparative advantage theory, while underpinning the ideology behind international trade , wasn't necessarily translating into beneficial and sustainable outcomes for poor countries (Ruffin, 2002).

(b) It was argued that developing countries were afflicted with several structural rigidities that stifled and constrained economic growth, thus the neoclassical idealistic model and assumption of perfectly flexible and adjustable economy did not apply to developing countries. Also, theorists began to challenge the notions of the outward-oriented approach, surmising that the supposed benefits from the export-oriented approach are not a straight-cut as is being presupposed. They point to the basic characteristics of economies such as entrepreneurship, technology, knowledge, absorptive capacity, and institutions. These determine how much progress an economy makes and how much of the benefits from international trade are retained within the country. The low-income countries are acutely disadvantaged across all of these fronts and metrics, and therefore were in no position to dictate or shape the direction or form of trade involving them.

(c) Prebisch (2016) opined that the gains from productivity growth in the North resulted in rising wages, not falling prices, due to the monopoly power of both labor and

firms in the North while in the South which is dependent mainly on agricultural and mineral exports, there was lower productivity growth, and wages were held down by surplus labor, weak unions, and competition among exporters. To industrialize, given the already sophisticated industrialization in the North, the low-income countries in the South have to pursue protectionist policies to keep their nascent industries protected from stiff competition from products manufactured in the North.

(d) By the mid-1940s it was crystal clear to development economists that the "structure" of the economies of the developing countries had to be changed in fundamental ways if they were to compete on equal terms in the world markets, and a market mechanism could not bring about this sort of structural change (Grabowski, 1994)

The result of these criticisms and agonizing over the state of affairs, was a set of ambitious IS policies to delink these countries from colonial dependency. However, the countries in a number of years down the line would soon learn that political independence does not automatically translate to economic independence. Key factors responsible for the attachment to the apron-strings of the colonial masters are as follows:

(a) Inherited social and economic structures left by the colonialists posed difficulties for self-directed development. These structures were mostly extractive in nature. Some academics have argued that the colonial outposts were mostly extractive economic configurations aimed at wringing the most from the resources of the countries for the benefit of the mainland (Memmi, 2013). In essence, there was very little incentive to build sustainable structures that would be amenable, flexible and adaptable to the locals for continued development (Onyeonoru, 2003).

(b) Highly skewed income distribution, linked to the inherited social and economic structures deliberately left behind by the colonials constrained the march towards development. The social, economic and educational strata left behind by the colonialists bred a local elite and concentrated income and commerce in the hands of few people ostensibly to perpetuate post-colonial hegemony. There was very little appetite to liberalize education, enable political socialization of the people, and reorient the citizenship. As a result, consumerist patterns dependent on products and services from foreign countries continued unabated. In essence, along with colonialism, came the creation of large captive markets for goods made in the colonialists homelands. Geroski (2003) had studied in-depth the creation of new markets and the concept of inchoate demand. The colonialists had succeeded in creating large demands for European goods, where it never existed, heretofore.

(c) The structures that were necessarily supportive of colonial purposes are not necessarily supportive of self-directed development, without distorting and misdirecting priorities. Infrastructure were extractive in nature and production infrastructure and processes were deliberately installed and left at the primary stages to cater for the colonial capital's secondary and tertiary industries/factories, a level which provided superior returns in form of value and volume for the homeland.

The nascent countries soon realized that the process of development cannot simply be willed by nationalism. Given the preceding point, the nationalists had a lot to contend with. To upstage the apple cart, they had to conceptualize and implement grounds-up production and manufacturing infrastructure.

2.3 Import Substitution Implementation in Developing Countries

This subsection examines the cases of import substitution implemented in some countries with the intent of drawing out salient

issues such as comparisons, commonalities and differences in application, given the unique context of each case.

Table 1: Import Substitution comparatives across countries

BRAZIL	INDIA	SOUTH KOREA	CHILE	ARGENTINA	PHILIPPINES
Changes in exchange control	Stimulating basic industries for growth	South Korea's IS Strategy was based on foreign trade, exchange and credit policies	Closed economy High government expenditure	Stage 1: Labour intensive industries	Quantitative import restrictions
Tariffs to protect manufacturing	Infant industries protected through tariffs		High tariffs Extensive regulations	Stage 2: Capital Intensive industries	Tariffs
Gradual decline of the primary sector	Between 1950 and 1966 IS accounted for 23% of growth		Quotas	Tariffs	Focus on the manufacturing sector
Expansion of the secondary and tertiary sectors			Exchange controls		

The Indian model of IS focused on investing in heavy industry because of the assumptions about economy-wide effects of productivity growth created by domestic capital goods sector (Mahalanobis, 1955). About one-third of total investment was allocated to "basic investment goods," about 18 percent to industrial consumer goods, and 17 percent to agriculture. Critics of the model assumed that the plan could have been implemented with less capital than actually utilized, but what they often missed was the positive externalities that were spawned from the plan and also the important objective of economic independence. Brazil, Chile and Argentina pursued a structuralist approach to import substitution. Theorists in these countries argued that wage rates could be high in order to attack the poverty problem with no costs in terms of employment. Similarly, wage rates did not matter much in terms of exporting as its value could be set to achieve objectives such as capital formation or controlling inflation. While applications of import substitution across countries varied in some ways, there were a lot of commonalities bordering their conceptualization.

Lewis (1955) opined that backward societies can grow by modeling themselves after the

dynamic features of the advanced societies. Hence, many countries in the developing world like India, latched on to the planning concept, and these often existed side by side with the market. Most countries aimed at restructuring the economy, achieving rapid industrialization and becoming more independent of other countries. The following IS tools were mostly utilized by these countries:

(1) Tariffs were imposed, and effective rates of protection (ERP) were used in a differentiated manner to prioritize products, sectors, and activities. Tariffs were complemented by various foreign exchange rate controls which were often used as a quick fix to correct balance of payments problems by developing countries. The foreign exchange controls were not part of the policy toolkit or roadmap for import substitution, rather they were used as contingent measures.

(2) Exchange Rates: Most countries pursued the strategy of overvaluing the exchange rate as a subsidy to induce capital importation. Most often this discouraged exports.

(3) Import Licences: These were used as instruments to ensure products deemed essential for consumption or vital for stimulating investment were available.

The physical and human capital of the Sub-Saharan countries at independence were lesser than that available in other developing countries. Literacy rates were much lower, and the labour force was much less experienced and sophisticated. Also, savings and investment rates were much lower in comparison, and public infrastructure-roads, power networks, and institutions were much less robust and the markets were incomplete. Moreover, the new states were often ill-defined as to geographic boundaries and depth of governance. Ethnic, tribal, religious and linguistic diversity while presenting opportunities, also posed a lightning rod for conflicts.

2.4 Import Substitution Policies in Nigeria

In the past, Nigeria has pursued a number of import substitution policies to stimulate local production. The results of these policies are mixed. Some of the pre-independence macroeconomic policies to support import substitution include:

(1)Aid to pioneer industries ordinance of 1952

(2)Income Tax Amendment Ordinance of 1952

(3)Industrial Development (Import Duty Relief) Ordinance of 1957

(4)The Industrial Development (Income Tax Relief) Ordinance of 1958

(5)The Customs Duties (Dumped and Subsidies goods) Ordinance of 1958

These policies were enacted by the colonial governments at various instances to stimulate some level of production in the Nigerian colony. Using a variety of policy tools such as income tax relief, dumped and subsidies goods ordinance, import duty relief, tax amendment and the pioneer industries ordinance, the government sought to encourage local development. However, these tools were limited in impact due to the dominance of foreign enterpreneurs and foreign owned companies in the Nigerian market space. Whatever gains would have been garnered from the tax reliefs, subsidies and import duty relief, also stand to dissipate through repatriation of earnings and dividends, aside from the fact that much of the capital goods were import-based as well. Any meaningful import substitution in this era would have sought to concentrate local production infrastructure, ownership and control in the hands of indigenous people in Nigeria.

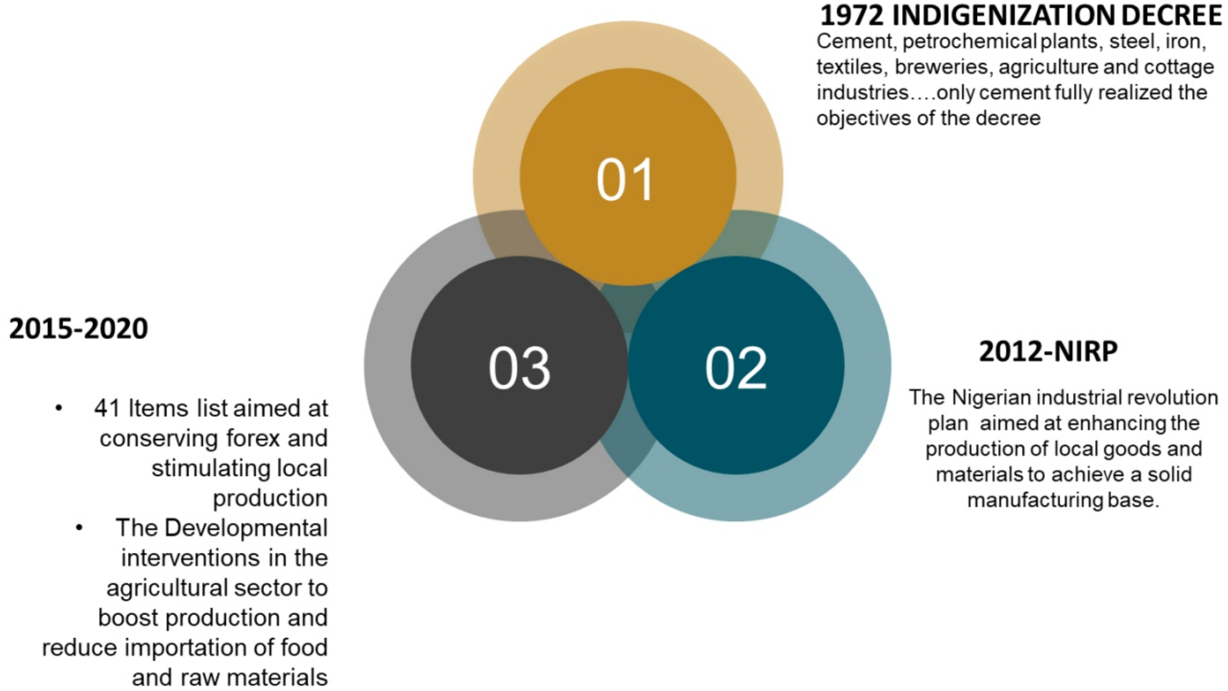

Figure2: *Post-Independence Import Substitution Policies in Nigeria*

2.4.1 The 1972 Indigenization Decree

Figure 2 above highlights the major import substitution supporting policies after independence. The government in 1972 undertook an ambitious plan to provide leverage for heavy industries such as steel, iron, petrochemical plants, cement, textiles, breweries, agriculture, cottage industries and a number of others using a combination of tariffs, indigenization policies, and subsidies. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the result of this policy was an array of budding textile companies across Nigeria, which led to the popularization of the Nigerian Ankara material. Kano and Kaduna States particularly, had very strong textile industries' presence. The local production of beverages by breweries was also very prominent in the late 70's and 80's. However, during the economic recession which kicked in after oil prices collapsed in 1981 and the subsequent foreign currency crisis of 1986 and the Structural Adjustment Programmes, most of these industries spurred by the 1972 policy stagnated and disappeared from the landscape. Only cement production achieved the full objective of this policy (Nyong and Ekpenyong, 2007).

2.4.2 The Nigerian Industrial Revolution Plan (2012)

The Nigerian Industrial Revolution Plan (NIRP) of 2012, adopted four cardinal objectives of enabling focus on labour-intensive low and medium technology manufacturing, building up core base industries that are essential for developing advanced industries, using the Nigerian large market demand to deepen industrial capacity of local firms, and using key manufacturing sectors as a fulcrum for technology drivers of the economy. The NIRP was specifically targeted and isolated from the broad development plans which Nigeria has pursued in the past. This is to enable focus on industrialization and not dilute it within the broad spectrum of development priorities which are inclusive of the hard and soft elements. The plan focuses on agro-allied industries, metals and solid minerals, construction, light manufacturing and services. It sought to deepen critical infrastructure for industrialization, develop skills, provide a conducive investment climate and leverage innovation, enable standards across industries, stimulate local patronage of Nigerian goods, and deepen financing for

infrastructure and industrialization. The intentions of this plan were noble, however, the implementation efforts have been mixed since the most recent economic recession of 2015 and 2016 in Nigeria (Ijirshar, 2015).

2.4.3 The 41 Items Foreign Exchange Policy

The Nigerian economy, in 2015, witnessed a distressing downturn that saw the local currency lose over 200% of its value relative to the US Dollar and other international convertible currencies. The recession had its immediate roots in Nigeria's singular dependence on oil for much of government revenues and source of funding a big portion of its budget. The impact of the recession was exacerbated by worsening fundamentals such as capital reversals due to geopolitical uncertainties, negative investor outlook and domestic instability driven by insurgencies at various fronts both in the north, middle-belt and southern parts of the country. These macroeconomic conditions fueled and reinforced the conditions for a recession to make landfall. Hence, Nigeria witnessed one of the worst economic recessions in recent memory. Due to its consumerist economic base relying mostly on importation to meet local demands, the country hemorrhaged foreign exchange and given the disparities in its balance of payments relative to other countries, Nigeria was in an unfavorable position as per foreign exchange. Something drastic had to happen. The Central Bank of Nigeria, the sole foreign exchange authority in the country instituted foreign exchange controls to stem the tide of forex dissipation. A slew of items, forty one (41) in number were targeted for exclusion from the foreign exchange window, ostensibly to preserve foreign exchange and allocate these to other import priority areas. There was a sense that much of these 41 items imported from abroad are producible, locally. The intent therefore was two-pronged; to stimulate local production of targeted items, and to preserve foreign exchange and arrest the continued slide of the naira. This, coupled with a cocktail of other complementary policies, both from the fiscal and monetary sides, were used to shape policy and respond to worsening economic fundamentals. A retrospective analysis therefore, would pit the 41 items policy more as a crisis -response action than a deliberate import substitution approach. However, the policy has translated to substantial outcomes in terms of foreign exchange savings, stimulation of local production base, generating employment and developing infrastructure in Nigeria. It would be recalled, that a lot of criticisms trailed the introduction of the 41 items policy, notably, a mainstream global publication's dubbing of the policy as “toothpick alert”, parodying the inclusion of toothpick in the 41 items list. Ironically however, toothpick factories have sprung up across Nigeria since the policy, and are even struggling to meet local demand due to the vast market opportunities. This underscores the opportunities that stare the country in the face, though against the skepticism of foreign capitalist interests.

2.4.4 Commodity production interventions

The Central Bank of Nigeria, between 2016 and 2020 pursued an aggressive support for the agricultural sector, targeting the production of commodities such as palm oil, cocoa, maize, sugar, tomato, cotton, rice, and a number of other commodities using multiple facilities that guaranteed credit lines to farmers, input processors and other actors in the value chains involved. The objective was to achieve significant reduction in the import bill related to these commodities, provide a source of local raw materials for manufacturing, optimize the value chain for the production and processing of these commodities, and also reduce the dissipation of foreign exchange on importation.

3.0 RESULTS OF NIGERIA'S IMPORT SUBSTITUTION POLICIES

There are arguments that Nigeria's import substitution policies have exacerbated its dependency given that it has to depend on imported raw materials, skills and technology, and that these could have been generated locally. The import-dependency for production infrastructure leads to transfer pricing and the repatriation of substantial earnings. Historically, high tariff walls have tended to disarticulate the economy internally and articulate it externally. However,the Stolper-Samuelson theorem justifies import substitution by highlighting foreign exchange savings, and that although the costs of installing infrastructure, importation of raw materials, technology and skills could be high in the short term, but in the long run the aggregate of foreign exchange savings justify embarking on ISI (Leamer, 1996; Magee and Oppenheimer, 1980; Deardorff, Stern and Baru, 1994). From this perspective therefore, one can surmise that the results of import substitution in Nigeria, especially the 41 items policy, may be mixed in the short term, but strongly indicates a good outcome in the long run for the country.

3. 1 Key challenges with Nigeria's import substitution policies

Some of the key issues that have been raised as confronting Nigeria's import substitution polices are as follows:

(1) Analysts argue that Nigeria overvalues its exchange rates, leading to problems with current account balances. This view is nested in the implication that an overvalued exchange rate drives up the cost of exports, thus making imports cheaper and depressing demand for local products. While the 41 items policy is aimed at curtailing this rabid import dependency and the dissipation of foreign exchange, other counterpart policies such as liquidity management focused on defending the naira and providing buffers for its parity with other currencies, tend to counteract and undermine the 41 items policy. In essence, analysts argue that the liquidity management policies artificially inflate the value of the naira as opposed to its real market value.

(2) Import substitution focused on domestic production through industrialization requires high import content. The machinery, technology, skills and processes requisite for installing high-value production assets are often not developed and produced within the shores of Nigeria. Most of the industries targeted by Nigeria's import substitution policies are heavy duty industries with resource-intensive outlay necessitating large volumes of foreign exchange, consequent transfer pricing and negative value-added (Warren, 1973; Edozien, 1968). Eguahare (1978) found that manufacturing activities in Nigeria were net users rather than net savers of foreign exchange.

(3) Industrial policies promote inefficiency and low factor productivity. Studies have shown that an increase in foreign investment, which conversely will dwindle in the face of import substitution, increases the skills and technologies of a country leading to high factor productivity. Growth in employment in Nigeria has lagged behind growth in output. Between 1963 and 1972, mean annual output was at 16% while total employment in the manufacturing sector grew at a mean annual rate of 11% (reference)

(4) There is a missing internal logic in macroeconomic policies and insufficient discriminatory and selective approach to targeting. For example, the VAT introduced in 1994 is levied on both inputs and outputs (double taxation). This discourages industrial production.

(5) The devaluation of the naira in 1986 and 2015 led to increased prices/cost of capital goods and hence inhibited the expansion of the manufacturing sector, as

manufacturers found it difficult to replace old technology. Besides, direct government involvement in ISI fostered corruption and inefficiencies during the military regimes. The military are credited with promulgating the NEPD (1972, 1977) decree. The experience of Nigeria buttresses the oft-held notion that state ownership does not necessarily translate to national control of the processes of selecting and transferring technology. Hence, government control does not guarantee that citizens get the appropriate technology on the least expensive terms.

4. 0 Recommendations

The following recommendations are put forward towards improving the quality of IS policies in Nigeria and their consequent outcomes:

(1) IS policies should be evidence-based and should therefore be underlined by strong data, qualitative assumptions, and focused on key issues in the economy. There should be a strong coordination between fiscal and monetary authorities, especially between the Central Bank of Nigeria, the Ministry of Finance, the National Bureau of Statistics and the Ministry of National Planning. The aim is to enhance the quality of data and analysis of scenarios to give impetus to a systematic and structured approach to policy crafting and implementation.

(2) IS policies should focus on small scale manufacturing industries as government focus in installation of large scale manufacturing industries has not benefitted the country. These are capital intensive and lead to a lot of importation of capital equipment, cost outlays, technology and skills importation and massive repatriation of earnings. Focusing on small scale industries provides a better value proposition for IS, as the economies of scale, competitive advantage, strategic capabilities and flexibility favour the industrialized countries more in terms of high-value, large scale manufacturing installations.

(3) The Central Bank of Nigeria should harmonize its 41 items policy with other foreign exchange, currency management, and financial markets policies to ensure a coordinated focus and to forestall counteractions in outcomes on several simultaneous policy tracks. It should also measure the impact of the 41 items policy to examine and ensure that while preserving forex on one hand, the impact is not blunted on other fronts by hemorrhaging foreign exchange through leakages, roundtripping and transfer pricing.

5. 0 Conclusion

This paper explored the use of import substitution to achieve economic expansion, with the specific case of Nigeria. It explored the wider global context and applications of import substitution from both monetary and fiscal dimensions, but with relevant focus on Least Developed Countries (LDCs) such as Brazil, India, South Korea, Chile, Argentina and the Philippines. The paper specifically detailed Nigeria's historical foray into import substitution and provided insight relevant to understanding its strategic direction from the multiple policies dating from pre-to post independence periods. Of specific interest to the paper, is the current 41 items policy enunciated in 2015 and 2016 to curb rising foreign exchange imbalances. Since the policy commenced, more items have been added to the list, albeit, making it “the 43 items policy”. The latest addition was diary products, and expectedly, this is also eliciting much reaction from operators, associations and some stakeholders. Already, the Central Bank of Nigeria has an abundance of evidence to prove the beneficial results of the policy, and it is only a matter of time, before the skeptical segment of stakeholders would suspend disbelief and rally round the quest for a sustainable economic development path driven by overriding domestic imperatives.

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