

SUSTAINABLE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, TRADE AND ENVIRONMENT AMIDST INSECURITY IN NIGERIA;ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT

This paper attempted an exposition on the importance of international relations in sustaining international trade, while preserving the environment because these activities affects the environment negatively. Objectives of the study includes identifying effects of insecurity on sustainable international relations. Highlight relationship between international trade and environment and identify the benefits of sustainability. To this effect, exploratory research design method was adopted while Synthesis of previous studies was explored. The study was able to achieve its objective. Therefore, the study recommended that government and conscious citizens should take immediate steps to extend international relation around the universe, Nigeria, should maintain good relation with foreign countries. and, at the same time the government ought to make massive awareness throughout the country with a view to extending trade and development with the globalizing process and improvements of education and healthcare are therefore required to achieve higher income and better environmental decisions.

KEYWORDS: *International Relations, Sustainability, Trade, Environment.*

INTRODUCTION

In recent times, Nigeria has been engulfed in security challenges that left a lot of people dead or maimed most of whom are innocent civilians, foreigners, some members of the nation's security personnel, elected officials and many government workers. In fact, this security challenge has assumed formidable dimensions forcing the country's political and economic managers and,

indeed the entire nation, to series of losses which includes loved ones, investments and absence of safety in most parts of the country.

The number of violent crimes such as kidnappings, ritual killings, suicide bombings, religious killings, politically-motivated killing, violence, ethnic clashes, armed banditry and others have increased as pointed out by Onifade, Imhonopi&Urim (2013). Worthy of note is the Niger Delta region of Nigeria where environmental degradation is on the increase partly due to the security challenges that exist in the region. With these array of problems bedeviling a developing country like Nigeria, the tendency is that the risk of spreading to neighboring countries cannot be ignored.

Whereas, it is widely held that international relations can play a very important role in creating sustainable trade and at the same time preserving the environment. In most international organizations, including the United Nations (UN) and the World Trade Organization (WTO), conventional wisdom is that international trade supports sustainable development, Which is now threaten by insecurity.

International relations promotes successful trade policies between nations. Besides, it also encourages travel related to business, tourism, and immigration, providing people with opportunities to enhance their lives. This is achieved through Globalization and economic integration which is a salient feature of the modern world. Moreover, the increasing division of labor and fragmentation of supply chains have led to the globalization of production and shipping of many commodities and services, which has enhanced international economic cooperation.

Trade growth enhances a country's income generating capacity, which is one of the essential prerequisites for achieving sustainable development," the WTO noted in the 2016 UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. This belief is usually based on the relationship between trade and only one — or, at most, two — of the three pillars of sustainability. These pillars are: the economy, social interests, and the environment.

Greater trade flows, provide supportive evidence of this cooperation as pointed out byKrugman, Obstfeld, and Melitz (2014). Against this trend of globalization, however, international politics is not necessarily becoming more cooperative, an idea that had been promoted in the popular press and academia (Friedman 2000, Mandelbaum 2003, Witt 2019). Political tensions may considerably hinder all aspects of economic integration such as trade, investment, supply chain, and transport logistics.

Thus, the expansion of global trade and the increasing integration of global value chains raise questions about how trade and the environment interact with each other. What are the effects of trade on the environment? And inversely, how can a changing natural environment (e.g. climate change impact) modify trade patterns? Is trade liberalisation good or bad for the environment? What are the short term and long term consequences and can an optimal combination of trade and environment policies harness the benefits of trade while minimizing environmental costs?

It is understood that a secured environment serves as an essential springboard. Nigeria's pursuit of economic diplomacy beginning from the 1980s has been encumbered with strains arising from compromises in environmental and security matters. With the use of historical descriptive method, this work – drawing largely from the Ogoniland degradation in the Niger Delta and the recurring insecurity in Northern Nigeria will examine the impediments posed by environmental

sustainability and internal insecurity to the realization of this need. In its arguments, the paper adopted a framework predicated on the theory of integral sustainable development. The research reveals that Nigeria's efforts at development through economic diplomacy have been hindered by internal environmental and security challenges because the leadership failed to adopt more pragmatic and holistic approach in tackling these challenges (Udochukwu, Tenong, & Isaac Yiolokun 2020)

Therefore, this study is an attempt to explore the usage of international relations in sustaining international trade alongside the environment, given the security challenges faced by the country. This is done through the synthesis of existing knowledge. The overall goal of the paper is to highlight the challenges and proffer workable solution. Even as the paper provides information on trade issues, including how to make trade contribute to development.

OBJECTIVE

This study was set out to achieve the following objectives

- I. Identify effects of insecurity on sustainable international relations
- II. Highlight relationship between international trade and environment and
- III. Identify the benefits of sustainability

To achieve the objectives of this study, the exploratory research design was adopted. Data was drawn mainly from secondary sources. Thus, the study adopts the content analysis of issues.

CONCEPTUALIZATION

Concept of Insecurity

Understanding security as a concept enables us to identify what insecurity is all about and why it is important. Thus, in the view of Akin (2008) as cited in Achumba, Ighomereho, & Akpor-Obaro (2013) security refers to "the situation that exists as a result of the establishment of measures for the protection of persons, information and property against hostile persons, influences and actions". It is the existence of conditions within which people in a society can go about their normal daily activities without any threats to their lives or properties.

Insecurity and terrorism constitutes major challenge to the Nigerian government in recent times. The activities of the Islamic sect (Boko Haram) had led to loss of lives and properties in the country especially in the Northern part of Nigeria. Some of these activities include bombing, suicide bomb attacks, sporadic shooting of unarmed and innocent citizens, burning of police stations, churches, kidnapping of school girls and women, etc. Kidnapping, rape, armed robbery and political crises, murder, destruction of oil facilities by Niger Delta militants alongside the attacks carried out by Fulani Herdsmen on some communities in the North and South have been another major insecurity challenge facing the country. Callister (2015)

For over a decade, Nigeria has been fraught with insecurity challenges, from Boko Haram and their ISWAP counterparts to Bandits and unknown gun men, in the midst of all this, the statistics of unemployed youths and graduates in the nation has been rising to an alarming rate, the basic development infrastructures like electricity to enhance the industrialization of the nation in order to create employment opportunities has been lacking, thereby crippling other efforts to drive the economic resurgence of the 7th most populous nation in the world

We live in a world where people are increasingly interconnected and so are their problems, people in USA lose their jobs when factories are moved to nations where wages are lower.

So many of today's social problems are global in nature, we cannot hope to solve them by focusing on individual nations creating an enabling environment that will help the people to dream would. Insecurity in Nigeria is not a national problem as most people think but rather trans-national

Trade and the Environment

International trade can bring prosperity but potentially also create negative social and environmental consequences through direct effects (scale effects) and indirect effects (increased competition which generates pressures to cut production costs) (Irwin, 2020; WTO, 2018). But the big subject that's overlooked, at least in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), is how trade can help the environment. The relationship between trade and the environment is complex and certainly not always positive. For example, the global agricultural trade has caused agricultural expansion, deforestation, and biodiversity loss in producer countries. Exports of soya and palm oil bring revenue to countries like Brazil, Indonesia, and Malaysia, but the intensive farming of these crops also causes rainforest and habitat destruction, overfarming, and the destruction of soil and water. (See SDG #6, which focuses on reducing water scarcity and improving access to clean water, and SDG #15, which aims to conserve land-based ecosystems like forests and wetlands.)

Trade may also be an obstacle to combating climate change. According to the WTO and the UN, open trade would increase industrial production and eventually increase CO2 emissions. Also, "trade may increase the vulnerability to climate change of some countries because it leads them to specialize in the production of products in which they have a comparative advantage, while relying on imports to meet their requirements for other goods and services. These countries may become vulnerable if climate change leads to an interruption in their supply of imported goods and services." (See SDG #13, which focuses on the need for climate action.)

Although some Free Trade Areas (FTAs) have environmental protection provisions on paper, they are seldom able to be enforced. Even though there have been documented violations, no Party has ever brought a formal case based on the environmental provisions of any US FTA. In fact, the enforcement of trade provisions usually does the opposite of protecting the environment: Companies regularly use Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) to sue

International Relation

International relations attempts to explain the interactions of states in the global interstate system and it also attempts to explain the interactions of others whose behavior originates within one country and is targeted toward members of other countries. In short, the study of international relations is an attempt to explain behavior that occurs across the boundaries of states. The broader relationships of which such behavior is a part, and the institutions including-private, state, non-governmental, and inter-governmental that oversee those interactions.

International Relation, Economic Trade and Development

Capitalist economic theory holds that a completely liberalized global market is the most efficient way to foster growth, because each country specializes in producing the goods and services in which it has a comparative advantage. Yet, in practice, cutting trade barriers

and opening markets do not necessarily generate development. Rich countries and large corporations dominate the global marketplace and create very unequal relations of power and information. As a result, trade is, inherently, unequal and poor countries seldom experience rising well-being, but increasing unemployment, poverty, and income inequality (Dixit & Norman, 1980). An additional problem is that free trade is not equally free. Agricultural subsidies and other trade barriers in the US and the EU prevent poor countries from gaining access to the most important markets.

Meanwhile, poor countries open up their own markets to US and EU exports. Critics of free trade point out that many of the world's richest countries sheltered their economies by protection when they were at the start of their own growth. Further, trade is so dominated by transnational corporations that new trade rules mainly benefit those companies. A number of NGOs have started to promote fair trade, arguing that trade can promote development if it is environmentally sustainable and includes respect for human and labor rights.

The trade and development of a country largely depends on international relations, especially structural changes. Economic structural change refers to a long-term shift in the fundamental structure of an economy, which is often linked to growth and economic development. For example, a subsistence (prevalent) economy may be transformed into a manufacturing economy, or a regulated mixed economy is liberalized. A current driver of structural change in the world economy is globalization. Structural change is possible because of the dynamic nature of the economic system (Milner, 1997).

Patterns and changes in sector employment drive demand shifts through the income elasticity. Shifting demand for both locally sourced goods and for imported products is a fundamental part of development. The structural changes that move countries through the development process are often viewed in terms of shifts from primary, to secondary and finally, to tertiary production. Technical progress is seen as crucial in the process of structural change as it involves the obsolescence (obsolete) of skills, vocations, and permanent changes in spending and production resulting in structural unemployment. Moreover, structural changes of a country include culvert, bridges, gas, electricity, road communication, education, mills and factories, manpower, garments, school, college, university, export and import, economy, trade and commerce, transportation, industrialization, urbanization, science and technology, games and sports, credit and so on.

For structural changes, a developing country like Nigeria has to depend on foreign aid. When she is unable to meet the investment for her structural changes, then international relations is a must. For international relations, a country has to rely on the help of World Bank, African Development Bank, World Trade Organization and so on. Export and import of a country depends on international relations. For this, countries need help from World Trade Organization. Due to International Relations (IR), a country takes credit (loan) from any foreign country. Ideas, cultural trends like food, clothing, manner, and so on are dealt with in IR. People can share their views and opinions with another country, and they can establish international brotherhood, and friendship, then, it becomes possible for them due to IR.

Benefits of Sustainability

Sustainability is the ability to exist and develop without depleting natural resources for the future. Thus, we have to admit that Sustainability is important.

There are many benefits of sustainability, both short-term and long-term. We cannot maintain our Earth's ecosystems or continue to function as we do if more sustainable choices are not made. If harmful processes are maintained with no change, it is likely that we will run out of fossil fuels, huge numbers of animal species will become extinct, and the atmosphere will be irreparably damaged. Clean air and nontoxic atmospheric conditions, growth of resources that can be relied upon, and water quality and cleanliness, are all benefits of sustainability.

The 3 Pillars of Sustainability

The concept of sustainability is composed of three pillars: environmental, social and economic—also known informally as profits, planet, and people. These are in particular relevant to corporate sustainability, and efforts made by companies.

Environmental protection is the most frequently discussed element. It is concerned with the reduction of carbon footprints, water usage, non-decomposable packaging, and wasteful processes as part of a supply chain. These processes can often be cost-effective, and financially useful as well as important for environmental sustainability.

Social development is about treating employees fairly and ensuring responsible, ethical, and sustainable treatment of employees, stakeholders, and the community in which a business operates. This may be achieved through more responsive benefits, like better maternity and paternity benefits, flexible scheduling, and learning and development opportunities. For example, business should operate using sustainable labour, which involves fairly-paid, adult employees who can operate in a safe environment.

Economic development is probably the simplest form of sustainability. To be economically sustainable, a business must be profitable and produce enough revenues to be continued into the future. The challenge with this form of sustainability is achieving an equilibrium. Rather than making money at any cost, companies should attempt to generate profit in accordance with other elements of sustainability.

According to Siyi (2018) Trade impacts different aspects of sustainability in various ways, both positively and negatively. It has a rich context in the real world, so we must understand the full scope of the effects of trade when talking about it as an engine or impediment for sustainability. But trade is not the only tool we have. Sustainable development depends on thoughtful use of the whole toolbox, and tailoring it to achieve all three pillars of the goals

CONCLUSION

International trade has grown significantly over the last decades. Besides an increase in trade made us to also witness a change in the nature of trade through the emergence of global value chains. International trade is now predominantly conducted through global value chains which link producers in developing countries to consumers around the globe. Addressing social and environmental issues in global value chains has also received increased attention with the emergence of the concept of sustainable development and its inclusion in the 2030 Global Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals. The link in GVCs between consumers and producers and the increasing attention to sustainable development offers an opportunity for VSS

to contribute significantly to sustainable development. This report focused on the role VSS can play. The potential of VSS to make trade more sustainable relies on two crucial components: first that they generate an impact on the ground and second that they are widely used. We discussed these two components in-depth and showed the progress made so far and the challenges which remain.

Recommendations

Based on the exposition above, a country like Nigeria can be able to develop her economic potential and trade if she takes proper steps. Thus, the following are recommended

- a. The government of Nigeria and citizens alike should take immediate steps to extend international relation around the universe.
- b. Nigeria, should maintain good relation with foreign countries. and, at the same time, the government should create massive awareness throughout the country with a view to extending trade and development with the globalizing process.
- c. Improvements of education and healthcare are therefore required to achieve higher income and better environmental decisions
- d. Settlement patterns should be transformed for the good of the population and the environment, which may be done through ‘smart’ infrastructure and internet connectivity
- e. Development of Information Technology should be encourage to facilitate sustainability

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