

DIVERSIFICATION OF THE NATION'S SOURCE OF REVENUE FROM OIL TO CERAMICS: A WAY OUT OF THE COUNTRY'S MONOLITHIC ECONOMY

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Abstract

It is already a known fact that Nigeria is greatly blessed with diverse natural resources but the over dependence on crude oil has made the nation lose focus on other resources especially the solid mineral and the agricultural sectors. In the light of this, the paper attempts to focus on the need for the government to look into other sources especially ceramics which will no doubt boost the economy as well as provide job for the teeming masses. An attempt is made to look at the curricular and the wealthy nature of ceramics and the solid minerals which have a lot to do with producing ceramics as a whole. Literature review was relied upon and it is recommended among others that the Nigerian government should focus on other source of revenue especially ceramics because the oil wells may not last forever.

Keywords: Crude Oil, Revenue, Ceramics, Solid Mineral, Monolithic economy.

Introduction

Nigeria as a nation is richly blessed with natural resources in all nooks and crannies of each state of the Federation. With this, there is obviously no end to empowerment of the citizens and prosperity of the nation. However, the over dependency on crude oil of the Niger Delta region has made the Government and its people lose immense focus on other sectors. This blessing has hitherto unleashed its hardship on the same people. Prior to our country's independence in 1960 the country's economy mainstay was agriculture whereby each region of the Federation was noted for their peculiar cash and food crop. Like the groundnut pyramid of Kano, the cocoa and cotton in the West, the rubber and palm oil and kola nut in the East. Ikpatt et al (2013) questioned that "*who is not blessed in Nigeria?*" This seemingly innocuous question begs for an answer. Meanwhile Nigeria rate of poverty calls for many more questions. However in search of answer to the perennial question of jobs in the society El-Rufai (2010) submitted that "*our ancestors appear smarter than our leaders*". This is because they had

vast interest in mining and agriculture which led to job creation.

The focus on crude oil has made things to go one sided and the people are clamouring for resource control. However, the solid mineral also was playing its economical role but not as much as the agricultural sector. This negligence has really crippled the important role of the solid mineral in the Nigerian economy. The solid mineral is one aspect where high economical gains can be recorded both in the raw material state and the finished products. Crushed rock, granite, sand, and clay which are found everywhere are also building materials widely used for urban and rural dwellings and for civil engineering.

With the discovery of oil in 1956 at Olobiri in Bayelsa state, Nigeria Government simply killed the "Goose that was laying the golden eggs". All the states of the Federal are now focusing on the crude oil with each region clamoring for a pinch of the "national cake". The huge revenue generated from the exportation of crude oil is what accounts for the nation's monolithic economy up till date.

The government relies on foreign body to determine how the economy will be driven. The decision of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) is basically a determining factor in our economy. Ismail (2012) lamented that *"The decision of (OPEC) to fix high price per barrel, was the beginning of Nigeria's economy metamorphosis into monopolistic economy"*¹. He further noted that *"This development resulted into contributory factors to the neglect of agricultural sector"*.

Ceramics whose raw material stems majorly from solid mineral is a very viable industry. The exploration and exploitation of solid mineral will definitely create huge avenue for the production of ceramics. Akinbogun (2008) noted that *"Many sectors, such as ceramic industry, glass industry and textile industry among others are facing difficult times. The non performance has been traced to the unfavorable economic environment"*. This paper therefore attempts to reveal the importance and wealthy nature of ceramics which can also be a mainstay of the nation's economy. From researches made so far, most mineral needed for the production of ceramics is deposited in all states of the Federation and as such the government and its people must play its role in the development and sustenance of this industry.

The Discovery of Oil in Nigeria

Oil was first discovered in Nigeria in 1956 by shell BP at Olobiri in Niger Delta after half a century of exploration. Then, Nigeria joined the oil producing countries in 1958. In 1965 another oil field was discovered by shell in shallow water southeast of Warri. At the end of the civil war in the year 1970, Nigeria witness an oil boom whereby the price of oil skyrocketed in the world market. This made the country become very buoyant economically. They later joined the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in 1971. Nigerian National Petroleum Company was established in 1977 which became the major player in the upstream and downstream sectors.

Petroleum production and export plays a dominant role in Nigeria economy and account for about 91% of her external revenue. This dominant role has pushed agriculture, the traditional mainstay of the economy, from the early fifties and sixties to the background.

However the economic melt-down of 2008 in America and the slide in foreign earnings has a very strong signal on relying solely on oil.

The Solid Mineral Sector

The solid mineral is not left out of this negligence. Ceramics production depends mainly on this sector. Since the introduction of ceramics into schools and colleges there has been a great retrogression in ceramics whereby the traditional aspect of ceramics has not gone beyond what it is. Meanwhile the advanced world has incorporated ceramics technology whereby scientific breakthrough is recorded.

Nworgu (2012) noted that *"the national society of mining engineers, Mr. Benjamin Nwuode, has said the development of the solid minerals sector will provide an avenue to diversify the nation's economy"*. Noting that *"President Goodluck Jonathan is advocating the diversification of the economy and the solid minerals sector is a very important area that we can focus and expand the activities of the industry and thereby generate more revenue and employment, as well as increase the production of the mineral in this sector. Presently, Nigeria can boast of thirty-four or more minerals which can be transformed into viable product"*.

The raw mineral needed for both studio and industrial production that meets functional, aesthetic and technical purposes having direct or indirect impact on sustainability of the environment via wealth generation are: clays, silica, feldspar, calcium carbonate, talc, coal etc.

The Discovery of Oil and its Implication on Other Sectors

Nigeria has a vast land with natural resource spread everywhere yet the people are all clamoring for the crude oil and living in poverty. The discovery of oil has made the country lost its focus on agriculture, solid mineral, and tourism. Though some few people are living in affluence, this is not a fair treatment on the poor for a rich country with so many resources.

According to Ismail (2012) *"Affluence is not created by the very presence of the resources but lies in the effective utilization of such to provide necessities and to [improve the*

standard of living]. Stressing that if this is the case, "it is really quite pathetic for a country like Nigeria that is endowed with vast fertile and available land coupled with good climatic condition, turns from being producer and exporter to one of the largest importers of food products".

This also reflects in other areas like the solid mineral where importation takes place almost on a daily basis. Take for instance ceramics products which is the main focus of this paper, wares are imported into the country every now and then ranging from tiles, cups, sanitary wares, insulators, spark plug, glass, vases etc. Due to the discovery of oil these sector are not too active thus the economy is clinging to one side. The implication is that there is mass under development of other sectors. Employment and development is at a very slow pace, crime rate will be on the increase. Most people would want to lazy about and poor progress will be recorded in each state of the Federation. Those in power will quickly want to sell what belong to everyone. The flamboyant nature of our leaders will be on the increase.

As noted by Ismail (2012) *"the-money-is-no-problem syndrome of our leaders embarking on numerous economical unwise projects thereby costing the nation several millions of hard earned currencies and then the romance with corruption sows higher and higher as those who have access to the corridors of power scrambled for a piece of the "national cake" without the interest of the nation and its people at heart'*.

What is Ceramics?

According to Rhodes (1975) *"Is the art of making permanent objects of usefulness and/or beauty by heat treatment of earthly raw materials"*. It encompasses a vast array of materials that is difficult to really define. It is also a refractory, inorganic and non-metallic material. It is divided into two classes: the traditional and the advance, ceramics. The traditional includes; glass, clay products and cements while the advance ceramics include carbides, pure oxides, nitrides, non-silicate glasses and many more. Pottery which is mostly practiced in Nigeria is a branch of ceramics. Pottery is usually containers or items made from clay. "Pot" is a term used for any number of container forms. Making of

Ceramics/Pottery is very lucrative and prideful and is an age long vocation.

According to Rogers (2003) *"Potters have a pride in their materials while their pots were recognized by their geographically induced variations. They also developed a deep and intimate understanding of how these materials behaved. It was not the why but the how that was important"*. Making pottery is a timeless occupation and the best of pots through the ages had quality of timelessness about them that transcends chronological and cultural boundaries. Their appeal is universal and they use every available materials e.g. clay. The Nok tradition in Plateau state of Nigeria is an age long pottery making people of Nigeria. According to Hopper (2000) *"Clay is one of the earth's most abundant raw materials. It is constantly developing from the decomposition of certain igneous rocks"*. Man, since the Neolithic era has made very useful items with clay and this material is simply inexhaustible in nature.

Ceramics Education

The need to revisit the ceramics curriculum is very important if much is to be derived from this sector. Teaching of the subject right from the primary school will help a lot in the growth of this sector. Due to the fact that ceramics is mainly hinged to Fine and Applied Arts, it has not made it to play its scientific role. For a meaningful development of advanced ceramics in the tertiary institutions, it should be under the school of Industrial Design while the Traditional Ceramics could be under the Arts. Ceramics concept according to Akingbogun et al (2007) *"embraces the creation of functional designs that are also aesthetically satisfying. It deals with the making of prototype design for the industry for subsequent large scale production"*. Nothing that this *"concept has determined the development of curriculum that could make the objective of the programme achievable"*. Those in the sciences should be encouraged to study ceramics.

How can Nigeria as a Country Derive its Revenue from Ceramics?

For the country to remain one lasting buoyant economy the government should as a matter of urgency start to look at other resources especially agriculture and the solid mineral. The area of tourism should also not be left out because of our attractive features and wide

life. Some ways to making ceramics one of the mainstays of Nigeria economy is to do the followings:

(i) Mining of Solid Minerals

The ministry of solid mineral Abuja and some other agencies have done well by indentifying the minerals available in each state of the Federation. The demand for solid mineral globally will in no little way boost Nigeria economy. Mining in Nigeria is an old tradition which started in 1903 and reached its peak in the 2nd world war with export of coal, columbite, tin and lead. (El Rufai 2010). Ojehina (2012) submitted that "Nigeria loses N4.0485bn to illegal mining. This was because the Federal Ministry of Mines and Steel was not able to monitor the production in quarries. In his view Ekosin (2010) says that "Nigeria can earn over a trillion naira and create two million jobs between now and 2015 if President Jonathan set up a committee on solid mineral to give the sector a push".

(ii) Establishment of Small Scale Ceramics Centres

With the availability of clay in all states of the Federation, the establishment of small scale Pottery/Ceramic centres can be encouraged by the Federal Government. Nigerians do not need to import such items like table wares, tiles and other ceramic product. Huge revenue can be gotten *vis-a-vis* this trade. All that is needed is the fund, manpower, equipment, material, review of the curricular, societal interest, infrastructure and the right government policies especially the introduction of ceramics in schools and colleges and the training of adequate manpower. One of the flourishing ceramic business today is tiles production whereby the need to use tiles to decorate both homes and offices is in vogue. You can imagine the foreign exchange losses recorded in this aspect alone.

(iii) Large Scale Industry

This can cater for production of sanitary wares, cups, plates, pots, tiles, medical ceramic, electrical ceramics, refractory, structural ceramics etc with this, a lot of people could be employed. The demand for structural ceramics is high in the building industry.

(v) Production of Tools and Equipment

Sadly enough most of the ceramics tools and equipments are imported into the country. Our

Engineers can be trained to produce standard kilns, Throwing Wheels, Blungers, Pugmill, Modeling tools etc that can be exported to fetch foreign revenue.

(v) Sourcing of Raw Materials

Apart from mining of clay for local use, they can be exported. Mineral like granite can also be crushed and used as raw materials in the building industries. There are several ceramics raw materials that find applications in other industries such as Bentonite which is used in oil drilling and boreholes, gypsum in ceramic manufacture, Kaolin in paper and drug manufacture, talc in cosmetics etc. The production of glazes and oxides is another lucrative area in ceramics. Kankara in Jos has one of the finest ball clays in Nigeria.

(vi) Open Door for Investors

If the policies and climate is favorable, more foreign investors can come and invest in ceramics and the solid mineral sectors. The invitation of investors will in no small measure attract massive development of our roads and infrastructure.

Conclusion

The masses are yearning for a better living condition. There is brain drain to the foreign land. The masses deserve justice equality and fair treatment. This can be achieved by an aggressive development of all sectors of the economy as noted by Ikpatt et al (2004) "*justice for the people includes aggressive development of moribund agrarian and tourism economies together with optimal mining and management resources. This can eliminate inordinate fixation on the Niger Delta oil with resource control laws to boot*". Ceramics is a trade that the government can invest on for a viable economy. The over dependency on crude oil has in no little way created a big gap in the need to invest on ceramics and other sectors.

Recommendations

- ❖ The Federal government should provide good infrastructure to attract more investment in the sector as well as reduce the cost of doing business in the country.
- ❖ The national assembly should as a matter of urgency enact enabling legislatures that replace out mode derivation principle with more proactive

- ❖ resource control laws (Ikpatt et al 2003).
- ❖ There should be an urgent diversification of the economy by tapping into agriculture, solid mineral and tourism. The program that doubled resource control rights with full-scale privatization of existing Federal Government controlled agencies and corporations. (Ikpatt et al 2003).
- ❖ Government should not have absolute rights over mineral resources.
- ❖ There should be a cut off in the government bureaucracy so that policies can be monitored and corruption checked.
- ❖ Establish pottery/centres all over the country after which bound can be placed on imported wares.
- ❖ Task force to be set up to aggressively look into the mineral resource available for ceramics and mine such for sales.
- ❖ Training of manpower for ceramics.
- ❖ Revival of the collapsed ceramic industries.
- ❖ The oil revenue should be used to develop other sectors so that by 2020 we will be one of the 20 richest countries in the world.
- ❖ An aggressive development of ceramic institutions to train both the ceramic artist and engineers is thus advocated.
- ❖ Entrepreneur drive should be greatly encouraged by government while grants and soft loans should be given to interested ceramist.

Table 1: Some Minerals in Nigeria

	Mineral	Location
1.	Magnesite	Adamawa, Kebbi.
2.	Coal	Enugu, Imo, Kogi, Delta, Plateau, Anambra, Abia, Benue, Edo, Ondo, Bauchi, Adamawa & Kwara.
3.	Zinc	Ebonyi, Plateau, Cross Rivers, Zamfara and FCT Abuja.
4.	Quartzite	Ekiti, Taraba, Kogi, Kwara & Oyo.
5.	Limestone	Cross. Rivers, Ogun, Benue, Gombe, Ebonyi, Sokoto, Edo & Kogi.
6.	Granite	All the states & FCT.
7.	Manganese	Northern Kebbi, Katsina & Zamfara.
8.	Talc	Kogi, Kaduna, Niger, Ekiti & Yobe.
9.	Kaolin	Is found in the following Nigeria states. Ogun,- Kogi, Imo, Rivers, Anambra, Bauchi, Kebbi, Ondo, Ekiti, Akwa-Ibom, Katsina & Plateau.
10.	Marble	Kogi, Nasarawa, Oyo, Kwara & FCT Abuja.
11.	Bismuth	Northern state of Kaduna.
12.	Gypsum	Yobe, Adamawa, Ogun, Gombe, Sokoto & Edo.
13.	Considerate	Kano, Bauchi, Plateau, Kaduna & Osun States.

14.	Bitumen	Lagos, Ondo, Ogun & Edo.
15.	Lead	Ebonyi, FCT, Plateau, Cross Rivers & Zamfara.
16.	Mica	Kogi, Nasarawa, Ekiti, Kwara & Uyo States.
17.	Molybdenite	Plateau State.
18.	Tantalite	Nasarawa, Kogi, Osun, Ekiti, Kwara, Cross Rivers and Other places in Nigeria
19.	Iron Ore	Kogi, Kaduna, Enugu, Nasarawa & Zamfara States.
20.	Bentonite	Edo, Kogi, Ogun, Ondo & Borno States.
21.	Clay	All the states of the federation including FCT Abuja.
22.	Feldspar	Borno, Kogi, Osun & Ogun States.
23.	Barities	Nasarawa, Taraba, Benue, Cross River & Zamfara.
24.	Wolframite	Kano, Kaduna, Bauchi & Niger States.
25.	Silver	Is found in Kano.
26.	Kyanite	Can be found in Kaduna & Niger.
27.	Phosphate	Is found in Sokoto & Ogun States.
28.	Dolomite	Is found in Yobe State.
29.	Ilmenite-Rutile	Can be found in Bauchi, Plateau & Kaduna states.
30.	Fluorite	Can be found in Taraba State.
31.	Gold	Can be found in the following states. Niger, Osun, Kebbi, Kaduna, Kogi, Kwara & Zamfara.
32.	Silica	Is found in the following Nigerian states. Kano, Jigawa, Delta, Lagos & Ondo.
33.	Dolomite	Can be found in Kogi, Oyo, Edo, Kwara & FCT Abuja.
34.	Lithium	Is found in the Northern state of Nasarawa.

Courtesy: Ministry of solid mineral development Abuja 2006.

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