

International Journal of Strategic Research in Public Administration and Organizational Process | IJSRPAOP p-ISSN: 2636-6843 | e-ISSN: 2636-6851

Volume 3, Number 1 May, 2023

# Industrialization and Sustainable Development in Akwa Ibom State (2016-2022): A SWOT Analysis

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Article DOI: 10.48028/iiprds/ijsrpaop.v3.i1.01

#### Abstract

he government, in order to justify its existence, is saddled with the constitutional mandate of improving the material wellbeing and welfare of the citizens. It is in an attempt to realize this constitutional mandate that the government has to formulate and implement sound public policies to guarantee sustainable development in the state. For government policies to facilitate sustainable development, such policies must promote the maintenance of law and order, provision of adequate security institutions and mechanisms for the safety of all as well as provision of employment opportunities through industrialization. An important aspect of sustainable development is industrialization largely due to the aim of facilitating the achievement of structural transformation of the state's economy and also ensuring there is a balance between economic, environmental and social needs. This paper therefore aims at carrying out a SWOT analysis on industrialization and sustainable development in Akwa Ibom State. To achieve this objective, descriptive qualitative design was adopted, and data were gathered from secondary sources such as relevant books and internet materials. Findings indicated that there has been significant progress on industrialization and sustainable development although there are several factors that constraint the level of the progress. From the findings, it was concluded that the backward state of industrialization in Akwa Ibom is due to lack of proper implementation of government policy, inadequate funding, lack of proper research, lack of provision and maintenance of infrastructural facilities as well as lack of technical manpower and capacity underutilization. It was therefore recommended among other things that there should be adequate investment in human capital; adequate development of infrastructure; local industries should be given high prominence to produce and sell locally made products.

**Keywords:** Industrialization, Sustainable, Development, Unemployment, SWOT

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## **Background to the Study**

The government, in order to justify its existence, is saddled with the constitutional mandate of improving the material wellbeing and welfare of the citizens. Perhaps, this notion of the essence of government informed Appadori (1974) to view government as the agency or machinery through which the will of the state is formulated, expressed and realized. It is in an attempt to realize this constitutional mandate that the government has to formulate and implement sound public policies on the provision of infrastructures and basic amenities, quality education, poverty eradication, affordable energy, quality water supply, innovation and provision of massive employment through industrialization, to guarantee sustainable development in the state. Umoh (2019) posited that an important aspect of sustainable development is industrialization largely due to the aim of facilitating the achievement of structural transformation of the state's economy and also ensuring there is a balance between economic, environmental and social needs.

Industrialization has been given wide attention and priority by government at all levels largely due to the practice of integrating available resources by applying science and technology to the process of production of goods and services. The attention is driven by the massive activities of industries, which involve the transformation of material and energy into useable products and waste to have direct impact on the economy (Stewart, 1992). The main reason why governments focus on industrialization is to achieve sustainable development capable of ensuring that every sector of the economy is balanced.

For development to be sustainable, it must meet the needs of what is require by present generation. Such needs must be maintained in such a way that the needs of future generations are not compromised. This can be achieve where there are policies that promote the maintenance of law and order, provision of adequate security institutions and mechanisms for the safety of all as well as provision of employment opportunities through industrialization. Industrialization is an important aspect of sustainable development due to the aim of facilitating the achievement of structural transformation of the state's economy and also ensuring there is a balance between economic, environmental and social needs (Eugene, 2020). It is closely linked with economic development and has equally been the springboard for economic power and modernization. This is the reason the government of Akwa Ibom State have made industrialization a priority- the pursuit of the 9<sup>th</sup> goal of the sustainable development goals, which focus on building of resilient infrastructures, promotion of sustainable and inclusive industrialization as well as fostering of innovation.

#### Statement of the Problem

Akwa Ibom State is currently viewed as a state with several social, economic and development problems. Despite the abundant natural resources, lofty policies, relative oil wealth, proceeds from the monthly allocation from federation account, excess crude oil, 13% derivation fund, tenement rates from oil companies and internally generated revenue, the state is still classified as undeveloped. This is largely due to the concentration of development at the urban centres and lack of functional industries. Being an oil producing state, there is little employment of manpower due to the fact that the oil sector contributes less than five percent to employment

with high populations and low business attractions for investors (Ndidi, 2018). Though the civil service has provided employments to some citizens, those employed are just 0.4% of the entire population (i.e., 20,488 out of 5,451,277) (Department of Establishment, Akwa Ibom State, 2023). This unemployment state affects sustainable development to a significant extent.

However, the government of Akwa Ibom is currently focusing on industrialization though the process is stalled. The emerging industries such as Jubilee Syringe Manufacturing Company Limited, Kings Flour Mill and St. Gabriel coconut refinery are dependent on external markets for major inputs and manufacturing while some are majorly for repackaging. This situation cannot affect sustainable development because the industries are not manufacturing oriented. Some lack comparative advantage with foreign counterparts making the emerging industries dependent. This paper will therefore carry out a SWOT analysis on industrialization and sustainable development in Akwa Ibom State.

#### Theoretical Framework

This paper adopts the "structural theory of development". This is because every government must always aim at transforming her economy from agrarian or undeveloped to a manufactured economy. The theory is associated with Wilhelm Wundt who was famous for founding the very first labouratory devoted to experimental psychology (Green, 2016).

According to the proponent of this theory, to achieve fully industrialized and modernized economies in developing countries, their governments must take bold steps to intervene. Without the steps, they will continue to remain in the unfavourable colonial relationship with the rich countries. This was the believed that the Latin America would be used by the United States as sources for raw materials and cheap labour unless bolds steps by the governments are taken. In addition, "infant industries" in developing countries must be protected by government policies from unnecessary competition with their foreign counterparts. This can be achieved mainly through tariffs placed on importation as well as increment in the cost of imported goods. With this, the policies of government should promote the development of new/old domestic industries. Such policies should ensure that the industries and financially sustained to be able to compete on their own with foreign industries.

Furthermore, the structural theory of development focuses on the structural aspects of government policies which hinder the development, growth and sustenance of developing countries' economy. The emphasis here is on transforming the developing countries' economy from the agrarian/agricultural subsistence economy to a service, modernized, urbanized and manufactured economy. This, by implication, will result to the idea that government intervention in the economy will boost the industrial sector, basically known as the import substitution industrialization (ISI).

The pursuit of this intervention is that at the end, self-sustaining economic growth would be achieved. However, self-sustaining economic growth cannot be achieved if the government fail to minimize or put an end to the reliance on export of primary goods such as mining and agricultural products. Rather, the government, in pursuit of inward oriented development

should put measures that will protect domestic economy from the monopoly of economies of developed countries. Government should also ensure that all forms of barriers to domestic trade be removed and the domestic exchange rate be improved and overvalued to minimize trade with developed economies. This will minimize imported industrial products while the manufacturing of domestic substituted goods will be promoted. The idea behind this approach rests on the emphasis of infant industries that they don't have the experience and economic power to compete favourably with their foreign counterparts. Thus, the infant industries operating in the domestic economy must be protected till they are developed and free to join the competition in the international market (Green, 2016).

In application, the structural theory of development supports the transformation of economy from agrarian, subsistent or undeveloped (which is that of Akwa Ibom State) to a modernized and manufactured economy. With this, Akwa Ibom state government have to push industrialization and reduce dependence on trade with developed countries. The intervention of the Akwa Ibom state government and the policy on industrialization is to ensure that the economy of the state becomes fully modernized and industrialized. In this way, import will be discouraged while export encourage. This, to a large extent, will boost the economy of the state. Hence, this theory becomes important for this analysis.

## **Conceptual Clarification**

#### Industrialization

Industrialization has been variously conceptualized. It is defined as the provision of adequate institutions by the state (Lola, 2015). It is also seen as the method of developing the economic ability of a nation by converting the raw materials and other inputs into manufactured and finished goods for other productions and/or for final consumption (Anyanou et al. 1997). It can also be seen as a set of economic and social measures put in place to discover and create economic value in a more effective and efficient ways. It includes economic development that is self-sustain characterized by massive concentration of industries in specific areas, urbanization, division of labour and productions from factories.

To Hewit, Johnson and Wield (2002), industrialization is the phase of social and economic development in which human groups are transform from an agricultural subsistent society to an industrialized society which involve a comprehensive reorganization of the economy to make it manufacture oriented. To Maddison (2007), industrialization can also be seen as the system of using machines for production and services which were formerly done by people. This changes the perception of people in the society in such a way that they prefer to abandon farming work to take higher paying jobs in industries (Maddison, 2007).

Government's focus on industrialization is important because it helps in the progress of agricultural, trade, transport and other economic activities; reduces increase pressure of exploding population on the developing economy; create more employment opportunities; leads to massive urbanization and development of new cities; absorbs a large number of unemployed youths; enhance coordinated development of large as well as small, medium and cottage enterprises. The challenges of industrialization include lack of proper implementation

of government policy, inadequate funding, lack of proper research, lack of provision and maintenance of infrastructural facilities as well as lack of technical manpower and capacity underutilization.

## Sustainable Development

Sustainable development has been variously conceptualized. It covers a broad scope of sectors such as social, political, environmental and economic development. It is seen as a long-term strategy for the planning of the progress and development of a society in future without causing damage to the environment so as to make it safe for the next generations, who will continue in the development of the environment and economy of the society with similar ideals in mind. Such planning must satisfy the needs of the society without hindering the opportunities of others.

According to Lele (2017), sustainable development can be described as a system of economic and social activities that promotes the preservation of the environment. It includes the strategy adopted by a society that takes into account the efficient and effective management of human and material resources for human survival in present and future. Presently, for any development to be considered sustainable, it must be consistent with the sustainable development goals recognized worldwide. However, to provide guide and framework for future and optimal conscious sustainable development, the United Nations established seventeen goals known as the sustainable development goals (SDGs). These goals serve as blueprints for the achievement of sustainable development in future for all every country by 2030.

## These goals include:

- 1. **Goal One: "No Poverty".** The focus here is that, to achieve economic growth, equality and jobs that are sustainable should be inclusive.
- 2. **Goal Two: "Zero Hunger".** The target of the second goal is to ensure improvement in nutrition and food security, end of hunger, food security improvement as well as promotion of sustainable agriculture.
- 3. **Goal Three: "Good Health and Well-being".** The focus here is to ensure that the well-being of all are promoted that achieve healthy lives for all.
- 4. **Goal Four: "Quality Education".** This focus on promoting, facilitating and obtaining quality education for all citizens as the bedrock for ensuring that individuals' lives are improved.
- 5. **Goal Five: "Gender Equality".** The target of this goal are to ensure equality of all, promote and sustain individuals' fundamental human rights as well as ensure a peaceful coexistence of all to achieve a sustainable, successful and peaceful society.
- 6. **Goal Six: "Clean Water and Sanitation".** The focus here is to achieve clean and accessible water for all.
- 7. **Goal Seven: "Affordable and Clean Energy".** The focus here is to promote affordable and clean energy in dealing with major opportunities and challenges in the society.
- 8. Goal Eight: "Decent Work and Economic Growth". The focus here is to ensure that

- sustainable economic growth be promoted, conducive work environment that encourage quality jobs and enhance economic growth be improved.
- 9. **Goal Nine: "Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure".** This is to promote the investments in infrastructure as crucial elements in the achievement of sustainable development.
- 10. **Goal Ten: "Reduced Inequalities".** Central to this goal are reduction in the rate of inequalities, application of universal principle in the implementation of policies as well as focus on the needs of persons who are disadvantaged and marginalized.
- 11. **Goal Eleven: "Sustainable Cities and Communities".** This is to achieve the development of cities that ensure opportunities for all are provided with adequate access to basic services, transportation, energy and housing.
- 12. Goal Twelve: "Responsible Production and Consumption".
- 13. **Goal Thirteen: "Climate Action".** The target of this goal is to curb the menace of global climate change which affects all.
- 14. **Goal Fourteen: "Life below Water".** The target of this goal is to ensure that critical resources which are important to sustainable future development be carefully managed.
- 15. **Goal Fifteen: "Life on Land".** The focus here is to ensure all forests are managed in a sustainable manner, desertification is combated, biodiversity loss be halted, and degradation of land be reversed.
- 16. **Goal Sixteen: "Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions".** The target of this goal is to build effective institutions that promote access to justice and peace in the society.
- 17. **Goal Seventeen: "Partnership for the Goals".** Main focus here is to ensure that there is a renewed and continuous global partnership that promotes sustainable development.

## SWOT Analysis of Industrialization Policy and Sustainable Development in Akwa Ibom State (2016-2022)

The Akwa Ibom State government's industrialization policy is based on 5-point agenda, which are wealth creation; economic and political inclusion; poverty alleviation; infrastructural consolidation and expansion; job creation.

To achieve the above, the industrialization policy of the State governs by Mr. Udom Emmanuel focused on the application of a domesticated form of the Asian and World Bank formula for industrialization. This method grants the State House of Assembly the power to provide legal protective measures against political and regulatory risks for investors coming into the state to invest. The central mission of the policy is "to leverage and build on the uncommon transformation of the former administration of Governor Godswill Akpabio; to transform the economy of the state through industrialization and sustained public-private sector initiative, thereby opening up opportunities for growth and improved living standards" (Emmanuel, 2015).

#### Some Industries in Akwa Ibom State

Some of the industries established for sustainable development in Akwa Ibom State, assessed in this paper, are Jubilee Syringe Manufacturing Company Limited, Kings Flour Mill Limited and St. Gabriel Coconut Oil Factory.

## Jubilee Syringe Manufacturing Company Limited (JSM)

Located at Onna Local Government of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria, Jubilee Syringe Manufacturing Company Ltd was established in 2017. The Company which covers 8,000m2 of indoor space was established to produce disposable syringe.

According to Egbedi (2021), the syringes are designed in 3 sizes (2mL, 5mL, and 10mL) and made available in leur slip which makes it easier for the needles to be pushed on. They are made from medical grade raw materials with highly transparent barrels alongside tight black extended graduation which is easier to read. The syringes are equally made of polypropylene/high density polyethylene, rubber-free, pyrogen-free, latex-free, DEHP-free, PVC-free, non-toxic and are sterile and individual blister packed.

Since its establishment, JSM has grown to become the largest manufacturer of disposable syringes in Africa, producing about 1.5 million syringes daily with ultra-modern technology. This is made possible due to the ban on the importation of syringes. Operating in a public private partnership (PPP) with the Akwa Ibom State government, JSM needs to enhance economic and human capital development by creating opportunity to increase production capacity as well as hire more Nigerians to work in various areas (Ukpong, 2021).

## **Kings Flour Mill**

Kings Flour Mill Limited was established and commissioned on the 21st of September 2019. It is located at Mkpok/Okat, Onna, Akwa Ibom. It has a closed area of 4.892-meter square, an open area of 47.406-meter square with different sections including the emergency unit, the administrative block, expatriate's apartment, the warehouse as well as the tunnels for wheat, raw materials. It is built with High - Tech full automated machines including wheat flour milling machine, flour milling plants, family workshop milling, double roller mills as well as single sifter machine.

The mill was established to produce high-quality wheat flour and agro allied products. The aim is to become No. 1 Agric-based company in Africa providing solutions to support players in the Agro-processing value chain, and also to produce wheat-based products using the best global practices and processes; harnessing environmentally friendly technology and people capabilities. The mill has a production capacity of 500 metric tons of wheat and 400 tons of flour per day with over 450 employees. It has a fixed production line to process and package wheat flour and semolina with raw materials silos of 15,000 tons capacity (Akpan, 2021).

## St. Gabriel Coconut Oil Factory

The factory was flagged off on May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2017 in Ikot Akpan Okop, Mkpat Enin Local Government of Akwa Ibom State. In terms of structure, the factory has administrative offices,

technical spaces, production areas and industrial firefighting systems, water treatment machines, effluent treatment plants and residential quarters for managerial and technical staff including parking areas for vehicles bringing raw materials (NAN, 2022).

The factory has the capacity to process 300,000 coconuts per shift. This is estimated to produce 66 tons in a day from three shifts. To achieve this, Akwa Ibom State government commenced the factory with the cultivation of 2 million stands of hybrid coconut seedlings on an 11-hectare piece of land which has the capacity to produce 1 million nuts a day (Jegede, 2022).

At present, virgin crude coconut oil is sold at \$6 per litre and 221 litres makes one barrel while crude oil is about \$110 per barrel at the international market. This means that virgin coconut oil is \$1326 per barrel which is higher than the crude oil. With this, the factory is projected to boost employment opportunities and also diversify the economy of the state (Udonquak, 2022).

## The SWOT Analysis

SWOT means Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Threat. It is an instrument used to assess the overall performance of the industrialization policy of Akwa Ibom State government in relation to the situation/level of sustainable development in the state.

## The strengths

These are the internal factors in the state that can boost the success of industrialization policy and sustainable development:

- a. Rich natural resources/raw materials: The state has fertile lands in abundance for cultivation of over 2 million stands of coconut for the production of the virgin coconut oil. There are enough cartons to parcel the syringes produced in the Jubilee Syringe Manufacturing Company Limited. These raw materials add to the strength of the companies.
- b. Introduction of new product: Although none of the products produced by the industries are new in the international market, the coconut virgin oil and syringes are fresh products in the Nigerian market. They are equally sold at the international market.
- c. Physical Location/Resources: All the industries/factories established through the industrialization policy are sited in good expandable locations and are closer to the raw materials use for manufacturing. Large hectares or land are provided often in good location in which one can access easily.
- d. Financial Resources: Though industrialization is a costly project to achieve sustainable development, several funding sources such as monthly allocation from the federation account, grants, revenue generation, international financial agencies, corporate bodies, banks, individuals and potential investors has gone a long way in boosting industrialization in the state.
- e. Infrastructural facilities: The massive construction of roads right from the former administration till this administration is a massive boost for the policy to be successful.

- One can move in and out of southeast and towards the north very quickly. Proximity to the Port-Harcourt port also makes it easy for the state to import or export the products.
- f. Enabling environment: The state is widely known as the most peaceful state in Nigeria. The government has created an enabling environment for investors to do business in Akwa Ibom.

#### The Weaknesses

These include internal factors in the state that can hinder the success of industrialization and sustainable development:

- a. Shortage of skilled labour/professional: There are very few professional in Nigeria generally. The government is relying on foreigners who are employed in the industries to train the local ones. More than 80% of professionals here are only effective in analysis and theories but not actual practical.
- b. Lack of Adequate Data: Data are perceived as the life blood and bedrock upon which any policy formulation and implementation rest. Presently, there are no adequate machinery set up to conduct adequate research and make wider consultation on who will benefit mostly on the projects/ factories located in a particular area.
- c. Shortage of fund: Although all the industries have kick start, they all require massive investment and fund to make it realistic. Despite several funding channels as indicated in the strengths, it will take many years to achieve sustainable development because of the cost of running all sectors in the state.
- d. Corruption/poverty: A great majority of Akwa Ibomites are living in poverty. Also, those at the forefront of the policy implementation see it as opportunity to embezzle funds.
- e. Lack of raw materials: There is non-availability of raw materials locally especially for the syringe and kings flour company. For instance, the flour industry depends on imported wheat which is the main ingredient for flour.
- f. Lack of adequate infrastructural facilities: Many of the industrial machines for production used electricity which is grossly inadequate in the state. This makes the maintenance of the companies using high tech generators to be on the high side.

## The Opportunities

These include factors available for the expansion and success of the industrialization policy:

- a. Growth in the State Economy: With the industrialization, Akwa Ibom and Nigeria at large will no longer import coconut refine oil, flour and syringe products. Thus, the state has both domestic and international market to sell her products.
- b. Expert/professional training of indigenous engineers: The policy also affords the opportunity for professionals outside to come in and trained indigenous engineers in the state in certain areas that will be useful for the state. There are about 312 employees in the companies. There were about 28 foreign expatriates at first. They have trained about 70 employees many who are from Akwa Ibom (Egbedi, 2021).
- c. Potential of expansion: State and nationwide demand for the products is projected to increase every year-making way for expansion of the industries/factories as well as the economy of the state at large.

- d. The Nigerian senate ban on the importation of syringe in April, 2021 really boosted the syringe industry. Currently, the syringe are shipped to Mali and Accra, Ghana by sea, and then from there to the rest of West Africa with trucks (Egbedi, 2021). Ones the coconuts are ready for harvest, it will greatly promote the development of industrial transfer across borders.
- e. Interdependency relationship: These will be opportunities where developed countries also depend on the state for certain products like the virgin coconut oil including the flour. The import and export encourages international trade relations.
- f. Additional Human Resources/ Fund: Multinational corporations and other investors will offer human and manpower resources alongside patronizing of business in the state.

#### The Threats

Threats are external factors of the environment that may hinder the success of the industrialization policy and sustainable development:

- a. Funding sources: Most of the financing sources, like international agencies-World Bank/IMF-grant aids with tied conditions. Making the success of the policy to be harder due to devaluation of currency. The monthly allocation cannot be enough including the federal grants. All these posed serious threats to the policy.
- b. Mono economic status of the state: In the state, every other sector-political, social, cultural, technological, etc. are built around the money gotten from oil exploration-hence, her mono-economic status. Fall in the price of oil affects the development policy.
- c. Nearby states has already taken the lead: Noted mostly is Lagos, who is regarded as the most industrialize state in Nigeria. Also states like Abia and River states have been highly known to be involved in series of business and products.
- d. International/national legislations: Due to the dynamics of business environment nationally and internationally, laws are established to control this dynamism, thus, this could also hinder the policy especially on products that will be exported. The problem of the current Naira cash redesign policy also posed significant challenges in this regard.
- e. Intensive competition of external market: If the products are not of high quality, the industries/factories may not be able to meet international standard or compete favourable with foreign counterparts.
- f. International Threat: Many companies and foreign investors are not independent from national and even international threat. Apart from securing their movement, the state may not really have the security operatives to monitor their movements and communications with their home countries.

## Methodology

The paper employed the descriptive design, which focuses on the major elements and characteristics of any phenomenon or attribute. Data for this research is source basically from secondary sources, which include textbooks, journals, internet materials and published news. The choice of this method is inform by its extensive analysis of the subject matter with reference to SWOT analysis.

This paper aimed at assessing the relationship between industrialization and sustainable development in Akwa Ibom State using the SWOT analysis. Findings indicate that industrialization and sustainable development still remains an issue in the state. Although certain group of people in the state believed industrialization has been achieved to a significant level, many still see it as a failure. It was found that the industrialization policy is rooted on 5 point agenda. So far, there has been reasonable progress in the area of industrialization although there are several factors that constraint the achievement of sustainable development. However, it has been summarize that industrialization have significant relationship with sustainable development of the state. Despite the weaknesses and threats, there are equally strengths and opportunities to facilitate and enhance the success of the industries.

#### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

It can be concluded that industrialization is a catalyst for rapid economic growth, transformation, development and diversification. This process of sustainable development can be made possible by the provision of appropriate institutions by the government. The SWOT analysis provides a veritable framework for the assessment of the extent of progress and constraint to the industrialization drive towards the achievement of sustainable development. However, factors which constraint the smooth progress and achievement of industrialization in the state are lack of proper implementation of government policy, inadequate funding, lack of proper research, lack of provision and maintenance of infrastructural facilities as well as lack of technical manpower and capacity underutilization.

From what is found, the following recommendations should be taken into consideration:

- a. There should be adequate investment in human capital. Science and technology related courses should be given serious attention and should be incorporated into school curricular in the state irrespective of the level of education. Retraining of our traditional craftsmen and artisans should be done in line with modern technological facilities.
- b. Development of infrastructural facilities should be highly promoted. Good road network for ease of transportation of raw materials and finished products as well as adequate power supply should be given due attention. Almost all the machines and plants used for manufacture of products use electricity.
- c. Government should ensure business friendly policies are established to promote strategic allegiance between public and private sectors in the process of the development of the industrial sector.
- d. Investors and investing companies incorporated into the state industrialization should be allowed to have adequate access to land only for industrial purposes, though with strict control measures and policies. This will curb the menace of environmental exploitation and marginalization.
- e. Local industries and factories should be given high prominence to sell and produce locally made products. The usage of these goods should be highly encouraged to discourage import of manufactured goods.
- f. Certain legislation that may prevent investors should be abolished to create a

- favourable business climate for investment and business ventures to come in.
- g. Lastly, adequate mechanism should be put in place to create easy access to affordable credit. This should be done with low interest to enable the industrialization policy to be successful without deficit.

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