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THE FREE TRADE POLICY OF THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION: AN ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT ON THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

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ABSTRACT: *This study focused on the impact of the free trade policy of the World Trade Organization (WTO) on the industrial development in Africa. It obtained its data from the secondary sources such as textbooks, journals, articles published and unpublished from libraries in Abuja and the internet. The data were analyzed using content analysis and the liberalist theory which revolves around three interrelated principles: rejection of power politics as the only possible outcome on international relations; accentuates mutual benefits and international cooperation and; implements international organizations and nongovernmental actors for shaping state preferences and policy choices was adopted as a framework for the purpose of analysis. The findings revealed that the Third World or developing countries have not benefitted from WTO agreement. It was realized that Foreign Direct Investment has not contributed significantly to the growth of the African Nations' Economy. The paper, therefore, recommended as follows: African leaders should summon the political will and commitment to limit the negative impact of WTO's free trade policies on their economies generally and the industrial sectors in particular. To do this, specific policy options including, but not limited to the followings, should be pursued with vigour: Adopt protectionist economic and industrial policies with emphasis on key sectors including the agricultural sectors; Promote and protect local industrial development that is capable of producing basic goods and services; Improve and strengthen their decision-making machinery and institutions; Limit import of major goods and services which they have relative comparative advantage and; Identify their specific interest and objective in respect of the subject of the WTO. This can be done through the process of a broad-based and in-depth examination of the issues and their implications. For the WTO itself, it should ensure that it carries all countries along by giving them equal treatment no matter their statuses etc.*

KEY WORDS: free trade, world trade organisation, liberalism, policies, impact.

INTRODUCTION

Trade has played a role in the development of Africa in the last two centuries and continues to do so in present times. In spite of being richly endowed with natural resources and human capital, Africa is seen as the poorest region in the world (Jobodwana, 2006: 246). With the efforts of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT), the emphasis has been on urging states to eliminate or reduce trade barriers and promote free trade. Tupy (2005: 2) gives three reasons as to why free trade is beneficial: firstly, it improves global efficiency in resource allocation; secondly, it allows traders to specialize in the production of those goods and services that they do best; and thirdly, it allows consumers to benefit from the more efficient means of production, e.g. efficiency generally means reduced cost which in turn leads to cheaper goods and services. Yet, in spite of globalization's promise

of prosperity for the world, and particularly developing nations, trade liberalization has not significantly reduced poverty (Frewen, 2010). In the context of discussing trade agreements that would help to alleviate poverty and promote development, Chang (2005: 101) argues:
Contrary to what developed countries would have us believe, there is a respectable theoretical case for protection for industries that are not yet profitable, especially in developing countries...Virtually all of today's developed countries built up their economies using tariffs and subsidies (and many other measures of government intervention) throughout the 19th century and most of the 20th century (in particular until the early 1970s). Therefore a big "double standard" is involved when these countries preach the virtues of free trade.

One cannot ignore the inequality of the global trading scenario which has had an impact on developing countries. The majority of WTO members are developing countries, mostly from Africa. This study highlights some of the needs and challenges of developing countries as far as international trade is concerned and particularly places the role of the WTO, in this context, under the spotlight. The international trade issues relating to the divide between the developed and the developing nations include: The refusal of the United States (US) and the European Union (EU) to reduce or eliminate subsidies, especially on agricultural products (Bown and McCullouch, 2010: 34); The reluctance of developing states to reduce their tariff barriers, partly because they derive a relatively high proportion of their income from it (about a third of revenue in sub-Saharan Africa has come from tariffs in the past, whereas in richer countries, such tariffs amount to two percent of their revenue) (Nieuwoudt, 2007); the allegation by the Developed states that developing states, particularly from Africa, have the highest tariff barriers and that the main culprits, as far as violation of intellectual property rights of foreign businesses are concerned, are the developing nations (WTO, 2010: 98; Tupy, 2005: 1) and; The protection of intellectual property rights of businesses from developed countries are seen as having an adverse effect on developing countries as they are heavily dependent on technologies from the former. For instance, developing countries are denied access to cheaper generic medicines (Fergusson, 2008; Shenkar and Luo, 2008: 55).

Has trade liberalization by developing countries brought the requisite industrial development? If the WTO's efforts do not provide answers, what other options are available to developing nations to help alleviate poverty and improve industrial sector? The paper is organised as follows introduction, theoretical framework, conceptualization of free trade, the Formation of World Trade Organisation, Objectives, Membership, principle, structure and functions of WTO, the voting system of WTO, World Trade Organization and Industrial Development in Africa, The Policies of the Organization, The Impact of WTO's Free Trade policy on Africa's Industrial Sector, conclusion and recommendations

Theoretical Framework
The study adopts the theory of Liberalism, which is one of the mainstream theories of international relations. The term "Liberalism" originates from the Latin word "liber" meaning "free", an originally refers to the philosophy of freedom (Von and Bettina, 2005). Its roots lie in the broader liberal thought originating in the enlightenment. As an international relations theory, liberalism focuses on three interrelated principles such as: The rejection of power politics as the only possible outcome of international relations, questions security/warfare principles of realism; Accentuates mutual benefits and international cooperation and;

Implements international organisations and non-governmental organisations actors for shaping state preferences and policy choices (Shiraev and Zubok, 2014:86)
Liberals believe that international institutions play a key role in cooperation among states (Shiraev and Zubok, 2014:86). With the correct international institutions, and increasing interdependence, including economic and cultural exchanges, states have the opportunity to reduce conflict (Shiraev and Zubok, 2014:86). Interdependence has three main components. States interact in various ways, through economic, financial, and cultural means; security tends to not be the primary goal in state-to-state interactions; and military forces are not typically used. Liberals also argue that international diplomacy can be a very effective way to get states to interact with each other honestly and support nonviolent solutions to problems (Shiraev and Zubok, 2014:90). With the proper institutions and diplomacy, Liberals believe that states can work together to maximize prosperity and minimize conflict. Consequently, as stated by Abraham Nabbon Thomas, the WTO has "adopted the Western Liberal principles of free market/open international trade relations". However, as the author has argued: "the liberal position and prescription with emphasis on market economy and trade without domestic regulation have failed to explain and abate the incident of underdevelopment in Africa" (Thomas, 2010:213)

Conceptualising Free Trade

Free trade, according to Omaku (2017:579), involves the removal of tariffs, quotas or other restrictions on international trade, enabling global production of goods and services in the most effective and efficient way possible". Free trade is a system of trade policy that allows traders to act and transact without interference from government. According to Britannica Concise Encyclopaedia (2006), free trade policy is that which a government does not discriminate against import and interfere with exports. A free trade policy does not necessarily imply that the government abandons all control and taxation of imports and exports, but rather than it refrains from actions specifically designed to hinder international trade, such as tariff barriers, currency restrictions, and import quotas. The US History Encyclopaedia cited in Mahwash, (2017) maintains the economic rationale for free trade is based on the principle that if trade is free certain goods and services can be obtained at lower cost abroad than if domestic substitutes are produced in their place.

The idea of free trade started in 1977 following the publication of the famous Economist, Adams Smith, where he opined that "governmental regulation of trade actually reduces the wealth of the nations, because it prevents nation-states from purchasing the maximums amount of commodities at the lowest possible price" (Usman, 2013:253). Since then the concept of free trade has become a generally acceptable principle and is the concept that underlies the multilateral trading system (Omaku, 2017:579). Despites this, trade liberalization has not brought the expected requisite growth, particularly in developing countries (Frewen, 2010). One of the reasons suggested for this situation, is the existence of a large and growing informal economy. Fandl (2008: 163) contends, firstly, that trade liberalization can negatively impact the informal economy by failing to provide adequate domestic protection against foreign competition, and secondly, that economic growth will remain below its full potential unless the informal economy is granted the same opportunities for global participation and technical assistance as those offered to the formal economy.

The Formation of the World Trade Organisation

The world trade organisation is regarded "as an international organisation that promotes and enforces the provisions of international trade laws and regulations with a prime objective of overseeing trade practices and relations among member states." (Usman, 2013:253). The organisation was established following the Uruguay round of GATT negotiations which was concluded on April 15, 1994 at Marrakesh, Morocco. Countries such India along with 123 Ministers, including those from the European Communities signed the final Act incorporating the eight rounds of multilateral trade negotiations, which consists of :(1) the WTO agreement covering the formation of the organization and the rules governing its working; (2) the ministerial decisions and declarations agreements containing the important agreements of goods, services, intellectual property and plurilateral trade. They also contain settlement rules and trade policy review system. The WTO agreement is in fact the Uruguay round agreement whereby the original GATT is now a part of the WTO Agreement which came into force from January 1, 1995 (Thomas, 2010:223). The WTO is the only body making global trade rules with binding effects on its members. It is not only an institution, but also a set of agreements. The WTO regime is known as the rules-based multilateral trading system and its history dates back to 1947, when the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), was set up to reduce tariffs, remove trade barriers and facilitate trade in goods. Over the years, GATT evolves through eight rounds of multilateral trade negotiations, the last and most extensive being the Uruguay round (1986-1994) (WTO, 2003).

GATT, the WTO's predecessor, was established after World War II in the wake of other new multilateral institutions dedicated to international economic cooperation – notably the Bretton Wood institutions known as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. A comparable international institution for trade, named the International Trade Organization (ITO) was successfully negotiated. The ITO was to be a United Nations specialized agency and would address not only trade barriers but other issues indirectly related to trade, including employment, investment, restrictive business practice, and commodity agreements. But the ITO treaty was not approved by the United Nation and a few signatories, including the United States Congress which claimed it could affect the national sovereignty of a state (Sheriff, 2013:113). Consequently ITO never went into effect. In the absence of an international organization for trade, the GATT would over the years ''transform itself'' into a *de facto* international organization, and continued so until the WTO came into being at Marrakesh on 1 January 1995 (WTO, 2003).

According to Adeniran (2007:316) unlike the GATT, which function was to reduce tariffs in manufacturing trade, the WTO which replaced it has far and wider scopes including services, agriculture and manufactures. Similarly, Thomas (2010:223) notes that "whereas GATT regulated trade in merchandise goods, the WTO expanded the GATT agreement to include trade in services, trade related investment, trade related intellectual property and provides a framework for international trade law whose rules are legally binding on its member states". Furthermore, Hoekman (2002:41) has highlighted the differences between the two, thus: "The GATT was a rather flexible institution; bargaining and deal-making lay at its core, with significant opportunities for countries to 'opt out' of specific disciplines. In contrast, WTO rules apply to all members, who are subject to binding dispute settlement procedures. This is attractive to groups seeking to introduce multilateral disciplines on a variety of subjects, ranging from the environment and labor standards to competition and investment policies to animal rights". In summary, the world trade organization deals with regulation of trade between participating countries; it provides a framework for negotiating and formalizing trade agreements, and a dispute resolution process aimed at enforcing participants' adherence to WTO agreements which are signed by representatives of member governments and ratified by their parliaments. Most of the issues that the WTO focuses on derive from previews trade negotiations, especially from the Uruguay round (1986-1994). The organization is currently endeavouring to persist with a trade negotiation called the Doha development agenda (or Doha round), which was launched in 2001 to enhance equitable participation of poorer countries which represent a majority of the world's population. However, the negotiation has been dogged by ‘'disagreement between exporters of agricultural bulk commodities and countries with large numbers of subsistence farmers on the precise terms of a special safeguard measure' to protect farmers from surges in imports. At this time, the future of the Doha round is uncertain (Shah, 2007). The WTO is governed by a ministerial conference, meeting every two years; a general council, which implements the conference's policy decisions and is responsible for day-to-day administration; and a director-general, who is appointed by the ministerial conference. The WTO's headquarters is at the centre William Rappard, Geneva, Switzerland (WTO, 2010).

Objectives of the WTO

The followings are the objectives of the WTO: To ensure linkages between trade policies, environmental policies and sustainable development; To achieve these objectives by entering into reciprocal and mutual advantageous arrangements directed towards substantial reduction of tariffs and other barriers to trade and the elimination of discriminatory treatment in international trade relations; Its relation in the field of trade and economic endeavour shall be conducted with view to raising standard of living, ensuring full employment and large and steady growing volume of real income and effective demand, and expanding the production and trade in goods and services; To develop an integrated, more viable and durable multilateral trading system encompassing the GATT, the results of past liberalization efforts, and all the results of the Uruguay round of multilateral trade negotiations; To make positive efforts designed to ensure that developing countries, especially the least developed among them, secure a share in the growth in international trade commensurate with the needs of their economic development; To allow for the optimal use of the world's resources in accordance with the objectives of sustainable development, seeking both to protect and preserve the environment, and to enhance the means for doing so in a manner consistent with respective needs and concerns at different levels of economic development (WTO, 2010).

Members of the World Trade Organization (WTO)

Being a member of the World Trade Organisation comes some benefits. These include:"(a) strengthening of domestic policies and institutions for the conduct of international trade in both goods and services…; (b) improvements in the ease and security of market access to major export markets; and (c) access to a dispute settlement mechanism for trade issues" Michalopoulos (2002:61). Because of these benefits the membership of WTO has been on the increase over the years. For instance, by the end of Uruguay round in 1994, 128 countries had joined the GATT. Since the entry into force of the WTO, membership has grown to 144 as of the end of 2001" (Hoekman, 2002:41). By 2018 membership of the WTO increased to 164 representing about 98% of world trade. Also a total of 22 countries were reportedly negotiating

their membership of the organisation within same period (WTO: 2018:11). The followings are some members of the WTO listed in 2012:
Angola; Antigua and Barbuda; Argentina; Australia; Austria; Bahrain; Bangladesh; Barbados; Belgium; Belize; Benin; Bolivia; Botswana; Brazil; Brunei Darussalam; Burkina Faso; Burundi; Cameroon; Canada; Central African Republic; Chad; Chile; Colombia; Republic of Congo; Costa Rica; Côte d'Ivoire; Cuba; Cyprus; Czech Republic; Denmark; Djibouti; Dominica; Dominican Republic; Egypt; El Salvador; Fiji; Finland; France; Gabon; The Gambia; Germany; Ghana; Greece; Grenada; Guatemala; Republic of Guinea; Guinea Bissau; Guyana; Haiti; Honduras; Hong Kong; Hungary; Iceland; India; Indonesia; Ireland; Israel; Italy; Jamaica; Japan; Kenya; Republic of Korea; Kuwait; Lesotho; Liechtenstein; Luxembourg; Macau; Madagascar; Malawi; Malaysia; Maldives; Mali; Malta; Mauritania; Mauritius; Mexico; Morocco; Mozambique; Myanmar; Namibia; Netherlands; New Zealand; Nicaragua; Niger; Nigeria; Norway; Pakistan; Papua New Guinea; Paraguay; Peru; Philippines; Poland; Portugal; Qatar; Romania; Rwanda; Saint Christopher and Nevis; Saint Lucia; Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; Senegal; Sierra Leone; Singapore; Slovak Republic; Slovenia; Solomon Islands; South Africa; Spain; Sri Lanka; Suriname; Swaziland; Sweden; Switzerland; Tanzania; Thailand; Togo; Trinidad and Tobago; Tunisia; Turkey; Uganda; United Arab Emirates; United Kingdom; United States of America; Uruguay; Venezuela; Yugoslavia; Zaïre; Zambia; Zimbabwe (WTO, 2012:8).

Functions, Principles and Structure of the WTO

According to Hoekman (2002:41-42), the central function of the "WTO is as a forum for international cooperation on trade-related policies—the creation of codes of conduct for member governments. These codes emerge from the exchange of trade policy commitments in periodic negotiations. The WTO can be seen as a market in the sense that countries come together to exchange market access commitments on a reciprocal basis. It is, in fact, a barter market."

The detailed functions of the WTO are as follows:

i. It administers the understanding on rules and procedures governing the settlement of disputes of the agreement;

ii. It co-operates with the IMF and the World Bank and its affiliated agencies with a view to achieving greater coherence in global economic policy making;

iii. It facilitates the implementation, administration and operation of the objectives of the agreement and of the multilateral trade agreement;

iv. It provides the framework for the implementation and operation of the plurilateral trade agreements relating to trade in civil aircraft, government procurement, and trade and dairy products bovine meat. (Jhingan, 1997);

v. Monitoring national trade policies;

vi. Serving as a forum for trade negotiations;

vii. Serving as a centre of economic research and analysis with regular assessment of the global trade picture in its annual publications and research reports on specific topics and cooperates closely with the two other Britton Wood systems, IMF and the World Bank (WTO, 2003).

The Principles of WTO

In terms of principles, the WTO has five Main Principles as follows: Nondiscrimination, Reciprocity, Enforceable Commitments, Transparency, and Safety Valves.

Nondiscrimination
The Principle of nondiscrimination is said to have two major components: the Most-Favored-Nation (MFN) rule, and the national treatment principle. While "the MFN rule requires that a product made in one member country be treated no less favorably than a 'like' (very similar) good that originates in any other country", the "National treatment requires that foreign goods, once they have satisfied whatever border measures are applied, be treated no less favorably, in terms of internal (indirect) taxation than like or directly competitive domestically produced goods" (Hoekman, 2002:41)

Reciprocity
Reciprocity implies similar treatment in return for deals by member states. But most especially, reciprocity being a "fundamental element of the negotiating Process" is about the "desire to limit the scope for free-riding that may arise because of the MFN rule and a desire to obtain 'payment' for trade liberalization in the form of better access to foreign markets" (Hoekman, 2002:42)

Binding and Enforceable Commitments
Another principle is the binding and enforceable commitments. By this principle all liberalization commitments and agreements are expected to be binding on members. Hoekman (2002:43) has argued the "The nondiscrimination principle, embodied in Articles I (on MFN) and III (on national treatment) of the GATT, is important in ensuring that market access commitments are implemented and maintained."

Transparency
Transparency as a principle of WTO requires members of the organisation to be open about their trade policies. The principle is a basic legal obligation, as such "WTO members are required to publish their trade regulations, to establish and maintain institutions allowing for the review of administrative decisions affecting trade, to respond to requests for information by other members, and to notify changes in trade policies to the WTO" (Hoekman, 2002:44). Aacording to Hoekman, one advantage of the principle is that "It reduces the pressure on the dispute settlement system, as measures can be discussed in the appropriate WTO body."

Safety Valves
This principle has "three types of provisions in this connection: (a) articles allowing for the use of trade measures to attain noneconomic objectives; (b) articles aimed at ensuring "fair competition"; and (c) provisions permitting intervention in trade for economic reasons. What all this implies is that, in specific circumstances, governments should be able to restrict trade (Hoekman, 2002: 44)

The Structure of the WTO
The structure of the WTO include the Ministerial Conference, the General Council, Council for trade in goods, Council for intellectual property rights, council for trade in services and committees on trade and environment as well as other related committees(Sheriff, 2013:116).

The Ministerial Conference: This is the governing body of the WTO, and has the highest authority to adopt final decision on all WTO matters. It enjoys absolute authority over other institutions carrying functions of the organisation and taking appropriate measure to administer new global trade rule (Pal, n.d). It also decides on the admission of new member, and makes decisions concerning international trade agreements and the WTO Agreement (Hoekman and Mavroidis, 2007: 20-23). Its meeting is once in two years (WTO, 2018).

The General Council: This organ has other arms such as the General Council on Dispute Settlement and the General Council on Trade Policy Review (Sheriff, 2013:116). It meets once in amonth it the organisation headquarters in Geneva. It is responsible for carrying out the duties of the organization between Ministerial Conferences, while the Dispute Settlement Body administers the dispute settlement provisions of the different WTO agreements (Hoekman and Mavroidis, 2007: 20-23).

Other specific functions of the General Council cited in Mahwash (2017:88) are:

i. It oversees the operation of WTO agreements, and shares with the Ministerial Council the responsibility of adopting interpretations of the WTO Agreement. An example is its 2003 decisions on TRIPS and public health.

ii. It grants and extends waivers from WTO rules, on behalf of the Ministerial Conference. An example is the 'Kimberley Process ' waiver, to prevent trade in 'blood diamonds'.

iii. It meets as the Trade Policy Review Body (TPRB) and the Dispute Settlement Body (DSB); the two bodies and the General Council are considered as 'second level' bodies after the Ministerial Conference.

iv. It deals with accession-related matters including authorizing the accession of new Members when the Ministerial Conference is not in session. For accession matters, the General Council decides on the establishment of working parties on accession, and endorses accession packages upon complete n of negotiations.

v. It supervises the overall conduct of negotiations such as the Doha Work Programme. Since the Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC) was set up to carry out the Doha negotiations, the General Council has regularly reviewed its work under a standing agenda item. The TNC reports to each regular meeting of the General Council on the activities of its negotiating groups.

vi. The General Council also deals with systemic issues (such as selection of Directors-General and external transparency), and performs specific tasks assigned to it by the Ministerial Conference.

The Secretariat: The WTO Secretariat is located in Geneva, Switzerland. It is headed by Director- General with over 630 staff (WTO, 2018). Its major functions include supplying of technical support for various councils/committees and the Ministerial Conference; providing technical assistance for developing economies; analyzing world trade and; explaining WTO activities to the public and media. Other functions legal assistance in dispute settlement process and advices governments wishing to join WTO (WTO, 2018:11)

Voting System of the WTO

The WTO operates on a *one country, one vote* system, but actual votes have never been taken. Decision making is generally by consensus, and relative market size is the primary source of bargaining power. The advantage of consensus decision-making is that it encourages efforts to find the most widely acceptable decision. Main disadvantages include large time requirements and many rounds of negotiation to develop a consensus decision, and the tendency for final agreements to use ambiguous language on contentious points that makes future interpretation of treaties difficult. In reality, WTO negotiations proceed not by consensus of all members, but by a process of informal negotiations between small groups of countries. Such negotiations are often called "Green Room" negotiations (after the colour of the WTO Director-General's Office in Geneva), or "Mini-Ministerials", when they occur in other countries. These processes have been regularly criticised by many of the WTO's developing country members which are often totally excluded from the negotiations. Steinberg (2002) argues that although the WTO's consensus governance model provides law-based initial bargaining, trading rounds close through power-based bargaining favouring Europe and the United States, and may not lead to Pareto improvement.

The Free Trade Policies of the WTO

As noted early, the GATT served as the world's multi-lateral trade system for 47 years and was replaced with the WTO, an international organization dealing with the liberalization of trade. It has helped to promote global economic integration and trade in services, which was not covered by GATT. The WTO was established as the new institutional foundation of the multi-lateral trade system which helps to ensure that trade flows as freely as possible, by removing barriers to trade, and that there is transparency in the trading system. It serves as a forum for countries to negotiate trade and settle trade-related disputes (WTO, 2010: 9-10; Lumina, 2008: 23).

Upon creation, the WTO incorporated the two GATT principles into its operations. The principles are: i) The most-favoured-nation principle – which ensures that benefits, such as lower tariffs and import and export charges, are enjoyed by all member states (Article I of GATT); and ii) The national treatment principle – which ensures that a member should not discriminate between local and foreign products or services when imposing tariffs, charges or conditions of trade (Article III of GATT) (Hoekman and Mavroidis, 2007: 38-39). Other principles of WTO include the followings: i) The lowering of trade barriers through negotiation; ii) Predictability by states agreeing to bound rates; iii) Discouraging unfair practices such as subsidies and dumping; and iv) Providing benefits and privileges to developing countries, such as extra time to fulfill their obligations (WTO, 2010: 10-13). It has been argued that from its preamble, free trade is not the ultimate goal of the organization but that the WTO should be seen as an organization that facilitates the reduction of trade barriers and pursues equality in market access between members (Hoekman and Kostecki cited in Denkers and Jägers, 2008: 91). However, "The goal of barrier free trade was accelerated in the Uruguay Round by expanding the so-called zero-for-zero negotiations. And it is being realized regionally in Mercosur, NAFTA, APEC, the EU and the many other customs unions and free trade areas spreading throughout the world" (Ruggiero, 1996).

The Impact of WTO's Free Trade Policy on Africa's Industrial Sector

The performance of Africa's industrial sector in terms of growth and structural change has been poor relative to other regions. Between 1980 and 1986 manufacturing value added (MVA) growth in South Saharan Africa (SSA) averaged 0.3 percent compared to 5.9 percent in all developing countries and 7.7 percent per annum in Southeast Asia (Riddell, 1990). The rate of growth of manufacturing value added in Africa has decelerated from 5.1 percent during 1975-85 to 3.5percent during 1990-90, while Southeast Asia enjoyed growth rates of 7.7 percent and 8.8 percent in the same periods (UNIDO, 1993). In terms of structural change, industry in SSA has remained more dominated by traditional and technologically simple consumer goods industries than industry in other regions.

In spite of the dismal performance of much of African industries debates during the 1980s on Africa's economic development in general and on economic recovery in particular have not given adequate attention to the role of industry (Riddell, 1990). In some case industry has been identified as having been responsible for much of the waste of resources and a cure has been sought in diverting resources from industry to other sectors such as agriculture. The tendency to give less attention to industry is rather paradoxical for at least two reasons. First the literature on economic development ascribes a high degree of dynamism to industry a perception which has not been proved wrong. Second, industry has been instrumental in the generation and diffusion of technology which is an important source of dynamism and competitiveness in any economy. The neglect of the role of industry amounts to the omission of a major source of technological dynamism in the development of SSA and the whole Africa.The approach taken in the economic reforms has influenced recent debates on industrialization in Africa. It is notable in recent year's discussions of industrial strategy in Africa have emphasized the importance of restructuring the supply side of the economy towards export stressed the need to change the price structures which were associated with import substitution strategies by a return to the market.

Due to free trade and consequent free flow of goods and services, African countries have become import dependent rather than self sufficient through local production of goods and services which they have comparative advantage. This is where the WTO has ironically shown its abhorrence for protectionist policies and has also failed to apply such stance to all nations; while the developed countries continue to preach free trade through the WTO to third world countries. A case in point in the textile industries in Nigeria which hitherto produce textile in commercial quality which encouraged the local production of raw materials like cotton has been comatose and now Nigeria imports about ¾ of its textile needs. As it is, Nigeria and most Africa's imports is dependent despite its rich materials endowment , importing almost everything it consumes –rice, sugar, pharmaceutical products, beverages etc; when its can produce these locally. The inability of African countries to manufacture industrial goods and services for export points to its low industrial capacity. The antecedents has led to a growing psychological dependence or complex in the minds of Africans that anything locally produced is inferior and anything imported in superior in quality. Lall et al cited in Mahwash (2017:103) have rightly pointed out the role of capability factors which continues to be neglected in studies of African industrialization, while Structural Adjustment programmes continues to be redesigned with an almost exclusive focus on incentive factors. The researcher cited one study by the World Bank (1989) as an exception for having observed that most industries in Africa remain isolated from world markets and new technologies and continue to operate at costs higher than world prices.

Available evidence reveals that free trade policy only served to complicate the already precarious position of Africa in the New International Economic Order (NIEO). As Lapidus cited in Emeka, Umar, and Danwanka, (n.d:3) points out the African continent has suffered and it is still suffering from the problem of delayed development. The continent and its people have been the victim of exploitation whether in the form of slavery, colonization, neo-colonization, structural adjustment, international money lending and money changing or of the ongoing globalization of free trade. Jike (2004) accepts this position when he states that theoretical postulations on the benefits of free trade are rather specious and misleading in the

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lights of prevailing ignorable conditions in Africa, juxtaposed with the rest of the world. For him, African countries are tottering under the weight of adversities stemming from an inequitable and unjust global configuration such that African economies have tragically become junk yard for all sort of disused and unserviceable items from the West e.g automobiles (Tokumbo) cloths (Okirika) etc. This is the stark reality that confronts African countries even as it follows the supposedly redemption path of WTO.

At this juncture, some empirical evidences deserve the structure and pattern of world trade flows offers a good starting point. It is such that reflects the double standards contradictions and lopsidedness inherent on the WTO's regime. The share of developed countries of world trade in primary product which stood at 38.8 percent in 1990 increased to 45 percent in 2010. In the sphere of manufactures trace based on natural resources, the developed countries also recorded an increase from 60.1 percent in 1990 to 73.4 percent in 2010. They however recorded a decline in manufactured trade based on natural resources during the same period. The share of Sub-Saharan African countries also recorded an increase from 82.5 to 69.2 percent during the same period. But for Africa, the reverse was the case the share of Sub-Saharan Africa that stood at a ridiculous 5.4 percent in 1990 plummeted to 4.3 percent in 2010 in the area of the primary product. This is particularly worrisome given the fact that primary products constitute the main stay of African's economy. In the area of manufactures based on National Resources, Africa share declined from 1.7 percent in 1990 to 1.3 percent in 2010. The same trend happened in manufactures not based on natural resources which decline from 0.4 percent in 1990 to 0.2 percent in 2010. These tables below further confirm the assertion;

Table 1: Primary Products

	Primary Products		**% Change**	**Impact**
	1990	**2010**		
Developed countries	38.8	45	6.2	Positive impact
Developing countries	61.2	56	(5.2)	Negative impact
East and South Asia	10.4	9.5	(0.9)	Negative impact
Latin America & the Caribbean	12.5	13.2	(0.7)	Negative impact
Middle East & North Asia	21.4	20.9	(0.5)	Negative impact
South Asia	1.2	1.2	0	No impact
Sub-Sahara Africa	5.4	4.3	(1.1)	Negative impact

Source: UNCTAD, cited in Ojo (2004:80)

In Table 1, the share of the Developed countries of World Trade in primary products stood at 38.8 percent in 1990 and later increased to 45 percent in 2010 creating a positive impact for them. For the developing countries, it was a decline from 61.2 percent in 1990 to 56 with negative impact. Same decline and negative impact went for East and South Asia, Latin America and Caribbean and Middle East and North Asia. South Asia. While no impact was recorded by South Asia as the no improvement was witnessed in ten years of trade, the Sub-Saharan Africa registered a decline and a negative impact having dropped from 5.4 percent in 1990 to 4.3 percent in 2010. All this clearly demonstrate that Africa and indeed the Third World country are yet to benefit like the Developed countries from trade in primary products despite the policy of the WTO which aims at creating equal/favourable environment for all countries to trade.

Table 2: Manufactured Goods Based on Natural Resources

	Manufactures based on natural resources		% Change	Impact
	1990	2010		
Developed countries	60.1	73.4	13.3	Positive impact
developing countries	29.8	26.6	(3.2)	Negative impact
East and south Asia	8.4	11.7	(3.3)	Negative impact
Latin America & Caribbean	7	6.5	(0.5)	Negative impact
Middle East & North Asia	4.9	3.9	(1.0)	Negative impact
South Asia	0.8	1.4	0.6	Positive impact
Sub Sahara Africa	1.7	1.3	(0.4)	Negative impact

Source: UNCTAD cited in Ojo (2004:80)

Table 3: Manufacture not based on National Resources

	Manufacture not based on national resources		% Change	
	1990	2010		
Developed countries	82.5	69.2	13.3	Positive impact
developing countries	17.5	30.8	(13.3)	Negative impact
East and south Asia	10.8	22.6	(11.8)	Negative impact
Latin America & Caribbean	2.6	4.6	2.0	Positive impact
Middle East & North Asia	0.8	1.1	0.3	Positive impact
South Asia	0.6	1	0.4	Positive impact
Sub Sahara Africa	0.4	0.2	(0.2)	

Source: UNCTAD, cited in Ojo (2004:80)

What happened to trade in primary products also affected those manufactures not based on natural resources which declined from 0.4 percent in 1990 to 0.2 percent in 2010 as represented in **Table 2** above.

Also, Africa records a poor outing in the area of international capital flow. In the global increase that attends worldwide flows of foreign investment by 41% from $478 billion in 1997 to $694 billion in 1998, and to a record $1,491 billion in 1999, African share could be said to be negligible. As record has it, about 77 percent of the foreign direct investment (FDI) in 1999 or an estimated $837 billion took place among industrialized nations, with the largest share in the United Kingdom and United States (Ojo, 2004:81). While the Developed economies of Western Europe, north America and others recorded an increase in their share of total world FDI inflow from $145, 019 million (64.4 percent) in the 1990/95 to $1,227,476 million (68.4 percent) in 2010; developing countries' share continued to fluctuate Africa for example, which had $4,320 m (1.9 percent) in 1990/95 witnessed downward trend in 1996 (1.5 percent); 1997 (2.2%); 1998 (1.3%); 1999 (1.2%); 2010 (0.6%); until 2010 when it experienced an increase to 2.3 percent. Table 4 and 5 below present an irrefutable statistics.

Table 4: FDI Flows, by Host Region (US $ million)

Host Region	1990/95	1996	1997	1998	1999	2010	2010
World	225,321	368,140	78,082	694,458	1,088,264	1,491,933	1,491,933
Developed Economies	145,019	219,908	267,947	484,239	837,761	1,227,476	1,227,476
Western Europe	87,383	115,863	137,890	274,739	507,222	832,067	832,067
North America	47,058	94,089	114,925	197,243	307,811	367,529	367,529
South America	10,357	32,232	48,166	51,886	70,880	56,837	56,837
Other Developed Economies	10,578	9,955	15,132	12,257	22,728	27,880	27,880
Developing Economies	74,288	152,685	191,022	187,611	225,140	237,894	237,894
Africa	4,320	5,835	10,744	9,021	2,821	8,694	8,694
North Africa	1,543	1,479	2,607	2,788	4,896	2,904	2,904
Asia & The Pacific	47,710	93,994	105,978	96,386	103,008	133,795	133,795
Asia	47,321	93,331	105,828	96,109	102,779	133,707	133,707
South East & South East Asia	44,564	87,843	96,338	86,252	99,990	131,123	131,123
Central & Eastern Europe	6,014	13,547	19,113	22,608	25,363	26,563	26,563

Source: UNCTAD cited in Ojo (2004:80)

Table 5: FDI inflows, by host region (per cent)

Host region	1990/95	1996	1997	1998	1999	2010	2010
World	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Developed Economies	64.4	56.0	56.0	69.7	77.0	82.3	68.4
Western Europe	38.8	30.0	28.8	39.6	46.6	55.8	45.7
North America	20.9	41.8	51.0	87.5	28.3	24.6	20.7
South America	4.6	8.34	10.1	7.5	6.5	3.8	5.5
Other developed economies	4.7	2.6	3.2	1.8	2.1	1.9	2.0
Developing economies	33.0	39.5	40.0	27.0	20.7	15.0	27.9
Africa	1.9	1.5	2.2	1.3	1.2	0.6	2.3
North Africa	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.7
Other Africa	1.2	1.1	1.7	0.9	0.7	0.4	1.6
Asia & the pacific	21.2	24.3	22.2	13.0	9.5	9.0	13.9
Asia	21.0	24.2	22.1	13.8	9.4	9.0	13.9
South east & south Asia	19.8	22.7	20.2	12.4	9.2	8.8	12.8
Central & Eastern Europe	2.7	3.5	4.0	3.3	2.3	1.8	3.7

UNCTAD cited in Ojo (2004:80)

Indeed, global capital flows are unevenly distributed between developed and developing countries. In terms of net private capital flows African share increased from $1,287 million in 1990 to $7,074 million in 2010. While the increase would appear to be a welcome relief, the reverse becomes the case when compared with development in other regions of the world. East Asia and pacific improved from $19,402 million in 1990 to $65,693 million in 2010. Europe and central Asia recorded an increase from $7,692 million in 1990 to $45,446 million in 2010. The multilateral agreement on investment (MAI) was one such example of a trade and investment related treaty which would emphasis the ability of corporations to be allowed more freedom and less constraints, an enormous global activism by ordinary citizens saw this derailed as an indication of the policy's exploitative tendencies.

According to mainstream economic theory, global free trade is a net benefit to society, but the selective application of free trade agreements to some countries and tariffs on others can some time leads to economic inefficiency through the process of trade diversion. It is economical efficient for a goods to be produce by a country which is the lowest cost producer, but this will not always take place if a high cost producer has a free trade agreement while the low cost producer face a high tariff. Applying free trade to the high cost producer (and not the low cost producer as well) can lead to trade diversion and a net economic loss. This is why many economists place such a high importance on negotiation for global tariff reductions, such as the Doha Round.

Khor (2008), a Director of the Third World Network, argues that the WTO does not manage the global economy impartially, but its operation has a systematic bias towards rich countries and multinational corporations, harming smaller countries which have less negotiation power. He argues that developing countries have not benefited from the WTO agreements of the Uruguay round because, among other reasons, market access in industry has not improved; these countries have had no gains yet form the phasing out of textile quotas; non-tariff barriers such as anti dumping measures have increased; and domestic support and export subsidies for agricultural product in the rich countries remain high. Jagdish Bhagwati cited in Mahwash (2017:110) asserts, however, that there is greater tariff protection on manufacturers in the poor countries, which are also over taking the rich nation in the number of anti dumping filings.

While importing nations cannot distinguish how something is made when trading, though it sounds good at first along the lines of equality and non-discrimination, the reality is that some national laws and decision for safety and protection of people's health, environment and national economies have been deemed as barriers to free trade. Take the followings as a very small set of example as argued by Shah (2007):

i. Countries cannot say no to genetically engineered food
ii. Or milk that contains genetically engineered growth hormones known to cause health problems
iii. Or trees that have been felled from pristine forests and so on.
iv. Guatemala took effort to help reduce infant mortality, in accordance with the world health organization's guidelines, and to counter aggressive marketing by baby food companies aimed at convincing mothers their product are superior to the more nutritious and disease protecting breast milk for their babies. The result? The affected corporations managed to take this to GATT (the predecessor to the WTO) and get a reversal of the laws amidst the threats of sanctions. Profits prevailed.
v. Canada complained to the WTO about France's ban on asbestos. (The previous link also makes the point of how the victim's views are not heard in WTO proceeding, nor are they part of the debate, even though they may thousands of them.)
vi. The United States' attempt to ban shrimp caught using apparatus that were harmful to endangered sea turtles has been ruled as WTO-illegal, forcing the US to reverses its decision.

According to Shah (2007), Lori Wallach, Director of global trade watch provides further examples through a 6 minute video transcripts, noting that various trade agreement have been pushed in such a way that they often undermine local laws and constitution. If for example, he asserts, health or environmental protection get in the way of trade agreement, they often are revoked or changed in favour of the trade agreements. Hence, instead of respecting the reasons why there has been special and differential treatment for developing countries, rich countries instead want to push poor countries to reciprocate equally, in what would therefore actually result be an unequal result (as it would maintain the unequal terms of trade.).

Africa is really the exploited partner in the market place of globalization particularly in the area of world trade and distribution of income. Consequently, the continent has disappointingly become worse-off in almost every facet of development. One particular area of concern is the increasing tide of poverty that has come to envelope the continent. Today, there is a gross insufficiency of income/expenditure/consumption as well as a market degree of deprivation in the land. Form every approach used in designing the poverty line – the minimum acceptable standard of living -, be it food poverty (i.e. food-energy); overall poverty (i.e. cost of basic needs) and arbitrary – choice – of – index approach (Onah, 1996 cited in Mahwash, 2017:112), Africa ranks high in the poverty index.

It is important to note that out of the 21 countries listed as the world poorest countries based on purchasing power parity in 2011, all of them but two are African countries. And of the 21 countries listed as the richest using the same indicator, none is form Africa (Ozughalu and Ajayi, 2004:531). The percentage of population living in absolute poverty by region makes a more shocking revelation. Beginning form the late 80s through the 90s up to 1998, the percentage of Africa living in absolute poverty oscillates between 46.6 percent and 49.7 percent.

CONCLUSION

The paper discussed the impact of the WTO free trade policy on the industrial development in Africa. Several sub-topics were selected and treated to acquaint the reading public with the subject matter. These include the concept of free trade, the formation of the WTO, its aims, structure, functions and the principles guiding its operations. The work also did analysis of the impact of the WTO policy and found that: The performance of Africa's industrial sector, in terms of growth and structural change, has been poor relative to other regions. African firm were increasingly isolated from the dynamics of efficient change occurring elsewhere, notably as regards technical adaptation, advance in management techniques and development in computer aided manufacture and ancillary services. Free trade policies have further complicated Africa's unstable standing in the new International Economic Order. The share of developed countries in primary product, which stood at 38.8 percent in 1990, increased to 45 percent in 2010. In the spheres of manufacture trades based on natural resources, the develop countries also recorded an increase from 60.1 percent in 1990 to 73.4 percent in 2010. They, however, recorded a decline in manufactures not based on natural resources from 82.5 to 69.2 percent during the same period. But for Africa, the reverse was the case. The share of Sub-Saharan Africa that stood at the ridiculous 5.4 percent in 1990 plummeted to 4.3 percent in 2010 in the area of primarily product. This is particularly noteworthy given the fact that primary product constitute the mainstay of African economics. Global capital flows are disproportionately distributed between developing countries. The WTO policies as it affects third world/developing countries are exploitative. The selective of free trade agreements to some countries and tariff on other leads to economics inefficiency through the process of trade diversion. The WTO in it operational policies have a bias towards rich countries and multinational corporations, harming smaller countries which have less negotiation power. Third world/developing countries have not benefited adequately from the WTO agreements. Various global trade agreements have been pushed in such a way that they often undermine local laws and constitution. Africa is really the exploited partner in the market place of globalization particularly in the areas of world trade and distribution of income. As further confirms by Pal (n.d):

Free trade policy pursue by the WTO over the years has widened the income gap between rich and poor nations, instead of minimizing the gap…WTO functions in a discriminatory way as it is more biased to the rich countries and MNCs. In fact, this strategy of the WTO has not benefited the developing countries. One can see that the market access of these countries in industry has not improved, non-tariff barriers like anti-dumping measures have increased and domestic support and export subsidies for agricultural products in the rich countries still remain high'

Supporting this, Pettinger (2019) argues "free trade benefits developed countries more than developing countries…developing countries need some trade protection to be able to develop new industries. This is important to be able to diversify the economy"

Recommendations

African leaders should have the political will and commitment to limit the negatives impact of WTO's free trade policies on their economies generally and the industrial sectors in particular. To do this, specific policy options including, but not limited to the followings, should be pursued with vigour:

1. Adopt protectionist economic and industrial policies with emphasis on key sectors including the agricultural sectors;
2. Promote and protect local industrial development that is capable of producing basic goods and services;
3. Improve and strengthen their decision-making machinery and institutions;
4. Limit import of major goods and services which they have relative comparative advantage;
5. Identify their specific interest and objective in respect of the subject of the WTO. This can be done through the process of a broad-based and in-depth examination of the issues and implications;
6. For the WTO itself, it should ensure that it carries all countries along by giving them equal treatment no matter their statuses;
7. There should be a deliberate commitment by the organisation towards addressing the negative impact of free trade policy on the industrial sector of the African states so that they can develop economically as their Western counterpart;
8. Finally, while hoping that trade liberalization, at the global level through the WTO, as well as through regional and South-South efforts, certainly have a significant role to play in enhancing the position of developing countries, more especially African nations; it should be done in such a way that the local industries are not destroyed.

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