The Impact of Capitalist Policies on Cotton Production in Nigeria

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Abstract

Public policy and strategy of agricultural production in Nigeria since the mid-1980s 1990s and beyond has been tailored to capitalist agriculture. This is because the ruling class i.e. the compradors and the petty-bourgeois in control of the state are oriented more towards a capitalist path to development than towards non-capitalist path. Thus, they have generally the same aims and ideological bias as the foreign capitalist. On the other hand, cotton as one of the major cash crop is of considerable social and economic importance to Nigeria. The country witnessed the commodity boom years of the 1950s and 1960s which made Nigeria among the foremost world producers and exporters of the crop. Needless, to recall that, it was the crop together with other cash crops such as groundnuts, cocoa and rubber, which earned the required foreign exchange for Nigeria's capital development up to the mid-1970s. The country is experiencing a relative decline in the agricultural sector, cotton inclusive when compared with booms period. The immediate effects were the loss in foreign exchange earnings from this important source, huge loss or reduction in capacity for the production of sufficient raw materials for textile industries among others. Therefore, the paper attempts to examine some of the capitalist policies on cotton production and its impact on production in the colonial and post-colonial periods. The work used secondary sources of data such as books, journals, institutional reports in analyzing the situation of cotton production. The work adopted Marxian theory of capitalism as the theoretical framework that guided our analysis and interpretations using thematic expression and content analysis. The research discovered that inconsistency of policies in the agricultural sector visa vise cotton production has contributed to relative decline in production. Equally, the decline in textile industries in the 1980s contributed immensely to reduction in local demand for cotton from cotton farmers which discouraged many from engaging in production. Finally, the work recommends among others that government should expedite actions on the revitalization of the Nigerian textile industry in order to create local market for cotton in the country.

Keywords: capitalism, development, policies, cotton, production
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Contribution/Originality
The cyclical crisis of capitalism such as boom, depression, recovery, and crisis is a major impediment to sustainable growth in cotton production in Nigeria. These could be the reasons for ups and downs in the cotton and garment and industry. More glaring is in the sphere of production and marketing of the products both domestically and internationally.

1.0 Introduction

Globally, cotton is the most important commercial crop and plays key role in economic, political and social affairs of the world (ICAC, 2013). It is the most essential natural fiber crop in the world for textile produce, accounting for about 50% of all fibers used in the textile industry. It is more important than the various synthetic fibers, and it is grown all over the world in about 80 countries (Acquaah, 2007). Cotton is unique among agricultural crops, because it is the main natural fiber crop, and also provides edible oil and seed by-products for livestock feed, it also provides income for hundreds of millions of people (Chaudhry and Guitchounts, 2003). It is one of the agro-industrial crops which are produced in both developing and developed countries.

Cotton has played an important role since the industrial revolution of the 17th century. Currently, it is an important cash crop especially for a number of developing countries at local and national levels (Baffes, 2004). This indeed attested to the fact that cotton production is an important aspect of world agricultural product which contribute immensely to development of many developed and developing countries. Hussein (2010) observed that cotton has been at the heart of an agricultural revolution in cotton-producing countries in West and Central Africa. Although cotton production in Africa is not significant on a global scale, a large number of African countries remained heavily dependent on cotton. For instance, cotton accounts for 60% of foreign exchange earnings in Benin. The West and Central African producers, which had a very marginal rank in the world market forty years ago, have considerably increased their production capacity, and now account for more than one million tonnes, representing over 4% of the world production (ICAC, 2013).

Prior to the oil boom, cotton was one of the main source of foreign exchange and second largest employer of labour after the public sector (Gbadegesin and Uyovnisere 1994). It is one of the Agricultural product that boosted Nigerian export in the international market. Cotton is serves as indispensable that man use daily. It is used widely in hospitals, medical centres and clinics for cleaning and dressing of wounds in surgical operation and other orthopaedic uses. At home, it is used domestically as bedding and cushioning materials. The lint is also used as wick when soaked in oil to serve as illuminant in the rural areas. More than half of the cotton lint produced is used to make clothing and household textiles. The reminder is used in industry to make bag, belts, twins, and tyre-cords. The short lint is used in carpet, batting and as filling materials for pads and cushions. The fuzz (linters) on the seed is used to make felts, upholstery, mattresses, twin, carpets, surgical cotton, and in chemical industries for the production of rayon, plastics, paper and photographic film (Babangida, 2016).

However, despite these great uses of cotton, farmers in northern Nigeria and other part of the country are running away from its cultivation, a feature that remains a threat to Nigeria's economy. Several attempts have been made by researchers to improve cotton production but most proved abortive. And most of the little cotton produced is utilized by the local industries in the country and importation is banned many years ago (Kuchinda et al., 2002). This happened as a result of the absence of modern tools for cotton production. In addition, the major feature of cotton production in Nigeria is that about 80% of total production is by peasant farmers under rainfall conditions with simple tools and animal drawn-implements (Onu and Atala, 1992; Adeniji, 2007). The impact of this is that most textiles and oil mils operate far below capacity because of inadequate raw materials which will lead to economic throwback and losing of work place by many Nigerians.

This trend in closure of industries became clear when our textile industries dropped from 135 industries in 1980s to 30 industries or even less in 2009 (Afolabi, 2009). Consequently, this study examines the impact of capitalist development of policies on cotton production in the colonial, post-colonial and post structural adjustment programme era.

2.0 Literature Review

Colonial capitalist policies on cotton production

Prior to the colonization of Nigeria by the British imperialist, cotton production in African societies residing within the geo-political territories presently known as Nigeria were for domestic consumption by the local weavers, dyers, cloth beaters, cloth-merchant and other domestic users. From evidences collected by various nineteenth century European travelers, cotton would appear to be the most widely growth non-food crop during the period. In the 1830's, Richard lander was impressed by the amount of cotton growth everywhere he passed through (Akinjogbin and Osoba, 1980).

Immediately after the conquest of the Nigerian territories and their amalgamation of 1914, the colonial government went ahead and set in motions various trends that changed the structure of the pre-colonial society and its mode of production. Nigeria's incorporation into the international capitalist market as a junior partner, which started with the supply of slaves, continued unaltered with the supply of commodities such as palm oil, cocoa, groundnut and cotton among others. Thus, the incorporation of Nigeria's agricultural sector in to the world economy was achieved before 1940 through the penetration of merchant capital such as the British Cotton Growers Association BCGA, Empire Cotton Growing Corporation and their buying companies like Niger Company, United African Company and John Holt Ltd Company in the service of British industrial capital (Labo, 1991).

Commercial cotton production has a very long history in the country. It started well after the formation of the British Cotton Growing Association (BCGA) and the Empire Cotton Growing Corporation (ECGC) in the 1903 and 1924 respectively. The two organizations (BCGA and ECGC) in collaboration with the British government continued to intensify efforts towards encouraging commercial cotton production in Nigeria.

The British colonial government in 1949 established commodity boards. The government mandated the board to promote the purchase export and development of exports crops such as cotton, groundnut, cocoa and palm oil. Thereafter, in 1954, the colonial government regionalized the commodity boards and since then, referred to it as Northern Nigeria marketing boards in the Northern part of the country. The boards since then provide the overall coordination for financing procurement, processing and shipping of the cotton lint and cotton seed. However, in the actual handling of the crop, the boards employed the Licensed Buying Agents (LBAs) who bought cotton and behalf of the board from gazette cotton markets (Idem, 1999). The post-colonial government decided to reorganize the marketing boards and this gave birth to seven commodity boards in 1976 with the Nigerian Cotton Board (NCB) as one of them.

The NCB was established on 1st April, 1977 for the overall coordination on matters concerning cotton production and marketing in the country (Idem, 1999). The International Mandatory Fund (IMF) and World Bank sponsored Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) of 1986 led to the scrapping of the NCB together with the other commodity boards. Since the abolishing of NCB, government shifted over the production and marketing of cotton to private individuals and companies (Idem, 1999). Realising the vacuum created by the whole some application of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) in 1986 to cotton production in Nigeria, particularly in the area of the supply of good quality seed. The Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources established in 1987 a Cotton Consultative Committee (CCC) and in 1994 Cotton Revolving Fund Management Committee (CRFMC) was also introduced to manage the fund put in place in 1992 (Onwualu, 2009).

Historically, the Nigerian farmers had been growing cotton for many centuries mainly for local consumption i.e. for weaving of indigenous cloths. However, the growing of cotton for purely commercial purposes did not begin until the first decade of the twentieth century, when it was encouraged by the British Cotton Growing Association (BCGA). Although most of the African countries share a similar history of voluntaries' development of cotton production during colonial era, the history of BCGA tells the full story of cotton culture in Nigeria during that period i.e. colonial period. Even though, some trading firms took an interest in its production. For instance, Messrs Elder

Dempster and co brought tons of cotton seeds to Lagos in May 1901 to be distributed to farmers. This company also offered a large reward to the first shipper of 100 tons of cotton, and it tried to engage cotton growing experts in new orlens in the United States of America (USA) to visit Nigeria and instruct the farmers in the cultivation of cotton. But the efforts of Elder Dempster and co were not rewarded. The BCGA efforts were more successful. The BCGA was founded in 1902 with a capital of £50,000 which was increased to £500,000 in 1904. It conducted a number of experiments to discover whether any of the British West African countries could be adapted to cotton growing. The man objective behind such a project was to supply the British market with cotton grown within the British Empire and this make Britain independent of America for her raw cotton. A number of experiments were conducted in southern and northern Nigeria, and it was discovered that large areas in Northern Nigeria could be adapted to cotton growing. Indeed, at the initial stages of the BCGA's experiments in Nigeria, numerous plantations were established in southern Nigeria and cotton ginneries were erected along the railway at Abeokuta, Ibadan, Iwo and Oshogbo. In fact, the Moore plantations at Ibadan were founded by the BCGA as an experimental farm for cotton growing. The association soon concentrated its efforts on Northern Nigeria for its natural advantage such as suitable land, average rainfall, and population e.t.c. The three cotton growing zones in Nigeria are: The Northern cotton zone, which is made up of the present North West geo-political zone comprising Katsina, Zamfara, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Kebbi, Sokoto and Niger states. The zone accounts for 60 percent of the country's output. The Eastern cotton zone consists of the present North-East geo-political zone of Gombe, Bauchi, Adamawa, Taraba, Borno and Yobe states. The zone accounts for 35 percent of the nations' output. The North-Central geo-political zone accounts for only 5 percent. It comprises of Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Plateau, Edo, Ogun and Oyo states. In their efforts to increase cotton production in the country, the BCGA also frequently distributed cotton seeds to farmers. Between 1929 and 1945, cotton production in Northern Nigeria depended largely on the encouragement of the BCGA. Similarly, the Association engaged in establishing a number of ginneries along the railway lines particularly in Northern Nigeria. Important among the ginnery stations were Ilorin, Zaria, Kano, Kaduna and Sokoto. In 1960 about a dozen ginneries were operating in the cotton growing areas all of which were established by the BCGA. In fact, a new ginnery, with baling press operated by hydraulic power, was introduced which made it possible for bales from Northern Nigeria to be compressed in to half their former size thus, facilitating in shipping and lessening the cost of freight. Currently, Nigeria has about 30 ginneries of different ages, capacities and sophistications with more than enough capacity to gin all the seed cotton that is currently being produced in the country. The BCGA also acted as the ginning agent of the 1949 marketing boards.

The BCGA among other efforts to encourage commercial cotton production was to press the British colonial government for monopoly buying rights which was granted in 1906. The aim of the monopoly right was to curtail price fluctuations, speculations and competition between firms as well as other market uncertainties.

Similarly, the Association persuaded buying agents, merchant and firms to purchase cotton on its behalf. The BCGA also through colonial government mounted pressure to acquired parliamentary support to enhance cotton cultivation. The then British Prime Minister Arthur James Balfor was quoted in the House of Commons as having said that "Lancashire can and most find salvation in Northern Nigeria". Thus, the acting secretary of the colonial government in Zungeru instructed the resident of Kano, Sokoto, Buachi, Borno and Nupe to collect sample of cotton from their provinces and to forward them to the BCGA agricultural list at Lokoja. At the same time, Lugard, the then Governor of Northern Protectorate empowered the local managers of BCGA at Lokoja to communicate directly with residents in all matters concerning cotton and seed distribution, to ensure that the best cotton was grown and produced for sale to the BCGA. However, the management contract of BCGA expired in 1974; the Cotton Marketing Board (CMB) took up till 1986 when the industry was liberalized.

The economic importance of the operations of the BCGA, particularly in Nigeria according to Ekundare (1973), lies in the fact that the encouragement of the cotton industry meant the provisions of profitable employment for the people in the cotton growing areas. The farmers were able to add cotton to the list of export 'cash crop' from which they could derive incomes. In other words, the introduction of cotton helped to diversify agricultural production. The industry also provided additional employment for a number of rich men who engaged in produce-buying for export. It provided freights for the relatively new railway in Northern Nigeria, and Cargo for the streamers engaged in international trade. It also supplied one of the most important industries in the United Kingdom with raw materials thus, bringing prosperity to a number of manufacturers. But scholars like Ake (1981), Onimode (1982) believed that the Kano-Apapa railway line and other railway lines in the country were only but to facilitate the collection of cotton, groundnut and cocoa for export not for the development of the transportation sector or for the benefit of peasant producers. The BCGA was nothing according to them but an agent of exploitation of the peasant producers for the benefit of the metropolitan country through the creation of surplus value and capital repatriation.

Table 1: Exports of Cotton 1900 – 1944 (tons)

Year	Total Cotton Exports
1900 – 1904	132
1905 – 1909	1,383
1910 – 1914	1,884
1915 – 1919	2,112
1920 – 1925	3,940
1925 – 1929	6,038
1930 – 1934	4,594
1935 – 1939	8,332
1940 – 1944	9,913

Adopted Source: Nigerian Handbook, 1936 cited in Ekundare, (1973)

Another policy adopted by the colonial government to enhance cotton production in the country was a motion to encourage cotton growing was adopted by the House of Commons in U.K. And thereafter the colonial office directed the colonial government of Northern Nigeria to "… ensure the success of the scheme". The British Treasury made a grant of £1,000 per annum to the colonial government for three years beginning from 1906, for the development of cotton production. It further supplemented that by another grant of £1,000 per annum by the BCGA for five years, beginning also from 1906.

The colonial government also introduced in order to force or promote cash crop production, cotton inclusive, especially between 1900 and 1912 was colonial taxation. The colonial state imposed different types of taxes such as "Kundin Kasa", "jangali", Caravan tax to mention just a few. Throughout the protectorate. Similarly, the colonial government under Lugard administration directed all emirs i.e. (traditional rulers) to pay their taxes in cotton to be delivered either at the Niger Company's stored or to the BCGA agents. All those efforts were geared towards promoting cotton production for export to Britain. Needless, to say that the instructions of the high commissioners to Emirs to pay their taxes in cotton was intended by the British colonial government to induce or force peasant to produce more cotton for the BCGA. Suffice also to say that the imposition of a variety of taxes as well as other measures by the colonial government on the people of Northern Nigeria had the effect of ultimately transforming the indigenous commercial class into an appendage of British imperialism. As the years passed by, the British taxes inhabited the accumulation of surplus value while the capacity of the peasant producers to qualitatively transform themselves was undermined because of excessive and multiple taxation, huge exploitation, loss of produce and in some instances, the loss of land and even lives. Furthermore, the colonial state sought to promote the cultivation of the commodity produce like cotton through proposals to give cash loan advances to the peasant producers, although, the proposal was however, not implemented on the flimsy excuses that the peasant producers lack securities or collateral to guarantee the loans.

Similarly, the colonial government in 1904 established a model farm and experimental stations. There were a number of agricultural schools research institutions and government experimental farms and stations where agricultural research was undertaken. The most important of these were the West African Institute for Oil Palm Research at Benin, the Cocoa Research Institute Sub-stations and West African Maize Rust Research Unit at Ibadan, the Central Research Organization at Ibadan, Samaru near Zaria, the Northern Regional Stock farm at Shika Zaria to mention just a few. The colonial state equally, encouraged or imposed the purchase of seed cotton at establishing buying centers across the cotton growing areas. In the post-war years, increased planting played the greatest part in increasing cotton production, but the development of higher yielding strains also played a major role. The seed for well over 90% of the crop was provided from ginneries, thus making possible the rapid dissemination of scientifically bred seed which is not found in the case of any other crop. The introduction of the variety (Samaru 26c) which was developed in the 1940s increased the yield by over 20 percent, and by 1959 a new and better variety (Samaru 26) had been introduced, leading to a further increased in yield of 15 percent. By 1929, the Export of raw cotton lint was 5,865 tons, 9,380 tons in 1955 and the figure dropped to 6,207 in 1960.

Table 2: Export of Cotton 1946 – 1960

Year	Cotton (Raw Volume) (tons)	Value (£000)
1946	6,612	536
1947	5,248	520
1948	4,635	476
1949	9,984	1,448
1950	12,623	2,975
1951	15,374	4,950
1952	19,296	6,734
1953	17,707	5,518
1954	25,959	7,350
1955	33,174	9,380
1956	27,852	7,113
1957	25,196	6,337
1958	33,705	7,845
1959	36,884	7,301
1960	26,974	6,207

Adopted Source: Annals of Abstract of Statistics 1963 cited in Ekundare. (1973).

The British colonial government in 1949 established a commodity board. Although the Nigerian Cocoa Marketing Board was established by ordinance in 1947, following in 1949 by the cotton, groundnuts, and oil palm produce Marketing Boards. The marketing board system for the sale of the export crops was the successor of the West African Cocoa Control Board of 1940 and the West African Produce Control Board (WAPCB) of 1942, both of which were formed by the U.K. ministry of Food, to give the British government or firms grip over the economy of her West African colonies. The government mandated the marketing board to promote the purchase, export and development of export crops such as cotton, groundnuts coca and palm produce. A secondary but important purpose of the boards was to provide funds for the economic development of the areas of production and for scientific research in agriculture. The marketing board, as successors to the (WAPCB) inherited a large sum of money through the price equalization scheme £8,320,096 for the period 1939-1940 to 1946-1947. They continued to accumulate funds in good years and in performing their functions allocated this money as follows: 70 percent to be devoted to price stabilization, 7 percent to be spent on scientific research and 221/2 percent on the development of the producing areas. However, Onimode (1982) argued that the Boards played the fiscal role of appropriating agricultural surplus to the British government.

The marketing board system according to him functioned on a five-tier structure. This consisted, first, of the Nigerian Produce Marketing Company which represented all the marketing boards in London, arranged shipping and sold their products in the 'world market'. Next was the Central Marketing Board, owned by the Federal Government in Lagos, which supervised all the four produce marketing boards which, in 1954-1955, became Regional Marketing Boards under federalism. For cotton and groundnuts, it became the Northern Nigerian Marketing Boards. Each employed buying agents which were the trading firms such as United African Company (U.A.C.), John Holt, etc. that formally brought produce directly from producers. Finally, these agents also employed hording of middlemen who collected the produce and paid the producers usually much below the prices fixed by the marketing boards. The actual operation of the marketing boards system had four (4) elements. First in 1949-1952, the U. K. Ministry of Food engaged in bulk purchase of the whole exportable surplus of oil palm products groundnuts and beniseed: this was terminated in 1954.

Second, seasonal producer prices, usually fixed well ahead of harvest were arranged by each marketing board for an entire crop season. This was the essence of price equalization, and these producer prices were usually well below world prices. Moreover, price equalization did not really stabilize income which often varied by over 20% in one season. In addition, the boards undertook produce trading to ensure quality and paid differentials prices for different grades of produce. For cotton, the grading is usually NA1, NA2 and NA3. Finally, as a result of price differentials, the marketing boards accumulated huge trading surplus which were turned over to the colonial government. By 1954, they had made cumulative payment of £24 million to the production development Board called Development Corporations. In all, however, total withdrawal, including the trading surpluses, export duties and produce purchase tax, were a staggering £276.8 million for 1947- 1960. This was only part of the surplus generated from the multiple exploitation of the Nigerian peasantry in a little over a decade. This excludes shipping and other payments to British imperialist. It is important also to distinguish between two phases of the Board's operations. For instance, up to 1962, the Board's policy was to use most of its reserves for price stabilization, and to allocate 30% to research and development programmes directly beneficial to the producing areas as mentioned earlier. However, after 1962 all the accumulated reserves and future profits were treated as part of general government capital for investment in diverse projects. This change of policy was one reason for the generally low producer prices of 1962 and 1967. Although, price stabilization had been abandoned as a policy in 1962.

Furthermore, government took over the executive functions of the board and in 1963 almost the entire executive staff left, the services of the marketing boards leading not only to the loss of accumulated experience, but to a position where it was later officially admitted that by 1967 not a single member of staff was qualified to occupy his post. Equally, the board after 1962 became both more vulnerable to political pressure and less efficient in its commercial operations. These and other problems led to the restructuring of the marketing boards in 1976.

Similarly, there was lack of co-ordination between the boards and the government in encouraging young Nigerians to take up farming as a business. To encourage young people to resort to farming as a business, the boards could have been less conservative about their price-fixing policies in order to convince that farming, particularly cotton production, could pay as much as if not more than a white color job. There was also sufficient evidence however, that an increase in prices did encourage greater production. The marketing board operations succeeded in only reducing the intra-seasonal fluctuations in producer prices, but achieved little success in the much more difficult task of stabilizing producers' income.

Post-colonial capitalist policies on cotton production

The year 1969/70 was the year Nigeria made the most significant efforts in cotton production, it seeing as the golden era of Nigerian cotton output (ACE, 2003; Bello, 2004). In this period Nigeria was able to successfully lunched herself among world cotton producing countries. Cotton (*Gossypium hersutum L.*) is an important cash crop in Nigeria which produces lint and seed serve as raw materials for the local textiles and seed crushing industries. In addition, cotton seed provide edible oil for human consumption while cotton seed cake are used as raw materials for livestock feeds due to high protein content. Until recently, cotton was the major source of foreign exchange for the Nigeria. Unfortunately, since then Cotton production in Nigeria has taken a downward trend as the gap between demand and supply is becoming wider and wider every year because the supply does not equate demand. If such situation persists, it means that the demand for raw material cannot be met by our local industries.

Prior to oil boom, cotton was one of the main source of foreign exchange earner and second largest employer of labour after the public sector in Nigeria (Daniel et al., 2010). Since the inception of the Nigerian cotton board (NCB) in mid 70s it has been observed that cotton production has fallen to a very high level, thereby endangering the future of the Nigerian textile industries and causing an un-necessary drain on the country's foreign exchange following the law establishing structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) in the Nigerian economy and the scrapping of the commodity board by the federal military Government in the mid eighties (Sanusi, 2015).

Despite these great uses of cotton, farmers in northern Nigeria are running away from its cultivation, a feature that remains a threat to Nigeria's economy. This happened as a result of the absence of modern tools for cotton production. In addition, the major feature of cotton production in Nigeria is that about 80% of total production is by peasant farmers under rainfall conditions with simple tools and animal drawn-implements (Onu and Atala, 1992; Adeniji, 2007). This has resulted in farmers in tropical Africa usually obtaining low yields averaging 300 and 500 kilogram per hectare of seed cotton for July (late) and June (early) sown cotton, respectively (USDA, 2014). This yield figure is very low compared with that of her neighbours. For instance, cotton yield in Ghana is 0.8 tonnes per hectare, that of Benin and Burkina Faso are 1.5 tonnes ha and 1.3 tonnes per hectare respectively (FAOSTAT, 2010). World average yield of cotton is about 1.5 tonnes per hectare (International Cotton Advisory Committee, 2013). In the year 2014, the average Nigeria yield is 232 kilogram per hectare (USDA, 2014).

As a result of sharp decrease in cotton farming in Nigeria, statistics revealed that the contribution of the sector to the GDP fell from about 25% in 1980 to 5% in the most recent indicators (www.chanelstv.com). Indeed, this is an appalling that one of the major source of Nigerian foreign exchange is deteriorating, instead of Nigeria to make concerted effort in diversifying its foreign exchange through extension of its agricultural products like cotton which contribute immensely to its GDP, unfortunately Nigeria depend solely on petroleum exportation and neglect other economic sectors.

The report by the Financial Derivatives Company Limited, pointed out that in 2010, with a total production capacity of 602,440 metric tons, Nigeria was Africa's leading cotton producer and the 12th largest in the world. It, however, noted that cotton production in Nigeria has slumped significantly since then. Also, in 2017, the country was the sixth largest cotton producing country in Africa and the 22nd globally. Nonetheless, Nigeria's cotton output nose-dived by 51.66 per cent to 291,207 metric tons in 2017, from its peak of 602,440 metric tons in 2010. But export earnings from cotton plunged significantly to $6.07 million in 2017 from close to $570million in 2010. This was largely attributed to low yields due to poor quality seeds, pest damage and weak demand and government negligence (Chibuzor, 2019).

Table 3: The level of importation and exportation of cotton in Nigeria from 1994-2014:

Market year	Import	Growth Rate (%)	Export	Growth Rate (%)
1994	115	15.00	0.00	NA
1995	46	-60.00	0.00	NA
1996	46	0.00	70	NA
1997	69	50.00	0	-100.00
1998	70	1.45	90	NA
1999	70	0.00	75	-16.67
2000	70	0.00	135	80.00
2001	70	0.00	75	-44.44
2002	70	0.00	100	33.33
2003	70	0.00	90	-10.00
2004	70	0.00	100	11.11
2005	70	0.00	126	25.00
2006	75	7.14	125	0.00
2007	70	-6.67	150	20.00
2008	50	-28.5	126	-16.67
2009	50	0.00	225	80.00
2010	50	0.00	225	0.00
2011	50	0.00	100	-55.56
2012	50	0.00	100	0.00
2013	50	0.00	90	-10.00
2014	50	0.00	100	11.11

Source: United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), 2014.

The above table based on USDA (2014) statistics give a summary of cotton import and export in Nigeria over the last twenty years (1994-2014). The table shows steady importation cotton over the six years (2009-2014) and so also steady growth rate of importation of cotton in the country. This is a reflection of the inability of local supply to meet local demand. The export growth rate was unsteady with variations over the same period.

In Nigeria, the cultivation of cotton is not restricted to the northern savannah zones, but has spread to the derived savanna areas of Kwara, Osun, Ogun, Ondo and Edo State in the course of the last twenty years (Gbadegesin et al., 2007). The cotton-producing areas in Nigeria are divided into three ecological zones, namely, the Northern cotton zone which comprises, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Jigawa, Sokoto, Kebbbi and Zamfara States. The North-West zone provides 60 – 65% of the cotton in Nigeria. The Eastern cotton zone comprises of Adamawa, Taraba, Yobe, Maiduguri, Bauchi and Gombe States, and produces 30 – 35% of cotton in Nigeria. The third ecological zone known as the Southern cotton zone is made up of Kwara, Niger, Kogi, Oyo, Osun, Ondo and Edo States and contributes 5% of the total cotton production in Nigeria (Gbadegesin et al., 2007; CBN, 2011).

In 2017, it was the sixth-largest cotton-producing country in Africa and the 22nd globally. Nigeria's cotton output nose-dived by 51.66% to 291,207metric tons in 2017 from its peak of 602,440metric tons in 2010. Export earnings from cotton in Nigeria also plunged significantly to $6.07 million in 2017 from close to $570million in 2010. The slump in cotton production in Nigeria is largely attributed to low yields due to poor quality seeds, pest damage and weak demand.

Recent initiatives to improve the contribution of the agricultural sector to economic growth in Nigeria have emphasized the importance of cotton production in stimulating the economy. Cotton production in Nigeria has been linked to the productivity of the Nigerian textile industry. The demand for the commodity is usually driven by the demand for cotton lint by textile producers. Nigeria's cotton cultivation is challenged by low yields from lack of high yielding cotton seeds and pest damage. The cotton crop is highly susceptible to pest infestation which negatively affects yields, thereby reducing farmers' income. Policymakers in the country have admitted that low yields have contributed to the decline of productivity in the industry. This has resulted in a number of initiatives focused on providing farmers with quality cotton seeds to boost productivity. In 2015, the Raw Material Research and Development Council (RMRDC) offered cotton farmers about 5.82 metric tons of SAMCOT 7' 8' 9' 10' 11' and 12'cotton seeds, in collaboration with the Institute of Agricultural Research (IAR), under the auspices of the National Cotton Association of Nigeria (NACOTAN). This distribution yielded an approximately 5% uptick in cotton production in the country between 2015 and 2017 (Brand, 2019).

Theoretical Framework

This work maintains Marxian theory of capitalism, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engles contributed immensely to the theory of economic development especially capitalist mode of production and its consequences. Capitalism is a mode of production characterized by wage labour and commodity production for sale exchange and profit rather than for the immediate need of the producers (Marshal, 1998). Especially cotton farmers. Marx argues that capital is created by purchasing commodities and combating them into a new commodity with an exchange value higher than the sum of the original purchase (Caporoso, 1992).

Human beings are historically engaged in economic struggle between the dominant and the dominated class. Equally, at every epoch of human history, the dominant class sets a new condition of oppression to perpetuate its dominance thereby, deepening the antagonism with the dominated class. The state is the instrument use by the dominant class to advance its own interest. The state also is viewed as a power that evolved in a given society to regulated and mediated between the contending classes in the cause of pursuing their own economic interest.

Marx established that conflict is a driving force of history (Gilpin, 1986). He maintained that, an individual's position within a class hierarchy is determined by his role in the production process. He distinguished one class from another based on two criteria i.e. ownership of the means of production and control of labour power of others. From this, he defines modern society as having three distinct classes. First, is capitalist who owned the means of production and purchase the labour of others. The second categories are the workers or proletarian who do not own any means of production or the ability to purchase the labour power. The last is a small transitional class known as the petty-bourgeois that own sufficient means of production but do not purchase labour.

Therefore, the Nigerian state is identified with the presence of two as major classes namely the capitalist class represented by the political military and technocrat while on the other hand the peasant cotton producers. It is also a fact that the capitalist uses the state machinery to introduce policies and programmes that aimed at increasing cotton production at their advantage. Similarly, the social order and most of the agricultural policies established in Nigeria favours mainly the capitalist or bourgeoisie and on the other hand, puts the majority of the peasant cotton producers at the receiving end. The materialistic interpretation of history attempts to show that all historical events are as a result of continuous economic struggles between different classes and groups in society. Based on the aforementioned the paper critically, looked at these capitalist policies and their consequences on cotton farmers and the country at large.

3.0 Methodology

The methodology of the research is rooted in Marxian theory. The work examines the underlying socio-economic and political forces in production relations that shaped the state of affairs in cotton production in the country especially in the three stages of Nigeria's development colonial, post-colonial and post structural adjustment programme era. The study used secondary data such as textbooks, journals, periodicals, newspapers, thesis etc. as sources of data. The world used historic, descriptive, case study, comparative observation method, thematic and content analysis in explaining the situation of cotton production in the country.

The impact of Capitalist Development Policies on Cotton Production in Nigeria

Colonial government in collaboration with the petty bourgeois middlemen used various inducement policies such as taxation, propaganda, producer price, free distribution of seeds among others to change the production pattern towards export markets. Production became geared towards the market as agricultural products were commodities subjected to the capitalist law of demand and supply. Production for the colonial expert market blossomed while food production was disrupted. Essentially, the period between 1903 and 1960 Nigeria, have experienced an unprecedented fifty-seven years of uneven and combined effects of capitalist transformation both at the level of production and exchange. For instance, capital uses state power to regulate the conditions of peasant production by making laws about who might produce what or imposing agricultural development programmes. The programmes put the peasant in the position of using inputs such as fertilizer "improved" seeds and different techniques and tools, the process of compelling the use of these inputs and techniques was ostensibly done to help the peasant but in fact they said the integration of the peasant in to exploitative commodity relations (Ake, 1982). For example, colonial government introduced new cotton variety called Allen long-staple in 1914 (Mairiga, 1984). According to agricultural department, the American Allen long staple was found to be the type most "suited" to West African soil and climatic conditions.

Similarly, the new variety was to eradicate the local variety, to preserve the purity of American variety. Others variety of cotton was of high quality and was meant to produce the highest price to the peasant producer. However, it was responsible for the increase in the exports of cotton in the years 1921 and 1925. 6,871 bales 8,173 bales, 12,221 bales, 14,071 and 27,000 bales respectively (Mairiga, 1984). However, the new variety comes with some new farming requirement since, it had to be planted and harvested manually like any other crop, which was new to indigenous seed cotton growers. Similarly, it was highly unpopular among cotton producers and harmful to the local textile industry. It explains why many farmers continued to grow the local variety disregarding the American Allen long-staple due to high patronage by the local weavers. This would certainly also explain why the only noticeable disappearance of the local variety was in 1944, nine years after Allen long-staple was officially introduced to the Gombe area for example (Mairiga, 1984).

Secondly, the colonial economy was characterized by market imperfections and monopolies. Therefore, from the very beginning of the European particularly, British presence in Nigeria has been associated with monopolization (Ake, 1981). The BCGA through the assistance of British government acquire the monopoly buying rights, in 1906 and 1926. As such, other merchants became disinterested with the arrangement, thereby buying only less than five tons and leaving the bulk of the crop to the BCGA. The repercussion was farmers were paid on exploitative fixed price of Id per Ib of seed cotton each season (Mairiga, 1984). Furthermore, the United African Company (UAC) entered in to an agreement with John Halt Company limited aimed at avoiding competition and to ensure monopoly in the market. In the agreement both companies agreed to pay-fixed prices for cotton and other exportable commodities. This policy of price standardization by capitalist merchants supported by the colonial authorities increased the level of surplus accumulation by these companies. The position of the peasantry on the other hand was made more vulnerable to ruling class domination well as the petty bourgeoisie exploitation.

This continued to provide new opportunities for the aggrandizement of the ruling class and their comprador bourgeoisie. A situation was created where profits came only to those engaged in distributive trade as opposed to those involved in production (Babawale, 2006). The third phase of getting in to full grip of the peasantry was through imposition of taxation which was paid in British currency, of course as means of extracting surplus from the peasant producers. This was carried out either by forcing them to embark on cotton production needed in Lancashire or force them to sell their labour in capitalist commercial farms or mines. This act facilitated the basis for monetization of the peasant economies. For instance, in 1905 the colonial government had refused to grant the BCGA request to make people pay tax in cotton. However, colonial government continued to raise taxes higher and higher. Thus, it is clear from the foregoing that the central motive for the expansion of colonial capitalism was the generation of the profit through expanded commoditization of production and production relations which was accomplished through monetization (Labo, 1991). Fourthly, the capitalist class also sub-ordinates and expropriates the cotton producer through mechanisms of exchange which it is able to set up by the use of state power as said by Marx that the "executive of the modern state is but some commodities for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisies." Policies of grading examination and certification of cotton was introduced by the colonial government in 1923 (Mairiga, 1984).

The Main objective of grading was to make the producer bring clean cotton to the market and the inducement was higher price offered for clean cotton. The BCGA was prepared to pay extra ½ per Ib of cotton for grade "A" henceforth, cotton was classified as native indigenous and exotic. The two type were further sub-divided in to grade A and B depending on the amount of foreign materials such as dirt, leaf in the cotton. Cotton slated for export had to pass through one of these market where it was inspected by an African examiner (Mallam) and graded and the examiner would then issue certificate to the purchaser starting the grade of the cotton concerned and without which the BCGA would not accept the cotton at its ginneries (Mairiga, 1984). The grading of the cotton crop determines the price as stated earlier, and those who control the grading system where able to use it as a means of appropriation of surplus value (Ake, 1981). They can easily have manipulated and ensure that the peasant producer gets much less than the value of his product by degrading his cotton.

Fifthly, the more common and more effective form of subordination and expropriation of the cotton producer especially in the sphere of exchange was the compulsory marketing of cotton through monopolistic agencies such as BCGA of 1903, which obtained monopoly buying right from 1906 and 1926 as mentioned earlier, and the marketing boards particularly, the Nigerian Marketing Boards of 1949.

This arrangement proved so profitable to local and international capital (Ake, 1981). By 1954 the four marketing board were replaced by four regional marketing boards. Thus, the northern marketing board law gave the board exclusive right to purchase cotton for export beginning with 1954/1955 season. The board also purchased seed cotton ginned for local use. Also the board provided the overall coordination for financing, procurement, processing and shipping of the seed cotton lint and cotton seed. The collection of the commodities from the producers was left to the License Buying Agents (LBAs) of the marketing board. The marketing board took over the commodities at the port and then handed them over to the Nigeria Produce Company (NPC). It was this company, which arrange for the shipping and the sale of the commodity oversees. The board recommended a producer price, which was approved by the technical committee for the products for each entire season.

The official justification of the marketing board for producer price was astonishing. It was claimed that the arrangement avoided price fluctuations during the buying season because the minimum price payable was announced ahead of the buying season and adhered to. This supposedly helped to stabilize the income of the peasant producer and helped him to rationalize his activities (Ake, 1981). It was also claimed that regulation of the quality of commodities by the marketing board as maintained earlier and the payment of higher price for better quality product, gave the producer incentives to produce better quality cotton and increase his earning power. Finally, it was claimed that the arrangement helped to protect the peasant producer against the fluctuations in the world price of their commodities. This was possible because the Nigerian cotton marketing board would pay less in season in which the world demand was strong by putting some of the surplus in a buffer fund to be used to pay more in season when the world demand might be particularly weak (Ake, 1981). So the argument goes.

However, the fact remain that the board arrangement was exploitative. The scale of this exploitation can be deduced from the following. In Nigeria in the mid-1950s the commodities under the control of the marketing board amounted to 85% of the total value of Nigeria's agricultural exports as well as 72% of her total domestic exports. This lion's share of the internal contribution to the development of the budget came from the surplus extracted from the peasants-producers. This was done by the marketing boards (Ake, 1981). The appropriation of surplus value was now brought more directly under the control of the state machinery through its pricing tax and credit policies, public finance was used to support and subsidized the establishment of capitalist relation. For the Nigerian State, the creation of the board had meant an avenue for massive accumulation of revenue. Producer prices were kept well below the rising world market prices. For example, between 1947 and 1954 approximately $25million was appropriated from this source (Labo, 1991).

One may argue that theoretically the large surplus appropriated through the marketing board was public revenue and not profit for the capitalist class. However, much of it was appropriated by the capitalist class by their control of State through forms of investment which serviced capitalist enterprises such as infrastructures. Also appropriation took place by using the surplus for projects from which the capitalist benefited as constructers (Ake, 1981). The post-colonial capitalist policies on cotton production started with the attainment of political independence in 1960. The economic structures inherited at independence were severely distorted, characterized by low industrial base little or no technology and a manufacturing sector that had no linkage with the industrial sector, declining agricultural productivity among others (Babawale, 2006).

The domination of the economy by foreign forces and the structural distortions within it combines with general mismanagement and corruptions by the elite. The situation led to the adoption of International Monitory Fund (IMF) and World Bank inspired programmed known as the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) on 27th June 1986 (Babawale, 2006). The programme includes among other massive devolution of the naira, elimination of subsidies in social products and services, privatization and commercialization of public enterprises, liberalization of trade through open door export policy. The devaluation policy adopted by SAP has also adversely affected the surviving import substitution factories particularly, the textile industries. They were faced with a sharp and ever growing raise in the naira, cost of the basic inputs, such as raw materials and spare parts which they required to remain in business. Many of the industries have folded up while the few ones that survive are producing below installed capacity. The Nigeria textile industry to be specific has witnessed myriad of problems, ranging from epileptic supply of power, non-availability of black oil at economic price to dumping of textile fabrics and fairly used clothes. Therefore, the implication is that any rises or fall in demand by textiles is a very powerful production incentive either for increase or decrease in cotton production.

However, in its effort to revitalize the nation's crisis ridden cotton/textile sub-sector, the federal government is concluding arrangement to secure the sum of ₦70 billion loans from United Bank for Africa UBA to be granted to members of the cotton/textiles value chain, as loans at single digit interest rate as follows. Textile industries ₦50 billion while cotton production and ginning ₦20 billion (Mahmud, 2009).

4.0 Results and Discussion

It is known facts that the degree of commercialization and commoditization of cotton in the precolonial Nigeria was very minimal as African societies residing with the geo-political territories presently known as Nigeria were for domestic consumption by the local weaves, dyers, cloth beaters, cloth merchant etc. However, after the conquest of the Nigerian territories and their amalgamation of 1914, the colonial government went ahead and set in motion various mechanism that changed the structure of the pre-colonial societies and its mode of production to capitalism. After that cotton, production undergoes series of structural rearrangement from 1903 to 1924, 1949, 1954, 1977 and 1986. These rapid and inconsistencies in policy surely affected the fortunes cotton production in the country as average National Output remains at 300, 000 and 250, 000 metric tonnes.

Similarly, the adoption of IMF/World Bank Economic Policy of Structural Adjustment Programme succeeded in removing all government subsidies and minimize government intervention in the sector thereby creating a new trends of challenges. These challenges include, poor grading system, inconsistency in price mechanism, high production cost as a result of Naira devaluation to mention just a few. Farmers became discourage to engage in production as they are not sure of the market price. The condition of our textile industries which decline to less than 25 factories contributed immensely to reduction in local demand for cotton in the country. Nigeria spends about $4 billion annually on importation of readymade cloths from various countries. The million jobs which the sector created in the 70s and 80s was reduced to less than 20, 000 jobs. These and other problems such as insecurity of farms, corruption and misgovernance continue to affect adversely the fortunes of cotton production in the country.

Similarly, the Federal Government signed a memorandum of understanding with the West African Cotton Company (WACC) to review the declining fortunes of cotton production in the country. In order to encourage cotton farming, the Banks of Industry (BOI) disbursed about N 70 billion as loan to cotton farmers across the country. Equally, government established regional cotton research centre at the Institute of Agricultural Research (IAR) Ahmadu Bello University Zaria to serve as capacity building and encourage cotton cultivation. However, the contemporary reality revealed that only 25 textile factories are operating while the work force in Nigeria's textile industries stands at less than 20, 000 people. Accordingly, the country spends about 84 billion annual imported textiles and ready – made clothing from China and Europe (www.peoplesdaily.online.com).

The post structural cotton policies include seed multiplication policy, Cotton Development Committee, the establishment of National Cotton Association of Nigeria (NACOTAN), Agricultural

Transformation Action Plan ATAP of 2012 and the Federal Government Anchor Borrowers Programme of 2016 to 2020 among others.

5.0 Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

The paper establishes that the dual exploitation of cotton farmers by the petty-bourgeois encouraged by the state in the sphere of production, marketing and exchange compounded their poverty level thereby, discouraging them from production or increasing their production.

The work also concluded that the galloping inflation as a result of capitalism resulted in devaluation of the naira. As such, the commodity remained uncompetitive both locally and internationally. Similarly, the work recognized that there is non-existence of regulatory body to coordinate the activities of cotton production due to deregulation of the sector in 1986. That situation worsens the production capacity of the country.

6.0 Recommendations

The paper recommend that government should fast – track actions on the textile industries revitalization in order to create an enabling market environment for cotton farmers in the country. Equally, the revitalization will also create local market for cotton growers.

Secondly, consistency of policies is required from government so as to ensure one long lasting policy for cotton production in the country.

Lastly, government should continue with the provision of inputs and incentives such as fertilizer and security of farms for increase in production.

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