TALLINN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

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SUGGESTED STRATEGIES FOR REVIVING NIGERIA'S ECONOMY FROM RECESSION

Bachelor's Thesis

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I declare that I have compiled the paper independently and all works, important standpoints and data by other authors have been properly referenced and the same paper has not been previously presented for grading.

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ABSTRACT

Nigeria recently witnessed an intense and widespread recession, the consequences of which her citizens still continue to bear, although the intensity of the recession is gradually diminishing. The adverse effects that the recession caused include decrement in the quality of life as well as standard of living and an increment in poverty rate. This study investigates the causes of the economic recession in Nigeria, its impact on the nation’s economy and also provides a historical background of the country’s economic state from discovery of petroleum in Bayelsa state. This study also examined measures that can be adopted to lift the nation out of its economic recession.

This research was based on Karl Marx’s theory of economic crisis, which stipulates that the determinants of economic crises such as recession are from a combination of internal factors within a nation, all of which act together to lead to recession. Thus, this study highlights that the major cause of recession in Nigeria was government’s focus on oil exploration and exportation at the detriment of other sectors of the Nigerian economy. The study also discovered that other causes of recession in Nigeria include deficient economic planning and implementation; decline in Nigeria’s crude oil production capacity; restriction on the importation of agricultural products; corruption and mismanagement of funds; militancy and insurgency and the foreign exchange crises. The study also suggests in its discussion of findings that the strategies to reviving the Nigerian economy from recession include: the empowerment of the agricultural sector through adequate funding; the formation of sound policies and anti-corruption policies that will create a stable economy; the privatization of government-controlled assets for improved management; reduction of government borrowings and the nation’s importation volume and prompt signing of the budget into law.

Keywords: Recession, export, import, human capital, Nigerian economy, service sector, manufacturing sector.

LIST OF ABBREVIATION

GDP- Gross Domestic Product.

CBN- Central Bank of Nigeria.

NBER- National Burea of Economic Research.

NBS- National Bureau of Statistics.

NBC- National Broadcasting Company.

NNPC- Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation.

OPEC- Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

IMF- International Monetary Fund.

TSA- Treasury Single Account.

SDGs- Sustainable Development Goals.

FDIs- Foreign Direct Investments.

INTRODUCTION

The Nigerian economy for an extended period has predominantly been a mono-product economy, ever since the discovery of crude oil. This dependence on crude oil became even more predominant in the early 1970s, therefore diverting the country's investment from other promising economic sectors such as agriculture, which was quite successful locally and already bringing recognition in the exporting market with products like rubber, groundnuts, oil palm and coal. The petroleum industry overshadowed all other industries, based on the global demand for oil to power significant engineering firms. The profit from the export of crude oil alone accounted for over 70% of the entire nation's income, thereby increasing government's investment in the oil and gas sector at the detriment of other economic sectors that existed before the oil and gas boom.

Nigeria's current economic recession can be considered as the coming to fore of protracted anomalies within the country’s economic system, which have become very conspicuous in the tenure of the current government administration. It is necessary to mention here that due to these anomalies, especially the dominance of crude oil as the nation's primary source of foreign exchange, which spurred various successive governments to expend huge investments into this sector of the economy at the detriment of other sectors, it resulted in acute under-development of other sectors of the economy. Hence, due to this under-development of many sectors of the nation's economy, around 80% of the country's citizens suffer from inaccessibility to electricity, potable water, comfortable shelter or even decent healthcare. Also, the threat of the ever-growing rate of unemployment keeps increasing the percentage of citizens plagued with these deprivations, which is worsened by recession (Agri et al. 2017, 1). All of these led to economic hardships and poverty for the citizens of the country.

Every country experience economic instability in the productive industry, commerce, and overall activities of the economy within a period in an open market operated economy as fluctuating movements of gross domestic product (GDP). These fluctuations consist of shifts over a period when economic growth encounters periods of recession, relative stagnation or decline.

This study of Nigeria's economic recession is designed to provide a range of essential insights into some of the factors that over time and due to successive governments' inaction resulted into a full-blown recession in the year 2016. This study also highlights the historical precedents in the nation’s discovery of petroleum resources in Bayelsa state, in the Southern part of the country and how this discovery of petroleum resources and the abandonment of other economic sectors contributed to the nation falling into the throes of recession.

This abandonment of the other sectors of the economy and other factors that are subsequently discussed in this study therefore resulted to the recession that hit the nation’s economy, which her citizens are currently suffering from. It is therefore this problem of Nigeria’s recession that this research seeks to examine – especially from the historical perspective of oil discovery in Bayelsa State, the consequences of the Nigerian recession and the study proceeds to suggesting strategies that can be employed to lift the economy out of recession. These proposed mechanisms for restoration are contained in the findings section of this study.

Therefore we can safely assert that the nation is currently predominately bedevilled with the dual challenges of historical overdependence on revenue from foreign exchange of petroleum sales and other crude oil products (Shido-Ikwu 2017, 49) and the challenge of reduction in the volume of exportation and price of crude oil, which have resulted to a vast reduction in the nation's revenue base (CBN, 2012). The consequences of this dwindling in revenue include the situation where federal and state budgets are devoid of adequate funding, which in turn leads to external borrowing and debt financing. All of the challenges above prompted this study to examine the current recession situation in the country, with the aim of examining the discovery of crude oil in the country and how it has contributed to the current state of the economy and thereafter suggesting measures that can fast track the drive of returning the nation's economy to buoyancy.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Th study's objectives is the investigation of the recession in Nigeria's economy with the specific aim of:

1. Examining the concept and factors that led to recession in the country;
2. Highlighting the contribution of the discovery of crude oil to the economic recession in Nigeria;
3. Suggesting ways of lifting the Nigerian economy out of recession towards buoyancy.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Predicated upon this study's objectives listed in the following heading below, these research questions will be answered.

1. What are the causes of Nigeria's economic recession?
2. How did the discovery of crude oil contribute to leading Nigeria into economic recession?
3. What strategies and measures can be adopted to lift the nation's economy out of recession?

METHODOLOGY

The study utilized the qualitative method of research, particularly the systematic and comparative study of secondary sources of data. The descriptive technique was subsequently used to analyses the secondary data in order to answer the study's research questions. The descriptive analysis technique was employed because it is appropriate and useful in examining and evaluating how different scholars have treated the concept of recession in Nigeria and some of the solutions that these scholars proposed as the panacea to the country's economic woes. The research depended on the secondary method of data collection through review of journal articles, books, valid Internet materials and sources, newspapers and magazines related to the research subject.

STRUCTURAL OVERVIEW

This study is in four parts. The first part discusses this research's introduction to the study, highlighting the factors that led to economic recession, the scope of the study, its significance, and more importantly, the problem statement, the research question, objectives that the study wishes to achieve, the research methodology and a structural overview of what the study will look like. The second chapter, which is the theoretical framework, discusses the Karl Marx theory of "Economic Crisis" which is the theory on which this research is predicated upon.

This chapter also treats the relevance of the theory to this study, while another important part in this section is the definition of the concept of economic recession. Chapter two gives the background to the study, and also treats the historical perspective of the Nigerian economic recession, with a brief look at the current state of the Nigerian economy, the causes of the recession and its impact on economic recession in Nigeria. This chapter also treated the strategies and measures that can be adopted to revive the nation’s economy. Chapter three, which is the last section of this study, is the discussion of the research findings and its conclusion.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study will be beneficial to students and scholars of Economics, Policymakers and influencers, researchers and government officials at various levels. This study will enlighten all of these categories of persons about the causes of the Nigerian economic recession, its historical perspective and how the recession can be tackled. Persons in the categories mentioned above, through this research work can also be further equipped to deal with future issues and challenges related to the nation's economy. Furthermore, this research work has contributed to the body of existing literature on recession in Nigeria will also be helpful as a resource material for subsequent studies into the field of Economics and Policymaking and its impact on economic viability.

1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study beams its spotlight on recession in Nigeria and the measures that could be adopted to lift the nation's economy out of recession. In the course of doing this, several themes that help fulfill the objectives of this research are discussed. This section of this study shall briefly discuss the theoretical framework on which this research is premised, which is Karl Marx's theory of economic crisis.

Karl Marx (1818-1883) propounded this theory of contemporary capitalist economies that offers models and strategies for economic growth, as well as the development of society. He further treated the social and political situation under which this can operate, within this context, historical and dialectical materialism comes under spotlight. This Marxist theory of economic crises is constructed around the premise that it is the entire social world, especially the economy of nations that require analysis due to their dialectical social relations that are contradictory within the material world. Marx believed that the challenges of modern society are connected to realistic material sources of life. For example, these realistic material sources of life include the structures of capitalism. Hel also believed that the solution to these challenges was the destruction of these structures by the citizens of nations, which he refers to as “mass action of the people” via class-consciousness that was the consequence of extended exploitation of the people by the ruling section of the society due to their control of the means of production.

The Marxist’s theory on economic crisis situates the causes of economic crises on internal mechanism that reflect the contradictory features of the capitalist process. Numerous literatures on crisis theory present analyses of many internal mechanisms that can lead to these economic crises. These causal mechanisms, which have conventionally been called “economics crisis tendencies’ include under-consumption, the possibility of profit rate to diminish due to an increment in the cost of the means of production, such as power or labour, the profit squeeze caused by an over investment and other factors (Kotz 2009, 2), all of which come together to cause recession.

The conventional Marxist crisis tendencies that are generally contained in most literature can be considered a necessary point of commencement in the consideration of the probable causes of a severe structural crisis. Hence, in an instance when an individual includes merely the defining features of capitalism, then such crisis tendencies can be derived, however, it will not be determined systematically if any particular crisis tendency can result to a either grave crisis or mild crisis (Kotz 2009, 2) for the economy of any country.

The theory conforms to the opinion that capitalism creates two qualitatively divergent forms of economic crisis. One is the occasional business cycle recession, which can be solved after a considerably short period by the usual mechanisms of any capitalist economy, even though at the completion of the 2^{nd} world war, most country's governments' financial and fiscal policies have frequently been utilized to hasten a stoppage to recession. The second form of crisis on the other hand is one that has an extensive economic crisis, which needs significant overhauling, that is, it requires widespread institutional alterations in order for the crisis to be abated with a capitalist economy.

In Nigeria, the government holds a very major stake in regulating the economy as it regulates the direction of productive activities, as well as the distribution and allocation of productive resources. Therefore, the volatile production base and its social forces of production have not recorded success in the support of any socio-political changes that is capable of causing collective mass action in an active Nigerian society. It is important to note that successive Nigerian governments have been aiding the preservation of the private bourgeois structures of capitalism, an assertion that is also supported by (Vajda, 1981: 73). This suggests that the ordinary citizens’ social contract with the Nigerian government is a failure since it favors the entrenchment of the benefits of elite class of the economy. According to Marx, “the government or state is but the management of the common affairs of the bourgeoisie”. Therefore, government or state structures can be considered as a part of the collective structure dictated by the benefits and gains of the dominant or ruling class. The government or state is subsequently turned into a tool for the ruling class as described with regards to the ownership and control of the production means.

The Marx theory of economic crises in relation to this study and in connection to the Nigerian economic context helps to understand the capital economies of the world and how it functions by positioning a few people, especially those in government to control the means of production, while a large section of the citizens work for the very few people who control the means of production. In Nigeria, after the government discovered oil in Nigeria, the Nigerian government who are in charge of regulating the policies of production in the country shifted its attention from agriculture and other thriving sectors of the economy to focus mainly on the exploration and exportation of crude oil, at the detriment of other sectors of the economy, which started declining after the Nigerian government abandoned them (Omoyibo, 2012). This decision to focus mainly on crude oil production and exportation, as well as a lack of productive base by the Nigerian government, led to a situation where a huge percentage of the population became jobless due to the death of other sectors of the economy. Similarly, in Nigeria, the proceeds from the exportation and sales of crude oil are shared among the government officials. This according to Omoyibo, (2012) consequently decreased class conscious and the social awareness among citizen, which represents a crucial tool for social transformation in the Marxian theory.

1.1. The Karl Marx theory and the Nigerian case

Karl Marx's theory of economic crisis succeeded in describing that the factors that led to economic recession are factors that are within a nation's economy. These factors interplay and determine whether a nation falls into recession or not. According to (Kotz 2009, 2), “the Marxist theory of economic crisis identifies the factors that lead to recession as the internal mechanisms of a capitalist economic system that portrays the contradictory character of the capitalist process”. This is similar to the Nigerian situation as the theory almost completely captures the exact situation of the Nigerian economy where a combination of many factors led to the recession of the economy. As identified by the Marxist theory of economic crisis cited by (Kotz 2009, 2):

> “The Marxist crisis theory literature offers analyses of several internal mechanisms that can cause recession. Such causal mechanisms have traditionally been called "crisis tendencies," which include under-consumption, the tendency of the rate of profit to fall due to a rise in the value of means of production relative to labour-power, the profit squeeze due to a declining reserve army of labour (Marx's term for unemployed workers), and over-investment (or over-accumulation), as well as other mechanisms.”

Just as the theory above stated that the factors that lead to economic recession in a nation are always within the economy of such a country, in the case of Nigeria's economy before recession it witnessed many activities that combined to usher in the recession. These factors included that there was widespread financial corruption; the economy mostly focused on developing the petroleum industry, while ignoring investment and development of other economic sectors, inflation rates were always on the increase and most importantly, foreign investors were removing their investments out of the country due to insecurity of human lives and property.

All of these internal factors jointly worked together to prove Karl Marx’s argument as stated in his theory of economic crises, which argued that the determinants of recession in a country are internal factors that work together to cause economic recession. Therefore, in the Nigerian case, the internal factors that caused its recession are: widespread financial corruption; the economy's focus on developing the petroleum industry at the detriment of investmenting and developing other economic sectors; high inflation rates and the departure of foreign investors from the country because of insecurity of human lives and property, all of which ushered in recession as argued by the Marxist theory of economic crisis.

Furthermore, the theory argues that some of the interplaying factors that determine recession are the factors of productions such as raw materials, availability of human capital, an increment in the cost of the factors of production or even under-consumptions of finished goods. Bringing this theory's assertion back to the Nigerian economic case, some of the factors of production that partly contributed to recession in the country include high inflation rate, which increased the cost of raw materials for production, decreased monetary value as well as also decreased the country's currency's exchange rates.

This theory adequately captures the factors that interplay to determine the existence of recession, particularly as it concerns Nigeria. The theory also offers models or opinions that can help a nation, such as Nigeria determine the kind of recession bedeviling it and the appropriate measures that can be undertaken to combat the trend of recession to avoid further recurrence. This means that with the theory's exposure of the internal factors that result into recession, Nigeria as a country can through this theory, understand the factors that lead to recession and consciously devise strategies to fight against again action or inaction that can lead to recession.

1.2. The concept of economic recession

This subchapter discusses the concepts of economic recession. Besides, this chapter attempts to analyze the causes of Nigeria's recession, while simultaneously highlighting the contribution of crude oil discovery and overdependence on it, to the current recession bedeviling the nation.
In the course of doing all of the above, this chapter shall also discuss the following subtopics: the concept and various scholarly definitions of recession, the historical perspectives of the economic recession in Nigeria, the current state of the Nigerian economy, the causes of the Nigerian recession, the impact of recession on the economy and finally, measures and strategies of reviving the economy and setting it on the path of recovery.

Several literatures about global recessions have indicated that recessions in most parts of the globe mostly begins from the actions, policies or financial mishaps from the United States before spreading to the other parts of the world (Dode 2012). Also, a typical economic cycle has a boom phase or put in other words, a season of abundance, a season of scarcity and then a rebound season. In the season of economic abundance, there exists low level of unemployment, increased productivity and usage levels and good living quality. However, during seasons of recession, economic activities dwindle considerably, thereby leading to economic slump. The subsequent paragraphs will discuss the concept of economic recession and present some definition of the term as presented by certain economic scholars.

1.3. The definitions of economic recession

During periods of recession, specific macroeconomic indicators encounter decline. These indicators include the nation's GDP, household remunerations, business profits, capacity usage, spending on investments, employment rates and eventually leads to inflation (CBN 2012). Furthermore, in the opinions of (Chinguwo & Blewit 2012), economic recessions and financial challenges joined forces to worsen the economic situation of workers and their families. In another revelation by (Mailafia 2016), economic recession often leads to a stagnation of salaries, heightens the number of citizens on low remunerations and increases the rate of unemployment and underemployment.

There exist several definitions and interpretations to the concept of "recession" or "economic recession". According to the definition by the National Bureau of Economic Research, (NBER 2008), it can be defined as a major reduction in the productive activities in a country, which affects the entire economic structure and prevails for over a few months. Its existence is announced by conspicuous reductions in the nation's GDP, real income, employment, industrial production and wholesaleretail sales.

Downes (2008) defined recession in the field of formal neoclassical microeconomics as the decrement of GDP in a nation's productive sector between two or even greater consecutive time frame. Furthermore, the NBER, which is an authoritative and trusted economic research body located in America proffered a description that encapsulates the concept of recession. This description offered in (NBER 2010) sees recession as a situation where "a major reduction production activities that affects the whole nation, and extended over a long stretch of time, normally visible in real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth, real personal income, employment (non-farm payrolls), industrial production and wholesale-retail sales".

Mazurek & Mielcova, (2013) view recession from a different perspective. They proceeded to providing four categories of recession, which are, minor recession, major recession, severe recession and ultra-recession. In an instance of minor recession, the magnitude and impact of the recession is mild. This category of recession exists for merely two to three quarters, during which GDP diminishes to around 1.5%. In instances of significant recessions, however, the impacts of such recessions are usually on a worldwide magnitude and exists for two to four periods, with periodical GDP rate of growth diminishing between 1% and 3%.

Severe recessions, on the other hand, comprise large magnitude economic downturns and usually exist between a year to two years, and the mean quarterly GDP rate of growth reducing from 3% to 5%. Ultra-recession, however, occurs when the GDP diminishes to up to 30% or more when put in comparison to the levels before the recession. In the opinions of Mazurek and Mielcova (2013), this type of recession can last for multiple years.

Another author worthy of mentioning is Kimberly, (2006) where she described recession as a situation when the economy experiences significant decline in specific economic indicators for over six month. These indicators are namely: the Real (GDP), the personal levels of income as well as governments' income creation, rate of job availability, production and sales.

2. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Against this background above, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) released a report which revealed that Nigeria encountered recession in the first quarter of the year 2016, with a real GDP of -0.36%, (NBC 2017). This sharp reduction in economic activities was necessitated by the absence of confidence of foreign investors to invest in the nation's economy and a simultaneous absence of new investment in the already declining national economy. This state of economic affairs was further worsened by other factors such as the devaluation of the Naira in the forex market, foreign currency shortages, pipeline destructions in various parts of the country, high interest rate charged by commercial banks on loans, trade and importation restrictions and acute delays in the release of government budgets, which lead to delayed government spending. As asserverated by Agri, Maliafia and Umejiaku, (2017, 2276), the recession adversely affected the nation's socio-economic and political structures, as the nation's credit condition, standard of living, magnitude of importation and production, as well as consumption and employment levels all seemed to encounter very significant reductions.

The global economic meltdown to a large extent, among other numerous factors, precipitated Nigeria's economic recession. This recession led to the imposition of acute pressures on the different sectors of the economy, with the nation's local manufacturing industries being the most affected. In the same vein, NNPC (2017) also reveals that the manufacturing sector encountered challenges necessitated by diminishing sales and profits, increased costs of production, declining production, challenges of obtaining foreign currencies for the importation of essential production resources, decreasing availability of electricity, sudden retrenchment of workers and eventual closure of manufacturing plants.

Shido-Ikwu, (2017, 48) revealed that the Nigerian economy was plunged into the loss of more than 500,000 jobs, just as electricity availability decreased from 3593 Megawatts to 2,202 Megawatts. Furthermore, unemployment and underemployment surged to 31.2%, while the productivity of labour decreased to -0.4%. There was also non-payment of salaries, especially among both state and federal government workers and all macro-economic indicators diminished daily, indicating the urgency of appropriate intervention to reverse the adverse economic trend.

As has been mentioned earlier, it is factual that Nigeria's economy has encountered all the different phases that most normal business cycles encounter, which include phases of decline, recession, recovery and boom. However, to a very large extent, the recent recession possesses elements that have portended its occurrence, but were not immediate. However, as expressed by (Adebayo, 2016: Inokotong & Salami 2016), these elements continued to build up with the passage of time and all combined to culminate into the recession, which became entirely brown in the year 2016 when the Honorable Minister of Finance, Mrs Kemi Adeosun, during her speech about the state of the country's economic state, coupled with the enactment of the year 2016 Appropriation Act revealed that the nation's economy was technically in recession.

Apart from factors, which combined to precipitate the recession of 2016 as highlighted in the second paragraph of this introductory section, a major contributory factor to the recession is the country's historical and long-term over-dependence on crude oil. Also, although several government regimes have come and gone, with some even contemplating the need to diversify the economy, no practical and sustained steps have been taken in this direction till date (Akpan 2004, 2). The pervading dependence on crude oil by the Nigerian government, however, took an unfortunate turn after many decades, due to the awareness of the damages done by fossils fuel combustion to earth's ozone layer, energy companies began looking for safer and healthier sources of energy and eventually started producing clean and renewable energy, which consequently created a reduction of sales of petroleum products for exportation. This reduction of sales of petroleum products in the petroleum sector was a significant setback to the country's GDP, causing a ripple effect to all forms of development and contributed to other factors that led to the recession bedeviling the entire country.

It is against the backdrop of the preceding that this research evaluates causes of the recent recession, while simultaneously highlighting the adverse impact of crude oil discovery to the nation's economy and eventually suggesting measures to achieve the return of buoyancy to the Nigerian economy.

2.1. Historical perspective of economic recession in Nigeria

The Nigerian economy accrued increased revenue due to price surges of oil encountered during the early 1970s. These progressive incremental prices brought increased government revenue from the exportation of crude oil and also brought about maximum participation in the economy. In that era, crude oil was the most important and largest traded commodity popularly referred to as "black gold" by OPEC bulletin (1984). The British colonialists dated the hunt in crude oil in the country to 1903, in Aruromi of Abeokuta province. However, Nigeria did not start to reap the benefit of being an oil-blessed country until 1956, when the country commenced exploration and exportation of commercial crude oil, after finding petroleum deposits in large volumes at Olobiri fields of present day Bayelsa state, where over 15,000 barrels of oil were produced on a daily basis. This discovery ushered in investors and oil producing companies, such as Shell Exploration Company, Chevron, Texaco, Tenneco, Satrap et cetera, into the country. The first oil plant was then activated in Port Harcourt, while the country was admitted into OPEC, (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) in the year 1971.

The oil boom helped in the structural transformation of Nigeria from a colonial country to an internationally recognized, oil-producing contender, competing with a leading exporter of petroleum such as Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, urban and rural development all over the nation were associated with the oil industry as construction of roads, bridges, health centers, sky scrappers and other physical structures such as stadia, public libraries, museums and development across cities and towns were all based on the revenues made from the sale of petroleum products.

Although the nation's gross dependence on the bounty that came with the oil sector witnessed major development in the nation’s (GDP), it gave less room for alternative investment to other promising economic sectors in the country, such as agriculture and local manufacturing. It is pertinent to state that prior oil boom, agriculture was already responsible for the major share of Nigeria's GDP as well as the primary employer of labour. Nigeria used to be the biggest exporter of raw materials like cocoa, oil palm, groundnut and rubber in all of Africa. However, despite the abundance of arable land and conducive climate for cultivation, successive tenures of government neglected the agricultural sector, which was a promising alternative of production, capable of promoting a diverse economy.

By the early 1980s, other countries’ petroleum products began to compete in the world market, thereby causing a fall in price and inability to create a strong industrial based economy. This turn of events adversely affected the Nigerian economy, as the government could no longer fund her projects adequately, thereby resulting in the destabilization of the economy. Irrespective of this setback, the oil sector maintained its position as a major contributor to government revenue, accounting for almost all of the nation's exports and rounding up to billions of dollars annually. Meanwhile, according to Olaniyi (2015, 313), the country’s dwindling investment in the agricultural industry and her total dependence on petroleum harnessing caused the nation to encounter massive budget and revenue shocks as the sharp decline in petroleum prices in the foreign oil markets continued to loom.

These sharp decrements in the nation's revenues led to a series of economic throes, which led to situations where the country's productivity index declined, and the rate of unemployment grew astronomically. It therefore became evident that the nation required deliberate and concerted measures of recovery in order to abate the crises ravaging the economy. These recovery measures spurred the different various austerity measures and stabilization packages of the early 1980s aimed at economic development and arresting the economic crises. All of these strategies however did not reverse the declining trend in the economy, because the crises had existed for a long time. Furthermore, Ufomadu (2011, 16-17) revealed that there were indications that revealed that the nation urgently needed to develop other sectors of the economy and reduce its high dependence on revenue generated from the sale of petroleum products.

2.2. The current state of Nigerian economy

According to a publication from one of Nigeria's veteran tabloid "The Vanguard" in August 2016, it stated that President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, the predecessor of incumbent President Muhammadu Buhari earned a total of about 142 billion USD from crude oil and other petroleum resources all through his five-year presidency (The Vanguard Newspaper, 2016). This is a significantly enormous amount of revenue in comparison to many other presidents before him. Regarding the Central Bank of Nigeria's Annual Report drafted in 2008, showing a breakdown of the earnings from 1958 -2016, Nigeria earned 140 million Naira in revenue from crude oil between 1958 and 1966. General Yakubu Gowon's regime on the other hand earned the country 11.03 billion Naira from 1967 to1975.

The deceased General Muritala Mohammed's and expresident Obasanjo's military government gathered close to 25billion Naira betwen 1975 to 1979 respectively. During the civilian era after power was transferred by the military to President Shehu Shagari in 1984-85, Nigeria made 36billion Naira from oil, however, the military regime seized power again in 1985 by Head of State, General Muhammadu Buhari in his first coming and made 25billion Naira, while General Ibrahim Badamasi Babaginda between 1985 and 1993 raked a whooping 430billion Naira from petroleum resources. The Ernest Shonekan/Abacha regime (1993-1998) made 1.6trillion Naira, while General Absulami Abubakar’s regime accumulated 350billion Naira from 1998-1999.

At the return of governance to a democratically elected government in the year 1999, President Olusegun Obasanjo’s came into power again this time as a civilian and by May 2007, Nigeria saw 27trillion Naira from the oil sector alone. Passing the torch to Umaru Yar’Adua, the President after Obasanjo, President Yar’Adua who passed half way into his tenure, still made 9billion Naira.

Based on (CBN Annual Report 2008) President Goodluck Jonathan whose administration was between 2010 and 2015 earned around 51trillion Naira, which accounted for 80% of the country's revenue. Subsequently, in 2015, President Jonathan relinquished power to former military Head of State, Muhammadu Buhari, leaving just about 30billion Naira in the treasury.

However, since the advent of this tenure of government, that is the President Muhammadu Buhari led administration, the term recession has become a prevalent phenomenon in Nigeria's socio-economic and political existence. As expressed by Dickson & Ezirim (2017, 194), economic recession and its harmful effects have become the single most significant subject of discussions and debates among writers, journalists, scholars, diplomats and citizens both within and outside the boundaries of Nigeria.

It was also in this government's tenure, especially in the year 2016 that Nigeria's erstwhile Finance Minister, Mrs Kemi Adeosun formally pronounced Nigeria to be under recession (Adebayo, 2016; Inokotong and Salami 2016). Similarly, (Noko 2016; Ikeke 2017) both revealed that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in this same period revealed that Nigeria had recently plunged into its most intense recession and speculated that by the years 2017 and 2018, the nation's growth rate would stand at 0.8% and 2.3% respectively.

The present government spearheaded by President Muhammadu Buhari seems convinced to fight corruption to a standstill and ended acts of terror, as well as set the country on the track of restoration of past glory. After President Buhari's success in the presidential election in April 2015, there was a global acceptance from both local and internationally based citizens; they basked in the adulation of goodwill and high expectation. As the saying goes, "To whom much is given, much is expected." There, based on the campaign slogan, VOTE FOR CHANGE, the people were done with failed promises and wanted drastic change to take effect, sadly one cannot fight change without money. Past government had looted the treasury; the energy companies had waged war against polluted energy like crude oil causing a drastic drop in oil prices, thousands of oil barrels sat at ports with no orders, there was no money in circulation.

Foreign exchanged caused the value of the naira to nosedive in less than 3 months of the new administration making importation outrageous, the crippling effects of all other sectors started to manifest, farmers doubled the price of food items in order to break even, the electricity sector generated less power, health care had not been adequately funded for decades, nothing seemed to be working, Businesses collapsed and people lost their jobs, youths in their millions became unemployed, with some resorting to armed robbery and vandalism, children are malnourished and uneducated and the entire country is currently as unstable as a powder keg.

Therefore, as it stands, ever since the global meltdown erupted, Nigeria's economy is currently witnessing reduced consumer confidence, interest rates that are overburdening and restricts cash availability for investment. It has also led to an increment in inflation where the percentages of products or services that certain amount of money commands continues to reduce, as well as diminished real wages, which is a situation where workers' remuneration no longer keeps up with the nation's inflation level (Adeniran, et al 2017). This is because the purchasing power of the Nigerian Naira constantly reduces against international currencies such as the United States Dollars or the European Euros, while remunerations remain stagnant in spite of the hikes in the prices of international commodities, which leads to inflation in Nigeria.

2.3. Cause of the Nigerian recession

Two main factors led to the country's recession. The first is recession caused by worldwide financial and economic meltdowns and the recession incited by other Nigerian factors (Adeniran & Sidiq 2018, p. 1). However, this study will briefly highlight the recession caused by the global financial economic meltdown, but discusses in details the Nigerian factors that contributed to the Nigerian economy falling into recession. In the treatment of recession influenced by the worldwide recession, the crisis initially began as a financial crisis and then worsened into global economic crises. The foundation of this monetary crisis was in America's banking sector, which subsequently spread to other European countries and then to developing countries. Even countries that were unaffected with this crisis became hit in the rippling effects as the crises eventually turned into global economic challenges (Oladapo & Fabayo 2012, 29-41), creeping from one nation and region of the world to the other.

Kamar (2012) expresses that recession, in the case of Nigeria can be caused by internal factors because of conflicts of ideas, misapplication of economic theory, borrowing from abroad in pursuit of high-profit margin, oversight or neglect of regulations and discrepancies in policies as well as other external factors such as environmental mishaps, climatic alterations, insurrections and internal conflicts.

The leading causes of recession in Nigeria are increasing inflation, which is described as the increment of prices of products or services that leads to reduced buying power of the currency, growing foreign debts, overburdening interest rates, reduction of general demand of good and services, wages and remunerations, widespread unemployment. Other significant factors that lead to recession in the country include the following:

2.3.1. Deficient planning of the economy and implementation

Deficient planning of the economy and implementation are one of the primary causes of economic recession especially in Nigeria due to budget delay and exchange rate policy. There is neither evidenced strategic plan for economic growth as proclaimed by the government to spread development across all the sectors of the economy, thereby leading to the diversification of the economy, and the improvement of the production and extractive sectors, boosting farm production nor inciting expatriate investments, which have been suggested for implementation in the country. Similarly, the devaluation of the Nigeria currency due to the low price of petroleum products in the foreign market and the decreased production capacity which was primarily caused by the act of vandalism of the South-South militant Youths, who were clamouring for more financial resources for their government and environmental cleansing for the lands and water bodies which have been mutilated by oil spillage, created more economic hardship as a result of the increasing financial disparities among the rich and poor.

2.3.2. Decline in Nigeria's crude oil producing capacity

The decline in the country's petroleum output rate, which went beneath the quota determined by (OPEC), adversely affected the country's foreign exchange reserve, economic growth and development. For years, oil prices have remained low as America and China both decided to commence oil production in their countries to reduce demand for petroleum products. Okereke-Onyiuke (2009) revealed that these two countries were Nigeria's biggest purchasers of petroleum products.

2.3.3. Restriction on importation of agricultural products

The restriction placed on importing of certain essential food-based products, coupled with the increment of the cost of domestic oil due to the removal of fuel subsidy, the decrement of prices of global petroleum products, speculation in stock market due to budget delays are also major contributors to the causes of high inflation rate leading to the deterioration of the Nigerian exchange rate and economic recession in Nigeria.

The seemingly progressive loss of the country's currency that is almost synonymous with low buying capacity is taking a repetitive trend as the nation's forex market that had stability till 2007, began to lose value in comparison to other important currencies traded in the market. Cazes et al., 2009) reveals that this commenced in November 2008 and ever since, there is no evidence that Nigeria's economy has come out of this trend in spite of the Central Bank's striving to ensure that things are restored to normalcy, all of their strategies failed as the goal of strengthening the nation's currency failed and still maintained its loss of value in comparison with the American Dollar and other currencies.

2.3.4. Corruption and financial mismanagement

Corruption is another major cause of Nigeria's economic recession as financial corruption and misappropriation of financial income deny Nigeria's economy of needed infrastructure for existence and development. The leaders deliberately make uncalculated state decisions through borrowed monetary resources as result of mismanagement, structural and policy distortions and corruption (Eze 2009). Similarly, Farayibi (2016) asserts that the advent of the (TSA) treasury single account was designed to terminate lacunas that allowed financial corruption in the country's politics and economy, however, its adoption seem to attract adverse effects on the economy, thereby contributing to the economic recession.

2.3.5. Militancy and insurgency

As a result of constant neglect and insufficient funding allocated to oil-bearing regions, persons living there suffered abject poverty due to the aftermath of oil drilling laying waste to their farmlands and freshwater supplies. Several people die of either malnutrition or all forms of pollution, forcing the youths to rise and resort to pipeline vandalism, oil bunkering and even kidnapping of oil workers as avenues to get their matters heard by the federal government to meet their demands for a better life. The Nigerian government waged war on this militia group for decades before coming to a truce. This truce deal signed by the deceased erstwhile leader, president Musa Yar'Adua in the year 2009, ensured that over 30,000 members of the militia group signed up, giving up their guns and ammunition in exchange for a monthly salary. However, after the change in power from President Goodluck Johnathan to President Buhari, the amnesty deal became nullified because there were no longer sufficient funds to maintain it.

Therefore, the Niger Delta militant group called the Avengers announced in March 2016 that they would take up arms and resume their militancy. These Niger Delta Militant consist of youths from the riverine areas of the Southern states of Nigeria, which include Delta, Rivers, Bayelsa, Cross River and Akwa Ibom states. They are mostly armed militants that are always against the federal government, demanding for more financial allocation to the region and the environmental cleansing of their lands and water bodies, which have been contained due to oil spillage, oil exploration and oil pipe bursts. In some instances, they kidnap either staff of oil companies in the region or important government personalities and demand huge ransoms for their release. In other cases, they resort to the destruction of pipelines and other investments in petroleum in order to get responses from the government to oblige their main objectives of environmental cleansing and higher revenue allocation to their region.

2.3.6. The foreign exchange crisis

In 2008, the Nigerian Stock Exchange lost about 556billion Naira because of the economic meltdown, which led to the divestment of foreign investors in Nigeria to their native countries of origin (Aluko 2008). Apart from the enormous losses by investors in the Nigerian stock exchange, the country also lost billions of dollars in oil revenue because of the crash in demand of petroleum products at global market. The country has encountered numerous recessions from the year 1975 to the present one, and no panacea seemed available despite the nation's abundant human and natural gifts as well as many restructuring of the economy by consecutive government regimes, which have lingering adverse consequences on the country and her productive industries (Agugua 2002). The ailing economic condition is connected with years of financial corruption, the intervention of the armed forces into governance, tribalism, unstable political environment and many more internal factors. According to Obadina (1999), Nigeria's economy became mostly affected by bad foreign debt and almost complete reliance on petroleum products sales income, which results in her vulnerability to reducing prices of petroleum products in recent years.

Furthermore, researches conducted by (Sanusi 2009; Uchem 2010) indicated that recent economic downturn in Nigeria traced back to the mortgage meltdown in the United States of America between 2008 and 2009, which has spread due to complex and poorly understood financial linkages to other countries caused increasing volumes of products that were not bought and enormous employment loss globally and also fall in commodity prices.

2.4. Impact of economic recession on Nigeria

Recession usually takes adverse consequences on a nation’s economic activities and affects all spheres of national life. Many mergers and acquisitions emerge during this period, while loss of jobs, low investment in shares and expansions and low foreign direct investment become highly pervasive, thereby taking negative tolls on social activities.

The country’s labour sector is where the brunt of the economic recession is resting on as unemployment has been a severe issue in Nigeria even before the inception of the global economic downturn. Moreso, Ihenetu (2008) further adds that Nigeria has equally struggled with declining economic activities since the acclaimed boom of the 1970's, which have not only direct consequences on the well-being of the individual and family, but also destabilize more extended term development for the society.

As a result, of economic slowdown, incomes have decreased and there have also been reductions in the demand for goods and services, thereby resulting in reduction of production of goods and services and declination in profit. Also, due to production fall in both small and large business, workers are laid off, while research and development financing is reduced and product releases ceases, just as overall economic endeavours decline.

Stock markets are generally said to be sophisticated organizations that are made up of systems that support extended duration of finances from important economic industries that consists of families, corporate establishments and government agencies, all of which are activated, empowered and put within the reach of different segments in the nation. During recession periods, revenues decline and dividends are lowered resulting in reduction of stock prices in the stock market, loss of viabilities creating other problems of retrenchment of workers and unemployment problem for the economy (Mailafia 2016). Also, it leads to inability of customers to pay their debt resulting to growing non-performing loans, banks’ bankruptcy, debt downgrade and rescheduling and folding up of businesses. It influences the income of firms, productivity, item quality, financing cost (a fall), to invigorate acquiring for speculation that would prompt monetary exercises and development. In addition, Abubakar (2008) added that enormous pressures have been placed on aid budgets as a result of the challenges of external borrowings and unstable financial policies which affects the sustainable development goals (SDGs) of most developing countries such as Nigeria.

On another hand, remittance is a form of capital flows that has been affected by economic recession. The decrement witnessed in the country's yearly development rate remittances led to reduction in economic activities in developing countries like Nigeria, thereby reducing opportunities for African migrants (Osakwe 2010). In addition, according to Ngwube & Ogbuagu (2014), the industrial sector is another area that is grossly affected by the economic meltdown, which ushers in spates of decline in activities of industries and large-scale closure of industries, ranging from the food, beverages and tobacco sector to the textile, iron and steel sectors, or even electrical and electronics, motor vehicles and assembly sectors.

This recession has inflicted persistent adverse consequences on the overall economic endeavors going on in the country, thereby breeding severe levels of poverty, increasing criminal acts, depriving children of their opportunity of acquiring good education and cheap health services, creating adverse demand and supply shocks. Economic recession also results in families, organizations and governments cutting their budgets for survival, and especially deficit of budget for governments.

Apart from the negative consequences of recession, the phenomenon also offers very few advantages. It presents opportunities to further diversify the Nigerian export markets. Suggesting that different sectors in the Nigerian economy can become significant drivers of growth in the world economy in the near or medium term, thereby taking over from petroleum and crude oil products, which have for decades been the primary source of Nigeria's foreign income through exportation. Osakwe (2010) reveals that there exist prospects of increment in the demand for commodities to support growth in these economies, which could create an opportunity to reduce vulnerability to external shocks emanating from developed countries.

2.5. Measures and strategies of reviving Nigeria's economy

There are numerous measures proposed by many scholars such as (Shido-Ikwu 2017, 50-51 & Adeniran & Sidiq 2018) to lift Nigeria out of recession. Some of these measures as discussed by (Adeniran & Sidiq 2018), will be highlighted in the following bulleted points below.

- Economic recession can be managed by privatizing federal assets such as pipelines, transmission lines, refineries, steel companies that are solely utilized on productive activities that are capable of revamping and sustaining production in the real sector and to generate the needed foreign exchange.
- The re-structuring of Central Bank of Nigeria’s monetary policy is required to steer Nigeria out of the prevailing economic crisis by focusing on Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs)

rather than portfolio investment, which is volatile, short-lived and not beneficial to the economy.

- Security challenges and the problem of corruption should be addressed by the government to create an attractive investment condition, which will encourage other nations on the economic prospects of investing in Nigeria.
- Reduction in the importation of foreign goods, boosted local manufacturing and exports, increased financial commitment to infrastructural development, agricultural sector development and local production, boosting inter-regional trade and fostering local enterprises will all combine and aid removal of pressure on foreign exchange issue and serve as remedy to the economic recession.
- Controlling excess government borrowing or loan, reduction of taxes on remuneration for families and organizations and increment of local manufacturing sector, local entrepreneurship development that in turn would increase the major economic factors in the recession cycle.

Sadly, all these solutions require ample time and funding, none of which the present government possesses. Other strategies that can be employed in pulling the country out of recession include the following:

- Empowering the agricultural sector through more funding and boosting the sector's ambience, making it attract better investment and attention from young citizens who want to engage in farming activities, as demographics in the last three decades have indicated that older generations of Nigerians are involved in agriculture because it is primarily considered a job for the uneducated. However, Adeniran & Sidiq (2018, 3-4) reveal that the participation of government, as well as private investors, will encourage younger citizens to participate in agriculture, thereby diversifying the nation's economy.

- Promulgating sound policy and anti-corruption approaches, so that the nation’s economy can be built around a framework that is designed to last and withstand and unexpected economic shocks that might arise from one sector of the nation’s economy. This assertion is confirmed by Adeniran et al., (2017, 60) who claims that it is essential that government-owned and individually owned organizations, private individuals, government parastatals and other relevant bodies join forces to create implementable sound logical laws and regulations, that will serve as frameworks of regulation, that guide the actions and conducts within an organization and the society at large.

Finally, having discussed some of the measures and strategies that can be employed to revive the Nigerian economy, it is important to highlight some of the factors that culminated into recession in the country in the first place. It is important to note that apart from the global financial meltdown that affected many nations globally, other domestic factors that led to recession in Nigeria included; deficient economic planning, the reduction in the nation's crude oil production capacity, the restriction on the importation of agricultural products, widespread corruption and financial mismanagement, militancy and insurgency, vandalism, the loss of value of the nation's currency against international curriencies and other major factors. However, in spite of the situation, the measures discussed above, upon their implementation have the capacity to transform the Nigerian economy and restore its economic buoyancy once again.

3. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This section of the study seeks to provide answers to the study's research questions. In the process of providing answers to these questions, this section shall also discuss some of the discoveries made during the conduct of the study. At this jucture, it is important to clarify that a large body of the subsequent subtopics represent the opinions of the researcher, as informed by the discoveries from the study. In addition, the researcher goes further to butress some of these findings by citing some authoritive scholars who have conducted researches in the field in which this study focused on.

3.1. Factors that led Nigeria's economy into recession

Foreign investors' loss of trust to invest in the nation's economy was necessitated largely due to insecurity caused by vandalism and the destruction of public property, as well as terrorism from the Boko Haram sect. This status quo compelled numerous foreign organization that were already in existence in Nigeria to abadon the country and dissolve their organizations. Constant inflation- which made the prices of raw materials more expensive and workers to demand higher pays, were some of the reasons foreign investors lost trust in the nation's economy. All of these consequently reduced the profit margins of these investors as some of them started recording losses. In the end, most of them decided to leave the country, leaving many people jobless. In addition, government and private sector's discontinued investment in the already poor state of the nation's economy further drove the economy into recession.

Moving further, the devaluation of the nation's currency at the forex market and foreign currency shortages made it tough for manufacturers to obtaining foreign currencies used in the purchase of raw materials for production. After the dip in the international oil prices, there was widespread scarcity of foreign exchange currency because the country began to earn far lesser than it formerly earned. Consequently, businesses and manufacturers started having unfavourable business experiences, while also facing very challenging times seeking for foreign exchange currency used to import raw materials for the production of good and services. Furthermore, this drop in international all prices as well as inflation made Nigeria's currency lose so much value against the American Dollar. This state of affairs also further ushered in the nation's economic recession.

Another factor that resulted to recession in Nigeria is the high-interest rates charged by commercial banks in Nigeria. This made lesser funds available for economic investment and delayed passage of the national budget that causes delayed governmental spending. Commercial banks in Nigeria offer loans at highly exorbitant interest rate, which make it impossible for most people access the loans. These high interest rates shut numerous people out of loans because they are incapable of providing collateral to access such loans. In other cases, only the fear of the interest rates discourage individuals and corporate entities from taking bank loans for economic or business activities. Moreso, it is almost a tradition for budgetary spending to be delayed as battles between the executive arm of government and the legislative arm of government continually affect the prompt allocation of finance to the appropriate quarters of the economy. These budgetary delays thus regularly take adverse tolls on the nation's economy.

Apart from the factors discussed above, other factors that converge to lead to the outbreak of recession in Nigeria include: trade and importation restrictions; the reduction in the country petroleum production capacity due to acts of pipeline vandalism and destructions; the global financial crises that eventually snowballed into a global economic meltdown; the vastly unidirectional investment into the nation’s oil and gas sector, which stunted the growth of other sectors of the economy because of the paltry levels of investment, directed towards these other sectors; poor economic planning and implementation; Gross corruption and financial mismanagement and militancy and insurgency.

In the course of conducting this study, the researcher discovered that there are two classifications of the causes of recession in Nigeria as butressed by Adeniran & Sidiq (2018, 1). They include recession caused by the global financial and economic meltdown and recession caused by the numerous Nigerian factors as discussed in the last four paragraphs. All of the factors mentioned above are critical factors that led to the advent of recession in the nation’s economy because in the absence of them all, if everything was going smoothly and there was not constant inflation, and the country did not depend mainly on revenue from sale of petroleum products, and the economy was safe and did not have to make foreign investors leave, thereby causing widespread unemployment, if all of these factors were removed, then there is a high probability that recession would not have occurred in the country.

3.2. How the discovery of crude oil led to economic recession in Nigeria

Before the location of petroleum in the country in year 1956, Nigeria’s economy was predominantly an agricultural based society. The nation exported agricultural cash crops such as groundnuts, oil palm, coal and cocoa, thereby positioning Nigeria as a major seller of farm products, which earned Nigeria worldwide popularity and admiration. As butressed by Olorunfemi and Adesina (cited in Akpan 2012, 97-106), "agriculture assumed the mainstay of the country's economy in the 1960s and 1970s, when it was nationally reckoned and used as the major income earner for both the people and the government".

Therefore, the farming sector presented unending opportunities and employed over 70% of the nation’s working population; catered to core feeding needs of Nigerians whose population at the time was about a hundred and thirty million citizens. The agricultural sector also provided raw materials for local industries. Unfortunately, after the discovery of crude oil in 1956, petroleum production and export took over from agriculture and commenced taking the most prominent position in the country’s productive endeavours, subsequently providing the largest percentage (90%) contribution to the country’s foreign incomes (Odularu 2007). Besides, as confirmed by Akpan (2012, 97-106), Nigeria’s abundance of petroleum products in the 1970s’ immensely changed the arrangement of the nation’s economic structure, which eventually culminated into a novel political-economic paradigm as the country’s wealth multiplied, while new vistas of opportunities for lavishing the available resources became adopted on a national scale.

Although the oil and gas sector provided the Nigerian government ample revenue to carry out its activities, as it accounted for major chunk of government revenue, it however led to diminishing investment to other sectors of the economy as government focused most of its investments on developing the sector, while annihilating other industries within the country, including agriculture as well as the service based industries. Therefore, from the preceding, it is safe to say that to a large extent, governments' focus on investment on the petroleum industry of the country was at the detriment of other sectors. Hence, the discovery of crude oil contributed significantly to the current recession bedeviling the country.

3.3. Suggested strategies and measures to lift Nigeria out of recession

Empowering the agricultural sector through adequate funding from government-owned organizations and individually owned organizations will make it more attractive for young persons to desire to adopt farming as a worthy profession. This assertion is also confirmed by Adeniran & Sidiq, (2018, 3-4) who also included that the sector could employ very many persons, thereby reducing the rate of unemployment in the country. Furthermore, the agricultural sector can improve other sectors of the economy, especially the agro-allied manufacturing sectors of the economy.

This can be achieved through largescale production of farm produce, which agro-allied industries such as beverage manufacturing companies can utilize to manufacture their products. Therefore, improving agriculture in the country has multipurpose benefits. Firstly, it will decrease the rate of unemployment in the country if enormously invested in, it will increase the economy's volume of export, thereby increasing foreign exchange, it will also increase the availability of raw materials required for certain manufacturing organizations. Therefore, if agriculture is adequately invested in, the financial benefits that the nation can benefit from this can pull the nation out of recession.

In furtherance based on Adeniran's et al. (2017, 60) advice the creation of sound policies and anti-corruption approaches, so that the country's economy can be built on a solid foundation, capable of enduring any economic shock without crashing is necessary. This suggests that measures have to be devised to curb government officials from financial mismanagement, which in no small extent is one of the major challenges that plunged the nation into recession. Therefore, policies that severely sanction political office holders who engage in financial mismanagement should be put in place to discourage them and others in the private sectors of the economy.

Additionally, effective and efficient laws and policies that lead to the creation of a stable economy should be enacted. Some of these policies include adequate infrastructural development, adequate educational policies, adequate policies on healthcare and conduction of business and banking policies, adequate implementation of justice and other policies and laws that can make the economy stable. All of these have been identified as strategies that can revoke the nation's recession. Other essential strategies for pulling the nation out of recession and setting her on the path of economic buoyancy include: Privatizing federally controlled assets such as pipelines, power transmission lines, refineries and other economic structures, so that they can be revamped and consequently generate tax revenue for the government.

This suggests that government should relinquish control of assets that cannot be adequately managed to private organization to ensure efficiency and optimal working conditions of these assets. Privatization entails that individual or group of owners leave a particular venture to the forces of demand and supply. This assures better management and more productivity unlike when such organizations are in the care of the government who lack the availability to ensure proper management and effectiveness of the organization. This system will also reduce the rate of corruption practices because most of these assets will be in the care of private organization who can continuously monitor the movement of their finance, unlike when it is publicly owned and financial allocations are set aside for these assets, but are never utilized by the governments due to corruption. Therefore, with privatization, government can focus more on governance, while private organizations can control assets and on a grand scale control the nation's economy too.

Furthermore, reducing governments' excess borrowings or loans at all tiers of government. This means that governments' borrowings, whether at the federal level, state level or the local government level needs to be grossly reduced as loans from international bodies such as the Paris Club or the World Bank usually come with cutthroat interest rates. In most cases, Nigerian governments borrow from international organizations to complement its budgetary deficits. This should be curbed as these loans slow down the pace of the nation's development and always puts the nation under the shadows of the bodies that grant such loans.

Besides, a reduction in the nation's volume of importation should be adopted. This will breed development into the nation's local industries so that they can indulge in exportation and earn foreign exchange instead. This is against the current situation where the nation imports almost everything that her citizens need. For instance, the nation imports rice, machinery, automobiles, and other forms of finished goods. However, the paradigm ought to shift from the nation being an importer of goods to becoming an exporter of goods. This means that manufacturing plants in the country have to be revived, a situation that will lead to the creation of more manufacturing plants, the employment of more people, an increment in the income of foreign exchange and consequent pulling the country out of recession.

In conclusion, another essential strategy of pulling the nation out of recession is prompt signing into law of the budgetary bill. The legislative arm of the government should learn to corporate more with the executive arm of government, so that the duration of time, which the proposed budget lies on the table of the legislative house can be reduced. This will ensure that every sector of the economy receives the required finances needed for the prompt conduct of its activities and lead to smooth running of all the sectors of the economy and also aid the economy in meeting specific targets, which are always impaired by the late signing into law of the budgetary bill.

CONCLUSION

From this study, it can be gleaned that recession is an economic phase in the economic cycle that every country around the world has encountered at one point in history or another. It indicates that a country's economy is plagued and needs concerted and deliberate economic measures to be taken to ensure quick and effective recovery. Nigeria's economy entered recession in the first quarter of 2016 and its adverse impacts led to the decrement in citizens' living standard and the general quality of life. It also grossly surged the rate of penury in the land. This study's objectives were to examine the causes of the country's recession and trace the history of oil discovery in Nigeria in connection with contributing to the nation's recession. Another objective of the research was to proffer panaceas to bringing out the country from recession.

In response to this study's research questions, the findings of this study revealed that many factors such as the loss of trust of investors to invest in Nigeria because of insecurity caused by vandalism of public property, acts of terrorism from the Boko Haram sect, the devaluation of the Naira, the nation's currency at the forex market and foreign currency shortages, which led to the scarcity of foreign currencies to purchase raw materials for production, trade and importation restrictions, reduction in the country's petroleum production which led to decreased national income, the global financial crises and many more, all combined to result to recession in the Nigerian economy. All of the reasons mentioned above helped answer the first research question, which sougt to uncover the causes of Nigeria's economic recession.

It also discovered that the nation's oil discovery and the consequent abandonment of other productive sectors of the nation's economy also contributed significantly to the nation's state of economic recession. This discovery helped answer the query of the second research question which was aimed at making this discovery. Finally, the study proceeded to recommending measures that can be adopted to lift the economy out of recession. These measures were discussed in detail in the literature review section and the discussion section of this study, thereby answering the question of the appropriate strategies and measures that can lift the Nigerian economy out of economic recession, as is the theme of the query in reseach question three.

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