

THE ROLE OF NIGERIA IN BUILDING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH GREEN TRADE INITIATIVES WITHIN THE BRICS AND AFCFTA FRAMEWORK

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Abstract

This paper is on the role of Nigeria in building sustainable development through green trade initiatives within the BRICS and the African Continental Free Trade Area frameworks. Many developing countries are focused on sustainable development, which places significance on economic growth. One of the symbols of economic growth in any country is participation in international trade. To ensure that international trade results in positive gains for any country, it is now essential for countries to make efforts towards establishing green trade. Although some countries are participating in green trade, there are still issues hanging on implementation because they are against the principles found in traditional trade barriers. Developing countries are potential key players in green trade negotiations. The low level of participation of developing countries in green trade can be connected to their lack of capacity in contributing to green trade outcomes. The paper follows a qualitative approach and uses content analysis methods. Reports indicate that the Nigeria is in the proposed stage of the initiation of discussions; this could signal bad faith. As the greatest barrier to greener trade is the lack of trust—rejecting that policy efforts exist—more accountability is required of trade policymakers. Just seeking regional cooperation and participating when demands are made proves little information on a potential platform for national action. There are options for Nigeria. It would not be sustainable to sustain a regional economy while opposing sustainability. Nigeria should attribute African state sovereignty as long as states deliver public services from shared fiscal obligations.

KeyWords: Economic Integration, Environmental Sustainability, Sustainable Development, Circular Economy, Intra-African Trade, Green Industrialization.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Federal Republic of Nigeria, as a regional economic power, is interested in building a system of non-zero-sum global trade through the development of intra-African and BRICS trade, and on this basis, to play an expressive role in the world economy. The process of internal cooperation with the BRICS and participation in the AfCFTA opens the possibility of building more sustainable development for Nigeria and other members of these integration structures. The aim is to consider the problems of Nigerian development within the non-zero-sum African and global trade, particularly those related to its role, problems, and potential for further economic and trade cooperation with the BRICS states.

The substantiation of the relevance of the derived direction of the research is connected with the following arguments. First, the theme of green trade initiatives is of a strategic character both for Nigeria, relying on extractive industries, and for the world economy, which is increasingly oriented towards the ecological context. Secondly, the BRICS states, as the major players in the world economy, are consistent supporters of the redistribution of power relations and the objectives of green trade. The development of this topic, with the active participation of Nigeria, should be based on the BRICS and AfCFTA framework. Thirdly, Nigeria, as a regional economic power and as a member contributing a positive development dynamic to these organizations, faces the problems of ensuring the non-zero-sum nature of its participation, taking into account its interests, problems, and potential peculiarities. Encouraging rhetoric in Nigerian-BRICS relations demands further in-depth research into structural decisions in the field of green trade. The promising niche of research is the substantiation of the strategic conditions necessary for the transition to a motivating regime for cooperation (Yusuf, 2023).

Nigeria, a member of the South Asian countries and the BRICS, is a regional and economic zone and plays a significant role within the platform of the African Continental Free Trade Area to become a global power. Nigeria's building sustainability implies that there should be a balance between the speed of growth and the welfare of the people, as well as the maintenance of the Earth's ecosystems, which upends global searches for markets and finance as required for international trade, as well as the agenda for the global community. This chapter carries out research and pinpoints some issues and knowledge gaps in which research has gathered information and full understanding of these issues in order to know how Nigeria can build its sustainability and contribute towards the advancement of sustainable development in the global economy (Debrah, Olabode, Olan, & Nyuur, 2024).

The purpose of the study is to develop effective cooperation between Nigeria, the BRICS countries, and the African Continental Free Trade Area members in order to overcome challenges and use new opportunities to build sustainable development through green trade initiatives. In achieving the objective, the paper adopts desk research methodology where the researchers collected and analyzed data from secondary sources. Data were drawn from relevant books, book chapters, academic articles, research papers, methodology and tool development papers, national reports, and relevant sources. The data were collected from recognized international and national organizations' official databases.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development offers a unique opportunity for green trade initiatives to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Nigeria, like many other developing countries, aspires to achieve some of its national development plans through global trade in a greener and more sustainable manner. Building sustainable development through green trade is important for Nigeria's economic growth, food security, job creation, balance of trade, and GDP improvement. Nigeria is flexing its muscle on this global scale of two "Nigerias," that is, the situation in which there are social inequalities regarding trade benefits between the rich and the poor in the country, which are both sources and motives for green policies. For Nigeria to be successful with green development, there is a necessity to address and reduce social inequalities and weaknesses across the environment, social, economic, and governance aspects of the implementation of sustainable development within the country (Adamowicz, 2022).

Global trade has continued to occupy a significant place in different spheres of human existence and is expected to continue to do so for as long as humanity exists. Trade has been the channel through which several - virtually all - nations transact business and convert natural resources into valuable goods and services that satisfy human needs and wants. Trade opens up nations to the rest of the world and provides millions of people with employment opportunities, food, health services, improved living conditions, peace, technological development, and economic growth while creating numerous other benefits that improve the quality of life around the world. This discourse supports the conclusion that trade is undeniably an important catalyst for the economic, social, and political development of the human race (Ge, Imran, & Ali, 2024).

2.1. Sustainable Development

Today, the terms "sustainability" or "sustainable development" are widely used and have become catchphrases in both discussions and practice, especially in relation to international affairs and globalization. This means that these terms appear in a variety of documents that guide international economic relations, for instance, various reports and agreements. There are several variations about what may be the core of this concept, as it gains new content and evolves over time. This idea has varied along with paradigm reviews found in social science studies. One of the core ideas around this concept is the interconnectedness between resource issues, the environment, and development (Patomäki & Morgan, 2023).

Focusing on the broader concept, the term "sustainability" seems to be based upon the moral concern for the quality of life of future generations. This is usually related to ecological and environmental degradation, which "threatens the natural resource base of growth, and thus might weigh heavily on the future ability to develop." The concept of "sustainability" is also closely related to social equity and the distribution of wealth between the rich and the poor, the present and future generations, the North and the South. In a very basic sense, sustainable development is development that brings about improved living standards for everyone in the present generation and for future generations. In a practical way, sustainable development is

pursuing economic development, social progress, and environmental protection without exhausting or mortgaging the future. It involves a proactive approach that promotes efficient and cost-effective resource supply solutions (Lin & Zhou, 2022).

2.2. Green Trade Initiatives

Green Trade Development provides a vital opportunity to realize the added value of goods and services that are environmentally friendly. Moving forward to declare interest in the sustainable development of this area in response to the cooperation of the World Market in 1992 and the year of the Earth Summit in 1992, and for the first time, specifically mentions trade in the field of the environment. Later, in 2000, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meeting in Brunei highlighted the issue of concrete and meaningful progress and the successful entry into the new trade agenda in 2001. Green jobs and climate change are directly linked to investment in renewable energy technologies, fuel-efficient automobiles, modernizing construction, and waste management activities. This investment style is one of the protagonists that stand out as those that can contribute to the further development of the green market (Luo, Yimamu, Li, Wu, Irfan, & Hao, 2023).

At the 1996 Singapore meeting, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations pledged support for green trade development, starting with the exchange of information on national green regulations. The lack of green trade and services transfer has triggered the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development to stress the use of the principles of both protection and additional caution, and this conclusion was discussed at length in the Committee on Trade and Environment through negotiations. In an effort to create an open and predictable setting to respond to existing and new cases of green trade and investment, the Declaration on Green Growth symbolizes pride in the existence of a global forum capable of supporting policies aimed at achieving economic growth, job creation, environmental stability, and social equity (Demaria & Gómez-Baggethun, 2023).

3. BRICS AND AFCFTA: OVERVIEW AND SIGNIFICANCE

BRICS is an intercontinental alliance of five countries that recognizes the importance for the world's future of increased economic ties with the 'least developed' countries that have traditionally been marginalized from globalization. BRICS holds at least three societies with a still very large percentage in relative poverty, viewing the empowerment of the global South only as beneficial to their increasing self-development as emerging economic superpowers. BRICS has a pragmatic point of view. Its governance model provides equal rights to its member countries. The group is in favor of practical measures that help the global South by creating capacities or tapping new markets. The issue is not 'charity' as in the West's development policy, but is instead based on structurally sound allocation of resources, generation of demand in conditions of surplus production, and, in that sense, an actual affair of enlightened economic self-interest (Kirtan & Larionova, 2022).

The African Continental Free Trade Area is a free trade area founded in 2018, created by two agreements. The free trade area is the largest in the world in terms of the number of participating countries since this initiative was formed along the Afro-sphere framework in the

spirit of 'we are all African' and all countries are members of the African Union. The main goals of AfCFTA include creating a unified continental market for goods and services, with free movement of labor and capital, and significantly underpinning economic growth, industrial development, and transforming the continent as a whole. The potential represents a possibility of bringing 200 million additional people out of moderate and severe poverty and lifting Africa's women if additional support measures are implemented (Geda & Yimer, 2023).

3.1. Nigeria's Position in BRICS and AfCFTA

Introduction Nigeria is a key player in Africa and, as an emerging economy, has tremendous potential. However, there are a number of strong arguments that need to be addressed in seeing Nigeria as part of the BRICS group. When taking into account the capability and ambition of Nigeria in the AfCFTA, participation in BRICS is long overdue. Challenges Facing Nigeria's Position in BRICS and AfCFTA While Nigeria is a key forward-thinking nation in the global scenario, participation in the BRICS group is long overdue. In the AfCFTA situation, Nigeria has the capacity and contribution to engage effectively. But we must first bring Africa's largest oil producer, oil and natural gas expertise, Africa's largest alarming competitiveness, and the most populous economy into the AfCFTA. Conclusions Nigeria is a forward-thinking nation that has put great effort into the BRICS initiative, the AfCFTA, and the BRI in recent years. However, Nigeria should investigate how best it can foster local expertise in green trade as well as in the wider context of sustainability (Ezeani, 2024).

Nigeria has the economic and human resources and knows all the necessary tools and links required to invest sustainably in trading partners, including from the BRICS countries, whether through the AfCFTA, BRI initiatives, or other measures. Through nexus relationships and cooperation, Nigeria could use these natural assets to consolidate alliances and trade relationships with its partners in the BRICS and the AfCFTA, engineering, planning, supervision, and more dynamic communication between suppliers. In other words, Nigeria's long-term commitment, economic capacity, trade capabilities, proximity, natural assets, and diplomatic and policy ambitions seem to be an ideal basis for fostering the need for sustainable development by trading partners (Ishamali & Adie, 2024).

3.1.1. Historical Context of Nigeria's Involvement

Nigeria has long been disadvantaged as a result of the colonial legacy of the country's political economy, as it has been compelled to participate primarily in an extractive political economy of the wider world, alternatively as a subordinate partner in the non-oil commodity trades. In this respect, it is necessary to position Nigeria's involvement within the BRICS in the historical context in three parts. First, an examination will be made of Nigeria's leading role through the non-aligned movement in seeking political and economic justice for the exploited countries of the global South in the aftermath of the Second World War, leading to demands for a more just and equitable global economic governance framework, premised on efforts by the South to restructure the corrupted world system. The historical basis of these initiatives began to shape early Black leaders' ideology in the midst of their personal and group alienation (Johnson, 2024).

The second part examines the struggles for Nigeria's decolonization and her attempts to secure equitable terms of trade and economic development from the colonial interests. Stimulated by the commodity booms in the pre-Second World War era, Nigeria's national development strategy combined import substitution with a leap towards industrialization. The export of agricultural commodities that was employed to secure foreign exchange was linked with the sourcing of food to feed the colonists, rising numbers of expatriate administrators, and to meet the demands of British export businesses. In achieving this, the Nigerian economy under colonial rule became heavily dependent on the export of a limited number of primary commodities on which the economy was based. The rents extracted from agricultural activities were economically and physically crippling, leading to reliance on colonial mores compared to the sophisticated independent contributions to government decision-making that were the norm in other Latin American colonies (Ishamali & Adie2024).

3.1.2. Current Role and Contributions

Many Nigerian government initiatives are indeed geared towards sustainable, environmentally friendly practices. This is evident in a modest number of bilateral collaborations for green development, serene efforts towards the development of renewable energies, rural electrification using renewable energies, pursuit of carbon credits, incorporation of renewable energies in the secondary school curriculum, and support for international efforts on green growth. The Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative report prepared by the authorities involved in mining, exploration, development, and expenditure associated with such activities in Nigeria clearly goes further to assure a sustainable green environment within its initiative on natural resources management. Nigerian associations, including the Manufacturing Association of Nigeria, have reputably indicated partnerships with international actors on green development ideals (Aidonojie, Afolabi, Obieshi, Adeyemi-Balogun, & Wakili, 2024).

In business, as well as in its role in green growth, there is evidence that Nigeria has started action towards its aspiration. It is the first country in the world to institute sustainable banking regulations. The introduction of sustainable banking principles by the Central Bank of Nigeria indeed sets a precedent in Africa as well as an exemplary value to the rest of the world. Nigerian banks, which account for some of the 25 African banks found in the rankings of the top 1000 banks in the world, are mandated to respect principles governing a green economic environment. Nigeria has also embraced the ideas of the United Nations Environment Program Finance Initiative. This is evidenced in CBN's directive for mandatory annual bank downstream reporting on the environmental performance of Nigerian banks. The African Climate Technology Foundation does very valuable work in promoting science and technology policies in addressing climate change for Africa, given an unprecedented impetus by Nigeria. Nigeria shows open appreciation of important research and facilitation work led by a globally respected international Climate Change Development Agency (Nnaomah, Aderemi, Olutimehin, Orieno, & Ogundipe, 2024).

The Nigeria Institute of Social and Economic Research is the first and only national consultancy recognized in an agreement between the International Finance Corporation, the

recipient of the prestigious Financial Times Sustainable Bank Awards for "Achievement in Environmental Finance" and "Agricultural Transformation," as well as the World Bank, to execute in Nigeria the development of Environmental and Social Risk Management framework. The Nigeria Business Coalition Against AIDS calls on Nigerian businesses to adopt strategies in promoting a green, sustainable environment and society (Amusan & Nel, 2023). A further appreciation of the government's commitment to green growth can also be seen in the establishment of the Ministry of Environment-based Nigerian Environmental Fund for environmental protection of interest to the country. Nigeria has, in partnership with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, towards the promotion of green and sustainable growth, contributed actively to debates on green growth through its experts as part of the collaboration with the United Nations Economic Council in Africa (Anam, Ijim, Ironbar, Otu, Duke, & Achuk Eba, 2024).

4. GREEN TRADE INITIATIVES AND POTENTIALS IN NIGERIA

Nigeria has the economic potential to build a high-income modern society that is sustainable and equitable for future generations. It therefore needs to leverage natural comparative advantages in the areas of agriculture, livestock, energy, minerals, and water, and to build on its current trade policy, including the African Continental Free Trade Area and BRICS. The 'green economy' or the integration of environmental and social conditions into appropriate choices in economic growth and development projects is at the foundation of enhancing the overall well-being of the people in Nigeria. Green trade deploys goods and services to meet the needs for sustenance for humankind, be it food, shelter, clothing, furniture, herbal medicine, insect repellent, mosquito spray, candles, ornaments, or molecules in clothing (Okunogbe & Tourek, 2024)

4.1. Successful Green Trade Initiatives in Nigeria

In voluntary regional trade, it has been noted that there is a mutual grant of one country's autonomy to regulate and to affect the other country's regulation in respect to regulatory measures which may affect the trade of the other country. Particularly in the international trading infrastructure for the global carbon markets, that is, the networks which connect diverse voluntary national and regional compliance schemes into wider global trading markets, it has been flagged that the goals and advancement of the global carbon markets have become prone to both corporate and territorial interests. This implies acknowledging new linkages and leverage points for global and regional actors involved in the emission trading system that stretches beyond the more widely noted legal, administrative, transparency, and benefit linkages. Nigeria willingly has embraced the implementation of targeted green trade initiatives and linked them to the national emission reduction targets (Bolaji, Abdul Rahim, & Omar, 2024).

4.2. Green Agriculture and Agro-Processing

Green agriculture is another approach to green development. The agricultural policies and programs implemented by agribusiness in Nigeria, particularly agro-processing, would tend toward the expansion of the middle class, creation of jobs, reduction of poverty, return of rural-

urban defectors, and also improve local production of agricultural goods and earn foreign exchange through world trade. Agro-processing in the public or private sectors, on a mini-scale, urban or rural functions of raw foodstuff, intermediate or farm products into finished goods for consumption, sale, or further processing is operational throughout the country, but most particularly in the northern and western parts of the country. Agro-processing gave rise to the manufacturing sector and also contributes to the wealth of any productive economy. Nigeria can offer what the market for foreign interests needs, and they can also use the local market as their own protective base and send Nigeria the finished product at competitive prices (Ajah, Etowa, Effa, Ofem, Iso, Ettah, & Asuquo, 2024).

The federal and state governments recognize the importance of the sector and have in place several policy measures aimed at protecting the interests of the homegrown economy, such as bans on the importation of wheat flour, rice, sugar, maize, soya oil, milk, toothpicks, cassava, and cassava products, both as finished products or used as starch, sawdust, and the backing and funding of the Regional Agro-Industrial Development Zone. The Food Production Capitalization policy of 2011 rests on the agro-processors and also banned the importation of finished products for local manufacturing of available raw materials. The policy bans included wheat flour, bread, flour and cake mix, confectioneries, and chewing gum. Industries engaged in their local upgrade would attract a single-digit interest rate from the federal government. The authorities also deliberately impose high tariffs on imported agricultural machinery to enable the local supply industry to grow and meet the domestic needs of the sector to earn more of the huge profits which sectors of this kind are known to earn (Adetula, 2024).

4.4. Renewable Energy Initiatives

Nigeria, the largest economy in Africa, has adopted several policies to promote renewable energy. In our country, various efforts are being made to achieve 30% national electricity from installed capacity by 2030. These policies include the development of renewable portfolio standards, regulatory standards for feed-in tariffs, renewable energy investor device standards, standardized regulatory frameworks for renewable energy agreements, and a standardized renewable energy power purchase and sales agreement. Nigerian authorities have also established the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission to ensure minimum technical standards for renewable energy generators, built with a capacity of 50 MW and 1 MW in the national electricity network. These policies have attracted foreign direct investment to the Nigerian energy sector, but high risks associated with public sectors and currency convertibility are still important risk factors affecting the flow of investment in Nigeria (Humphrey, Mardini, & O'Dwyer, 2024).

However, there is currently no available information on reducing the impact of strengthening policy enforcement, infrastructure, the availability of long-term funds and taxes, and low investor capacity on the inflow of foreign direct investment into the Nigerian energy sector. Therefore, researchers need to review relevant information on these topics to better understand the impact of investment inflows in Nigeria. By collecting information and creating relevant databases, the study was able to use a factor model and a new generalized dataset based on the availability of data on factors affecting foreign direct investment to investigate whether or not

there is a correspondence between the identified investment-reducing components and identified investment drivers, and demonstrate alternative methods that can work to attract more investment into the country. With regard to job creation, recent renewable developments are leading to direct and indirect employment in the public and private sectors. Small and medium-sized solar home and business systems will make the biggest contribution, as they require ongoing maintenance, support, and security services (Adedoyin, Altinay, Gemikonakli, Altinay, Dagli, 2024).

However, the combination of hybrid autonomous and network assets will also help additional citizens increase comfort and overall ability. The sales and trade benefits of renewable energy and fuel-efficient cookers are reported positively. Residential projects offer average monthly savings, while Cooker Plan users also reduce the time required to go to LPG. Costs from bio-pix for shakers and coal ships receive credit to meet immediate operating or financial assumptions. The workforce will be strengthened by reducing insults and injuries. Some infrastructure upgrades needed to support the scale of small and micro projects that will support a more balanced workforce require third-party interventions that provide additional guarantees (Anam, Ijim, Ironbar, Otu, Duke, & Achuk Eba, 2024). Cyber-centric investment can help newer MFP, including training centers and human resources. We need commitment, support, and resources to develop formal partnerships with financial institutions, banks, investors, and the public sector. Multinational, donor, and private foundations and organizations are required. Safe and secure engagement can also help improve the quality of administrative organs and political mechanisms. Sustainable installation and commissioning of small and medium-sized plants will attract international and local industries and markets. Public and private individuals, electricity companies, insurance, and domestic financing parties need the attention of investments that can be traded and maintained regularly. Home-based inequalities and monthly repayments are reduced by allowing them to solve day-to-day problems. Because women earn less without bias, the use of solar systems for small and medium-sized businesses is helping to balance household and family situations (Adetula, 2024).

4.5. Eco-Friendly Manufacturing and Exports

Nigeria under the AfCFTA can take an active part in the movement of building green trade or green trading schemes within the framework of multilateral trading organizations. Nigeria's domestic market and exports are mainly composed of oil and gas, along with primary commodities, which not only characterize its high vulnerability to climate change but also prevent Nigeria from reflecting attributes of investments against climate change. Except for oil and gas, which are favorable to Nigeria in the nearly no-carbon market, other nonrenewable resource exports, the environmentally unfriendly structure and technology choices for primary production, and the increase of non-farm employment in foreign technology and green product markets are some features. In the face of rapidly increasing global economic interest, Nigeria has taken the position that the leading CO₂ emissions group, which has been accused of a lack of motivation to reduce the greenhouse effect, should be the real target, mainly focusing on the exportation and technology transfer of carbon-related products, turning Nigeria from an innocent internet user to a well-qualified contributor to the global emission reduction issue. Consequently, eco-friendly production has become a hot topic in international relations to

improve the terms of trade in South-South trade, and environmentally friendly schemes are industrialized to provide a policy platform (Humphrey, Mardini, & O'Dwyer, 2024).

4.6. Circular Economy Opportunities

The move towards sustainable production and services within Nigeria largely implies embracing a circular economy. The circular economy will enable Nigeria to use resources more efficiently, leading to a much lower environmental impact. The transition opportunities largely depend on the country's particular circumstances. It was noted that if Nigeria were to embrace only the best practices pertaining to the development of the circular economy from other countries, then it will still be the countries from which these practices were imported that will realize a much higher value from them. Circular economic transitions require targeted support and a clear understanding of the trade and the circular development needs of both high-performing and lower-performing countries, thereby allowing for mutual benefits. Circular development only takes root when supported by options and institution-building in lower-income countries and least developed countries (Adedoyin, Altinay, Gemikonakli, Altinay, & Dagli, 2024).

Nigeria's trade policy is largely in line with a developmental framework. This ensures reciprocity and mutually beneficial cooperation. However, this kind of trade policy is dependent on an enabling regulatory environment that has established goods and services standards, thereby preventing either environmental or social dumping. Nigeria can create an inclusive and green circular economy by emerging circular principles within international and regional trade and investment agreements. This implies that the 'right to trade' can only be established if growth is inclusive, green procurement is embraced, enabling policies have been created, subsidies are transformed, and if taxes encourage circularity while promoting the necessary institutions (Hassan, Ewuga, Abdul, Abrahams, Oladeinde, & Dawodu, 2024).

5. IMPACT OF GREEN TRADE INITIATIVES ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

A significant variable is the role of green trade initiatives in inducing sustainable development, as well as promoting security and economic diversification among leading economies. For the purpose of conceptual simplification and deterrence of obtrusive information, the focus of the study is on select African economies, specifically Nigeria as a representative of ECOWAS, and Ghana as a representative of a middle power. Nigeria is one of the world's most populous nations and the leading oil exporter in Sub-Saharan Africa, with its petroleum exports accounting for about 51 percent of total GDP. Together with South Africa, Nigeria plays a significant security and economic role in Africa and has a relatively influential role in global decision-making arenas, such as having a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council, which allows the country to ensure that the views and values of Africa, especially West Africa, are taken into account (Afieroho, U. E., Li, Y., Han, Y., & Radujkovic, 2024).

Nigeria is a factor in setting general directions aimed at achieving peace and sustainable development results. Nigeria's potential leadership has been manifested in its current role in ECOMOG, ECOWAS, and the strategic relationship between the African Union and the United

Nations. Accra has been harnessed by the community of West African nations to resolve regional conflicts; therefore, Ghana as an African middle power can also be considered. Ghana has benefited from considerable political gains in enhancing its bilateral and multilateral relations through its active push for support in the West African subregion regarding the strategic objectives of the United Nations, African Union, and ECOWAS. If the economies adopt green trade policies similar to those in the current agreement, could they actually increase their potential Gross Domestic Product and create jobs (Gbahabo, Agyeman, & Ikhide, 2024).

Results show that if the rest of the world adopted different green trade policies, net exports in these products could rise significantly, resulting in measurable increases in GDP. In part, this can be attributed to the fact that when the prices of goods that use materials fueling substantial exports are reduced through trade liberalization, economies will export more goods, resulting in a trade deficit reduction and the realization of measurable GDP gains as a result of increased trade surpluses. This is particularly efficient if the world remains liberal and does not trigger protectionist countermeasures. This can lead to deepened growth externalities. In view of the recent increase in anti-globalization tendencies, it would thus be detrimental to withdraw from a potentially sustainable growth originating from increased international trade. Finally, it should be noted that as long as international offsets are included in the world's carbon budget, the gains in GDP are not counterbalanced by increases in greenhouse gas emissions. These gains are therefore environmentally friendly (Kenneth & Okoro2024).

5.1. Economic Benefits

Economic Benefits For the most part, making the BRICS economies greener holds large potential economic benefits even before considering international spillovers. Economic gains of such a leap include fiscal savings, investment, and job growth in green sectors throughout the economy; reduced exposure to volatile commodity prices by making use of cheap, abundant, and widely available solar and wind resources; and less vulnerability to volatile and cascading macroeconomic and financial crises by reducing both income and trade dependence on polluting activities and investments. In addition, the benefits of much more efficient and affordable urban systems have economic, social, public health, and resilience dimensions. Currently, BRICS cities represent some of the most polluted, least affordable, and congested urban agglomerations on the planet. Huge general equilibrium gains could materialize, and very low social discount rates are supported by such planning (Gbahabo et al., 2024).

These far outweigh narrow costs associated with reducing short-term unfair competitive advantages resulting from dumping underpriced goods without any environmental or societal standards into BRICS domestic markets and rebound effects as energy consumption decreases. The BRICS countries are not new to pursuing industrial, economic, or environmental strategies based on downstream and upstream value chains by strategically leapfrogging over incumbent actors in using strategic framework conditions, directly targeted economic instruments, and a strong focus on the transformation of entrepreneurial actors: how to build systemic capabilities beyond newly developed pilot and flagship projects will be the crux of this analysis (Kenneth and Okoro, 2024).

5.2. Environmental Impact

The issue of environmental concerns should not be ignored in Nigeria's bid to establish a green economy and embrace green trade and investment activities. Unlike the other BRICS countries, Nigeria relies heavily on natural resources, mainly in the agricultural, petroleum, and mineral sectors. The gains made by these sectors in terms of foreign trade have brought about a resource boom, which has led to adverse environmental impacts. These negative impacts include air and water pollution, soil degradation, loss of biodiversity, desertification, and climate change. Governments recognize that trade policy measures to promote trade liberalization could erode environmental policies and fail to integrate the environment into trade policies, especially at the multilateral level (Adedoyin et al., 2024).

In an effort to mitigate the environmental impacts of trade, various instruments to promote green trade have been deployed at various levels of trade, especially at the international level. These instruments include non-binding principles, the incorporation of environmental provisions in international trade agreements, and in multilateral environmental agreements. The required support from the citizenry and trades remains alarmingly high despite these trade agreements with both environmental and social concerns. It has been suggested that the success and contributions of international trade to national growth and development are dependent upon good governance, which provides protection of both the national and global commons. Good governance, however, is possible in a democratic society. There is a need, therefore, for political institutions to provide leadership in formulating and implementing green trade and investment policies (Ojo, 2024).

5.3. Technology Transfer and Innovation in Sustainability

Currently, technology transitions underscore efforts geared toward environmental sustainability. Countries, particularly developing countries, have embarked on green economy programs targeting the creation of new green and sustainability-oriented activities and the transformation of existing ones. The ultimate goal is to redirect the economy toward sustainable development. Sustainable development is largely underlined by the principle of improving economic prosperity while protecting the environment and ensuring equity in human development. Innovations that underpin technology transitions should create solutions to address the demands of the economy, satisfying ecological and social constraints while using knowledge as a key input and a driver in the process. The generation of new technologies, expansion of existing ones, or transfer from external sources is important in such endeavors (Owotemu, Ifechi-Fred, & Faleti, 2024).

Various studies on the importance of the transfer of green technology and mechanisms to strengthen such international cooperation have been encouraged. Technology transfer can be greatly supported through practices that protect intellectual property rights and ensure that the production, delivery, and use of green technology are fully consistent with the protection of the environment while allowing countries to address public policy objectives. Such initiatives and concerns underscore most green trade elements, specifically the roles of intellectual property rights and regulatory coherence. These were part of the issues that featured in the Initiative for

Green Growth in response to climate change and in ongoing negotiations on intellectual property at various institutions (Sabbaghi, 2024).

5.4. Financial and Technical Support for Green Trade Projects

Apparently, trade projects serve as trade facilitators. These projects are instituted and financed by national and global entities to facilitate trade and thus contribute to fostering sustainable development and poverty alleviation. Hosted by the Nigeria Export-Import Bank, the Enhanced Integrated Framework launched four public projects undertaken by Nigerians and financed by the EIF. As green trade projects, these new projects are expected to break new ground and set the pace for the wider introduction of green trade project concepts. From employing environmentally sound techniques in exploiting Nigeria's leather resources, to the setting up of solid waste management in the informal trading activities in Nigeria's commercial city of Lagos, to creating environmental awareness and protection in Nigeria's commercial city of Lagos, to setting up a mango processing factory in the southeastern part of Nigeria, the green projects promise to represent a significant departure from services and agricultural productivity boost projects originally agreed upon. These projects are expected to enable Nigeria to participate and benefit from green trade international initiatives (Sabbaghi, 2024).

The ability of Nigerians to gain the needed training, exposure, skills, and build up working relationships with relevant counterparts must be underpinned by comprehensive financing arrangements put in place by the government before it can exploit the advantages that the international community offers by requiring countries like Nigeria to participate in important green business facilitation initiatives and projects. In helping Nigeria to successfully participate in the green growth potential and also the wealth creation potential of the various multilateral environmental agreements, the assistance could also help Nigeria to take advantage of pre-captured foreign currency reserves. These foreign currency reserves could then be used as collateral to attract direct private sector investment into Nigeria's priority green projects (Anam et al., 2024).

6. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this paper has initiated a study examining the nexus of Nigeria's industrial structure, informing its climate action plans, investments, and green/grey trade issues. Nigeria's industrial revolutions championed a greater push into ecological modernization due to overlapping state-in-market failures and ecological market failures pressing for double functional roles: eco-design, cleaner production, energy efficiency, renewable energies, and waste-neutral performance strategies. Using descriptive analysis of data, relevant institutional frameworks, previous studies, and existing literature, the paper examined the nature and specificity of Nigeria's trade and development dimensions in terms of a structural shift, global value chain participation, technology transfer, and the South-South and North-South exchange. There is consensus that a green economy transition is not only necessary to address climate change but also presents strategic, critical, proximate, and expanded markets and factors for sustainable and equitable structural change. Nigeria is at the focal point of such industrial diversity.

With a well-articulated regional economic integration strategy as the beacon for sustainable development, Nigeria can leverage the opportunities presented by the AfCFTA and see itself through to reinventing industrial policy with advanced ideas in order to ensure that trade beats aid in driving structural transformation and performance. Home manufacturing through sustainable development principles is recommended so that addressed gaps in value addition and green investments will open up some high-, medium-, low-, and most open-skill/sub-skilled/unskilled jobs. Since a green economy is multifaceted and multidimensional, policymakers should also emphasize social and institutional integration by way of inclusive development and stakeholders' iterative feedback mechanisms. Contagion effects to the rural countryside triggered through investments in infrastructure, technologies, innovation models, and clean services can create new spaces for the sectors to be substantive contributors to accelerated growth, thereby healing or attenuating current gaps in inclusive growth.

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