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Poor electricity supply in Nigeria

Electric power is the most common source of energy in contemporary world history. This explains why it plays a pivotal role in the industrial and technological development of nations across the globe. As such, any country that is desirous of sustainable development in this age of technology must, as a matter of necessity, device means of regular generation and effective power supply. Without it, meaningful socio-economic as well as industrial development of any kind cannot be achieved. Apart from this, efficient electricity supply impacts positively on other facets of human existence in the modern world, most especially in vital areas like; commerce, education, communication and the general standard of living.

The electricity demand in Nigeria far outstrips the supply and the supply is epileptic in nature. The country is faced with acute electricity problems, which is hindering its development notwithstanding the availability of vast natural resources in the country. It is widely accepted that there is a strong correlation between socio-economic development and the availability of electricity. The history of electricity in Nigeria dates back to 1896 when electricity was first produced in Lagos, fifteen years after its introduction in England. Despite the fact that its existence in the country is over a century, its development has been at a slow rate. In 1950, a central body was established by the legisla- tive council, which transferred electricity supply and development to the care of the central body known as the Electricity Corporation of Nigeria, now defunct. Other bodies like Native Authorities and Nigeria Electricity Supply Company (NESCO) have licenses to produce electricity in some locations in Nigeria. There was another body known as Niger Dams Authority (NDA) established by an act of parliament. The Authority was responsible for the construction and maintenance of dams and other works on the River Niger and elsewhere generating electricity by means of water power, improving and promoting fish brines and irrigation. The energy produced by NDA was sold to the Electricity Corporation of Nigeria for distribution and sales at utility voltages.

The Nigerian energy supply crisis refers to the ongoing failure of the Nigerian power sector to provide adequate electricity supply to domestic households and industrial producers despite a rapidly growing economy, some of the world's largest deposits of coal, oil and gas and the country's status as Africa's largest oil producer. Currently only 40% of Nigeria's population is connected to the energy grid whilst power supply difficulties are experienced around 60% of the time. At best, average daily power supply is estimated at four hours, although several days can go by without any power at all. Neither power cuts nor restorations are announced, leading to calls for a load shedding schedule during the COVID-19 lockdowns to aid fair distribution and predictability.

However, certain factors continue to be impediments to stable electricity supply. The erratic power supply in Nigeria is generally believed to be the bane of economic and industrial development in the Country. The factors include government's inconsistent and misguided power reform policies; inefficiency in power generation, transmission, distribution and consumption; and the incompetent work force of the energy companies.

To achieve efficiency in power supply, some of these recommendations can be put towards solving the erratic power supply problem were proffered. One of the recommendations is the adoption of energy conservative policies such as policies to encourage shift from the use of energy inefficient electric devices like incandescent bulbs, old model refrigerators, computers and televisions, to the use of energy efficient LED bulbs, modern refrigerators, computers and televisions. Other recommendations include the immediate discontinuation of default or estimated billing system adopted by the power distribution companies; upgrading of power distribution and transmission equipment; and the immediate engagement of competent and qualified work force by the electric power companies. It was categorically stated that despite the general belief that the erratic power supply problem of Nigeria is as a result of the low power generation capacity of the Country, the major cause of this problem is energy wastage by consumers occasioned by the default or estimated billing system adopted by power distribution companies.

As a result of poor electricity supply, the Nigerian economy faces

challenges such as ; reduced income for the government as citizens no longer pay electricity bills as they believe they do not enjoy the electricity so why pay ? The economy as a result is loosing a major source of income and is one of the reasons Nigeria has faced recession in recent years .This problem can be solved by investing more in the electricity sector of the country which will allow more sources of electricity of be created for the country as soon as possible . The dams which are not currently in use can be brought back to action with repairs to the equipment , tools and machines . Dams should also be regularly examined and inspected by the appropriate professionals .

Government also suffers reduced income because of the poor electricity supply as many businesses cannot be properly run or function in a country without a proper supply of electricity in the country. Food Storage businesses, Factories , Hotels and many more cannot work properly while using the electricity provided by the government meaning they therefore have to use expensive options such as  generators or solar panels to provide electricity for themselves . As a result , a lot of people with dreams to operate in that field of business would not be able to leading to less tax received by the government cause these companies cannot start up . This problem can be eradicated through investment in the electricity sector so as to be able to provide constant electricity for businesses in the country .

As these many businesses that require  constant supply of electricity cannot start up properly, there is an increase in the number of unemployed citizens in the country on a daily basis . One of the solutions to this unemployment is to improve the electricity in the country so the government itself alongside individuals can start factories, hotels and other organizations which will provide employment for citizens.

Individuals in Nigeria suffer a lot from poor electricity supply .There have been so many instances where buildings are getting burnt down and the fire departments cannot properly perform their responsibilities due to the lack of water which electricity provides . Many individuals have lost their lives an property indirectly to the poor supply of electricity in Nigeria.  The Ministry of works which is responsible for electricity supply in Nigeria alongside organizations such as NEPA should act immediately on these matters by making sure all fire departments have constant electricity so as to be able to perform their responsibilities properly for the good of the Country .

Hospitals are also not able to perform their responsibilities properly because many a time there is poor supply of electricity .As there is a poor supply of electricity, they are not able to perform advanced medical services to patients who require them because the equipment cannot function without constant supply of electricity. This problem can be solved through providing constant electricity across the country.

Individuals are also at a great disadvantage of the poor supply of electricity in Nigeria.