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SHELTERING NIGERIANS: THE CONTRIBUTION OF KAMWIL GROUP OF INDUSTRIES LIMITED ILORIN, KWARA STATE, 1996-2013

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Abstract

Attempt to industrialize Nigeria and indeed Kwara State was not left for the government alone. Therefore efforts were made by private participants to complement government efforts in industrializing Kwara State. One of such industrialists is Alhaji Kamoru Yusuf who established Kamwil Group of Industries in Ilorin. The establishment specializes in building materials and has therefore been making impacts in the area of sheltering Nigerians over the years via the production of Roofing Sheets, Aluminum Step, Kam Metecoffo and Copper wire among other products. Other contributions of the industry were also highlighted. The study concludes that in spite of the unfavorable economic conditions prevailing in the country, the founder and the management of the industry has been able to put the industry floating, and it is one of the few industries producing at full capacity in the country.

Keywords: Kwara State, Aluminum, Building materials, Sheltering, Industry

I. Introduction

Kamwil Group of Industries Limited is an indigenous Company that was registered in 1996 by Alhaji Kamoru Yusuf with the aim of producing buildings and construction materials locally for Nigerians and beyond. The industry started its operation with few nail cutting machines at Asa-Dam Road Ilorin with three Staff that included the Chairman and the founder of the industry himself. By mid-2014, the company had opened its third

factory which gulped about 23 Million US Dollars to improve the quality of its galvanized roofing sheet (Alhaji Kamoru, 2014). The founder of the industry also invested more than 5 Million US Dollars to set up a mini factory in China in 2013, to serve as linkage for the Ilorin industry to get regular supply of quality raw materials and machines that will meet the needs of the Nigerian people.

The assessment of the products and other general contributions of this industry to Kwarans and Nigerian economy is therefore our concern in this attempt. To do this the work is divided into four sections. Section one introduces the topic while section two discusses the products of the industry and their contributions to Nigeria economy; section three looks at the problems confronting the industry and section four concludes our discussions.

II. Kamwil Products and their Contributions to the Development of Nigeria

Kamwil Group of Industries Limited has been involving in the Nigeria economy for almost three decades. The company engages in the manufacturing and production of building and construction materials that enhance the construction of safe, healthy and comfortable buildings to the generality of Nigerian users (Adeyi, 2012).The industry is divided into three factories;

The first is the Kam Roofing factory. This engages in the production of Kam Aluminum Step tiles, Kam Metecoffo, Kam Aluminum Chad, Kam Galvanized Roofing Sheet and Kam Aluzinc, The roofing sheets and step tiles come in different colors and of right quality and thickness. The basic features of these roofing sheets are that they are curve crest to serve as a guide against leakages. They also have flat smooth surface for easy handling and installation with embossed surface to guide against peeling and corrosion. They are economical (minimum maintenance), lengthy and tailored to customers' desire (Kam Industry, 1999). These roofing sheets and step tiles are being continually used by many contractors and private developers across the nation for years without complaint; the company is thereby contributing to the infrastructural and socio-economic development of Kwara State and Nigeria in general (Adeoti, 2014).

Other products of this section are nail shanks of various sizes. The shanks are of seven types, sizes of 5 and 4inches are used for roofing houses, furniture making and in the area of road, bridges and dam constructions. Other sizes of nails produced are in 3, 2½, 2, 1½ and 1inches. These sets of nail shanks are often used for furniture, general carpentry works and for suspending ceilings among others (Oriolowo, 2014). Since nails always go with roofing sheets, other carpentry and construction works in general, nail shank of Kamwil no doubt is making its impact in the economy of Kwara State and Nigeria especially in the area of construction, furniture and building industry.

Apart from the nail shanks of various sizes, there is also the copper galvanize wire nail (1 x 25mm length), it is also called 30litex. This nail is used for suspended ceiling, construction of ship, local canoes and other domestic works. The company also produces the zinc/roofing nail (2½ x 70mm) that can be used in roofing zinc of any type depending on the type of wood involved (Olabode, 2014).

The Black binding wire is also one of the products of the company used mainly when constructing bridges, drainages, German floors, decking and lintel works. The British reinforcement concrete which is in different diameter with different meter is used mainly for construction works. There are also both black and white EMIO which are used in poultry work, carpentry, domestic fencing, building of Lorries and cafeteria (Ande, 1998). Another vital product of this section of Kamwil group of Industry, which has contributed to the socio-economic development of Kwara State, is the A142 200 x 200.This product is used for heavy duty floor, barricades, fence and construction works. There is also the galvanized coil wire which is used for armor cables, security barb wire, bucket handles (plastic and Iron) and cloth hanger (Kam Industry, 1999).

The second factory of the industry is the one that produces woven sacks made out of nylon, polypropylene and polyethylene. The sacks are in different sizes and colors. Through the production of these sacks, many petty traders along the streets who need sacks and nylon to tie and pack commodities before they are sold to buyers have been able to do so without problems. In the same vein, bigger sacks are made available to companies across the country to pack their products to their ware houses and wholesale buyers.

Some industries across the country that have been benefitting from the sack of Kamwil includes Global Soap and Detergent Ilorin, Tuns Mills and

Food Ltd Oshogbo, Animal Care, Glister Success Industry, International Marbles and Stones Ltd Eyenkorin, Freedom Group Industry, Igbeti-Oyo State, Nikky Food-Ilorin, Shonga Farm Limited among others. Kamwil sack is used also by numerous farmers to pack their farm products from their farms in rural areas to markets in urban cities across the nation. In addition, many Feeds/Flour Mills, Solid Mineral Companies, Chemical Industries and other Agro-allied companies in Nigeria are patronizing Kamwil products (www.kam, 2014).

The third factory apart from the nail and sack factories in the Company is the PVC factory. This factory produces pipes of various sizes that are used by builders, electricians, plumbers and other contractors across the country. With this, the industry has been able to save the nation billions of Naira that would have been expended abroad to import quality pipes for different projects.

III. Other Contribution of Kamwil Group of Industries Limited

Electricity supply to Oshere Community where the industry is located was the first community service embarked by the founder of the industry. The founder not only bought a transformer with all other accessories attached to it but is also carrying out its repairs since installation. This no doubt improved the social and economic activities of the people that live in this area. In addition, The Chairman of Kamwil has also been assisting various religious organizations in the area with the provision of building materials, ceiling fans and other musical instruments (Aribidesi, 2014).

The industries also improved business atmosphere of the villages, township and other cities in the state. For instance, the location of these industries in the hitherto sparse environment of the town brought about an increase in population of the area, to the extent that those who had abandoned their lands started to move to site to complete their buildings. In addition, most people who needed things to buy and could not go there physically turned to the residents/indigenes of the areas where these industries are located to become retailers and hawkers. By this, they were able to satisfy the factory workers and other visitors. Also, some local dwellers are involved in the supply of petty things needed by the companies and their workers. The materials included stationery etc. Aartisans attracted

the area are engaged in repairing of broken down of electrical appliances, some served as contractors, house painters and in many other unconventional jobs. The indigenes of the villages and surrounding towns were also involved in the distribution chains of the company's products. Some even became wholesalers who appointed distributors for the company's products in other towns (Ibrahim, 2012).

Governments at the state and national levels also have been benefitting from the industry in the area of revenue generation through various forms of taxes collected from the company and its workers (Aluko, 1973). The industries have been paying company tax based on the profits made by the industry annually. Secondly, the industry has been paying the mandatory import duties of 30% of the total value of machinery imported into the country through its China Company to the Federal Government. The Kwara State government is also realizing personal income tax in the form of Pay as You Earn (PAYE), Capital Gain Tax (CGT) Sales Tax (ST) and Property Tax (PT) from the industry, beside other miscellaneous taxes collected by the Local Government Area that houses the industry (Ibrahim, 2013).

Also, the industry provides employment opportunity to more than two hundred people of Kwara State and other Nigerians (Ahmed, 2013).The work force range from the lowest level like cleaners, drivers, clerks, receptionists, security men, and messengers to the top management and administrative workers such as financial officers, the human resources managers, supervisors, secretary to the Chairman and Accountant. In the same vein, there are thousands retailers and wholesalers that depend on the products of the industry for livelihood.

The job opportunities provided by the company had helped and are still helping to reduce unemployment as well as poverty level generally (Odeyemi, 2013).These workers besides being employed directly and indirectly by the industry also enjoy other social facilities like supports during annual carol, birthday of prophet Muhammad, festivals, canteen facilities, luxurious staff bus and health center.

In addition, good and efficient transportation unit was put in place to further realize one of the objectives of the company which is to make its products available nationwide. Therefore attention was paid to the provision of good delivery vehicles and professional healthy qualified drivers to handle the delivery vehicles to make its products available nationwide.

IV. Problems Confronting Kamwil Industry Limited

The problem confronting Nigerians generally and which have been affecting the economy as well is power failure. Frequency of power outage often last for as long as fifteen hours in a day or days in some instances (Kingley, 2011).This forced the management of Kamwil to resort to the use of generating sets. Reliance on generating set no doubt amount to doubling the cost of production, which might be transferred to the end buyers. When this is done it certainly affects the market selling price of its products. Often in the country, there are cases when the diesel will not be available and the management would have to resolve to stock buying of diesel for smooth operation and hope for an improvement in electricity supply which might not come for days (Alhaji Kamoru, 2014).

Many times the management of the industry often faced financial problems aggravated by the federal government decision to raise the CBN minimum rediscount rate which made it much more expensive for industrialists to borrow money (FRN, 1988). The liquidity squeeze was further strengthened by a deliberate policy of curtailing the rate of credit expansion to the private sector. Thus, many manufacturers including the financier of this industry were unable to compete for loans needed to develop a local raw material base, or pay for the foreign exchange needed to bring in foreign inputs or even reorganize their production techniques or cover their basic overhead costs (Ibrahim, 2013).

The operating environment in Nigeria also constituted a major problem to Kamwil Group of Industries Limited's objective of distributing its products all over the country and even beyond. Infrastructural problems like bad road networks in Kwara and across Nigeria always affect the time, rate and frequency of delivery of Kamwil products to their respective customers and warehouses in different parts of the country. For instance, delivery trailers going to Kano may take up to five days instead of normal two days if the roads were to be in good condition (Angulu, 2007).

In addition, the economic depression of the country further reduced the purchasing power of the respective Nigerians because they no longer have enough financial strength to purchase the necessary building and construction materials needed for any building and construction works (Mufutau, 2006). Thus, those who patronized Kamwil building materials tend to engage in the act of not buying all the needed building materials and

the repercussion of this is sometimes destructive both to the people using these small quantity of materials for a building work and also tends to ruin the company's reputation (Aribidesi, 2014).

Kamwil Industry Limited also fall victim of substandard and fake spare parts. Though the company as part of its efforts to stop this trend decided to establish a branch in China known as Kam Industries (WUXI) Limited (Alhaji Kamoru, 2014), this was conceived to import standard machinery and spare parts to ensure continual production of building materials that will meet the needs of the people but problem associated with importation of spare parts to Nigeria often hinders effective importation of these materials as at when due (Effiong, 1990).

Unbridled importation of building products into the country also served as hindrance to the efforts of the industry. Most foreign companies treat Nigeria as a dumping ground for their unsold products and send them to the country at ridiculously low prices. Thus, whenever this happened, the management of Kamwil would be forced to also offer their products for sale at ridiculously low prices in the face of harsh economic condition prevailing in the country (Alhaji Kamoru, 2014).

Though however, government thinking was that the importation of galvanized iron sheets would bring succor and assist local industries to solve the impending problems. This was however not to be because as Iron sheets keep arriving into the country from different locations, so the prices of imported building materials keep coming down. Nigerians shifted to the better imported galvanized sheets at low prices to the detriment of the locally produced Iron sheets that come to home markets at higher prices. This condition led to the situation whereby the warehouses of Kamwil became filled with unsold products as a result of lack of patronage (Ibrahim, 2014).

V. Conclusion

This essay has attempted to examine the role of Kamwil Group of Industries Limited on the socio-economic development of Kwara State and Nigeria as a whole. In the beginning, the origin of Kamwil Industry Limited was analyzed with the various products being produced as well as their

importance. Other social and economic contribution of this industry was equally highlighted before we looked at the problems confronting the industry. The industry however has been able to wax stronger in spite of these difficulties.

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