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Energy Policies and Oil Supply Bottlenecks in Nigeria: Problems and Prospects

Authors:

Bisiriyu Abiodun Taleat (55601170@mynwu.ac.za)
Department of Public Management and Local Government, North-West University, Mahikeng, South Africa
ORCiD: 0000-0003-4745-095X

Muhlya Tshombe Lukamba (mt.lukamba@nwu.ac.za)
Department of Public Management and Administration, North-West University, Vanderbijlpark Campus, South Africa
ORCiD: 0000-0002-2136-6787

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Abstract:

Nigeria is one of Africa's largest oil producers, but persistent challenges within the oil supply chain have undermined sustainable development and energy security in the country. The study investigates the energy policies bottlenecks affecting oil supply in Nigeria by examining the effects of existing energy security and oil policies, identifying limitations to oil supply, assessing prospects for long-term energy security, and proposing policy options for sustainable energy security. The study is situated within the Nigerian energy sector, with a specific focus on the oil industry and its role in national energy security and economic stability. A qualitative research design was adopted. Data were collected through documentary analysis of official policy documents, scholarly articles, and reports from international energy agencies. The findings reveal that the Nigerian oil supply chain is constrained by infrastructural decay, pipeline vandalism, oil theft, policy inconsistency, and administrative corruption. The dominance of oil in national energy policy has limited diversification into alternative energy sources, particularly the effective development and utilization of natural gas. Although the oil industry remains central to Nigeria's energy economy, persistent structural and governance-related bottlenecks continue to undermine domestic supply, fiscal stability, and the exchange rate. Addressing these is essential for achieving long-term energy security and sustainable development. This study contributes to the discourse on energy security in Nigeria by recommending stronger regulatory controls, investment in modern infrastructure,

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transparent governance systems, policy reforms, and enhanced public–private partnerships to improve efficiency and sustainability in the energy sector.

Keywords:

Energy Policy, Energy Supply, Oil Production, Energy Distribution, Energy Security

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Introduction

Energy is one of the keys to national development, industrialization and economic stability. The oil source is an important source of power, income, and foreign exchange to many countries in Africa. Nigeria is the largest oil producer in Africa and among the top ten in the world, and it is positioned centrally in determining the energy future of the African continent. With nearly 90 per cent of the Nigerian export revenue and more than 50 per cent of government revenue, the oil industry has become one of the most vital components of the stability of the national economy (Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), 2022). However, even with such an important role, the country has a problem of periodic supply bottlenecks that pull down energy security and socio-economic development. Although it is sufficiently endowed with renewable and non-renewable energy sources, there are always serious issues related to its proper and adequate energy supply (Adeshina et al., 2024). This contradiction is especially pronounced in the oil industry, where the national position of the nation as a major producer in Africa is compromised due to the active supply bottlenecks, which leave the country in a severe lack of energy and do not allow it to develop in the most stable way (Adeshina et al., 2024).

It is a widespread problem caused by a combination of a lack of proper infrastructure, widespread corruption, and overdependence on fossil fuels, which fails to take into account the immense prospects of its renewable energy endowments (Nwozor et al., 2020). Consequently, the reliance on fossil fuels not only increases the environmental issues but also subjects the Nigerian economy to fluctuation of oil prices worldwide (Iormom et al., 2024). Moreover, the energy industry of the country is fraught with the lack of energy resources and the excessive overdependence on less sustainable energy production, which hinders the comprehensive energy shift and the socioeconomic development of the country (Adeshina et al., 2024).

The Nigerian oil industry is characterized by the paradox of resource wealth and long-lived energy poverty, in that despite having more than 37 billion barrels of proven crude reserves and huge natural gas reserves, Nigeria is still faced with persistent energy shortages (Nwokeji, 2019; Godswill et al., 2023). The consequences have resulted in massive revenue losses, supply interruptions, and environmental deterioration due to pipeline vandalism, oil theft, inconsistency in regulations, and infrastructural degradation (Watts, 2021). Such challenges not only affect the domestic access to energy but also make Nigeria less competitive in the global oil market, particularly with the increasing shift toward renewable energy sources.

Historically, since independence in 1960, the energy policy environment in Nigeria has been evolving, but the government has failed to strike a balance between the two interests of maximizing oil revenues and domestic energy security. Since the creation of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) in 1977, up to the time the Petroleum Industry Act (PIA) was enacted in 2021, the reforms have

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been continuous in bits and limited by political agendas (Ezirim, 2020). Oil-centrality has also contributed to the failure of diversification in natural gas and renewable energy sources, further strengthening the exposure of Nigeria to the international oil prices. The oil business has been the main source of socio-political conflicts in Nigeria, especially within the Niger Delta region. Paradoxically, oil exploration has created wealth and mainstream environmental degradation, displacement of the host community, and acts of violence (Ibeanu & Luckham, 2021). As a result, policy responses towards oil sector are frequently torn between conflicting requirements, namely the economic development, an eco-friendly environment and social balance.

Nigeria, a leading oil producer, experiences chronic bottlenecks in supply, which impact the domestic consumption and the performance of its export activities. Deterioration of infrastructure is a hindrance to productive activity, while concurrent pipeline sabotage and oil theft in billions of dollars a year are major challenges facing the sector (Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI), 2021). These challenges are further worsened by policy inconsistency and poor governance that bring uncertainty to investors and restrict innovation. Meanwhile, the world energy situation is changing towards being sustainable, and most nations are embracing cleaner energy sources. Overdependence on oil and a low rate of diversification of the economy to gas and renewable energy sources expose Nigeria to economic shocks and environmental crises. Nigeria is a leading petrostate in the world, and its fiscal reliance on oil and gas revenues (estimated at 45 per cent in 2018) makes it a petrostate among the oil-producing countries.

A complicated combination of political, economic, and bureaucratic factors contributing to the difficulties of this dependency has continuously hampered the development of the energy sector reform in the country (Nwozor et al., 2020). Moreover, the withdrawal of the International Oil Companies from Nigerian onshore and shallow water fields, which is a result of the global transition towards cleaner energy and safety issues, presents both opportunities and threats to the Nigerian economy and the local oil companies (Odutola and Igwe, 2025). The current change requires a powerful and responsive policy environment that will equip local players to adequately utilize the assets and efficiently support the sustainable development of the domestic energy environment.

The fluctuation in the oil price is usually a symptom, not the cause of the underdevelopment in Nigeria, because the mono-product growth policies are ineffective (Ighosewe et al., 2021). In fact, the poor levels pervading across the entire Nigeria, as more than 40 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line, further hinder the affordability and access to sustainable energy solutions, which in turn hampers the transition into a low-carbon economy (Godswill et al., 2023). The dependence of foreign exchange earnings and government revenue on crude oil exports has further exposed Nigeria to the impacts of oil price shocks in the global market, since the country is vulnerable to such events (Ikechi and Anthony, 2020; Olujobi and others, 2022; Raifu and Afolabi, 2024). The lack of diversification in the national

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economy increases this susceptibility to external market forces (Ite, 2020). Hence, energy policies and the adequacy of oil supply in Nigeria require critical analysis to determine appropriate policy strategies for energy security toward long-term sustainable development.

An Overview of Nigerian Oil and Energy Policy

Nigeria, the leading oil-producing country in Africa, is a country that is endowed with a petroleum-dominated energy industry. Oil forms over 80% of the government's revenues, nearly 90% of export revenues, and it is central to the economic and fiscal policies of the country (CBN, 2022). Despite the vast oil deposits, Nigeria has been facing constant challenges in energy supply, infrastructure, governance, and sustainability. Consequently, the energy strategy of the country has evolved to satisfy both the domestic energy needs and the global market for energy production, though with diverse levels of success. Nigerian oil and energy venture started as the oil was discovered at Oloibiri in 1956, and thus commercial production began in 1958. In the early days, the oil exploration and production were mainly dominated by foreign multinationals such as Shell-BP and Mobil with little government interference (Orogun, 2020). During the 1970s, the Nigerian government sought to have more control over the industry.

A shift to state-directed administration came with the formation of the Nigerian National Oil Corporation (NNOC) in 1971, followed by a merger with the Ministry of Petroleum Resources to the creation of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) in 1977 (Iyoha, 2019). The income from oil exports funded the massive industrialization programmes in the 1970s; however, the absence of an organized policy on energy limited the sustainability of the programmes. National Energy Policy (NEP) 2003 marked the first major effort by the government of Nigeria to institutionalize the planning of energy. The NEP emphasized the role of energy diversity, effectiveness, and security. Despite such a policy framework, oil continued to control the energy mix, limiting the development of other sources of energy, including natural gas and renewables (Obi, 2020).

The reliance of Nigeria on crude oil has influenced the policy choices in several aspects. To begin with, it lacks adequate investment in natural gas infrastructure despite Nigeria having the largest known gas reserves in Africa, estimated at 206 trillion cubic feet (NNPCL, 2022). There is a flaring of gases with worsening environmental degradation, and the future of the country's energy security is weakened. Secondly, oil-dependent policy has made Nigeria highly vulnerable to changes in oil prices in the world market. The 2014 oil price crash and the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 were some of the instances of crises in history that revealed the dependence of the economy on oil revenue, leading to fiscal instability and exchange rate fluctuations (World Bank, 2016). Thirdly, there are environmental and socioeconomic dimensions, which persist because of oil dependency. The exploration and production of oil in the Niger Delta have resulted in the leakages of oil pipes, gas flaring and conflicts between the companies and

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the local people. Such issues needed to be addressed by the government, such as the formation of Host Community Development Trusts as a part of the PIA, to address the conflicts and promote the development in the communities (Ibeanu & Luckham, 2021).

The core aspect of the modern-day reform, which has been developed after years of delays, is the Petroleum Industry Act (PIA) of August 2021. The PIA reorganized the regulatory framework of oil and gas industry in Nigeria through the promotion of investment, a better governance system and management of revenues. It put in place fiscal stimulus to encourage investment in gas infrastructure and utilization projects with tax cuts and a reduction of royalties. The PIA aimed at creating a more stable and transparent environment in which the investors can enhance competitiveness and long-term investments (Petroleum Resources Nigeria, 2024). The Nigerian government in 2025 passed the ordinance Order of the Upstream Petroleum Operations (Cost Efficiency Incentives) that established a performance-based tax incentive system aimed at reducing operational costs within the upstream petroleum industry. This is done to solve persistent inefficiencies by giving oil operators financial incentives that result in or exceed cost reduction targets. The reform aligns the cost structure in Nigeria with the global best practices and increases the global competitiveness of the sector (Ernst & Young, 2025; KPMG, 2025).

In 2008, Nigeria embarked on its Gas Master Plan after realizing the importance of its natural gas reserves in the country's economy. The main concern in this plan is the development of gas infrastructure to process, transport, and use gas in the residential environment, especially in the generation and commercial processes of gas. The goal is to increase the utilization of gas in households and commercials as well as decrease the use of liquid fuels. This would positively affect economic prosperity and minimize fuel flaring (Petroleum Resources Nigeria, 2024). The establishment of the Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC) in 2023 is another milestone for the energy policy. It serves as a Regulatory Framework of Energy Transition, Decarbonization and Carbon Monetization to facilitate the climate agenda. The industry was given the Upstream Petroleum Decarbonization Template (UPDT) to enhance environmental responsibility and sustainability. This framework will guarantee the achievement of the net-zero targets of Nigeria through the alignment of such operations in the upstream oil and gas operations. It also manages to strike a balance between energy security and economic development (NUPRC, 2024).

Consequent upon the above, the evolution of oil and energy policy framework in Nigeria is an ongoing process, which is typified by the reforms to reconcile the traditional hydrocarbon development and the rapid growth of renewable energy. The overall strategy of the government focuses on decarbonization of the upstream operations, cost-efficiency, encouraging the use of gas as a source of power and industry, and actively working toward the goals of renewable energy. All these policies and actions are aimed at making Nigeria a secure and resilient energy state committed to sustainable energy transition

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in the coming decades. The energy plan of Nigeria has never been biased against oil due to its economic value; this dependence has, however, led to inefficiencies in the governance arena, security of supply and sustainability. Acts in the law, such as the Petroleum Industry Act and renewable energy schemes, are a positive move towards diversification and modernization. This has resulted in the fact that to achieve permanent energy security and close the gap on oil supply, one will require aggressive policy implementation, stronger institutions, investing in infrastructure, and strategic exploitation of the vast natural gas and renewable energy resources available in Nigeria.

Effects of Current Energy Security and Oil Policies in Nigeria

The current energy and oil policies in Nigeria have a great influence on the economic, social, and environmental levels, determining the development of the country and the well-being of the people. The study carefully examines these effects by analyzing the findings of current policy developments and issues that are still unresolved. Therefore, some of the identified effects of energy security and oil policy in Nigeria are discussed as follows.

Economic Effects

The Nigerian economy mostly depends on oil profits, which constitute about 70 per cent of government revenue and 90 per cent of export earnings. The Petroleum Industry Act (PIA) of 2021 and the Upstream Petroleum Operations Cost Efficiency Incentives Order of 2025 tend to increase the level of income through the attraction of investments and reducing the cost of operations (Petroleum Resources Nigeria, 2024; Energy Chamber, 2025). These policies have recorded small success in boosting crude oil production, where the year-on-year growth rate has been at 5.5% recorded in August 2025 and fiscal returns (NUPRC, 2025). Improved regulatory transparency is driving native participation and foreign direct investment, and it is stabilising the government revenues to some extent, needed to make budgetary allocations. The programs also aim at motivating more production in OPEC quotas to maximize the market share in Nigeria.

However, oil price variability is a significant threat, which threatens the stability of economies and impedes the ability to plan in the long term. The International Monetary Fund has advised Nigeria to revise its 2025 budget to reflect lower oil price forecasts, with a warning of the dangers of overreliance on fossil fuels (IMF, 2025). This weakness reduces social spending and investments in infrastructure, not in the oil sector. The diversification of energy sources promoted in the policy through the National Energy Transition Plan will offer the prospects of sustainable economic development, as it will establish new areas such as renewables and mini-grids that will provide jobs and solve energy poverty (SEforAll, 2023; African Review, 2023). Nevertheless, monetary shortfalls and infrastructural underdevelopments impede the rapid growth of such benefits.

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Societal Effects

Energy and oil policies have significant effects on social development because the policies affect the accessibility of energy, access to employment, and the community dynamics, particularly in the oil-producing regions. The large population of Nigeria (more than 60 per cent without reliable electricity services) faces energy poverty, which does not favour education, health, and the economy. This disparity is reduced through policies and projects focused on renewable energy, like the Nigeria Electrification Project that places solar mini-grids and residential projects in rural areas. However, the combination of chronic infrastructure and administrative shortages means that many Nigerians rely on the high-priced diesel generators or have no power at all (Foakinrele, 2025). Scary actions that disrupt output in the oil sector include violent clashes, sabotage of oil and gas pipelines, and illegal refining (Climate Justice Central, 2024). One of the challenges is due to a lack of enough policy frameworks to ensure fair remuneration, environmental conservation and stakeholders' involvement in the Niger Delta and other oil-producing areas. Social frustration has remained a factor due to environmental degradation and the unequal distribution of resources, which leads to occasional shutdown of oil production facilities that create supply imbalances and loss of revenue. Policies are increasingly placing more emphasis on community participation and benefit-sharing, but there is a lack of consistency.

Ecological Effects

The oil policies in Nigeria have a very high and complex environmental impact. Although the Petroleum Industry Act provides environmental control measures, there are a number of oil exploration and production activities that continue to produce various degradation effects that include oil spills, gas flaring, soil contamination, and water pollution (Saint Akadiri, 2025; Ndubuisi and Asia, 2007). Gas flaring in itself is a waste of valuable natural gas, releasing greenhouse gases and PM that is harmful to human health. In the Niger Delta region, oil pollution harms agriculture and fisheries, thus affecting the livelihoods as well as contributing to poverty (Ibrahim & Itopa, 2025). Illicit refining increases environmental degradation and poses health risks to the neighbouring communities. Programs to combine renewable energy and transition schemes are intended to reduce such effects by reducing the use of fossil fuels and emissions. The policies that demand the investment of oil income into clean energy projects can make the dissociation of economic development from environmental degradation possible (Dinneya-Onuoha, 2025). However, lack of enforcement, inability to enforce regulations, and vested interests hinder the improvement of the environment.

Effects on the Energy Sector

Policies in the vast energy industry have driven the growth of changes in the electrical sector, which includes the privatisation of the sector and the integration of renewable sources (Adejo, 2025). The Electricity Act 2023 encourages liberalisation of the market, which would increase competition and

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possible efficiency gains. Introduction of subsidies and incentives on renewable energy is aligned with the Nigerian energy transition goals towards achieving energy security and climate commitments. However, power is not reliable, and it is marked by frequent power cuts and insufficient coverage of the grid that severely restrain industrialisation and quality of life improvement. The sector has weak sustainability due to the financial crisis in electricity generation and distribution companies, that are caused by tariff arrears and a poor payment culture (Foakinrele, 2025). Solar, biomass, and hydropower are used to create a diversified power mix, which enhances energy security and resiliency due to the gradual shift of fossil-based electricity to these alternative energy sources. Donor-funded projects that introduce mini-grids and solar household systems increase the coverage of off-grid communities, leading to the development of the local economy (Renewable Energy Journal, 2025).

Consequently, the current energy and oil policies of Nigeria have had mixed results, such as immense improvement in production growth, attracting investors and development of renewable energy. Nevertheless, there are major structural problems, such as dependence on oil exports, poor infrastructure, governance challenges, social unrest, and environmental degradation, which keep on undermining policy effectiveness and sustainability. They require strengthening of institutional governance, infrastructure development, implementation of social protection, increased monitoring of the environment, and a focus on equitable access to energy. To make renewable energy more integrated with the management of fossil fuels, it should be enhanced to minimize emissions and create a strong and diversified energy system. Provided that Nigeria can meet these goals by steadily pursuing its policies, engaging the stakeholders, and implementing the measures to ensure the economic, social, and environmental implications of the energy sector policies in Nigeria will be the drivers of sustainable development and improved livelihoods rather than impediments.

Limitations to the Oil Supply in Nigeria

Nigeria, being the largest oil producer in Africa, has critical constraints that prevent it from realizing its full potential of oil supply. Nevertheless, the multiple interconnected factors that crippled the country in terms of oil production are associated with the lack of infrastructure, security issues, regulations, and socio-political aspects, despite the abundance of reserves. This study, therefore, discussed the major constraints to oil supply in Nigeria in 2025 and analysed the causes and implications.

Infrastructural Deterioration

The poor infrastructure and aged structure are critical limitations to the capacity to maintain and increase oil supply in Nigeria. The Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) and industry estimates that about 63 per cent of oil piping systems in Nigeria are more than 30 years old, with corrosion and wear commonly being the primary cause of leakages and spillages (SBM Intelligence, 2025). The lack of infrastructure maintenance has been characterized by long-term underinvestment, which has led to a

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backlog of 12 billion dollars, causing supply bottlenecks and the loss of crude oil that is enroute to the export terminals. There is also a limitation in storage capacity, leading to logistical issues of high production, and producers must cut down production (Business Human Rights Resource Centre, 2024). The state-owned four refineries have outdated technology, bad conditions, and mismanagement, which rank the country as a significant importer of refined products despite being an oil-producing country (Nigerian Observer News, 2023). This leads to the insecurity of the downstream supply and fuel shortage, which affects the local energy supply.

Security Glitches and Vandalism

The most notorious constraint to oil supply in Nigeria is security. Most of the oil production in Nigeria has been brought from the Niger Delta region, which is faced with the problem of pipeline vandalism, oil theft and militancy. Illegal tapping through organized criminal networks also engages advanced practices that result in massive damage and crude loss ranging between 200,000 to 400,000 barrels per day (Business Human Rights Resource Centre, 2024). The illegal refinery sites continue to be deactivated, and even the links between illegal sites are cut to prevent illegal connections, but new vandalism activity is still emerging, disrupting the cycle that is inaccessible to traditional security operations (Channels Television, 2025). Instability is enhanced by militancy and community tussles over control of resources and environmental degradation. Sabotage networks have become parallel authorities and even have territorial jurisdiction, which increases the difficulties of security agencies (SBM Intelligence Security Report, 2025). Maritime security issues, such as Gulf of Guinea piracy, impact offshore activities even more than the breaking of supply streams (Discovery Alert, 2025).

Governance and Policy Constraints

As Nigeria has already undertaken major reforms as a result of the Petroleum Industry Act (PIA) 2021 to present a more transparent and investor-friendly environment, the full activation and implementation of the Act is not final and leaves regulatory uncertainties. There are also certain provisions that are awaiting approval in the legislature or bureaucratization, which create delays in investment and project implementation. Besides, duplication of mandates between petroleum regulatory authorities leads to coordination issues. Absence of proper accountability and poor implementation of environmental and operational regulations contribute to the inefficient production (Shuaib, 2019). Environmental laws and, in particular, gas flaring regulations and emission regulations are needed but create operational difficulties for producers who may not have the technology or capital to fully comply with them (Petroleum Resources Nigeria, 2024).

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Investment and Financial Limitations

The upstream nature of the oil production requires consistent investment in exploration, drilling and infrastructure renovations. Unlike the situation in the United Kingdom, Nigeria faces the challenges of inadequate financing as a result of energy transition pressure globally, and increased awareness of climate risks, combined with regional competition for capital. Access to credit, and consequently, the ability to make significant contributions to supply improvement, is especially limited to indigenous companies. Moreover, long-term low crude prices and fluctuations of revenues decrease government budgets to support programs in the sector. This problem is an indication of fiscal frailty associated with oil dependency since the IMF has urged Nigeria to reset its budget estimates for 2025, where oil prices are lower than expected.

Technical and Operational Constraints

Oil supply is also limited by technical inefficiencies; several production rigs and equipment are derelict and have passed their working life, which decreases their reliability and output efficiency. The production volumes are impacted negatively by the rig downtime and slower performance without immediate overhaul or replacement programs. The fact that deep offshore fields and marginal fields are not explored to the maximum means that the structure of the reservoir is at risk of either technical or geological risks or capacity constraints. The growth in oil production in Nigeria depends on its discovery and improved recovery methods, which are yet to be exploited (Upstream Gaze Magazine, 2025).

Social and Environmental Conflicts

Oil spills, gas flaring and leakages cause serious ecological and healthcare losses to the local population. Such effects contribute to social resentment, demonstrations, and resistance by communities, resulting in production activities being slowed or ceased (Climate Justice Central, 2024). There is poor community participation, and the feeling of being unfairly situated in sharing resources worsens tensions. In other instances, the war between the host communities may escalate to sabotage or a work stoppage, further limiting continuity of the oil supply (Doe, 2025). These restrictions have to be met with an integrated strategy, vigorous infrastructure restoration process, increased security partnership with communities, full application and enforcement of regulatory frameworks, facilitating investments, adoption of recent technologies, and comprehensive community development initiatives. The oil potential in Nigeria can be achieved through enhanced cooperation between the government agencies, oil companies, security agencies and the local stakeholders to translate the wealth of the resources into a sustainable and reliable oil supply that is required in national development.

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The Prospect of Long-Term Energy Security and Oil Supplies

Nigeria is at the critical stage of its struggle to ensure that it maintains its oil supply intact, besides ensuring its long-term energy security. This is occurring because the economy, the environment and politics of the country are transforming. With the growing population and growing economy, the energy policy in the country should seek a solution to strike a balance between exploiting the oil reserves to the full maximum and to maximize renewable energy sources, as well as accommodating the transformations in the global energy scenario. Nigeria possesses numerous oil and gas reserves; besides being geographically well-positioned, it serves as a major energy provider in Africa. The oil industry has also received a new push with new policy changes, which assisted the government in achieving the broader objectives of energy security.

The Petroleum Industry Act (PIA) 2021 is intended to have a drastic effect on the capacity to produce by opening everything up, enhancing governance and providing tax incentives to attract upstream investment. These transformations, together with the new Upstream Petroleum Operations Cost Efficiency Incentives, which were initiated in 2025, will promote more efficient operations and increased involvement locally. They will also contribute to the realization of Nigeria's vision of 2 million barrels of oil per day production (Forbes Africa, 2025). The natural gas is now a major component of the scheme to ensure the safety of its energy supply. The Energy Transition Plan (ETP) seeks to have a greener energy system and desires to utilize the vast gas reserves that the country has to generate electricity and power for the industry. More gas infrastructure can be built to ensure that houses and businesses do not rely heavily on diesel generators, which are not highly efficient. It may result in a stable and less costly electricity source (Sustainable Energy for All, 2023).

Renewable energy has its good aspects too. The solar and mini-grid programs in Nigeria are enabling various individuals in the rural and off-grid areas to access power. This is occurring due to the fact that the cost of technology is reducing and the support of governments is increasing. Nigeria Electrification Project (NEP) and other projects implemented by the Rural Electrification Agency (REA) are not only proving to be somewhat effective in alleviating energy poverty and improving economic growth in the local regions (Dinneya-Onuoha, 2025). Energy systems are also capable of being more dependable and enhancing the performance of oil production through digital breakthroughs and the implementation of current technology to track, advance predictive maintenance, and optimise supply chains (NAICE Conference, 2025). Hence, all that contributes to the diversity and stability of the energy prospect require policy direction.

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Discussion of Findings

Nigeria, the biggest oil producer in Africa, is a country of paradox of abundance of resources and constant energy insecurity. Having more than 37 billion barrels of proven and large reserves of natural gas, the country ought to become self-sufficient in energy production and an important exporter (Nwokeji, 2019). Rather, oil supply has been hindered through the infrastructural decay, inconsistency in policies, and oil theft, as well as ineffective governance (Watts, 2021).

The most notable findings of this study is the deplorable condition of oil infrastructure in Nigeria. Long ago, refineries that were once viewed as a symbol of industrial development have deteriorated, working at less than 20% capacity (Ite, 2020). Consequently, Nigeria has been relying on imported refined petroleum products in high quantities even though it is a crude oil powerhouse (Central Bank of Nigeria, 2022). The pipeline networks are also poor and old-fashioned, thus prone to leakages, theft, and sabotage (Obi, 2020). These infrastructure gaps are not only a cost burden, but also negatively affect the reliability of supply within the country.

Another key finding is the absence of policy stability in the energy sector. Nigeria has rolled out several energy policies throughout the decades, starting with the inception of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) in 1977 to the highly anticipated Petroleum Industry Act (PIA) of 2021 (Ezirim, 2020). Nonetheless, it has been selective or lagged by political interests in implementation. Uncertainty in the regulatory environment of Nigeria is commonly mentioned as an inhibitor to long-term investments by investors and international oil companies (Nwozor et al., 2020). It is also this inconsistency that has not allowed the country to exhaust the reserves of natural gas or make a crucial transition to renewable energy (Adeshina et al., 2024).

Moreover, it was also disclosed that Nigeria loses billions of dollars each year because of oil theft and vandalism of pipelines, especially in the Niger Delta (Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative NEITI, 2021). Illegal bunkering is now a massive, organized business, which in most cases is supported by corruption and ineffective law enforcement (Watts, 2021). Such activities are not only devastating to national income but also lead to devastating environmental costs, such as oil spills that kill farmlands, fishing grounds, and biodiversity (Ibeanu & Luckham, 2021). Militarized response to oil theft has also not been very effective since the socio-economic complaints that triggered host populations, such as poverty, unemployment, and marginalization have not been addressed (Nwozor et al., 2020).

The results also indicated that the Nigerian economy is shockingly oil-driven, with oil earnings taking up to 90 per cent of total export revenues and over 50 per cent of the government revenue (CBN, 2022). This reliance opens the economy to the volatility of oil prices globally, which has been the cause of several fiscal crises in the historical past (Ighosewe et al., 2021). Other industries of the economy, like agriculture and manufacturing, have become weaker due to the supremacy of oil, lowering the strength

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of the country's economy (Raifu & Afolabi, 2024). Besides, this resource curse legacy has sustained underdevelopment, with massive oil wealth failing to be translated into overall economic prosperity (Nwokeji, 2019).

It was clearly revealed that the environmental impact of the oil exploration is devastating. Oil spills, gas flaring, and land degradation have uprooted livelihoods in host communities, resulting in conflict and mistrust among local communities, oil companies, and government authorities (Watts, 2021). These socio-environmental issues are indicative of the inability of the previous policies that govern the energy sector to reconcile economic interests and environmental protection, and social justice (Ibeanu & Luckham, 2021). Insecurity and supply shortages have also increased the chain of community dissatisfaction and militancy, and sabotage (Obi, 2020).

Nevertheless, there are still challenges, but the results show positive change opportunities. The huge gas reserves in Nigeria have not been tapped, but gas may act as a buffer energy to bridge the transition of fossil fuels to renewable energy (Odutola & Igwe, 2025). PIA is a guideline to enhanced governance, engagement of host communities, and financial reform, though it will only work based on political will and open implementation (Ezirim, 2020). Also, the development of renewable energy sources, in particular, solar, can offer a possibility to diversify the energy mix and to decrease the reliance on oil (Adeshina et al., 2024). A transformative role in the mobilization of investment and innovation could also be played by the public-private partnerships (PPP) (Godswill et al., 2023).

Policy Recommendations

To maximize these opportunities, Nigeria has to implement proactive and wholesome policy measures. These measures are to be directed at infrastructure, governance, social inclusion and environmental sustainability.

Renovation and Expansion of Infrastructural Facilities

Long-term energy security is dependent on infrastructure that performs satisfactorily. The investment ought to be directed towards repairing damaged pipelines, refineries and power transmission facilities. It is equally important to develop modular and scalable gas processing and distribution networks in order to maximize the use of gas supplies to generate power. The partnerships between the government and the companies can also help in pooling of resources and expertise to expand the refining capacity that will enable Nigeria to depend less on the refined products that are imported. The national grid should be diversified by adding more renewable energy infrastructure and also enhancing it. The reinforcement of the electrical transmission system ensures that the power supply remains constant, and it is easier to inject more renewable energy into the system.

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Institutions and Regulation Enhancement

The Petroleum Industry Act and the associated regulations should be strictly adhered to, to maintain the confidence of investors. The government, by having clear rules and by improving communication between the agencies, will facilitate compliance with the rules, as well as enforcement. There should be obligatory points for reducing the amount of gas flaring and adhering to environmental regulations. This will motivate firms to adopt environmentally friendly technologies. A regulator that is independent and licensed to regulate the renewable energy would assist the sector to thrive in a more organised manner.

Increase Community Safety and Engagement

The security forces, oil companies and local communities must collaborate across all sectors to address security challenges in the Niger Delta and other oil-producing regions. Taking programs to the communities where people can get involved on a basis of trust and clear distribution of benefits can go a long way in ensuring that there are no cases of conflict and sabotage. People will no longer be stealing and vandalising as their actions will be prevented by investing in the most sophisticated pipeline surveillance and quick response teams. Regional maritime security should also be strengthened to protect offshore assets.

The Energy Transition and Green Infrastructure

The Energy Transition Plan of Nigeria should align with the fiscal policy and economic recovery plans. It must also consider resilience to climate as a normal policy. Sustainable energy systems will be implemented sooner if there are incentives for investments in renewable energy, energy efficiency, and clean cooking technologies. The carbon credit markets and climate financing techniques should be utilized to finance the green infrastructure projects and utilization of new technologies. Through cooperation in research, development process and establishing capacity, we can develop our own renewable energy technology, thereby reducing our dependence on solutions from other nations.

Financial Sector and Investments Reforms

Assist native oil firms and renewable energy entrepreneurs to access competitive financing through providing credit guarantees, sharing risks, and modifying the financial sector to permit the use of new instruments such as green bonds. Enhance the strength of financial management to safeguard against fluctuations in oil prices as well as to ensure that energy investments receive unstoppered support. The alliance between the countries can provide access to concessional capital and climate funds that can be utilized alongside the national resources.

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Data Transparency and Capacity Building

The transparent data management and open access will increase the confidence of the stakeholders and foster sense of responsibility. Investment in local technical education, certification programs and knowledge transfer projects will assist in developing a skilled workforce that will meet technological and operational changes.

The prospects of energy security and oil supply in Nigeria have never been much better and are facilitated by comprehensive legislative changes, bold transition policies, and developing technical options. However, to bring these possibilities into reality, there must be a concerted, inclusive and long-term policy action that focuses on transforming infrastructure into being more resilient, governance, security, better energy, and a better financial sector. By investing in a long-term vision that embraces economic development, social equity and environmental stewardship, Nigeria can use its hydrocarbon resources to become the basis of broad-based development and energy leadership in the global arena.

Conclusion

These results show that the oil industry in Nigeria is in a trap of both prosperity and poor performance. The weak environment of energy has been established by infrastructure failure, lack of policy direction, insecurity, corruption, and over-reliance on oil incomes. The bottlenecks hamper domestic energy security and competitiveness in the international oil market, particularly when the world is shifting to renewable sources of energy. One of the most important conclusions made is that the issue of energy in Nigeria is not caused by the absence of resources but the lack of purposeful governance and poor institutional organization. Oil wealth has been mostly mismanaged, and this has promoted corruption, policy discontinuity and short-termism. Lack of reinvestment in oil revenues, infrastructure, diversification and development of human capital has continued to render the country underdevelopment and in energy poverty cycles. Meanwhile, the reform opportunities are still open. When the Petroleum Industry Act is fully implemented, it will offer a platform of better governance, host-community relations and stability in investment. Nigeria also stands at a lot of opportunities to utilize natural gas to produce domestic power, industrial development and export diversification. Moreover, diversifying the use of renewable energy sources would not only make Nigeria compliant with the global climate commitments but also mitigate the impacts of the problem of electricity shortage in Nigeria. To summarize, the way forward of Nigeria as the permanent destination of energy security is through the challenge of structural deficiencies, diversification, and strong institutions. In the absence of such reforms, there are high chances that the country will intensify energy paradox that will see it endowed with resources but an energy deficit. Nigeria, however, can use its oil wealth as a basis to industrialize, achieve energy security and socio-economic development with the help of smart governance, non-oil policies and sustainable investments.

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