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Original Research Article

Electricity Tariff Adjustment: Assessing the Socio-Economic Consequences on the Manufacturing Industry in South-South, Nigeria

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Abstract: The manufacturing sector is globally considered a crucial engine room, which plays a strategic role in value addition, economic development/diversification, industrialization and employment generation. However, in Nigeria, this sector, operates far below optimal capacity, largely due to chronic deficiencies in energy supply and affordability. Manufacturers in Nigeria face energy expenditures that constitute a significant portion of total production costs, with resultant negative impacts on the economy. This study investigates the socio-economic consequences of electricity tariff adjustments on the manufacturing industry in South-South region of Nigeria, with particular emphasis on production costs and productivity. Empirical evidence indicates that manufacturing firms continue to experience unreliable electricity supply, compelling reliance on alternative power sources that substantially raise operational expenses. The results show that rising electricity tariffs significantly increase overhead and total production costs and adversely affect productivity, thereby constraining output efficiency and competitiveness within the sector. Inferential and regression analysis reveal a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between electricity tariff increases and manufacturing production costs, confirming that higher tariffs are closely associated with escalating production expenses. This substantial explanatory power underscores electricity tariffs as a dominant determinant of manufacturing cost structures in Nigeria. The findings establish that increased electricity tariffs, compounded by persistent supply unreliability, significantly elevate production costs and reduce productivity in the manufacturing sector. The study therefore, concludes that electricity tariff policies have direct and measurable implications for industrial performance and sustainability, highlighting the need for policy frameworks that balance cost recovery with the operational realities of energy-dependent manufacturing industries.

Keywords: Electricity Tariff, Manufacturing Industry, Production Cost, Energy Pricing, Industrial Productivity, Policy Framework, Cost Recovery.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Electricity remains a critical production input for the manufacturing industry, particularly in developing economies where industrial growth is closely linked to energy availability, reliability, and affordability. In Nigeria, the manufacturing sector plays a strategic role in employment generation, value addition and economic diversification. However, its performance has been persistently constrained by challenges in the power sector, which include unstable supply and rising electricity tariffs (Adenikinju, 2005; Akinlo, 2009; Nkalo and Agwu, 2019). Recent electricity tariff reforms aimed at cost recovery and market sustainability have intensified debates on their economic implications for industrial users, especially manufacturing firms that are highly energy dependent (Oseni, 2011; Adenikinju, 2019). In the South-South region of Nigeria, where industrial activities are concentrated around oil, gas and allied manufacturing clusters, electricity tariffs implemented by Port Harcourt Electricity Distribution Company (PHEDC) and Benin Electricity Distribution Company (BEDC) have significant implications for production costs and competitiveness. Studies have shown that increases in electricity tariffs can elevate operating costs, reduce capacity utilization and weaken industrial productivity when not matched by

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improvements in supply reliability (Adewuyi and Adenikinju, 2016; Okorie and Manu, 2016). Electricity tariff increases remain a major cost pressure, though many firms have adopted modern billing systems. The challenge of unreliable power supply and high energy tariff has significantly altered the performance, global competitiveness and long-term sustainability of manufacturing firms. The sector often respond to high tariffs through self-generation, which further raises production costs, erodes profit margins and worsens the inflationary pressure on the economy.

According to data from the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN), local manufacturers spent ₦290 billion on self-generated energy during the first quarter of 2024, highlighting the acute crisis affecting their operations. The pressure on the disposable income of the average Nigerian has been aggravated, unsold inventory of manufacturers increased, their profit margin eroded and unemployment rate increased, all leading to the closure of more private businesses. The implications of these challenges are profound. High energy costs not only escalated production and distribution expenses by 20.7% but also led to a decline in key manufacturing metrics. Capacity utilization fell by over 9.76%, production volumes dropped by 10.14%, and investments decreased by 5.16%. Employment in the sector also suffered, with a reduction of 5.27%. MAN's 2024 economic review reported that Nigerian manufacturers registered a surge in alternative energy expenditure from ₦781.68 billion in 2023 to ₦1.11 trillion in 2024. This estimated 42.3% increase in energy cost, reflects the acute cost pressures driven by high energy prices and tariff adjustments (Iwayemi, 2008; Oyedepo, 2012; Adebusuyi and Obamuyi, 2016; Olisah, 2023; ENA, 2024; Onyema, 2025, Odeyinka, 2025; Okeiyi, 2025).

Beyond cost implications, manufacturers' attitude and response toward electricity billing and payment systems also influence the effectiveness of tariff reforms. Perceived unfair billing practices, limited transparency and mistrust of distribution companies have been shown to affect payment compliance and willingness to accept tariff adjustments among electricity consumers, including industrial users. These behavioral responses has undermined revenue recovery efforts and distorted the intended outcomes of tariff restructuring ((Ubi *et al*., 2012; Kareem *et al*., 2014; Emodi and Yusuf, 2015; Adenikinju, 2019). Against this backdrop, this study examines the socio-economic impact of electricity tariff structures on the manufacturing industry in South-South Nigeria, with specific reference to PHEDC and BEDC. The study evaluates manufacturers' attitudes and responses toward electricity billing payments and assesses how different tariff plans affect production costs and operational sustainability. By providing empirical evidence from the manufacturing sector, the study contributes to the growing literature on energy pricing, industrial performance and power sector reforms in Nigeria.

Energy security, which implies timely access to sustainable and cost-effective energy is vital for any Nation to attain significant industrial development without. In Nigeria, electricity tariffs have been a contentious issue, with frequent adjustments causing uncertainty and economic instability (Akhator, *et al*., 2019). High electricity tariffs have increase production costs for manufacturers, leading to higher prices for goods and services. This has ultimately affected commodity prices availability and affordability, thereby reducing the competitiveness of Nigerian products in the global market. Over the years, several researchers have undertaken substantial study projects on the impact of energy tariffs and self-generated power supply on company performance in Nigeria (McDonald, 2009; Bergasse *et al.*, 2013; Ogunmodimu, 2013; Akuru *et al*., 2017; Olaoye and Talabi, 2018; Onah *et al*., 2021). Kolade and Ifeanyi (2024) discussed the implications of the April 2024 tariff increase from ₦68/kWh to ₦225/kWh for Band A customers, analyzing its impact on the power sector's liquidity and the broader economy. Adebayo *et al*., (2024) employed threshold regression to analyze how electricity consumption influences Nigeria's economic growth, identifying specific consumption levels that significantly impact GDP. Despite the diverse studies on electricity tariff adjustments, studies assessing its effect on the manufacturing sector in the South-South are still sparing. This obvious gap has occasioned the need for this study to evaluate the associated socio-economic consequences of electricity tariff variations on manufacturing firms in South-South region of Nigeria. The study seeks to provide valuable insights that can inform policy decisions and contribute to the development of a more stable and sustainable electricity sector in Nigeria.

2.0 MATERIALS AND METHODS

The paper investigated the influence of electricity tariff on manufacturing industry in South-South, Nigeria. The paper employed the survey method, specifically a descriptive survey, which involves the use of questionnaires for data collection. A total of twenty-three (23) questions were included in the questionnaire and the questions were divided into four (4) distinct parts. Following the completion of the collecting process, the questionnaire was revised to guarantee that sufficient replies have been rendered and that the responses are consistent with one another. As a result of this, the major data for this study was collected via the use of questionnaires that were given by the researcher in both hard copies and soft copies through the administration of Google forms. In addition, the questionnaire included open-ended questions, which gave respondents the opportunity to contribute explanations on the topic matter. The study also utilized an ex-post-facto design, which involved the collection of secondary data through visits to the Benin electricity

distribution company (BEDC) and the Port Harcourt Electricity Distribution Company (PHDC) during energy audit sessions.

The survey was distributed randomly among manufacturing firms in the South-South Nigeria. The stakeholder theory (Phillips *et al*., 2019; Gutterman, 2023) tool was adopted to aggregate the perspectives of manufacturing firms that use grid-supplied electricity for their activities. Stakeholder theory serves as a theoretical foundation which enables the researcher to identify individuals or groups who may influence or be influenced by a proposed action. The questionnaire was distributed to manufacturing firms in Rivers and Edo States, Nigeria. Respondents at the manufacturing firms were contacted by mail, with telephone interviews potentially undertaken as a follow-up and supplement to the mailing technique. A total of 42 respondents from 10 manufacturing firms in the region were used for the study.

The regression model is grounded in the endogenous growth theory (Pack, 1994; Onyimadu, 2015). The variables were judiciously chosen for their relevance. The literature examined also revealed several factors influencing economic growth. For the sake of clarity, it is posited that each industry or firm will employ an equivalent level of capital and labor. In the context of this study, it is posited that the influence of electricity tariffs on output, whether in terms of industrial output or gross domestic product, functions through total factor productivity. This study employed per capita gross domestic product (PCGDP) as it represents the sole proxy for which extensive trend or time series data is readily available in Nigeria. It is important to note that the amount of electricity consumed does not accurately represent the actual electricity provided. The measure of electricity tariff (ET) is fundamentally determined by the quantity of electricity consumed, which, reflects the potential supply from the PHEDC and BEDC.

3.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 presents the descriptive results pertaining to the inquiries made regarding the evaluation of the effects of increased electricity traffic on the manufacturing sector. The table indicates the frequency of responses, along with percentages and mean scores, which serve to quantify central tendency. The standard deviation assessed the variability of the responses. The structured questionnaire used in the research adopted a 4-point Likert scale.

The first questionnaire item ascertained whether manufacturing firms benefit from a reliable electricity supply for their production processes. The findings show that more than 66% of the participants disclosed that their companies do not benefit from a reliable electricity supply for production, whereas about 33% concurred that they frequently experience a consistent electricity supply. This was further substantiated by the mean score of 2.073, indicating that manufacturing companies do not benefit from a reliable electricity supply for their production needs. This outcome is critical for a developing nation, such as Nigeria that aspires to enhance its industrialization efforts. The second item determined whether the manufacturing firms have adopted the use of contemporary billing systems. The findings show that a significant majority of the participants (about 93%) affirmed their use of modern billing systems within their production facilities, while about 7% have not. The next item evaluated the perspectives of respondents regarding the impact of alterations in electricity tariffs on their companies' overhead costs. The findings show that more than 90% of the participants reported an increase in their companies' overhead costs due to the rise in electricity tariffs. The overhead expenses for about 10% of the participants have not experienced a substantial increase due to the rise in electricity tariffs.

Table 1: Descriptive analysis of impact of electricity tariff on manufacturing firms (Iwuagwu, 2025)

Questionnaire Items	Responses	Freq.	(%)	Mean	S.D
We enjoy steady electricity supply for production.	Strongly Disagree	16	38.1		
	Disagree	12	28.6		
	Agree	10	23.8		
	Strongly Agree	4	9.5		
	Total	**42**	**100.00**	**2.073**	**1.016**
We embrace the use of modern billing system.	Strongly Disagree	0	0.0		
	Disagree	3	7.2		
	Agree	15	35.7		
	Strongly Agree	24	57.1		
	Total	**42**	**100.00**	**3.497**	**0.638**
Our overhead cost is high due to electricity tariff.	Strongly Disagree	0	0.0		
	Disagree	4	9.5		
	Agree	18	42.9		
	Strongly Agree	20	47.6		
	Total	**42**	**100.00**	**3.378**	**0.649**

Questionnaire Items	Responses	Freq.	(%)	Mean	S.D
Increase in electricity tariff has affected our production cost.	Strongly Disagree	0	0.0		
	Disagree	4	9.5		
	Agree	21	50		
	Strongly Agree	17	40.5		
	Total	**42**	**100.00**	**3.318**	**0.641**
Electricity tariff affect our level of productivity.	Strongly Disagree	1	2.4		
	Disagree	3	7.1		
	Agree	18	42.9		
	Strongly Agree	20	47.6		
	Total	**42**	**100.00**	**3.378**	**0.694**

The fourth item evaluated the perspectives of respondents regarding the overall production costs of their companies, influenced by alterations in electricity tariffs. The findings demonstrated that more than 90% of the participants reported an escalation in their companies' production costs due to the rise in electricity tariffs. The production costs for about 9% of the participants have not experienced a substantial increase due to the rise in electricity tariffs. The fifth outcome analyzed the impact of increased electricity tariffs on the productivity of manufacturing enterprises. The findings show that the rise in electricity tariffs has significantly impeded the productivity of a substantial majority of manufacturing firms, with more than 90% of respondents in the affirmative. About 9% of respondents reported that the increase in tariffs has not adversely impacted their productivity levels. The mean score of 3.378 distinctly suggests that a substantial majority of the respondents perceive that the increase in tariffs has profoundly influenced their productivity levels. Again, this outcome raises significant concerns for a developing nation such as Nigeria, where the manufacturing sector is anticipated to serve as the cornerstone of industrialization and socio-economic advancement. A comparison of the percentage responses obtained from each questionnaire item of the descriptive analysis is given in Figure 1.

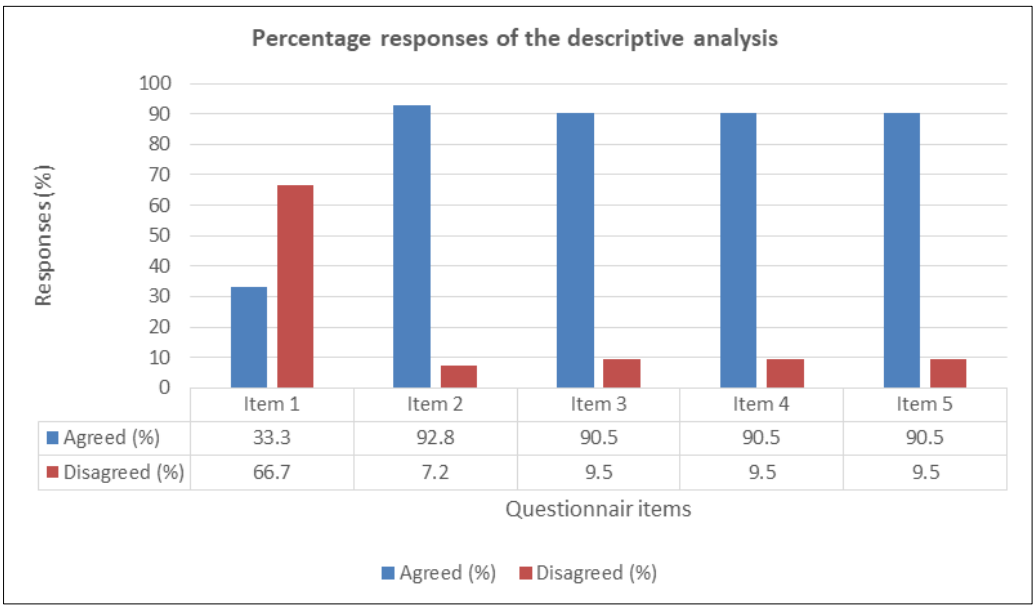

Figure 1: Comparison of responses to the questionnaire items

In summary, the average score values suggested that participants largely concurred with the items presented in the questionnaire. An important finding from this analysis indicated that, notwithstanding the implementation of contemporary billing systems by the majority of manufacturing firms, the rise in electricity tariffs has notably escalated their production costs. The manufacturing sector represents a domain that necessitates a conscious and consistent supply of electricity to facilitate production processes, yet these enterprises have not experienced reliable supply of electricity. This situation has influenced their overall production costs, as they are compelled to resort to alternative sources of power, which are considerably more expensive. It outcomes also disclosed that numerous respondents held the view that the prevailing electricity tariff significantly influences their productivity levels. The standard deviation scores further support the notion that the responses were not significantly varied from the mean, as none of the results exhibited a score substantially exceeding 1.00. Consequently, the findings from the descriptive analysis were deemed satisfactory.

Table 2: Effect of increase in electricity tariff on the manufacturing sector in Nigeria (Iwuagwu, 2025)

Correlations			
		Electricity Tariff	**Manufacturing Sector**
Electricity Tariff	Pearson Correlation	1	0.659**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	42	42
Manufacturing Sector	Pearson Correlation	0.659**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	42	42

**Correlation is significant at the 0.00 level (2-tailed)

The inferential analysis of Table 2, strengthens the observations in Table 1. The Pearson correlation result ($r = 0.659$, $p < 0.01$), reveals a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between electricity tariff increases and production costs in the manufacturing sector.

This relationship is further quantified by the regression analysis of Table 3, which shows that electricity tariff increments explain 43.4% ($R^2 = 0.434$) of the variation in manufacturing production costs. This high explanatory power indicates that electricity tariffs are a dominant determinant of production costs in the sector.

Table 3: Regression results for the manufacturing sector (Iwuagwu, 2025)

Model Summary[b]					
Model	**R**	**R Square**		**Adjusted R Square**	**Std. Error of the Estimate**
1	0.659[a]	0.434		0.433	1.82993
a. Predictors: (Constant), Tariff					
b. Dependent Variable: Manufacturing					
Coefficients[a]					
Model		**Unstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Coefficients**	**t**	**Sig.**
		B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
1	(Constant)	11.852	0.855		13.857	0.000
	Tariff	0.252	0.056	0.659	4.466	0.000
a. Dependent Variable: Manufacturing						

Summarily, the integrated findings demonstrate that increased electricity tariffs, coupled with unreliable power supply, significantly elevate production costs and reduce productivity in Nigeria's manufacturing sector, posing a serious threat to industrial growth as well as social and economic developments.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The findings of this study provide clear empirical evidence that increases in electricity tariffs have a significant and far-reaching impact on the manufacturing sector in Nigeria. The inferential analysis confirms the existence of a strong and positive relationship between electricity tariff increases and manufacturing production costs, indicating that higher electricity prices are closely associated with rising operational expenses within the sector. This relationship highlights the critical role of electricity as a core input in manufacturing activities and underscores the sensitivity of production costs to changes in electricity pricing. The regression results further demonstrate that electricity tariff increases are a major explanatory factor influencing production costs in the manufacturing sector. This suggests that fluctuations in electricity tariffs account for a substantial proportion (43.4%) of the changes observed in manufacturing cost structures. The implication is that electricity pricing policies have a direct and measurable effect on the financial performance and cost efficiency of manufacturing firms. In an environment where manufacturers already contend with infrastructural and logistical challenges, rising electricity tariffs further intensify cost pressures and threaten the sustainability and competitiveness of the sector.

In conclusion, the results indicate that electricity tariff increases constitute a critical constraint on manufacturing growth in Nigeria, with potential adverse effects on productivity, investment decisions and industrial expansion. Based on these findings, it is strongly recommended that future studies adopt a longitudinal research approach to examine the long-term effects of electricity tariff dynamics on manufacturing performance, productivity trends and firm survival, to provide deeper insights that can better inform electricity pricing and industrial policy decisions.

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