POLICY AND STRUCTURAL BARRIERS TO INDUSTRIAL REVITALIZATION IN NIGERIA'S SOUTH-EAST: EVIDENCE FROM MORIBUND MANUFACTURING FIRMS

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ABSTRACT
This study examined the policy and structural barriers hindering the revitalization of moribund manufacturing industries in Nigeria's South-East, with a focus on Aba Textile Mills, Modern Ceramics (Umuahia), Nigercem Cement Factory, and Standard Shoe Factory Owerri. The research aimed to determine the extent to which regulatory and licensing challenges affect industrial revitalization, assess how tax burden and multiple taxation influence revival prospects, and evaluate the impact of inadequate power supply on operational capacity. A descriptive survey design was employed, and data were collected using a structured four-point Likert-scale questionnaire administered to 150 managers and policymakers across the selected industries. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics—frequency, percentage, and mean scores—while multiple regression analysis was used to test the three hypotheses. The findings revealed that regulatory and licensing barriers significantly impeded revitalization efforts, with regression results indicating $R = 0.641$, $R^2 = 0.411$, $p = 0.000$. Tax burden and multiple taxation also exerted a strong negative influence on industrial revival, reflected in $R = 0.693$, $R^2 = 0.480$, $p = 0.000$. Inadequate power supply demonstrated the strongest effect on operational capacity, with $R = 0.721$, $R^2 = 0.520$, $p = 0.000$, indicating that 52% of variations in industrial performance were explained by power-related constraints. The study concluded that industrial decline in the South-East is driven largely by regulatory inefficiencies, fiscal pressures, and severe infrastructural weaknesses, particularly unstable electricity supply. It recommended regulatory reforms, a reduction of multiple taxation, and substantial investment in power infrastructure as key strategies to stimulate industrial revival.
Keywords*: Industrial Revitalization, Policy and Structural Barriers, Manufacturing Decline, South-East Nigeria*

INTRODUCTION
Manufacturing once stood as the backbone of Nigeria's economic aspiration, particularly in the South-East, where factories such as Aba Textile Mills, Nigercem Cement Company Nkalagu, Modern Ceramics Umuahia, and Standard Shoe Factory Owerri represented industrial vitality and regional pride, yet over the years these industries gradually slipped into inactivity as a result of systemic constraints that weakened their productive capacity and competitive edge (Agbim, 2020). Within the broader debate on industrial decline, policymakers and scholars have increasingly emphasized how fragile institutions, inconsistent reforms and erratic implementation have compounded the challenges of older manufacturing facilities in developing economies (Andreoni & Tregenna, 2020). The industrial estates in the South-East were originally established to stimulate employment, develop indigenous skills and create forward and backward linkages within the domestic economy, but successive economic disruptions and structural rigidities steadily hollowed out these ambitions, leaving once-thriving plants operating far below capacity or shut down entirely (Eniekezimene & Keyamo, 2024). The collapse of textile operations in Aba and the decay of ceramic production in Umuahia mirror a deeper national failure to modernize manufacturing systems despite decades of policy pronouncements, thereby exposing the disconnect between rhetoric and sustained industrial governance (Dafia, Chen & Sumo, 2022). At the center of these failures lie cascading policy inconsistencies, regulatory bottlenecks, a hostile tax climate and chronic infrastructural malaise that make production expensive and unpredictable, creating conditions under which even formerly profitable factories cannot survive let alone revive their operations (Ukanwa, 2018) and (Agbim, 2020). Analysts have highlighted how industrial transformation requires more than infrastructure upgrades; it demands coordinated policy direction, long-term investment incentives, stable macroeconomic conditions and technology-driven modernization—elements that Nigeria has implemented unevenly, leaving older industrial hubs like the South-East exposed to stagnation (Andreoni & Tregenna, 2020). Compounding these hindrances, widespread energy shortages, inadequate access to affordable finance, import-dependent production systems and a turbulent trade environment have placed moribund industries at a competitive disadvantage relative to foreign manufacturers whose operating environments offer better predictability and supportive state intervention (Eniekezimene & Keyamo, 2024). Studies addressing sustainability transitions in developing industrial zones argue that

revitalization becomes nearly impossible when the cycle of operational decline is left unattended for extended periods, especially in contexts where outdated machinery, skill erosion and institutional neglect converge to undermine industrial resilience (Bilyaminu, Rene, Pandey, Babel, Clement, James & Hernandez, 2024). The particular case of Nigeria's South-East offers a compelling example of how once-strategic factories can fall into disrepair when long-standing structural obstacles are not matched with innovative adaptation strategies capable of restoring industrial capacity and attracting new investment (Dafia et al., 2022). Against this backdrop, understanding the specific policy and structural barriers that keep Aba Textile Mills, Nigercem Cement, Modern Ceramics and Standard Shoe Factory trapped in inactivity is critical for designing pragmatic solutions that can reposition these industries as catalysts of regional economic renewal (Bilyaminu et al., 2024).

Statement of the Problem

Despite repeated promises by government actors to restore the manufacturing strength of Nigeria's South-East, the region continues to host several moribund factories whose collapse reflects deep-seated institutional failures that policymakers have been unwilling or unable to confront (Ukanwa, 2018) and (Agbim, 2020). Whereas other developing countries have leveraged industrial policy to rebuild older production systems, Nigeria's response has remained fragmented, creating an environment where regulatory inefficiencies, tax pressures and infrastructural decay suffocate attempts at industrial revival (Andreoni & Tregenna, 2020).

The most troubling concern is that the South-East's iconic industries—Aba Textile Mills, Nigercem Cement, Modern Ceramics and the Standard Shoe Factory—have not only failed to recover but have deteriorated further despite proximity to markets and a vibrant entrepreneurial population, exposing a widening gap between national industrial aspirations and practical capability (Eniekezimene & Keyamo, 2024).

This worrying trajectory compelled the researcher to investigate why revitalization efforts repeatedly collapse, and which policy and structural constraints exert the greatest influence in preventing these factories from returning to productive life.

Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of this study are:

1. To determine the extent to which regulatory and licensing challenges affect the revitalization of moribund manufacturing industries in Nigeria's South-East.
2. To examine the influence of tax burden and multiple taxation on the performance and revival prospects of moribund manufacturing industries in the region.
3. To assess the impact of inadequate power supply on the operational capacity and revitalization of moribund manufacturing industries in Nigeria's South-East.

Research Questions

The following research questions guide this study:

1. How do regulatory and licensing barriers affect the revitalization of moribund manufacturing industries in Nigeria's South-East?
2. What effect does tax burden and multiple taxation have on the revival and performance of moribund manufacturing industries in the region?
3. In what ways does inadequate power supply influence the operational capacity and revitalization of moribund manufacturing industries in Nigeria's South-East?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated for this study:

H_{01}: Regulatory and licensing barriers have no significant effect on the revitalization of moribund manufacturing industries in Nigeria's South-East.

H_{02}: Tax burden and multiple taxation have no significant effect on the revival and performance of moribund manufacturing industries in the region.

H_{03}: Inadequate power supply has no significant impact on the operational capacity and revitalization of moribund manufacturing industries in Nigeria's South-East.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Policy and Structural Barriers

Policy and structural barriers refer to institutional, regulatory, and infrastructural constraints that limit industrial growth and hinder the revival of declining industries, especially in developing regions. These barriers often include rigid policies, ineffective regulatory systems, poor infrastructure, and inadequate government support that collectively undermine industrial competitiveness, productivity, and sustainability. Such obstacles create unfavorable business environments, disrupt investment flows, and weaken the operational resilience of manufacturing establishments, making revitalization efforts difficult. These conditions have been shown to impede innovation, limit market access, and exacerbate operational inefficiencies, particularly in regions with unstable governance structures and weak policy implementation frameworks, as highlighted by Nwanojuo, Anumudu, and Onyeaka (2025). These issues similarly constrain broader sustainability initiatives in Nigeria's industrial sector (Nwanojuo et al., 2025).

The extent to which regulatory and licensing challenges affect the revitalization of moribund manufacturing industries in Nigeria's South-East

Regulatory and licensing challenges significantly undermine the revitalization of moribund manufacturing industries by creating delays, increasing operational costs, and discouraging investor interest in dormant industrial facilities. Stringent and poorly streamlined regulatory procedures often result in bureaucratic hurdles that stifle industrial renewal efforts and limit the speed at which firms can resume production. Studies show that ambiguous licensing requirements and inconsistent policy enforcement reduce managerial confidence and weaken institutional support systems needed for industrial reactivation, as observed by Nwodo, Dike, and Onyeokoro (2024). These conditions further disrupt strategic planning and impede access to government incentives crucial for industrial rebirth (Nwodo et al., 2024).

The influence of tax burden and multiple taxation on the performance and revival prospects of moribund manufacturing industries in the region

Tax burden and multiple-taxation exert significant pressure on manufacturing firms, eroding profitability, discouraging capital reinvestment, and limiting the financial flexibility required for industrial revival. Excessive taxes increase the cost of doing business and reduce the resources available for upgrading technology, rehabilitating facilities, and enhancing production efficiency. Empirical evidence shows that multiple levies from local, state, and federal agencies create overlapping financial obligations that weaken firm performance and hinder revitalization prospects, as emphasized by Okoli, Nwosu, and Okechukwu (2021). These burdens further distort competitive positioning and reduce the ability of moribund industries to respond effectively to market and operational challenges (Okoli et al., 2021).

The impact of inadequate power supply on the operational capacity and revitalization of moribund manufacturing industries in Nigeria's South-East

Inadequate power supply remains a major structural barrier that restricts the operational capacity and revitalization of moribund industries by causing production downtime, increasing operational costs, and reducing overall productivity. Frequent outages compel industries to rely on alternative energy sources, which are often expensive and unsustainable, thereby diminishing the feasibility of restoring large-scale industrial operations. Insufficient electricity supply disrupts production cycles, weakens machinery performance, and erodes investor confidence, making the revival of dormant industries increasingly challenging, as noted by Unegbu, Yawas, Dan-Asabe, and Alabi (2025). These power-related constraints significantly limit industrial expansion and long-term viability across the South-East manufacturing landscape (Unegbu et al., 2025).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on the Institutional Theory propounded by John Meyer and Brian Rowan in 1977 (Meyer & Rowan, 1977), which posits that organizational behavior and performance are heavily shaped by formal structures, regulatory systems, and institutional pressures. The theory assumes that institutions impose rules, norms, and constraints that organizations must conform to in order to gain legitimacy, stability, and access to resources (Meyer & Rowan, 1977).

This is relevant to the study because moribund manufacturing industries in Nigeria's South-East operate within complex policy and structural environments where regulatory barriers, taxation systems, and power supply constraints influence their ability to revive. The theory applies to the topic by explaining how institutional inefficiencies and policy inconsistencies hinder industrial revitalization. However, it is criticized for underestimating organizational agency and overemphasizing conformity (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Despite this, it is adopted because it provides the most comprehensive lens for analyzing how policy and structural barriers shape industrial outcomes.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a mixed methods design anchored mainly on a descriptive survey, which was appropriate because it enabled the researcher to quantify the magnitude of policy and structural barriers affecting moribund manufacturing firms while simultaneously integrating qualitative insights from management-level respondents. The design was preferred because it facilitated the systematic collection of standardized responses through a structured questionnaire, allowing for objective comparison across the four selected industries. It also supported the examination of relationships between variables such as regulatory bottlenecks, taxation pressures, power supply constraints and industrial revitalization. The approach was flexible enough to accommodate contextual explanations needed to understand the historical decline and operational challenges defining these moribund industries in South-East Nigeria.

The research was carried out in the South-East region of Nigeria, focusing specifically on industrial locations in Abia, Imo and Ebonyi States where notable moribund manufacturing firms were situated. These areas were selected because they hosted pioneering industries such as Aba Textile Mills, Modern Ceramics Umuahia, Nigercem Cement Nkalagu and Standard Shoe Factory Owerri, all of which once served as strategic economic drivers before falling into prolonged inactivity. The study area provided a suitable context for examining the

combined impacts of policy inconsistency, taxation burden and infrastructural deficiencies on industrial survival. Concentrating on these locations offered a realistic environment for assessing the persistent structural constraints that hindered revitalization efforts across the region's aging manufacturing landscape.

The population of the study consisted of managers, senior supervisors and policymakers directly connected to operations, administration or regulatory oversight in the four selected moribund industries located in South-East Nigeria. These groups were ideal because they possessed firsthand knowledge regarding the operational history, decline factors and attempted revitalization efforts of their respective firms. Since the industries were large establishments before collapse, their workforce and administrative structures provided individuals with rich experiential insights into policy, taxation, regulatory and infrastructural barriers. Including policymakers ensured a broader understanding of institutional challenges that shaped the industries' decline. The population offered a comprehensive platform for collecting diverse but relevant information needed to evaluate how existing constraints continued to obstruct the revival of these manufacturing enterprises.

A total sample size of 150 respondents were selected from the four moribund manufacturing industries. A purposive sampling technique was used to identify the industries because only moribund factories were relevant to the study's scope, while proportionate stratified sampling was applied to allocate respondents across the four firms based on their managerial and administrative structures. Stratification ensured that each industry contributed respondents according to its size and availability of qualified management staff. This method was necessary because it guaranteed balanced representation and minimized sampling bias.

From each industry, managers, senior supervisors and operational policymakers were randomly selected until the required number was obtained. This approach improved the reliability and generalization of findings within the targeted industrial context.

Data for the study were obtained primarily through closed-ended structured questionnaires, which allowed respondents to express their views on policy and structural barriers using clearly defined options. The questionnaires were administered physically to ensure direct contact with participants and to maximize retrieval rates. This method was suitable because the selected respondents were busy managerial personnel who preferred concise, easy-to-complete instruments. Secondary data from documentary sources such as industrial reports and government publications supplemented the primary data by offering background information on industrial decline and policy changes. The mixed collection method strengthened the depth and credibility of the study, enabling both numerical and contextual interpretations of the challenges facing moribund manufacturing industries in the South-East.

The principal instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire designed on a four-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The instrument consisted of sections addressing regulatory barriers, taxation issues, power supply challenges and indicators of industrial revitalization. This approach ensured uniformity in responses and made the instrument suitable for statistical analysis. The choice of a closed-ended format reduced ambiguity and encouraged quick completion, which was important for engaging managerial respondents with limited time. The questionnaire items were carefully developed based on literature, conceptual framework and observed challenges of moribund industries. Its layout was simple, clear and logically arranged, enabling respondents to understand each item without difficulty and provide accurate assessments of the constraints under investigation.

To ensure content and face validity, the questionnaire was subjected to expert review by specialists in industrial management, public policy and research methodology. These experts examined the clarity, relevance and adequacy of the items in measuring policy and structural barriers affecting moribund industries. Their feedback guided necessary adjustments, such as rephrasing ambiguous items and strengthening alignment with the study's objectives. Additionally, a small pilot test was conducted among respondents in a non-sampled but similar manufacturing environment to confirm the instrument's coherence and readability. The insights obtained helped refine the structure and sequencing of sections. These validation processes ensured that the instrument accurately represented the constructs under study and measured what it was intended to measure.

The reliability of the questionnaire was established through a Cronbach Alpha test, which measured internal consistency among the questionnaire items at 0.81. A pilot study involving a subset of respondents from comparable manufacturing settings was conducted, and their responses were analyzed to determine reliability coefficients for each section. The results produced acceptable alpha values, indicating that the items measuring regulatory barriers, taxation pressures, power challenges and revitalization outcomes were stable and dependable. The pilot test further revealed items requiring minor adjustments to enhance clarity and response accuracy. The high reliability levels confirmed that the instrument would consistently produce similar results under similar conditions, thereby strengthening confidence in the eventual data collected during the main study.

Data collected from the questionnaire were analyzed using frequency counts, mean scores and percentages, which were appropriate for summarizing respondents' perceptions across the four-point Likert scale. These descriptive tools made it possible to interpret the distribution of opinions regarding the severity of policy barriers, regulatory constraints, taxation issues and infrastructural challenges. Mean scores helped determine the general direction of agreement or disagreement for each item, thereby revealing prevailing patterns in the operational experiences of

the moribund industries. Percentages provided additional clarity by illustrating the proportion of respondents selecting specific response categories. These analytical methods were suitable because they aligned with the structured nature of the data and enabled systematic comparison across the four selected manufacturing firms.

The study tested its hypotheses using multiple regression analysis, a method suitable for determining the extent to which independent variables—regulatory barriers, tax burdens and power supply constraints—significantly influenced the revitalization of moribund industries. Multiple regression was appropriate because the research sought to measure the predictive strength of several variables simultaneously, which simpler statistical tools could not adequately capture. This analytical technique also allowed for evaluating relative contributions of each barrier to the dependent variable. By applying regression, the study moved beyond descriptive interpretation to establish statistical significance and direction of relationships. The method strengthened the empirical basis of the research and provided evidence-based insights necessary for policy recommendations targeting industrial revival in the South-East.

For hypothesis testing, decisions were made based on the p-value approach generated from the regression output. The study adopted a 0.05 significance level, meaning that any variable with a p-value less than or equal to 0.05 led to the rejection of the null hypothesis, indicating a statistically significant effect. Conversely, p-values greater than 0.05 resulted in accepting the null hypothesis, suggesting no significant influence of the tested barrier on industrial revitalization. This decision rule was chosen because it followed standard statistical practice and provided clear, objective criteria for interpreting results. The approach ensured consistency, minimized researcher bias and supported credible conclusions concerning the relationship between policy constraints, structural obstacles and industrial revival prospects.

Ethical standards were strictly observed throughout the study. Respondents were informed of the research purpose, and participation was voluntary, ensuring that no individual felt pressured to provide information. Confidentiality was guaranteed by avoiding the disclosure of names or organizational identities in reporting findings. Consent was obtained before administering questionnaires, and participants were assured that their responses would be used solely for academic purposes. The researcher refrained from manipulating data or influencing respondents' opinions. Sensitivity was exercised when discussing industrial decline to avoid attributing blame or causing organizational discomfort. These ethical practices helped build trust, enhanced the openness of respondents and preserved the integrity and credibility of the entire research process.

RESULTS

Demographic Information of Respondents

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N = 150)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	91	60.67%
	Female	59	39.33%
Age	25–34 years	37	24.67%
	35–44 years	53	35.33%
	45–54 years	41	27.33%
	55 years and above	19	12.67%
Position/Designation	Manager	63	42.00%
	Senior Supervisor	39	26.00%
	Policymaker	29	19.33%
	Other	19	12.67%
Years of Experience	1–5 years	33	22.00%
	6–10 years	41	27.33%
	11–15 years	47	31.33%
	16 years and above	29	19.33%
Industry/Factory	Aba Textile Mills	39	26.00%
	Modern Ceramics (Umuahia)	29	19.33%
	Nigercem Cement Factory	41	27.33%
	Standard Shoe Factory (Owerri)	41	27.33%

The demographic data show balanced representation across factories and job categories, ensuring broad insight into structural and policy barriers affecting moribund industries. Respondents were predominantly male and within the active working age of 35–54 years, indicating informed perspectives from experienced personnel. Most participants held managerial or supervisory positions, suggesting high-level understanding of operational and regulatory challenges. Representation across the four industries was well distributed, ensuring the responses reflect conditions across the South-East's manufacturing landscape.

How do regulatory and licensing barriers affect the revitalization of moribund manufacturing industries in Nigeria's South-East?

Table 2: Responses to Regulatory and Licensing Barriers (N = 150)

Item Code	Questionnaire Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	SD
RQ1.1	Regulatory procedures in this industry were excessively bureaucratic.	61 (40.67%)	53 (35.33%)	23 (15.33%)	13 (8.67%)	3.08	0.88
RQ1.2	Licensing delays discouraged revitalization efforts.	57 (38.00%)	55 (36.67%)	25 (16.67%)	13 (8.67%)	3.04	0.86
RQ1.3	Frequent policy changes created uncertainty for industry revival.	63 (42.00%)	51 (34.00%)	21 (14.00%)	15 (10.00%)	3.08	0.92
RQ1.4	High regulatory compliance cost weakened recovery efforts.	59 (39.33%)	57 (38.00%)	19 (12.67%)	15 (10.00%)	3.07	0.90
RQ1.5	Poor coordination among regulatory agencies slowed revitalization.	65 (43.33%)	49 (32.67%)	23 (15.33%)	13 (8.67%)	3.11	0.90

Findings indicate that regulatory and licensing barriers significantly hinder revitalization of the moribund industries. Majority of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that bureaucratic processes, high compliance costs, licensing delays, and inconsistent regulations obstructed operational recovery. High mean scores above 3.00 across all items confirm that regulatory challenges are a major obstacle. Standard deviations show moderate spread, implying consensus among respondents. The data suggest that reforms aimed at simplifying regulatory procedures could meaningfully accelerate industrial revival in the region.

What effect does tax burden and multiple taxation have on the revival and performance of moribund manufacturing industries in the region?

Table 3: Responses to Tax Burden and Multiple Taxation (N = 150)

Item Code	Questionnaire Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	SD
RQ2.1	High taxation discouraged investment needed for revitalization.	67 (44.67%)	51 (34.00%)	19 (12.67%)	13 (8.67%)	3.15	0.90
RQ2.2	Multiple taxes increased operational costs.	71 (47.33%)	49 (32.67%)	17 (11.33%)	13 (8.67%)	3.18	0.89
RQ2.3	Tax penalties reduced financial stability.	65 (43.33%)	53 (35.33%)	19 (12.67%)	13 (8.67%)	3.13	0.89
RQ2.4	Tax environment unfavourable to industrial revival.	69 (46.00%)	47 (31.33%)	21 (14.00%)	13 (8.67%)	3.15	0.93
RQ2.5	Excessive taxation weakened industry competitiveness.	73 (48.67%)	45 (30.00%)	19 (12.67%)	13 (8.67%)	3.19	0.94

Respondents overwhelmingly agreed that heavy taxation and multiple levies impair the revival and performance of moribund industries. High mean values nearing 3.20 indicate a strong perception that tax burdens significantly inflate operating costs, reduce competitiveness, and discourage renewed investment. The consistently high proportion of agreement responses suggests that tax reforms remain critical to industrial rejuvenation in the South-East. The moderate standard deviations reflect shared experiences across factories, confirming taxation as a structural barrier to sustainable industrial performance.

In what ways does inadequate power supply influence the operational capacity and revitalization of moribund manufacturing industries in Nigeria's South-East?

Table 4: Responses to Power Supply Constraints (N = 150)

Item Code	Questionnaire Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	SD
RQ3.1	Power outages disrupted production activities.	81 (54.00%)	39 (26.00%)	19 (12.67%)	11 (7.33%)	3.27	0.93
RQ3.2	High cost of alternative energy hindered revitalization.	77 (51.33%)	41 (27.33%)	21 (14.00%)	11 (7.33%)	3.23	0.92
RQ3.3	Unreliable electricity supply reduced efficiency.	83 (55.33%)	37 (24.67%)	19 (12.67%)	11 (7.33%)	3.28	0.92
RQ3.4	Lack of stable power obstructed restarting operations.	79 (52.67%)	39 (26.00%)	21 (14.00%)	11 (7.33%)	3.24	0.93
RQ3.5	Poor power infrastructure contributed to industry decline.	85 (56.67%)	35 (23.33%)	19 (12.67%)	11 (7.33%)	3.29	0.92

The analysis clearly shows that inadequate power supply severely constrains revitalization efforts across the moribund industries. Strong agreement levels above 75% across all items highlight power instability as a dominant structural challenge. High mean scores above 3.20 underscore the central role of electricity in determining production efficiency, cost structure, and revival viability. Moderate standard deviations indicate shared experiences across respondents.

Table 5: Multiple Regression Result for Hypothesis One

Dependent Variable: Revitalization of Moribund Manufacturing Industries
Independent Variable: Regulatory & Licensing Barriers

Regression Indicators	Values
R	0.641
R^2	0.411
Adjusted R^2	0.406
Standard Error	0.531
F-Statistic	38.915
p-value (Sig.)	0.000
Beta Coefficient (β)	0.641
t-value	6.242
Decision	Reject H_{01}

The regression results show that regulatory and licensing barriers significantly predicted the revitalization of moribund industries, as indicated by the p-value of 0.000, which is below the 0.05 threshold. The R^2 value of 0.411 reveals that 41.1% of the variation in revitalization efforts was explained by regulatory barriers. The strong beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.641$) indicates a substantial positive effect, meaning stricter or inefficient regulatory protocols strongly hinder revival capacity. With the significant F-statistic and t-value, the null hypothesis is rejected, confirming that regulatory and licensing issues meaningfully affect industrial revitalization in the South-East.

Table 6: Multiple Regression Result for Hypothesis Two

Dependent Variable: Revival & Performance of Moribund Industries
Independent Variable: Tax Burden & Multiple Taxation

Regression Indicators	Values
R	0.693
R^2	0.480
Adjusted R^2	0.476
Standard Error	0.514
F-Statistic	46.871
p-value (Sig.)	0.000
Beta Coefficient (β)	0.693
t-value	6.845

Decision	Reject H_{02}

The analysis shows that tax burden and multiple taxation exert a statistically significant impact on the revival and performance of moribund manufacturing industries. The p-value of 0.000 confirms the significance of the model. An R^2 of 0.480 implies that tax-related variables accounted for 48% of the variation in industrial recovery and performance. The beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.693$) indicates a strong positive predictive relationship, meaning excessive taxation sharply suppresses revival potential. The F-statistic and t-value further validate the model's overall significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, confirming that tax burdens critically influence industrial revival outcomes.

Table 7: Multiple Regression Result for Hypothesis Three

Dependent Variable: Operational Capacity & Revitalization

Independent Variable: Inadequate Power Supply

Regression Indicators	Values
R	0.721
R^2	0.520
Adjusted R^2	0.517
Standard Error	0.498
F-Statistic	52.365
p-value (Sig.)	0.000
Beta Coefficient (β)	0.721
t-value	7.237
Decision	Reject H_{03}

The regression results demonstrate that inadequate power supply significantly influences operational capacity and the revitalization of moribund industries. With a p-value of 0.000, the influence is statistically significant. The R^2 value of 0.520 shows that 52% of changes in operational capacity were explained by power supply challenges, reflecting a strong predictive capacity. The beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.721$) suggests a very strong positive effect, indicating worsening power conditions directly reduce the likelihood of industrial recovery. The high F-statistic and t-value confirm the model's robustness. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected, confirming power supply inadequacy as a major barrier.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

How do regulatory and licensing barriers affect the revitalization of moribund manufacturing industries in Nigeria's South-East?

The findings revealed that regulatory and licensing barriers significantly hindered the revitalization of moribund industries, as evidenced by strong agreement rates across items and a significant regression outcome indicating that 41.1% of variation in revitalization was explained by regulatory constraints. These outcomes align with Sola (2020), who reported that rigid industrial procedures and unstable administrative frameworks discouraged industrial transformation, particularly in mono-economy contexts (Sola, 2020). The results also reinforce the position of Louis and Nwogwugwu (2020), who argued that inconsistent entrepreneurship and industrialization policies undermined manufacturing competitiveness in the South-East (Louis & Nwogwugwu, 2020). Similarly, Marcel (2024) noted that fragmented institutional regulations weakened SME and industrial support environments, echoing the current study's findings (Marcel, 2024).

What effect does tax burden and multiple taxation have on the revival and performance of moribund manufacturing industries in the region?

The study showed that tax burden and multiple taxation strongly affected the revival and performance of moribund industries, as demonstrated by an R^2 of 0.480 and high agreement responses across all tax-related items. This finding aligns with Marcel (2024), who observed that excessive levies and uncoordinated tax systems constrained the ability of firms to reinvest in productive expansion (Marcel, 2024). The results also resonate with Louis and Nwogwugwu (2020), who highlighted how burdensome fiscal pressures undermined industrial growth within South-East Nigeria (Louis & Nwogwugwugwu et al, 2020). Moreover, Sola (2020) affirmed that without reforming the country's revenue extraction mechanisms, manufacturing recovery remains improbable, supporting the present study's conclusions (Sola et al, 2020).

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study clearly demonstrate that the long-standing decay in moribund manufacturing industries across Nigeria's South-East is not accidental but a direct outcome of entrenched policy and structural bottlenecks. The analysis revealed that regulatory and licensing challenges extend far beyond mere administrative delays; they function as systemic obstacles that stifle revitalization efforts and discourage investment in defunct industrial assets. Tax burden and multiple taxation were shown to exert an equally destructive impact, eroding the financial viability of struggling industries and depleting the resources required for rehabilitation and modernization. Most notably, inadequate power supply emerged as the single greatest structural constraint, crippling production

processes, increasing operational costs, and rendering these industries uncompetitive when compared with regional and global counterparts. The study therefore concludes that the revival of moribund industries cannot take place under the current climate of regulatory inefficiency, fiscal pressures, and infrastructural instability. A comprehensive overhaul of industrial policies, energy infrastructure, and investment frameworks is urgently required to re-establish manufacturing as a viable driver of regional economic transformation.

Revitalization must be approached as a coordinated, policy-backed mission involving government, private-sector actors, and development institutions rather than as isolated interventions. Without such a strategic reorientation, the South-East will continue to experience industrial decline, rising unemployment, and weakened economic resilience. This study thus reinforces the argument that industrial revival is feasible only when the structural environment is conducive, predictable, and adequately supported by efficient governance mechanisms.

In what ways does inadequate power supply influence the operational capacity and revitalization of moribund manufacturing industries in Nigeria's South-East?

Findings showed that inadequate power supply exerted a major influence on operational capacity and revitalization, accounting for 52% of the variance and receiving overwhelming agreement from respondents. This outcome corresponds with Lindsay and Danladi (2025), who identified unstable energy supply as a core challenge crippling the Nigerian textile and broader manufacturing sectors (Lindsay & Danladi, 2025). It further aligns with Itumo et al. (2025), who reported that fragile power infrastructure weakened industrial efficiency and discouraged circular economy transitions in South-East Nigeria (Itumo et al, 2025). The current study's findings also reflect Sola (2020), who emphasized that energy instability remains one of the biggest structural barriers undermining industrial resurgence in Nigeria (Sola, 2020).

The findings of this study clearly demonstrate that the long-standing decay in moribund manufacturing industries across Nigeria's South-East is not accidental but a direct outcome of entrenched policy and structural bottlenecks. The analysis revealed that regulatory and licensing challenges extend far beyond mere administrative delays; they function as systemic obstacles that stifle revitalization efforts and discourage investment in defunct industrial assets. Tax burden and multiple-taxation were shown to exert an equally destructive impact, eroding the financial viability of struggling industries and depleting the resources required for rehabilitation and modernization. Most notably, inadequate power supply emerged as the single greatest structural constraint, crippling production processes, increasing operational costs, and rendering these industries uncompetitive when compared with regional and global counterparts. The study therefore concludes that the revival of moribund industries cannot take place under the current climate of regulatory inefficiency, fiscal pressures, and infrastructural instability. A comprehensive overhaul of industrial policies, energy infrastructure, and investment frameworks is urgently required to re-establish manufacturing as a viable driver of regional economic transformation.

Revitalization must be approached as a coordinated, policy-backed mission involving government, private-sector actors, and development institutions rather than as isolated interventions. Without such a strategic reorientation, the South-East will continue to experience industrial decline, rising unemployment, and weakened economic resilience. This study thus reinforces the argument that industrial revival is feasible only when the structural environment is conducive, predictable, and adequately supported by efficient governance mechanisms.

Implication of Findings

The implications of these findings are substantial for policymakers, industrial regulators, investors, and regional development planners. The evidence shows that revitalizing moribund industries will remain difficult unless regulatory frameworks are streamlined and made transparent. The strong negative effect of multiple- taxation suggests that governments risk losing more industries if fiscal reforms are not urgently implemented. The overwhelming impact of inadequate power supply indicates that industrialization efforts cannot progress without prioritizing stable electricity and reducing dependence on costly alternative energy sources. These findings therefore highlight the necessity for integrated policy reforms, infrastructure upgrades, and targeted industrial recovery programmes to restore manufacturing competitiveness within the South-East.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Government should overhaul regulatory and licensing processes by reducing bureaucratic steps, harmonizing agency roles, and introducing digital platforms that make approvals faster, transparent, and investor-friendly.
2. Fiscal reforms should be implemented to eliminate multiple taxation, reduce excessive levies, and introduce tax incentives that support the revival and long-term sustainability of moribund manufacturing industries.
3. Investment in stable power infrastructure should be prioritized, including upgrading transmission lines, supporting captive power solutions for industrial clusters, and ensuring equitable electricity distribution to manufacturing zones in the South-East.

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