

## Socio-Political and Economic Transformation of the Peasantry in Contemporary Nigeria

**Onuoha, Peter Chuks**

Department of Political science  
Rivers State University  
[charichuks@gmail.com](mailto:charichuks@gmail.com)  
08038929131

**Okore, Michael Okiemute**

Department of Political Science  
Ignatius Ajuru University of Education  
[okoremichael@yahoo.com](mailto:okoremichael@yahoo.com)  
08132030307

DOI: [10.56201/jpslr.vol.11.no5.2025.pg86.96](https://doi.org/10.56201/jpslr.vol.11.no5.2025.pg86.96)

---

### **Abstract**

*The study explores socio-political and economic transformation of the peasantry with emphasis in contemporary Nigeria. The peasants play a pivotal role in sustenance and stability of the Nigeria state due to their economic activities; production of food basically for family consumption and in some cases, exchange in the market. However, despite the enormous role played by the peasants, the existence of peasant is been threatened in Nigeria due to some factors such as climate change, industrialisation and poor leadership which have facilitated the transformation of peasantry in Nigeria. The social class theory propounded by Karl Marx in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was deployed for the study. Secondary method of data collection was utilised for the study; it involves the collection of data from textbooks, journals and articles among others. The study found out that there are some factors that propel the transformation of peasants in Nigeria; climate change, industrialisation, overdependence on oil and leadership failure etc. Nigeria today depends largely on crude oil production as the mainstay of its economy. Oil accounted for about 80% of Nigeria's foreign exchange. The agricultural sector has been neglected as a result of oil boom. The study therefore recommends that there is need for Nigerian government to diversify its economy from oil based economy to include other sectors such as the agricultural sector to halt the migration of peasant from rural areas in search for paid jobs as a result of opportunities created by oil boom. This can be achieved by developing the agricultural sector.*

---

### **Introduction**

The term peasantry has often been misconstrued or used interchangeably with terms such as rural cultivator, or farmer, but they are not the same. A rural cultivator is that person that produces basically for family consumption. A farmer is that person that produces basically for the market. Farmer is a capitalist whose aim of production is for the market to make profit. The farmer employs the services of labourer and equipment to aid his farming activities. A peasant can be defined as a group of smallholder farmers who depend mostly on family labour in cultivation and who also apply low level scientific and technological knowledge to farming activities. The peasantry are thus characterised by subsistent (use value) production. Teodor (1973 cited in Edelman, 2013)

defined peasantry as having four essential and inter-linked facets; the family farm as the basic multi-functional unit of social organisation, land husbandry and usually animal rearing as the main means of livelihood, a specific traditional culture closely linked with the way of life of small rural communities and multi-directional subjection to powerful outsiders. In addition, Teodor recognised the existence of a number of analytically marginal groups which share with the 'hard core' of the peasantry most but not all of its major characteristics. These included the agricultural labourer lacking a fully-fledged farm, a rural craftsman holding little or no land, the frontier squatter or the armed peasant who at times escaped centuries of political submission along frontiers or in the mountains, as well as pastoralists and peasant-workers in modern industrial communities (Teodor, 1973 cited in Edelman, 2013).

Concurring with the overall thrust of Teodor definition, Sidney (2010) noted that the fact that peasantries nowhere form a homogeneous mass or agglomerate but are always and everywhere typified themselves by internal differentiation along many lines. He also pointed to the need for middle-range definitions of peasantries and of peasant societies; definitions that fall somewhere between real peasant societies 'on the ground,' so to speak, and the widest-ranging level of definitional statement, adequate to describe all of them (Sidney, 2010).

The contribution of peasant to the economic development of any society cannot be overemphasised. In Europe and other developed societies including developing societies, the peasant is a veritable instrument for wealth creation as they ensure the survival and stability of family which lead to the overall stability of the state at large. Despite the enormous role played by peasant in Nigeria, the existence of peasant has been threaten by several forces such as colonialism, industrialisation and a shift from agriculture to oil production amongst others.

Before colonialism, the nature of Nigeria society was mainly agricultural and there were a large number of peasants in the country. Prior to colonialism, ownership and utilisation of lands was relatively common, though it was more common to find large tracts of lands owned and managed by communities. British Colonial policies affected tenure and the communal land systems that were previously in practice. Measures such as land appropriation, taxation, and the introduction of cash crops that favoured the big farmers that acted to the differentiation of peasants where introduced by the British colonialist. With Nigeria gaining independence in 1960, the discovery of oil saw a change in the priorities of the country and saw the terms of trade for farm produce lowering. This led to the process of pauperisation of many peasant farmers who were obliged to sell their produce to the newly formed capitalist farms.

In the 1980s-90s, the structural adjustment policies that were advocated by the World Bank/IMF for liberalising the economy of developing nations to make them more competitive equally affected many peasant farmers negatively by doing away with agricultural subsidies and structures for safety nets for the poor. This led to increased inequality as a result of having more money to invest on capital. Currently, most of them are farmers and most of the farming done in Nigeria is peasants and, therefore, mainly for sustenance. This is because many peasants have shifted focus towards looking for employment within cities. Common factors that have impeded peasants in Nigeria are; climatic shifts, persistent land tenure question and absence of social, economic and infrastructural/ agricultural growth which define the socio-economic development of Nigeria peasantry.

The objectives of the study are to; examine the character of peasants in Nigeria; analyse the peasant's contributions to socio-economic development in Nigeria; and discuss the factors that are responsible for peasant transformation in contemporary Nigeria.

In addition to this introduction, this paper is structure into four sections; section one; methodology and theoretical framework, section two; literature review, section three results and discussion and the last section focuses on conclusion and recommendations.

## **SECTION ONE**

### **Methodology**

The historical research design was adopted for the study. Scholars are of the view that the historical research design is advantageous in several ways. For instance Thomas (1995), asserted that it is easy to use, not costly and permits the use of historical materials. In the view of Babbie (2007), it blends well with the grounded theory approach. Using the historical method, raw data could easily be transformed into standardised information based on the conceptual framework peculiar to the issue at hand. The secondary source of data was utilised for this study. Secondary source of data refer to the set of data collated or authored by another person, archives, in the form of documents collected for the purpose other than the present one in which it is being used (Asika, 2006). Selltitz et al. (2008), declared that the usefulness of secondary sources of data lies in the fact that information of this sort is collected periodically. Also, gathering of information from such sources does not require the cooperation or assistance of the individual about whom the information is being sought. The source of data for this study includes; magazines, textbooks, journals and seminar papers among others. The content analysis was adopted as the method of data analysis.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework adopted for the study is the Marxian Class Theory. The theory was propounded by Karl Marx in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Marxian class theory asserts that an individual's position within a class hierarchy is determined by their role in the production process, and argues that political and ideological consciousness is determined by class position (Marx, 1867). A class is those who share common economic interests, are conscious of those interests, and engage in collective action which advances those interests. Within Marxian class theory, the structure of the production process forms the basis of class construction. For Marx, a class is a group with intrinsic tendencies and interests that differ from those of other groups within society, the basis of a fundamental antagonism between such groups (Marx, 1867). For example, it is in the labourer's best interest to maximise wages and benefits and in the capitalist's best interest to maximise profit at the expense of such, leading to a contradiction within the capitalist system, even if the labourers and capitalists themselves are unaware of the clash of interests.

Karl Marx's class theory was derive from a range of philosophical schools of thought including left Hegelianism, Scottish Empiricism, and Anglo-French political-economics (Giddens, 1971). According to Giddens (1971), Marx's view of class originated from a series of personal interests relating to social alienation and human struggle, whereby the formation of class structure relates to acute historical consciousness. Political-economics also contributed to Marx's theories, centering on the concept of "origin of income" where society is divided into three sub-groups: Rentiers, Capitalist, and Worker (Wright, 2003). This construction is based on David Ricardo's theory of capitalism. Marx strengthened this with a discussion over verifiable class relationships. Marx sought to define class as embedded in productive relations rather than social status. His political and economic thought developed towards an interest in production as opposed to distribution, and this henceforth became a central theme in his concept of class.

Marx distinguishes one class from another on the basis of two criteria; ownership of the means of production and control of the labour power of others (Marx, 1867). From this, Marx sees society

splitting up into two great hostile social camps; capitalists, or bourgeoisie, own the means of production and purchase the labour power of others why the workers, or proletariat, do not own any means of production but rely on their labour power to earn a living. Rather, they sell their own labour power to the bourgeoisie in exchange for wage. According to Marx, class is thus determined by property relations and not by income or status. These factors are determined by distribution and consumption, which mirror the production and power relations of classes.

Applying the Marx class theory in understanding socio-political and economic transformation of the peasantry in contemporary Nigeria society, it become imperative to state that the peasant constitute a social class in Nigeria as they produced basically for family consumption (although, they sometimes exchange their products in the market to buy what they do not have). Governments in Nigeria have not really paid priority to the peasants. The peasants are been neglected and suppress at all level. The peasants in Nigeria contend against so many forces; climate change, poor leadership and industrialisation which have acted to forced most of them to seek for alternative source of livelihood (transformation). The Marx class theory is relevant as the theoretical framework as it explains the factors responsible for the transformation of peasant in contemporary Nigeria society

## **SECTION II**

### **Concept of Peasantry**

Peasant is a word used to refer to the rural poor, rural residents, serfs, agricultural labourers, and the common or simple people in the society (Paki & Ebienfa, 2014). It appeared in English literature in the late medieval and early modern times. Markson (2010) views peasant as a small holding farmer, producing crops for family consumption and market exchange, using family labour throughout the farming circle. Post (2010) cited in (Gutkind & Waterman, 2012) based his definition of the peasantry on three sets of dynamic relationships – between the peasant and the land, the market, and state – all of which show a tendency towards a declining control of the producer over the product of his labour, his means of production and his labour power. Atieno-Odhiambo, (2009) cited in (Gutkind & Waterman 2012) saw peasants as those whose ultimate security and subsistence lies in their having certain rights in land and in the labour family of members on the land, but who are involved through rights and obligations in a wider economic system which includes the participation of non-peasants. Araghi (1995) views peasants as people involved in agriculture that have direct access to the production of their means of subsistence.

From the above perspectives, some of the salient points about a peasant include;

- i. He is a village or semi-urban dweller.
- ii. He is an agricultural labourer holding a small farmland which may or may not involve direct ownership.
- iii. He is tied to the soil (land) for his production and survival.
- iv. He produces mainly for his family consumption and sells surplus produce (market exchange) for him to use the proceeds to meet other family needs.
- v. He employs the labour of other family relations and he owes obligation to the authorities of the state.

Furthermore, there have been a debate about the “peasant questions” which saw to the emergence of the “disappearance thesis and the permanence thesis”. The disappearance thesis defends that the inevitable expansion of capitalism will lead to the extermination of the peasantry while the permanence thesis argues that the peasant mode of production in the peasant societies have a distinct development logic that supports the survival of the peasantry within capitalism (Araghi,

1995). The disappearance thesis is suitable to this study as it identified the factors that impede peasants in Nigeria. The neglect of peasant by the Nigerian government, industrialisation and overdependence on crude oil at the expense of agriculture has threaten peasantry in Nigeria and led to their transformation.

### SECTION III

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### The Character of Peasants in Nigeria

The Nigeria state is made up of different ethnic and religious groups. It is a multifaceted society. Traditionally, the basic fundamental or functional unit of peasants in Nigeria is the family. The family owns land and every member of the family relates to the land on the bases of values, norms, and rules. Historically in Africa particularly in Nigeria, nobody is allowed to be destitute, dependent or even idle. Every member of the society has access to land for production, meeting of needs and contributing to the society. Also, members of the family have the right to benefit from the use of the land as long as he lives. More importantly, land in Nigeria is communally owned but individually cultivated and used. Peasant agricultural production in Nigeria is family-based subsistence production. Peasant families rarely cultivates with the commercial concern of selling in the market place, but nevertheless, they do sell surplus commodity product above the subsistence requirement of the family in local market though the primary intention of their engagement with the land through cultivation is shaped by the material and cultural requirement of the family rather than profit.

The following are some of the character of peasants in Nigeria as gleaned from Olaoye and Adekoya (2012), they are;

**i. Resilience and Adaptability;** in the form of economic pressures and environmental challenges. Nigerian peasants often face economic challenges, including limited access to resources and markets. Despite these challenges, they exhibit resilience and adaptability, finding ways to sustain their livelihoods through small-scale farming, trade, and other activities. Peasants are accustomed to coping with environmental issues like erratic rainfall, droughts, and soil degradation. They adapt their farming techniques, such as crop rotation and mixed farming, to mitigate these challenges.

**ii. Communal and Cooperative Spirit;** in the form of collective farming and social support networks. In many Nigerian peasant communities, farming is a collective effort. Families and neighbors work together during planting and harvesting seasons, sharing resources and labor to maximize productivity. Peasants rely heavily on social support systems, such as extended family ties and community organisations, to navigate economic difficulties and social obligations. These networks are crucial for mutual aid and collective decision-making.

**iii. Deep Connection to Land and Tradition;** in the form of cultural identity and land tenure. For many Nigerian peasants, the land is not just a source of livelihood but also a key aspect of their cultural identity. Farming methods, festivals, and rituals are often tied to the agricultural calendar and reflect deep-rooted traditions. The attachment to land is also reflected in the systems of land tenure, where land is often passed down through generations, emphasising the importance of land to the peasant way of life.

**iv. Subsistence-Oriented Economy;** in the form of limited market access and diversification of activities. Peasants in Nigeria often operate within a subsistence economy, producing primarily for their own consumption with limited surplus for sale. This is due in part to limited access to larger markets, transportation challenges, and inadequate infrastructure. To ensure their survival,



peasants often diversify their activities, engaging in petty trade, livestock rearing, and other forms of income generation alongside farming.

**v. Marginalisation and Vulnerability;** in the form of political and economic marginalisation and vulnerability to exploitation. Peasants in Nigeria are often marginalised in terms of political power and economic opportunity. They may have limited access to government support, agricultural extension services, and credit facilities. Due to their economic position, peasants are vulnerable to exploitation by middlemen, landlords, and other more powerful actors in the agricultural value chain.

**vi. Resistance and Agency;** in the form of land rights movements and cultural resistance. In response to challenges such as land grabbing and unfavorable policies, some peasant communities in Nigeria have organized to protect their land rights and improve their economic conditions. This shows their agency and determination to secure their livelihoods. Peasants often resist cultural assimilation and maintain their traditional practices and languages despite external pressures from urbanisation and modernization.

**vii. Simplicity and Contentment;** in the form of frugal living and community values. Peasants typically live simple lives with minimal material possessions, prioritizing the essentials needed for survival and contentment. Contentment among peasants is often tied to strong community values, spiritual beliefs, and a close connection to nature.

### **Peasants Contributions to Socio-Economic Development in Nigeria**

The contributions of peasants to the socio-economic development of Nigeria are enormous and cannot be overemphasised. Some of these contributions include;

- i. **Food Production:** food production is an area that will enable us to appreciate the contributions of peasants in Nigeria. This is defined by a largely agricultural production that at best is subsistence, characterised by technological backwardness and a weak degree of specialisation and exchange. Despite the low level of technology and its attendant low level of production, the peasants contribute to the process of food production in the country. Peasant production is different from capitalist production in the sense that in capitalist enterprises, the producer does not own the means of production, but is employed as a wage labour. The worker is free from servile obligation. The workman has no land or tool in order to meet his basic needs, but is forced to seek employment as a labourer (Marx, 1961; Chayanov, 1966). On the contrary, peasant production is conducted by the family labour unit, which ideally works on its own family land with its own locally made farming equipment. The farm is rather his livelihood (Williams, 1976). For instance, peasants in Nigeria are subsistence farmers, they cultivate yams, cassava, rice, cocoyam, plantain, sweet potatoes, corn, sugar cane, okra, onions, groundnuts, pepper, peanut, tomatoes, beans, and other vegetables among others to feed their families and sometimes, sell some of their farm produces in the local market to raise money to buy household items.
- ii. Peasants create a peaceful atmosphere for development to thrive by their peaceful disposition. That is, by being law abiding, they help to create, promote and sustain the right environment for development to occur. This promotes harmonious living and peaceful co-existence of members of the society.
- iii. Peasant production encourages communal labour. Communal labour refers to the practice of jointly rendering their labour services to help each other in times of needs. That is, the peasants jointly work on each other's farms during the planting season and even during harvest periods where much labour is needed.

- iv. The peasants in the rural areas contribute in a very high degree to sustain the educated peasants and the urban poor by providing the food needs of the city population. The educated peasants and the urban poor are not mutually exclusive groups, and they depend to a large extent on the rural peasants' population to survival. For instance, these groups of peasants travel regularly to their towns and villages periodically to get food stuffs from the rural dwellers. The urban population also depends on the peasants for their food supplies.
- v. Peasants help to implement government policies and programmes in the rural areas. This is because, programmes such as Operation Feed the Nation, Green Revolution, Fadama, etc., witnessed peasants playing unique roles in the implementation process in Nigeria.
- vi. Peasants also supply the pool of labour in the execution of developmental projects. For instance, the peasant is seen as a source for cheap labour simply because the amount that is paid to him for his labour is relatively very low. There is therefore the labourers category of peasants which depends on working for others to make a living, because the wages paid to such category of people barely exceeds what they use for food. This category of persons in most cases has no land of their own to cultivate, hence they depend on others to survive by working for them.

### **Factors Responsible for Peasants Transformation in Contemporary Nigeria**

Despite the enormous role played by peasant in Nigeria, the existence of peasant has been threatened by several forces such as climate change, leadership failure, industrialisation and overdependence on oil production amongst others. Some of these factors are discuss below

**i. Climate Change;** according to Ayinde et al. (2011), climate change refers to long-term alterations in temperature, precipitation, wind patterns, and other aspects of earth's climate system. It is typically understood as changes in these patterns over extended periods, often decades to millions of years, due to natural factors like volcanic eruptions, solar radiation variations, and orbital changes, as well as anthropogenic (human-induced) factors, most notably the emission of greenhouse gases from activities like burning fossil fuels, deforestation, and industrial processes. Ifeanyi-obi and Nandi (2014), noted that climate change has significantly impacts rural farming in Nigeria, a country where agriculture is a primary livelihood for a large portion of the population. The effects are multifaceted, affecting crop production, livestock, and overall food security. Nigeria's agricultural system is heavily rain-fed, and climate change has led to unpredictable and erratic rainfall patterns. This affects planting and harvesting times, often resulting in reduced crop yields. According to Ojo and Adebayo (2012), erratic rainfall has led to flooding, which destroys crops, washes away fertile topsoil, and leads to loss of livestock and human lives. The Niger Delta region and other low lands have been victims of flooding which have often sacked most peasants from their lands, destroyed their farm produce and compelled most peasants to seek for alternative source of livelihood. Intense rains lead to soil erosion, especially in the absence of proper soil conservation practices. This leads to the loss of fertile land and reduces the capacity of soil to support crops. Also, increase frequency and intensity of droughts, particularly in northern Nigeria, has affected peasants due to devastating effect of drought on farming. This has forced many peasants to seek for alternative source of livelihood. Higher temperatures negatively affect livestock by reducing their productivity, increasing susceptibility to diseases, and sometimes leading to death, particularly in regions where water and pasture become scarce.

**ii. Overdependence on Oil Production;** oil is a major source of energy in Nigeria and the world in general. As the mainstay of Nigeria's economy, oil plays a vital role in shaping the economic and political destiny of the country. In 1970 as reported by Gbadebo (2005), the petroleum sector became the bedrock of the nation, although it had entered the export list since 1958. Oil asserted

its importance in 1970 after the Nigerian civil war (1967-1970). Since then the Nigerian economy has been dependent on the oil sector as the major sector of government revenue and foreign exchange (Ojamage & Oyaide, 2007). According to NNPC (2014), revenue from oil amounts to 70% - 90% of the total foreign earning from export activities annually. Nigerian economy revolves around the business activities of its oil industry as it generates the bulk of government revenues. Its major activities (acquisition, exploration, production and development) are characterised by huge capital expenditures, high technological expertise and the ability to manage investment risks.

A retrospective look into the Nigerian economy and its development reveals that agriculture was both the mainstay of the economy and the chief foreign exchange earner prior to the discovery of oil as agriculture accounted for over 80% of Nigeria's foreign exchange with significant improvement in peasant economy. Agriculture was the mainstay of the Nigeria's economy prior to the discovery of oil. But with the discovery and commercialisation of oil in large quantity, all that change as oil now account for about 90% of Nigeria's export and foreign exchange (National Bureau of Statistics, 2022). Crude oil represents approximately 90% of Nigeria's total export earnings. This makes the country heavily dependent on oil for foreign exchange. The oil and gas potential in Nigeria has attracted Multinational Oil Companies such as Shell, ExxonMobil, and Chevron in the country's oil and gas sector.

Data released by National Bureau of Statistics revealed the contribution of different sectors to Nigeria's economy. According to the report, the Mining & Quarrying sector consists of Crude Petroleum and Natural Gas, Coal Mining, Metal ore and Quarrying and other Minerals sub-activities. This sector grew nominally by 31.90% (year-on-year) in Q3 2023. Coal Mining exhibited the highest growth rate of all the sub-activities at 162.76%, followed by Metal Ores activity at 82.66% (NBS, 2023). However, Crude Petroleum and Natural gas was the main contributor to the sector with a weight of 92.78% in Q3 2023. Comparing Q3 2023's rate of growth relative to Q3 2022 and Q2 2023 growth rates, there was a decline of 2.37% points and an increase of 39.01% points respectively. The Mining & Quarrying sector contributed 8.32% to the overall GDP in the third quarter of 2023, higher than the contributions recorded in 2022 third quarter at 7.32% and higher than the previous quarter at 6.58% (NBS, 2023). Agriculture contributed 26.36% to nominal GDP in the third quarter of 2023. This figure was lower than the rate recorded in the third quarter of 2022 and higher than the second quarter of 2023 which recorded 27.55% and 21.07% respectively (NBS, 2023).

Gbadebo (2005) indicated that the Nigerian economy since 1975, following' the quadrupling of crude oil prices in the world market in 2003/2004, depended on the oil sector for more than 80% of foreign exchange earnings and value of export, and over 60% for total revenue. In real terms, the oil sector has accounted for 13 to 22% of the country's gross domestic product. The commercialisation of oil witnessed the emergence of numerous companies that are involve in the exploration of oil and these open up employment opportunities for many (peasants inclusive). The oil boom has saw many peasants to abandoned their farmland as a source of livelihood and seek for higher opportunities created as a result of the oil boom. The huge remuneration offered by many oil and gas companies saw many peasants abandon their farmland and seek for new jobs. This is indeed is one of the forces that aided the transformation of peasants in contemporary Nigeria state.

**iii. Industrialisation;** industrialisation is the process by which an economy transforms from primarily agrarian (farming and agriculture-based) to one dominated by the manufacturing of goods and services. This transition involves the development and expansion of industries, such as



factories and production facilities, leading to mass production and technological advancements. The major features of industrialisation are; urbanisation, shift from agriculture to industry, technological innovation, infrastructure development and social changes etc. Industrialisation has acted as a propelling force for the transformation of peasants in contemporary Nigeria state. Industrialisation opens up several economic opportunities for the peasant to explore. It affords the peasant an avenue to seek for jobs in the industries. Rather than just relying on subsistence farming, many peasants were able to secure jobs in the industries thereby abandoning their farmlands.

**iv. Leadership Failure;** it is another factor that has led to the transformation of peasant in contemporary Nigeria. Leadership failure in Nigeria is a deeply rooted issue that has significantly affected the nation's development across various sectors. The problem is multifaceted, involving political, economic, social, and institutional dimensions. It can be construed within the context of widespread corruption, lack of accountability, inconsistent policies, poor implementation of policies, economic mismanagement, insecurity and lawlessness and lack of infrastructural development etc. Nigeria is grappling with numerous challenges today due to leadership failure. This has contributed to the transformation of peasants in contemporary Nigeria. The failure of the government at all level to prioritise the welfare and wellbeing has affected the peasants. Governments have abandoned the peasants as it has failed to create the enabling for the peasants to operate. Peasants are not be consulted in the formulation and implementation of policies, in most cases, their farmland are been appropriated by the government in the name of infrastructural development which often are not completed, they are not given local farm tools to enable them sustain their farmlands. All these have made many peasants to seek for new economic opportunities especially in urban areas.

### **Findings**

- i. The work found that peasants play a vital role in the economic development of Nigeria. They contribute to food production, produce the food consumed by urban dwellers and help to implement government policies and programmes in the rural areas thereby improving the living condition of the people and sustaining the Nigeria state
- ii. The study found that there are some factors that propel the transformation of peasants in Nigeria; climate change, industrialisation, overdependence on oil and leadership failure etc. Nigeria today depends largely on crude oil production as the mainstay of its economy. Oil accounted for about 80% of Nigeria's foreign exchange. The agricultural sector has been neglected as a result of oil boom.

## **SECTION IV**

### **Conclusion**

The peasants play a vital role in guaranteeing food security due to their immense contribution to agriculture. They are the class of people that produce for the household and by extension those that are in formal sectors that are not involve in agriculture. The Nigerian governments have not done enough to protect and sustain this class of people. The peasantry in contemporary Nigeria is undergoing a social transformation, marked by shifts in household structures, migration patterns, and gender roles. Rural-urban migration, especially among the youth, has altered the demographic composition of rural areas, leading to labour shortages in agriculture and a decline in traditional practices. This transformation is occasion by the forces that impinge on the peasants in

contemporary Nigeria; industrialization, overdependence on oil, climate change and leadership failure etc.

### **Recommendations**

- i. Governments at all level in Nigeria should give priority to peasants due to their enormous contribution to food security in Nigeria. This can be achieve by formulating and implementing peasant oriented policies
- ii. There is need for Nigerian government to diversify its economy from oil based economy to include other sectors such as the agricultural sector to halt the migration of peasant from rural areas in search for paid jobs as a result of opportunities created by oil boom. This can be achieve by developing the agricultural sector.

## References

- Araghi, F. (1995). Global depeasantization, 1945-1990. *Sociological quarterly*, 36(2), 337-368.
- Asika, N. (2006). *Essentials of research methodology*. Spring publisher.
- Ayinde, O. E., Muchie, M., & Olatunji, G. B. (2011). Effect of climate change on agricultural productivity in Nigeria: A co-integration model approach". *Journal of human ecology*, 35(3), 189-194.
- Chayanov, A. (1966). *Theory of peasant economy*. University of Wincosin press
- Edelman, M. (1999). *Peasants against globalisation: Rural social movements in Costa Rica*. Stanford university press.
- Giddens, A. (1971). *Capitalism and Modern Social Theory: An analysis of the writings of Marx, Durkheim, and Max Weber*. Cambridge University Press
- Gutkind, P. & Waterman, P. (2012). *African social studies: A radical reader*. Heinemann press.
- Ifeanyi-obi, C. C., & Nnadi, F. N. (2014). "Climate change adaptation measures used by farmers in South-South Nigeria". *Journal of agricultural extension*, 18(1)
- Marx, K. (1961-1963). *Capital*. Foreign Languages publishing house.
- Marx, K. (1986). *Capital: Critique of political economy*, 1(8)
- Ojo, S. O., & Adebayo, P. F. (2012). "Climate Change and Food Crop Production in Nigeria: Implications for Food Security". *International Journal of Agricultural Research*, 7(2), 169-180
- Olaoye, O. J., & Adekoya, B. B. (2012). "Social and economic factors influencing the Adoption of fish farming technologies among peasant fish farmers in Ogun State, Nigeria. *Journal of agricultural extension and rural development*, 4(3), 55-63.
- Paki, F. & Ebienfa, K. (2014). Peasants and development in society: The case of Bayelsa state. *Journal of economics and sustainable development*, 5(6), 108-115
- Selltiz, C. et al (1977). *Research methods in social relations*. Oxford publication
- Teodor, S. (1973). *The nature and logic of the peasant economy: A generalisation*," in Marc Edelman, (2013). What is a peasant? What are peasantries? A briefing paper on issues of definition. *Prepared for the first session of the intergovernmental working group on a United Nations declaration on the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas*.
- Wright, E. (2003). Rethinking, Once Again, the Concept of Class Structure. *Journal of capital & class*, 27, (8)