

Challenges of Globalization and Education in Nigeria

Nwankwo, O. C.

*Abia State College of Education (Technical),
Arochukwu, Nigeria*

ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of globalization appears to be a product of renewed beliefs and contestations in a global process, which has drawn the international community at the threshold of a global village. These range from politics, economy, communication and education to even agriculture and food. National culture and national economies are all becoming irrelevant and giving way to globalized strategies characterized by powerful market forces. The market scenario is dominated by powerful transnational entities that owe no allegiance to any State. This study therefore review globalization and education with the main aim of addressing its implications and challenges in Nigeria.

Keywords: *Globalization, education, communication, development*

INTRODUCTION

The whole idea of globalization is an attempt to provide lasting solutions to the myriad of problems of humanity. These problems may be political, economical, religious and educational. Globalization was a catch-phrase which has been described in various fields and branches such as economic globalization that is the integration of national economies, through foreign trade, direct investment, capital flows, and migration; the spread of technology and education.

However, the most important influence on globalization is the invention of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) which historic achievement has greatly impacted on education around the world. The 1990's ushered in a new world order, the beginning of the idea of globalization and its immediate impact of ICTs on higher education development. Globalization represents the international system that is shaping most societies today including teachers' education programme. It is a process that is changing the integration and the interaction of the changing world. The effects of globalization in terms of the uses of technology on the development of teachers' education is critical as the effects are reflected in the content and process of education in order to produce output that can compete favourably in the labour market. The global phenomenon has not just begun. It has a history.

Chronological scholars such as Fletcher (1990) traces its origin to the voyages of discovery of the 15th century. Henriot (1998) notes that globalization is not unprecedented. The primary aim of globalization is to generate human development conditions that will improve the standard of living of the population, redistribute wealth, and facilitate the attainment of development and economic well-being. Within the 21st century and beyond, the forces of globalizing economies, politics and cultures are bringing new pressures on existing social structures in developed and developing countries of the world. Consequently, globalization is introducing new challenges to which societies

must respond. The process of globalization is often portrayed as a positive force which is unifying widely different societies, integrating them into a global village. If individuals, as a result of globalization, are able to have access to new technologies and information and therefore make use of economic opportunities to increase their productivity, it is envisaged that their lives would be positively affected. The widespread acceptance and adoption of economic liberalization policies, rapid technological change especially in the areas of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and the spread of democratic ideals have resulted in increased international integration of the markets for goods, services and capital. The new millennium has witnessed the rapid intensification of social, cultural and economic formations that come under the general assembly of conceptual rubric of globalization.

Globalization refers specifically to the increasing dominance of an international network of communications, not only in the economy but also in social systems such as politics, the mass media, education, science and technology (Luhmann, 1997). Globalization is one aspect of the large agents of modernization, which describes societies as characterized by progressive growth in the complexity of communication (Charlton and Andras, 2003). Despite its inevitable problems, efficiency, effectiveness and capability of societies are thereby potentially benefiting most people of the time (Luhmann, 1997).

The concept of globalization has acquired considerable emotive force. Some view it as a process that is beneficial to future world economic development and inevitable and irreversible. Others regard it with hostility, and some with fear believing that it increases inequality within and between nations, threatens employment and living standards and thwarts social progress. Globalization is a situation where the whole world is viewed as a single community in the acquisition and development of productive resources. Efficient and effective transportation and communication systems are core elements that drive globalization. The purpose of the study of globalization is generating considerable academic interest in a variety of disciplines, including anthropology, economics, sociology, political science, law and education (Castle and Davidson, 2000; Giddens, 2000). This study therefore reviews globalization and teacher's education with the main aim of addressing its implications and challenges in Nigeria.

THE CONTRASTING ASPECT OF GLOBALIZATION AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON EDUCATION

Scientific research was one of the first global communication systems, especially at its most advanced levels. Highly qualitative scientific education is at various levels (Post-graduate, under-graduate, and even school teaching levels) becoming progressively globalized. Globalization has two apparently contrasting aspects: standardization and differentiation. In science education, this does not only imply international standardization "harmonization" of basic structures and communications on the one hand, but also national specialization of advanced level of education which offer a different profile of expertise for

each country. In terms of education, globalization entails a growth in the complexity of international educational communications, and therefore implies standardization in its core communications to enable continued specialization of cutting-edge progresses. Such standardization includes the evolution towards a common “education language”, standard education structure, examinations and evaluations (Charlton and Andras, 2006). Globalization of education requires a common language for organizational sciences, and will be increasingly the case as competence in a simplified form of international scientific English becomes more universal. As a global science education system grows, there will be increased competition and migration of teachers and students. The law of competitive advantage suggests that such mobility will encourage societies to specialize in what they do best (Charlton and Andras, 2006).

Globalization is made possible and accelerated by long range communications. For example, international telecommunications and rapid transportation, improved fidelity in communication example digital electronic information and less costly communication media such as the internet. These technological advances enable increasing specialization and coordination of functions (Wright, 2000). Globalization is the product of new Information and Communication Technologies which instantaneously connect people, organizations, and systems across long distances. In addition to creating and circulating vast amounts of information and data, these technologies have the promise of freeing people from the tyranny of space and time. These new technologies are rapidly and irrevocably changing the nature of work, thought, and interpersonal patterns of social relations (Turkle, 1997). Consequently, two schools of thought have emerged to explain the meaning and nature of globalization. These are the liberal school and the radical school of thought. The liberal scholars see globalization as a process of freeing economies so that trade between countries can take place more easily.

Castle and Davison (2000) observe that globalization fosters economic efficiency and encourages international institutions and problem – solving. Other liberal scholars see contemporary globalization as multi-dimensional. According to them, while the economic dimension constitutes the heart of the process, it is far from being economic. It applies to politics, the globalization of democracy and governance, culture and civil society. Betiku (2003) defines globalization as processes of increasing inter connectedness between societies far away. According to him, a globalized world is one in which political, economical, cultural and social events become more and more extensive. Onuh (2004) says that globalization is one on-going gigantic movement initiated and pushed forward by the developed capitalization aimed at removing or weakening territorial and jurisdictional boundaries and barriers of individual nations. In summary, the liberal scholars argue that globalization process:

- a. Are neutral and an inevitable part of historical change?
- b. Will increase wealth and prosperity for all countries and people including workers.

The World Bank Report (1990) as cited in Khor (2001) observes that increasing globalization helps to expand opportunities for nations and on average, help workers in

rich and poor countries alike. The radical scholars have collectively questioned the logic behind globalization and described it as old wine in a new wineskin. Adick (1995), for instance, has observed that globalization in its current phase, is essentially the universal of capitalism, in its speculative variety. Globalization is not simply the product of the inexorable march of market forces. According to him, it is the outcome of conscious planning and execution, first, by big business namely: the multi-national corporations and second, by the governments of the United States and the United Kingdom. Adick (1995) is of the view that globalization is a technique of ideological marketing; it was devised by global entrepreneurs primarily to counter a rising trend in the under-developed world.

Ezeliora (2000) questions the whole argument about globalization, including the illusion of one world, myth of inevitability and identical effects. Essentially, the radical scholars see nothing new in the globalization process. Consequently, they have classified the concept as a new form of imperialism. According to Giddens (2000), globalization embraces technological relations thons, modernization and development strategies. In summary, the radial scholars argue that with globalization there is:

- a. Increasing world poverty, unemployment and lowering the living standard of workers and women.
- b. Increasing gap between the rich and the poor. Globalization could be described as the last stage in the development of capitalism.

From the foregoing, four broad perspectives appear to have emerged from the controversy surrounding globalization:

- a. It identifies globalization with increasing homogenization within the global system.
- b. The strong globalization view.
- c. The weak globalization perspective.
- d. The last perspective is rejectionist; the rejectionist argues that all that happened are nothing but continued process of internationalization.

INFLUENCE OF GLOBALIZATION IN NIGERIA

Trade and Business Activities: Nigeria has become a dumping ground for goods and services produced in advanced capitalist societies. Goods ranging from detergents, toilet soaps, fruit juice/drinks, foot wears, frozen chickens to heavy plants and electronics are now being imported by those local firms who are suppose to manufacture them locally. This is probably the main cause of unemployment in Nigeria. Nigerians were proud of Aba made shoes, local fabrics, locally brewed beer like Golden guinea, the Abakaliki rice and a lot of others, but today, one rarely finds anybody drinking locally brewed beer such as “33”, Premier, Champion to mention just a few, everybody now goes for brands like Star, Stout and others brewed and marketed by multinational corporations. Nigerians who were used to locally produced rice are now used to foreign rice (Caprice). The imported Shoes from Italy and Dubai have taken over the Aba made Shoes.

Culture: There is increasing cross border contacts and trans-societal transmission of cultural products and culture values. Nigerians, especially ladies have gone nuclear, trying to imitate the Europeans. They now wear the super-gatti tops and miniskirts, fixing of their nails and many other behaviours that are imported from other nations of the world.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT): Information and Communication Technology (ICT) education covers the use of computer, radio, satellites, online self-learning packages, tele-presence systems, interactive CDs, Video, internet optical fibre technologies and all types of Information Technology (IT) hardware (Adebayo, 2002). According to Bakie (2001) and Ibrahim (2002), Information Technology (IT) is the integration of computer technology, mainly in the form of internet, and information management systems; it gives users opportunities to handle text and images, numbers and graphs, instructions, sound and music and to process information by organizing and recognizing, storing and retrieving, sorting and analyzing and presenting and communicating it.

Information and Communication Technology is very crucial to Nigeria's development as a nation, considering the fact that it has a crucial role to play in the provision of the type of education required for the individual to live a full life in this century and for Nigeria to compete favourably in the global economy. In the past, science education was carried out in the most conventional way, with students relying solely on textbooks and direct contact with teachers. With the introduction of open and distance learning, the importance of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) has become more pronounced. The future of science education is contingent on how education itself is empowered to utilize all positive elements of globalization movement especially in Information Technology (IT).

Telecommunications: Telecommunications like the mobile telecommunications network MTN, Glo, the Airtel, Etisalat were all made possible because of globalization. This has further made Nigeria to join the rest of the world as a global village. People now stay in one part of the country and communicate with others in different parts of the world.

Banking: The banking sector has contributed a lot to globalization, example, the Western Union money transfer system which transfers money from one part of the country to another. People no longer need to carry cash because of the advent of electronic cash, value card, Automated Teller Machine and so on.

CONCLUSION

African Nations are relatively new in the international system. With poor economies occasioned by weak industrial base, these countries appear not to be strong contention in the international competitive capitalism. Weakened further by corruption and political instability in African States and have suffered more from vagaries of development in the international system. With a renewed emphasis on globalization and regionalism, economic integration becomes an inevitable option to be adopted, if a collective bargain and development must be achieved.

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