

GLOBALIZATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY: GLOBAL INTEGRATION OR IMPERIALISM

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ABSTRACT

Globalization as an ideological phase of human development has come to stay as a reality than fiction. Different parts of the world are faced with one form of reality or another concerning the effect of the ideology. Many scholars emphasized the positive benefit of globalization while some others believe it has done more harm than being speculated. This paper attempt, if- some definitions of the concept as a historical process and also attempted a brief of it development. It also examined the different debates concerning the effect to the worlds: the first world and the third or developing world and leaving a question to be answered by discerning minds. The use of theories is not left out to examine the possible positions.

Keywords: *Globalization, global integration, Imperialism, 21st century*

INTRODUCTION

The world has at different times in history experienced different forms of social, economic and political relation, from slavery to colonialism, feudalism, socialism, communism, capitalism and imperialism. Today, it is passing through another form of experience which though not totally new but having a far-reaching effect on all facets of different economies of the world. That is globalization or globalism. Globalization or globalism as an ideological concept has not yet been subjected to a commonly acceptable definition due to its versatility. This is so because the concept embraces different things. In other words, the concept could be used to depict economic, political, social, cultural or technological relations. In a general term, globalization describes an ongoing process by which regional economies, societies and cultures have become integrated through globe spanning networks of exchange (Bwagwati 2004). The term, as Bwagwati (2004) explains sometimes is used to refer specifically to economic globalization, the integration of national economies into international economy through trade, Foreign Direct Investment, (FDI) capital flows, migration and the spread of technology, but Croucher, (2004) concludes that globalization is recognized as being directed by a combination of economic, technological, social-cultural, political and biological factors and trans-national dissemination of ideas, language or popular culture.

The United Nations (2007) in its description of globalization writes that globalization is a widely used term that can be defined in a number of different

ways. Accordingly, when used in an economic term, it refers to the reduction and removal of barriers between national borders in order to facilitate the flow of goods, capital, services and labour. Sassen, (2006) writes that a good part of globalization consists of an enormous variety of micro processes that begin to denationalize what had been construed as national, whether policies, capital, political, subjectivity, urban spaces, temporal frames, or any other of a variety of dynamics and domain. Friedman (2008), examines the impact of the "flattening" of the world and argues that globalized trade, outsourcing, supply -chaining and political forces have changed the world permanently for both better and worse which is also used in a doctrinal sense to describe the neoliberal form of economic globalization.

In this light, globalization has been sometimes used interchangeably with internationalization though with a remarkable difference. The concept of globalization is not new though, but its origin also remains a subject of controversy. Some scholar's attempts to situate the origin of globalization in the modern era, but several others argue that it is a phenomenon that has a long historical antecedence. Frank

(1998) argues that a form of globalization has been in existence since the rise of trade links between Sumer and the Indus valley civilization in the 3rd millennium Jomo (2006) opined that the origin of globalization have been debated to has been existence dating back to about 5 centuries to the Iberian Voyages of discovery and conquest associated with such names as Queen Isabella of Spain, Christopher Columbus also known as Cristobel Colon among others of Venice, Vasco dagama and Fedinard Magella.

According to Jomo (2006) globalization is associated with what has been referred to as the new imperialism which date back to the 19th century but only came to be recognized as distinct phase of economic history at the beginning of the 20th century most significantly with the writings of the English Liberal John Hobson in 1902 and the Marxist revolutionary, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. Joma (2006) states further that in view of the ambiguity and confusion in the contemporary discourse on globalization, any review of economic globalization issue, whether contemporary or historical must reiterate three obvious points.

Firstly, globalization means different things to different people. Secondly economic globalization is not inevitable, and thirdly the meaning and implication of globalization have changed over time since it first caught on in the 1980s and especially significantly with the changing political contact. Others like Jack (2004) have also traced globalization to the link between Roman Empire, the Parthian empire and the Han Dynasty, hence increasing articulation of commercial links between these powers inspired the development of the Silk Road which started in Western China, reached the boundaries of the Parthian empire and continued onward towards Rome.

Another account of the origin of globalization take into consideration the Islamic golden Age as an important early stage of globalization (Jack, 2004) when Muslim trades and explorers established a sustained economy across the Muslim World in this period while the necessity of learning Arabic and completing the Hajj

created a cosmopolitan culture (Jack, 2004). The advent of the Mongol empire in the middle East and China which facilitated travel along the Silk Road which permitted travelers and missionaries such as Marco Polo to journey successfully from one end of Eurasia to the other as well as the so called Pax Mongolica of the 13th century also had several globalization features and effects as it resulted into the creation of the first international postal service in the newly unified regions of central Asia; and the pre-modern phases of global or hemispheric exchange are sometimes referred to as archaic globalization (Jack, 2004).

The period that follows is the period or phase that gave rise to another phase of globalization known as proto-globalization (Jack, 2004). This is so because up to the time of the Voyages of discovery according to Jack (2004) the largest system of international exchange were limited to the Old World which was around the 16th century and this period represented a qualitative exchange in the pattern of globalization because it was the first period in which the New World began to engage in substantial culture, material and biological exchange with Africa and Eurasia (Jack, 2004). This period was also characterized by the rise of maritime European empires, particularly the Portuguese Empire, the Spanish Empire and later the British and Dutch Empire. This period can be said to have begun shortly before the turn of the 16th century when the kingdom of Iberian Peninsula - the kingdom of Portugal and the kingdom of Castile began to send exploratory Voyages to Americas and around the Horn of Africa (Jack, 2004).

Global integration continued through the expansion of trade in the 16th and 17th centuries when the Portuguese and the Spanish empire colonized the Americas, followed eventually by France and England and different cultures of the world came under a direct and tremendous cultural impact of the earliest globalization. In the 15th century, Portugal's company of Guinea was one of the first chartered commercial companies established by Europeans in other continent during the age of discovery, whose task was to deal with spices and to fix the prices of goods. In the 17th century, globalization became business phenomena when the British East India Company founded in 1600 which is often described as the first multinational corporation was established. In 1602, the Dutch East India Company was founded and the Portuguese East India company in 1628. Because of the large investment and financial needs and the high risks involved with international trade, the British East India Company became the first company in the world to share risk and enable joint ownership of companies through issuance of shares of stock which is an important driver for globalization (Jurgen and Niels, 2005).

The 19th century according to Jurgen and Niels (2005) witnessed the advent of globalization in something approaching its modern form - the period industrialization which permitted the cheap production of household items using economies of scale while rapid population growth created sustained demand for commodities and manufactures. Globalization according to them was decisively shaped by 19th century imperialism, and after the opium war and the completion of

the British conquest of India, the populations of the regions became ready consumers of European exports. Meanwhile, the conquest of new parts of the globe, notably Sub-Sahara Africa by the European powers yielded valuable natural resources such as rubber, diamonds and coal which helped fuel trade and investment between the European imperial powers, their colonies and the United State. It was this period that Sub-Sahara Africa, and the Island pacific were incorporated into the world system shortly before the first phase of modern globalization in the 20th century with the First World War (Jurgen and Niels, 2005), (Hopkins, 2002).

The modern day globalization is traceable to the 20th and 21st century. Globalization since World War II is largely the result of planning by politicians to breakdown borders hampering trade to Increase prosperity and interdependence thereby decreasing the chance of future war. This led to the Bretton Wood conference leading to the agreement by world leading politicians to play down the framework for international commerce and finance and founding of several international institutions intended to oversee the processes of globalization (Jurgen and Niels, 2005). These institutions include the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development now known as World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund IMF. Jomo (2006) contend that globalization and other policies promoted by these institutions and other International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and World Trade Organization (WTO) and most governments in the world have not led to increased growth, instead, the cost of these changes, destruction of industries, unemployment, reduced human security and other consequences of policies demanded by these institutions and by international financial markets have burdened society with few clear countervailing benefits.

This institution imposes the policies on other nations, through globalization which has been facilitated by advance in technology which have reduced the cost of trades and trade negotiation rounds. Originally under the auspices of the General Agreement on Tariff and Trade (GATT) which led to a series of agreement to remove restriction on free trade and other achievements from the (GATT) agreement include promotion of free trade, elimination of tariffs, creation of free trade zones with small or no tariffs, reduced transportation cost especially resulting from development of containerization for ocean shipping, reduction or elimination of capital controls, reduction or elimination or harmonization of subsidies for local businesses, creation of subsidies for global corporation, harmonization of intellectual property laws across the majority of states, with more restrictions, (Jurgen and Niels 2005). Another prominent characteristic of the modern globalization according to Jurgen and Niels (2005) is cultural globalization driven by communication technology and the worldwide marketing of Western cultural industries which was understood at first as a process of homogenization cultural cosmopolitanism; the global domination of

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Theoretical explanation of globalization World-system theory Globalization world system is any historical social system of interdependent parts that form a bounded

structure and operate according to distinct rules or "a unit with a single division of labour and multiple cultural systems. Three concrete instances stand out; mini systems, world empires and world economies. This theory explains that the modern world-system is a world-economy; larger than any judicially defined political unit and the basic linkage between its parts is economic, (Wallerstein 1974b) The political-economic as well as socio-cultural relationship involved in globalization can best be placed in a proper perspective using this theoretical explanation. This theory has it that globalization as a process which is completed in the 20th century is a relation in which the capitalist world system spreads across the actual globe.

Proponent of this theory like Immanuel Wallerstein (1998) has it that the modern world system which originated around 1500 in parts of Europe arising from a long-term crisis of feudalism gave rise to technological innovation and the rise of market institutions, advances in production and incentives for long-distance trade which stimulated Europeans to reach other parts of the globe and these Europeans took advantage of their superior military strength and means of transportation to establish economic ties with other regions that favoured the accumulation of wealth in the European core. This theory explains that during the long 16th century, Europeans established an occupational and geographic division of labour in which capital-intensive production was reserved for the core countries (countries at the centre) while peripheral areas provided low-skilled labour and raw materials, this, according to the world system then, this in equal relationship between the European core and non-European periphery.

Inevitably generated unequal development and some state also played a crucial role in maintaining the hierarchical structure as they helped to direct profits to the monopoly producers in the core and protected the overall capitalist economy. This theory posits that the world as a whole is now devoted to endless accumulation and profit seeking on the basis of exchange in a market that treats goods and labour alike as commodities. Another theory of relevance, though close to the above is the World Polity Theory. A polity is a system of control values through the collective conference of authority. (Meyer 1980). The system is according to Meyer (1980) is constituted by a set of rules also called frames or models. Actors in the system are entities constructed and motivated by emulating frames Boli and Thomas (1997). The world polity according to the theory contains no single actor or institution defining what is valuable for the world as a whole. Instead of a central actor, the culture of world society allocates responsible and authoritative actorhood to nation-state Meyer, Boli, Thomas and Francisco 1997).

This authority is rooted in a world culture; a set of universally applicable models that defines who are legitimate actors in the world society, what goals they can pursue and how they can pursue them. As a standpoint from the above tenet of the theory, globalization is the growth and enactment of world culture. Because from the mid 19th century, a rationalized world institutional and cultural order has crystallized that consists of universally applicable models that shape states,

organizations, and individual identities, (Meyer, Boli, Thomas and Fransisco 1997). According to the theory, conception of progress, sovereignty, rights, and the like have acquired great authority, structure and actions of states and individuals and provide a common framework for global duties. Explaining the above position the world culture has deep roots in European tradition the rational structure and content of medieval Christendom, the state system devised in 1648 and enlightened universalism in science and philosophy and by the end of the 20th century, the world culture had crystallized as the constitutive elements in world society; a set of scripts to be followed anywhere. This culture has in fact been widely enacted which have provided common models for thinking and acting globally (globalism).

CONTROVERSIES AND DEBATES SURROUNDING GLOBALIZATION

There are raging controversies concerning the role globalization has played for the various actors. These controversies centered on both the positive and negative effect of globalization on nations', organizations, and individuals. As Sliglitz (2003) put it hypothetically, why has globalization - a force that has brought so much good - become so controversial? He explained that opening up to international trade (which is one of the gains of globalization) has helped many countries grow far more quickly than they would otherwise have done. To him international trade helps economic development when a country's export drives its economic growth (because) export led growth was the centerpiece of the industrial policy that enriched much of Asia and left millions of people there for better off (Stiglitz, 2003). Foreign aid which is another aspect of globalization or globalized world Sliglitz (2003) explain has brought benefits to millions despite all it faults. Citing examples, he explains that guerillas in Philippine were provided jobs by a World-Bank financial project as they laid down arms; irrigation project have more than doubled the incomes of farmers lucky enough to get water, education projects which have brought literacy to the rural areas, and AIDS projects that have helped contain the spread of the deadly disease.

Despite the promises of reduction of poverty by globalization, there seems to be a growing divide between the haves and the have nots, hearing increasing numbers in the Three world in dire poverty, living on less a dollar a day. Despite repeated assurance of poverty reduction made over the last decade of the 20th century, the actual number of people living in poverty has actually increased by almost 100 million (Sliglitz 2003). According to the World Bank (2000) report, in 1990, 2.718 billion people were living on a less \$2 a day. In 1998, the number of poor living on less 2 a day is estimate at 2.801 billion and this occurred at the same time that total world income increased by an average of 2.5% annually.

In Africa for example, the high aspirations following colonial independence have been largely unfulfilled. Instead, the continent plunges deeper into misery, as incomes fall and standards of living decline, while the hard won improvements in life expectancy gained in the past few decades have began to reverse and the scourge of HIV/AIDs the centre of the decline (Sliglitz 2003). In most parts of world,

globalization has not succeeded in reducing poverty neither has it succeeded in ensuing stability. Crises in Asia and Latin America have threatened the economic and the stability of all developing countries, as there are growing fears of financial contagion spreading around the world, that the collapse of one emerging market currently will mean that others will fall as (Stiglitz 2003) (A case in point is the present global economic recession arising from the collapse of the D.S stock market which the world may continue to suffer from up to the mid of 2020 especially the Third world).

Russia is another victim of the process of globalization. Russian for example was told by the west that the new economic system would bring them unprecedented prosperity; instead it brought unprecedented poverty in comparison with the earlier communist system. The contrast between Russian's transition as engineered by the international economic institutions and that of China designed by it could not be greater, while in 1990 China's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was 60%, that of Russia by the end of the decade, the number had been reversed, this while Russia saw an unprecedented poverty (Stiglitz 2003). The table below shows the distribution of world GDP around late 1989 by the D.N development program in 1992 Human Development Report.

Table 1: Distribution of world GDP around late 1989

Quantile of population	Income
Richest 20%	82.7%
Second 20%	11.7%
Third 20%	2.3%
Fourth 20%	1.4%
Poorest 20%	1.2%

Source: UN Development program. 1992 Human Development Report

The table above explains the inequality in the world economic order. It shows the distribution of global income to be very uneven with the richest 20% of the world's population controlling 82.7% of the world's income, and by implication economic argument by far trade theorist claim that unrestricted free trade benefits those with more financial leverages i.e. the rich at expense of the poor. Vandana (1997) writing on the threat of the globalization of agriculture explains that trade liberalization and the globalization of agriculture is supposed to increase the production of food improve the economic situation of farmers across the world, but however in country after country the process is leading in condition for farmers and a decline in food security for consumer in India globalization according to Vandana (1997) posits that globalization of agriculture is in fact merely the corporatisation of agriculture, and this corporatization of agriculture which is being pushed as a successor to the Green Revolution of the 1960s and 70s is leading to new poverty for small farmers as unequal and unfair contacts lock them into a new form of bondage. Many had contended that globalization is a new form of imperialism.

Imperialism according to Samir (2001) is not a stage and not even the highest

stage of capitalism from the beginning but inherent in capitalism expansion and explains that the imperialist conquest of the globe by the Europeans and then North Americans children was carried out in two phases and is perhaps entering the third. The first phase Samir (2001) explains is the world capitalist expansion which later produced the forces of liberation. This was the period of the first revolution of the western Hemisphere; which was the slaves of saint Domingue (present day Haiti).

The second phase of imperialist devastation was based on the industrial revolution and manifested itself in the colonial subjection of Asia and Africa to open their markets, and this is the period that set the stage for globalization. Samir (2001) asserts that imperialism stage of human development is of the origin of the greatest problem with which mankind has ever been confronted, the overwhelming polarization that increased the inequality between peoples from a maximum ratio of 2: 1 around 1800 to 60: 1 as at today with only 20% of the earth's population being included in the centres that benefit from the system

The objective of dominant capital today are still the same with the imperialist era-the control of expansion of markets, the looting of the earth's nature resources, the super exploitation of labour reserves in the periphery.- The ideological discour designed to spare the assent of the peoples of the central Trial, (The United States, Western Europe and Japan) has been refurbished and is now founded on a duty to intervene that is supposedly justified by the defense of democracy; the rights of peoples and humanitarianism (Samir 2001).

CONCLUSION

There is however a wide range of controversy over whose interest is globalization serving, the west or the rest of the world. This question is aroused by concern by the critics of globalization and accused the western countries of hypocrisy. To critics they believe that the western countries have pushed poor countries to eliminate trade barriers, but kept their own bemires, thereby preventing developing countries from exporting their agricultural products and so depriving them of needed export income. There is also the belief that globalization brought together countries of inequality strength (political and economic) thereby reinforcing inequality among the centre or core western countries and the peripheral nations.

Many argued that globalization is the door that opens us an otherwise resource- poor country to the international market; where a country has little materials or physical product harvested or mined from its own soil, large corporations from the west seek an opportunity to take advantage of the export poverty of such a nation making globalization the actual result of the foreign businesses investing in poor countries to take advantage of the lower wage rate. The cultural heritages of most of the non western countries are at the verge of extinction due to the stronger influence of the dictates of the western cultures. In most cases these cultures of the non western are described in such a way that makes it dysfunctional by western authors and user researchers.

The activities of most multinationals have also undermined the geographical sanctity of their host as well as the political and natural sovereignty of the Third world or developing countries. The controversial debate surrounding globalization has left much to be desired, on whose interest globalization has come to serve; is it just cooperation, an attempt to reduce the world into a single entity for speedy development of all its components as some of its proponents claimed or is it a 21st century form of imperialism to further have a full control of the developing countries' (human and natural resources) to the advantage of the stronger Western nations at the expense of the of the weaker third world/developing nations. Which side of the divide does it fall?

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