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GLOBALIZATION AND EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA: A THEORETICAL  
APPRAISAL

OGUNBIYI, O

AND  
PEMEDE, OLUWATOBI

Abstract

*The phenomenon of globalization is moving at a faster speed and no nation can afford to be left behind if it is to maintain acceptable rate of economic growth and development. But then, the question is: Is globalization simply about economics and can we separate education from economics? Also, what are the implications of this concept to both African education and Western education? In this paper, an attempt has been made to discuss the above questions. However, if the benefits of globalization are many, it then becomes imperative that education remains for all societies the greatest instrument for achieving national development.*

Introduction

Various writers, of different conceptual backgrounds have attempted to probe into the relationships of globalization and educational development in Nigeria. In fact, some of these writers have analyzed while others criticized the relationship of globalization and educational development in Nigeria. It may be first important to understand what globalization itself is all about.

Globalization is a product of imagination, which has come into material's equivalent. In other words, it is one of the realities of our time. Some say, it is the dawn of a new era, which encompasses and promises integration of national economics with investment, technology transfer, transportation, communication and international trade. Others see it as an "old enemy in a new disguise" which is characterized by uneven economy development that brings unequal opportunities, which is reflected in the unequal integration and fragmentation of many nations in which more developed nations get richer while the less developed regions become poorer. Whatever perspective we want to define globalization, it is a generalization term that is vital and necessary, as such the world becomes a "global village". Interestingly, information technology has created impact on the economic, political, education and cultural activities of people in different spheres of life, which has become more closely integrated into the global village. It is as



a result of this, we can learn all aspects of all human activities including different cultures, religion and interact with each other globally. Since learning is a tool in education, therefore, the role of globalization in educational development cannot be overemphasized.

It should be pointed out that education is not confined to specific location, but it is a continuous process, that is capable of meeting the demands of the challenges of globalization. As it were, progress will be recorded in the spheres of telecommunications, telefax, telephone, cable net work, internet, voice and text mails and computers in terms of education. However, in order to articulate any underlying appraisal and critique of the role of globalization in educational development, the paper discusses the concepts and definitions of globalization, explains the challenges of globalization, relevance of education in Nigeria, issues and global integration, role of globalization in educational development in Nigeria, as well as summary and recommendations.

### Concepts and Definitions

There is no unique or universally accepted definition of the term globalization. It could be referred to as a staggering concept. It is pertinent to recognize that the definition has many concepts, perspectives, faces, impacts and interpretations. Though it is the process to which the world economy has been reduced to a "global village" and a "global market", for the purpose of understanding the main concepts, a few definitions and interpretations of globalisation are considered below. IMF (1997), defined globalization as the growing economic interdependence of countries world wide through the increasing volume and variety of cross-border transactions in goods and services and of international capital flows, and also through the more rapid and wide spread diffusion of technology.

In the same vein, García (1978) in her paper "Cooperation South" sees globalization as changing the way of production as organized and required by the general dismantling of trade barriers and the free mobility of financial and productive capital in the context of accelerated technology change. Technological development in the sphere of information and electronic services has been a catalyst for speeding the process, bring about global production, distribution and consumption.

Ake (1999) did not consent to the above postulations, but rather defined globalization as the march of capital all over the world in search of profits, a process reflected in the rich and power of multinational corporations. It is about the nation-state coming under pressure from the surge of transnational phenomena, about the emergence of a global mass culture driven by mass advertising and technical advances in mass communication.

To Aja and Emerise (2000), globalization reflects the greater openness of national and international economics to greater flows of trade, finance, capital, high technology, and market integration offerings. The engineering mechanism of globalization remains the revolution in

science and technology, particularly as it affects transportation and electro-communication systems. The net result is the creation of a global village, a single market system, a global factory and a global office. In other words, globalization is grotesque and dangerous polarization between peoples and countries benefiting from the system and those that are merely recipients and reactionaries of the effects.

Robertson (1992) articulated globalization as a concept which refers to both the compression of world and intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole.

Giddens (1990) in his own view, laid emphasis on globalization to world in which societies, cultures, politics and economies have in some senses, come closer together, and defined the concept as "the intensification of world wide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring miles and vice versa.

### The Challenges of Globalization

Globalization brings persistent energy and benefits to countries that are able to properly harness their opportunities to the proper development of their materials, and human resources/endowments. Resources are scarce, and for a nation to benefit from globalization, such nation must be ready to bear the cost, and be ready to scientifically allocate her resources both in human and in materials resources towards attainment of economic growth and stability, which must give room to competition. Having said this, the question that readily comes to mind, is how do we reconcile the opportunities in weak economies of less developed nations to what is obtainable in the strong economies of developed nations? Are the developed countries getting richer while the less developed countries getting poorer? Whose role is it to bring about international integration which allows the less developed countries to gain from globalization? In buttressing the above argument, one can level up the gap in the sense that globalization makes it possible for all nations to benefit from interdependence. Interdependence allows all economic agents to participate freely in international trade and has also increased economic linkage among countries through trade and financial flows. It has also been argued that interdependence entails risk and uncertainty, and that the rich are in the main stream.

To this end, the major challenges to all countries, particularly the developing countries is to be assisted from the marginalization and repositioning in global economy which calls for both policy and intellectual review of the trends and patterns of means of production in terms of export capacity and infrastructural facilities since the less developed countries are mono-economics which are not self-reliant and depend solely on western economies.

However, to meet the challenges of globalization, the less developed countries, particularly Nigeria, would no doubt hesitate in preparing individuals for the implementation and achievement of the vision 2010 objectives, that is, where we are, where we want to be and how



to get there. These will eventually tailor the Nigerian economy towards self-sustaining and self-reliant economy, which would be competitive in the world market, and can access the various international institutions available to promote economic growth and stability. It also has to improve on her communication networking which includes productive technology and the use of communication technologies in learning and in facilitation of the flow and share of ideas, values, goods and services, banking and finance, science and technology, foreign investment and market integration.

### The Relevance of Globalization to Education

It has been argued that, "a dollar spent on education of human beings will often bring a greater increase in national income than a dollar devoted to tangible goods". Therefore, the relevance of education cannot be overemphasized because it makes human beings more efficient, effective and productive. Alfred Marshall also recognized the relevance of education and articulated that, "good education confers great indirect benefits even on the ordinary work man. It stimulates his mental activity, it fastens in him the habit of inquisitiveness, makes him more intelligent, more ready and more trustworthy in his ordinary work".

However, education is a catalyst in the process of globalization in the sense that, it brings light to the social and scientific cooperation involved in globalization. Due to technological and scientific break through in the telecommunications, internet, telefax, computers and other electronic devices it is making a profound influence on virtually all aspects of the economy through education. The expansion of these devices has brought to the door step of people all necessary information around the world which has eventually brought light, knowledge today decision making process and helps in the area of civilization and modernization.

It is an accurate truism that we are in the space age that requires sophisticated education about environment. But less developed countries still lack the abilities to exploit all necessary opportunities in attaining greater height of the space age, due to poor investment in education, poor infrastructural facilities, low level of technology development, poor governance, poor and low managerial and technical abilities. All these factors also militate against the less developed countries to gain in the process of globalization.

Knowledge is power and education hitherto remains the gateway to knowledge. Every developed country attained the status-industrialized economy only by tapping from the tremendous power of education in their march towards attainment of national objectives. This accounts for reasons why education is compulsory for all children in the developed countries.

For Nigeria to attain such status, and benefit from the era of globalization, there should be more concentration on education by making it the main hallmark of national objectives. She should provide compulsory and qualitative education not proceeding "bit by bit" but rather a large

comprehensive programme is required or clearly necessary for the successful carrying out of sophisticated education.

### Summary and Conclusion

This paper has discussed the relationship between educational development in Nigeria and globalization. It is important to note that globalization is a product of imagination that has come to materials equivalent. It waits for nobody or a nation. We have come to an era where development or industrial revolution is based on information. Information is knowledge and knowledge is powerful, and information is idea and ideas rule the world, and information can be acquired through education. There is need therefore to improve the Nigerian educational system by reflecting global realities in our curriculum.

Also, the fate of Nigerian economy in this new era of globalization rests on the quality of our policy makers. There is the need for the policy makers to bear in mind that information controls the mechanism of globalization and should be introduced into national development strategies for proper management and implementation.

It is crucial and pertinent at this time for various writers, authors, scholars and policy makers in Nigeria, to offer better guidance and critical analysis for our country by reducing our reliance on foreign economy, by helping to realize the huge capacity of our natural resources endowment, and also probe into the issues of our educational system and economy. By this, our potentials would be realized, discovered, exploited and put into optimal use, which will serve as a major catalyst for Nigerian economy to benefit better in the era of globalization. Above all, everybody and all nations are faced with competition to join the planners of globalization, hence, Nigeria education and economy should be premised in the challenges of globalization.

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