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The Effect Of Globalization On African Countries: An Over View Of Nigeria

EZE R.C (Department Of History And International Studies Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka)

Nkwede J. (Department Of Political Sciences Ebonyi State University Abakaliki)

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Author (s)

Eze R.C.

Department Of History And
International Studies Nnamdi
Azikiwe University
Awka.

Nkwede J

Department Of Political Sciences
Ebonyi State University Abakaliki.

E-mail: oteh_c@yahoo.com

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Abstract

The focus of this study is the effects of globalization on African countries. Globalization is a positive force for development and poverty reduction. It has led to growing inequalities among nation states. This is a problem, which the study seeks to address. Though globalization is a worldwide issue the work shall be united to its economic and political effects. The study aims to examine the concept of globalization and its economic and political effects on Nigeria. The study will make recommendations for the win/ forward. The method used in this research will be secondary source of data collection and the content analysis method, which involves the use of newspapers, bulletins, journals and textbooks.

Introduction

International contact and exchange are not new, since the beginning of history, inter - country movements, trades and migration had been taking place. Even in the ancient and medieval world, international trading companies were formed, promoted and financed by states, governments and groups of individuals to explore and at times, pillage and conquer distant and less privileged communities and countries for the benefit of the more privileged ones.

The Phoenicians, the religious crusaders, the Europeans slave dealers. Their collaborators and the colonizers operated internationally and in the globe - world of their time, particularly after the 15th century, the various explorations, trading and colonizing countries of the West transverse Africa in search of economic grains and the empires usually at the expenses of those with whom the made contacts, conquered and colonized.

At the Berlin (Germany) conference of 1884, the Europeans power partitioned Africa among themselves; their political and economic domination of Africa assisted and complimented the Christian missionaries evangelists and Islamic crusaders who brought new and different cultures, gods and gods Africa. All these worldwide enterprises were

"globalization of a sort and were undertaken by almost the same groups of countries and races that are the main protagonist of to day's globalization" (Aluko 2000).

However, the present day globalization differs in scope, manner, and intensely from these same powerful nations at the expense of more or less the same weak nations, furthermore, the term "globalization" has acquired considerable emotive force. Some view it as a process that is beneficial, a key to future world economic and also inevitable and irreversible, others regards it with hostility even for believing that it increases inequality within and between nations, threaten employment and living standards and thwarts social progress.

Globalization offers extensive opportunity for worldwide development but it is not progressing evenly. Some countries are becoming integrated into the global economy than others; countries that have been able to integrate are seeing faster growth and reduced poverty.

Globalization can even be designed as "the intensification of economic, political, social, and cultural relations across borders." (kegley and wilt kopt 1998.597). a critical characteristic of these cross border-interaction

is that they are not originated by national governments.

The economic side of globalization dominates the headlines of financial pages and computer trade Journals. Globalization implies nothing less than a redistribution of global economic power. This is not to say that globalization only deals with economic and political aspects of the society, rather the concept of globalization goes as far as integrating society through the flow between countries to information, ideas, activities, technologies, goods and services, capital and people. Globalization in fact, as affected about every sector of the economy and society. In recent times, the world has been described as a "GLOBAL VILLAGE" meaning the world is just a globe where every society, people, culture etc. are intertwined, interwoven, thus bring about the death of distance. In a matter of minutes, communication between two people at two extreme ends is made either through telephone calls or the electronic mail via internet.

Globalization also encourages trade between countries by promoting free trade between countries without any barrier. According to the former United Nations Secretary General, Boutros - Ghali, "globalization is creating a world that is increasingly interconnected in which national boundaries are less important and it is generating both possibilities and problems" (Kegleya Witt Kopf; 598). The main theme of this research work is to explain or rather high light that the increasing integration (globalization) offers tremendous opportunities to developing countries but that it also carries with it serious risks.

Therefore, in the course of this study, there would be a critical examination on political and economic effects of globalization in Africa with particular reference to Nigeria.

The Problem

Globalization as it has been defined is the integration of society economy. Globalization in its real series is a positive force for development, and poverty reduction. However, one of the most common colonies today is that globalization typically leads to growing

inequality among countries.

These are sharp contrasts between countries in many of the dimensions of globalizations. An example is the degree to which countries have embraced the Internet and open communities. More than 30% of the population in the United States of America have access to the internet, but in Africa and other third world countries only 1% - 2% of the population enjoys the same service.

Developing countries many of which, 20 years ago had quite restrictive policies towards foreign trade and investment have opened up to the global market to every different extent. The crux of the problems in this study is that globalization as an agent of development has only been beneficial to developed countries and hence it has widened the gap that was already in existence. Since this globalization is inevitable, it has come to stay, Africa countries should grasp the opportunity that come with it to enhance development and join in this progress of integration as equals.

The ideal of a ruling class has been one of the greatest canards of modern history. But it is coming true after all. Supporters of debt relief engage in woolly thinking, but the moral case for debt forgiveness is 'unanswerable'. The nation-state is not on the decline but nobody denies that it is losing power to other sorts of governments. From the viewpoint, one can say they were optimistic in their approach on the issue of globalization.

According to one popular view, globalization is the "inexorable integration of markets, nation - state and technologies to a degree never witnessed before in a way that is enabling individuals, corporation and nation - states to reach the world further, deeper and cheaper than ever before" (Friedman 1999:20). By contrast, some groups of scholars and activist view globalization not as an inexorable process but as a deliberate, ideology project of economic liberalization to more intense market forces.

Discussion of globalization often conveys a sense that something new is happening to the

world. It is becoming a 'single place' as such global practices, values and technologies now shape's lives to the point that we are entering a global age.

Globalization used to be widely celebrated as a new birth of freedom, better connections in a more open world to improve people's live by making new products and ideas inversely available, breaking down barriers to trade and democratic institutions, resolve tensions between old adversaries and empowering more people. The term globalization was used increasingly to express concern about the consequences of global change for the well being of various groups, the sovereignty and identity of countries, the disparities among people and the health of the environment. Politicians opposed to the inequities of oppressive global capitalism now portray globalization as dangerous.

Analysts differ on whether globalization is desirable or despicable, however depending in part on the scenario about the future world order that globalization would help create the political perspectives that inform their world views, some focus on the benefits of globalization for economic well - being, other focus on its unevenness and the prospects of marginalizing large number of peoples and states. Some focus on challenges globalization poses to an international system founded on the state. Other are more sanguine about the states resilience and the prospects for global governance to cope with the challenge of globalization. It is time globalization threatens to widen the gulf between the worlds rich and poor countries: but from recent literatures it would be said that globalization is a process that carries along with it risks and opportunities. It depends on how you grasp it for example the Asian countries (Asian tigers) are reaping the economic benefits of globalization: through their strong hold on technology.

Therefore, the west is greatly identifying with them. Globalization is to aid development from the above reviewed literature we can say that globalization like every other strategies for development has its benefits and disadvantages. Africa should not just fold their

hands and see themselves as the losers in the integration process. For the world economy to work effectively. They need the co-operation of nation -states. Certainly, a world of vanishing boards a challenge the territorial state, but the world economy does not operate somewhere off shore but instead functions within the political frame work provided by nation -states. (Kegleya Witt Kopf (1998:576). In addition to literatures or rather previous lilornlurcson globnli7.ar.ion, my view point is that since this phenomenon has come to stay and it is unstoppable, Nigeria and Africa as a whole a role to play, and this role should be of more benefit to us. In the next chapter, more will be discussed on the benefits.

Globalization an Overview

Globalization storms from "the onrush of economic and ecological fdrees that demand integration and uniformity and that mesmerizing the world with fast music, fast computer and fast foods with MTV; Macintosh and McDonald pressing nations into one commercially homogenous global network: one commerce". (Kegleya Witt Kopt 1998:576). Cellular phones are rapidly sweeping the world enabling many among the estimated 50% of the population who have never made phone calls to communicate instantly with others. The rapid growth in popularity of cellular phones is one element of a larger revolution in telecommunications that is shrinking our world.

Information Technology and Globalization

Computers are the most visible of globalization. They also are its most potent agents. No area of the world and as area of polities, economic society and culture are unmane from the pervasive impact of computer technology. Even victims of ethnics' political conflicts and national disasters in the remote corners of the world are connected to other by the laptop computer that relieves workers from the international federation of Red cross and Red crescent society bring with them.

The freedom people enjoy with personal computers and their ability to tap into

emerging technologies without government intervention is most apparent on the Internet. Individuals regularly sort the 'Net' without constraints, creating a global element web of people, ideas, and interaction a cyberspace unencumbered by the borders of the geopolitical world. Theoretically anyone can post information but the reality is that government, corporation. And academic institution control the main contents of the internet. Although, the internet supposedly is available to anyone with a modern and the will to use it, race, gender, income, and age show the profiles of uses. Access maybe unlimited in theory, but it is restricted by the course of technology and step leaning curve for computer neophytes. As the use of the Internet has grown fuelled by the growth of personal computers in homes and business concerns about it and abuses surfaced. A law passed in early 1996 to promote ipetition conformed a provision requiring television manufactures to jrpotate technology into their sets that will enable parents (or others) to block reception of particular station of programs. Because the United State spawned the internet, it is home to more PCs than any other country, and is at that time front of telecommunication revolution; its influence of the emerging technology of the future is substantial. Infract some see America's information capabilities as the basis for their continued influence in culture, politics and the military fairs well into the next century.

The Media

The era of globalization is often described as the "information age" but remarkably large portions of the information we receive are controlled by a remarkably small member of media sources. Ownership of the world's media sources increasingly is concentrated in the hands of a few giant national and multi-national corporations. While the media's impact on public affairs is more difficult to trace, scholars generally agree that the media have the capacity to set the agenda of public discourse .out political affairs.

In the process, they also often shape the discourse itself, particular power is attributed to CNN (Cable News Network)

the twenty four hours television news channel beamed around the world. Its global broadcast of squalor and violence in Somalia for example were often viewed as a catalyst to the humanitarian intervention there, one critic has described the impact of CNN and the media this way "in foreign policy circles these days one often hears that the advent of instantaneous and global technology has given the news media far greater influence in international relations than ever before robbing diplomacy of its rightful place at the helm in the process observers of international affairs calling it the CNN curve. It suggests that when CNN floods the airwaves with news of a foreign crisis, it evokes an emotional out cry from the public to-do something" (Kegley a will Kopf: 582). Under the spell of the CNN curve, goes this refrain policy makers have no choice but to redirect their attention to the crisis at hand or risk unpopularity, whether or not such revision is merited by policy consideration.

Control of television and other media sources by the United States and a small number of European countries became the focus of hot dispute with the global south during the 1980's the global south leaders sought to right the imbalance of the information flows from north to south that painted what they perceived to be an unfavorable image of the south. The image they believed fostered Northern values such a consumerism designed to perpetuate the south dependence on information and communication order.

(Nwico). The NWICO has since been removed from the agenda of public of financials discourse, but the issues remain very much alive in nongovernmental organization and central to the globalization challenge. One analyst's worries about the implications of concert routing so mushmedia in so few hands.

The new global information, infrastructure is especially distorting due to dominance in global products around the world and dominance in cultural exports. This dominance provides the potentials to displace indigenous culture with a tide of

largely western. Largely consumerists, global conformity. Perhaps, globalization is just a nice word that multinational corporation use to hide. Their efforts or infract the entire world with the cultural virus of commercialism.

Global Health or Global Infection

Human - Kind and the threat of disease have always coexisted easily, for example in Kikwiti Zaire, the deadly Ebola virus after haring I am dormant for twenty years broke out and ravaged its victims with massive hemorrhaging and inevitable death. Globalization not only heightens the awareness of health risk but also actually multiplies them. Rapid urbanization in much of the world contributes to the rapid spread of diseases. Growing numbers refugees forced into unsanitary camps take ravages from cholera and other diseases that can prove as deadly as the violent ethnic conflict they flee from Excessive population growth forces people to move into habitats where unknown micro organisms and killer virus awaits them. Growing millions lilted with the carriers of potentially total disease. May also view the uses of narcotics as a disease.

The illicit use of drugs is nonetheless widespread and hugely profitable. Fuelled by major production and distribution complexes in the Andes and southwest and Southeast Asia, the annually. As profits growth, the power of traffickers expands as well, leading to other worrisome developments. Among them are the widening impact drug trade on illegal economic structures and processes in major producing or transit countries; the increasing political corruption in such countries, the growing intrusion of criminal enterprises into the realm of the state and the law; the successes of narcotics business innovation avoiding detection, increasing operation efficiency, and the growing transactional corporations among criminal empires that deal in drugs and other black market items.

Globalization of Trade and Labour

In manifesto, on the evils of capitalism, Karl Marx urged the workers of the world to unite,

throwing of the bondage imposes by the oppressive owners of capital. The assumption was that workers everywhere shared a common purpose and vision. That is no longer true. As the liberalization of market throughout the world and their rapid integration globally processed labour market will be profoundly affected.

Competition not solidarity has intensified. Because the spread of globalization is uneven, some will be winners and other looser. In the 1970's one third of the world's workers were isolated from the rest of the world through centralized economic planning as in the former eastern bloc and through restructure trade barriers and the regulation of capita market elsewhere. Today, three grant population bloc; china, The Republic of the former soviet union and the India with nearly half of the world's labour force among them are entering the global market and many other countries have already established deep linkages. Accommodating the influx of new worker will be difficult "Almost one third of the worlds" 2.8 billion workers are either jobless or underemployed, and many of those who are employed work for very low wages with little prospect for advancement" (Kegleya Witt Kopf: 580) multinational corporation have been a primary vehicle of growing interdependence.

This has often been made possible by moving manufacturing sales and technological know — how to developing countries where labour is cheap on the whole the concept "globalization of trade" (free trade)implies that the process of globalization discourages barriers in trade by opening up to the borders without any particular country preventing goods from going in.

Cultural Conflict

Finally, globalization is increasingly polarizing the African societies in the same way that the unequal gains of the 19th century industrial revaluation gave rise to social discontents and to communism or socialism in many countries. In many Africa countries today, an increasing number of professionals,

upper class elite to about with papers, cellular mobile telephones and watch CNN, BBC and other foreign satellite dish programmes 4n where more than % of the population do not have access to portable water, electricity or fuels and where an increasing number of high schools, colleges and university graduates are unemployed. The uneven spread of economic opportunities within African countries, brought about by globalization, is increasing discontent and marginalization, especially among the youths the urban poor, or among, other disadvantaged groups the result is increased crime rates, social upheavals that at times have led to rebellion against the governments or to inter-ethnic rivalries and wars, the rise of inter-ethnic violence in Africa has been frightening. In Nigeria, for instance many ethnic groups are today individually complaining of being marginalized by either federal government or by the state government or by both and are calling dissolution of the federation or for a national conference to discuss and determine the basis of construed association in a loosely governed Nigeria and to settle the mode of sharing the wealth of Nigeria.

Globalization is thus threatening the existence of many African countries. Globalization is both a cause and a result of the modern information revolution. It is driven by the dramatic improvement in telecommunications incredible computing power, and the development of information network such as the internet. These technologies are helping to overcome the barriers of physical distance. The real issue now is how to manage the implication of the globalization process and to turn it into a historic opportunity for greater wealth creation and distribution into a tool for larger integration in the world economic system. "Globality confronts us with two sets of issues. At the national level, the role of the government has to be required. As their ability to influence business activities in increasingly constrained and their margin of manoeuvre shrinks in front of the overwhelming power of trinomial markets, governments are under pressure to increase their roles in two key domains. On the one hands, they must strive to provide through their policies the most

propitious environment and framework for economic activity, knowledge generation and fore increased competitiveness; on the other hand, they must equip their citizen with the skills and expertise needed to face the unrelenting pressures and requirement created by globalization "(Stem 2000:69)".

Government will also be Judged more on their ability to address the social representations of the globalization process and to find ways to balance its universities and among the workers who are underfunded, under paid and who see their standard of living continually being eroded. The universities produce teachers and students who harld have the competence or the facility to unravel the causes and the consequence of the globalized economy.

The internationalizing and the globalizing of the economics of African countries continue to criminalize, pauperize, and degrade their peoples in the world economic relation. As well as the African leaders acquires and venerate the existing world economic system, they and not the globalizer will be the losers. Nigeria will not be able to wish away the pull of globalization in this age of technology advances. However, there is need for Nigeria to be a participant on its terms and as a subject rather than an object and victim of based on the recognition that global citizenship can exist only if it based on justice to all. If the world is now a "global village," we all know the norms in the village square. Such norms include solidarity participation in the decision making process, justice, mutual support, and communal sharing of the pleasure and pains of the village.

The village is not the theatre for ruthless competition, destruction and graft. The village is an example of an inclusive body for a selected few.

The present globalized economic world has become an important arena for emphasizing the conflicting tension of our time. It has put on unfair burden on the countries of Africa.

To realize the great potential from globalization, countries need complementary

institutions and policies. These institutions and policies can themselves be strengthened through countries' involvement in international markets. This prospect immediately raises issues of sequencing which kinds of undertakes first in order to minimize the risks associated with globalization.

Conclusion

The project was undertaken to find out whether there are political and economic implications of globalization in Africa. Was because Nigeria has been involved in the globalization process over the years. Nevertheless, this whole idea of globalization is that countries, economies, companies; people are coming together not because they are forced to but because they want to. Indeed; they can't help themselves as communication gets better, finance moves faster and free markets spread.

The results have showed that globalization has failed to reconcile the interests of the economically poor and weak peoples and nations of the world. There are specific measures that countries can take to ensure that everyone, especially poor nations, participate in globalization and benefit from it. It is important to say at this point that our findings are not with finality since any academic labour is usually an on-going process. Hence, there is always the thirst for continuous research. However, I have been able to gather this research essay after a thorough study of the subject matter.

Recommendations

With the on-going process of globalization, if Africa is to participate effectively as a member continent of the "global village" its people and its governments must undertake some certain tasks. First and foremost, is to build complementary institutions and policies that can support and complement the expansion of trade. In building institutions, the issue of economic and political freedom is vital to development and poverty education. Over the long run, societies in which individuals, households and firms have freedom to make essential economic decisions that affect them directly have consistently out-

performed those in which the government has arrogated those decisions to itself. Economies cannot succeed with seasonably well functioning government and indeed such a government is vital to economic freedom. However, economies cannot succeed if governments over reach in ways that undermine the incentives for and dynamism of the private sector. Political freedoms and democracy generally can promote development in several ways.

First, they serve as a bulwark protecting economic freedoms. Secondly, democratic political systems have the information flows and responsiveness necessary to prevent the worst types of economic volatility from occurring. Thirdly, there is some evidence that democracies respond to and adapt more rapidly to economic shocks. The African governments should not only take reasonable measures to protect their respective economies. But they should also ensure the integrity of their respective countries as sovereign and viable members of the international community.

The philosophy of minimal government in the African economies. The African governments or those of them that have the will, must use state powers, to stop the recurrent devaluation of their currencies by returning to fixed exchange rates. They should control the escalating rates of interest, assist agriculture, industry and commerce and pursue a policy of full employment along side mass literacy and good public school education. The African countries must rapidly develop the physical resource as well as the equally large human resources for the benefit of its people rather than for the benefit of those countries and people that already have an unfair share of the wealth of the world. It is evident that countries in the international system that reap the benefits of globalization and those countries that have formed blocks in the system to further their interests as a block rather than as a mere nation. By being a member of these blocks they stand to gain the benefits of collective interest. E.G the European Union and United States to

Africa. Therefore, Africa should seek to unite to pursue their interest as one, because any benefit to Africa in the face of globalization countries of the continent. The Africa union has a vital role to play in the international system.

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