

GLOBALIZATION, GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Abstract:

The paper examined Globalization, Governance and Development in Nigeria. The main argument of the paper is that globalization would continue to impact negatively on governance and indeed development in Nigeria except the basic objective conditions are met in order to derive the expected benefits from globalization. The paper relied on secondary sources of data and adopted dependency theory as an analytical construct. One of the assumptions of dependency theory is that unequal exchange is the basis for exploitation and underdevelopment. It was noted in the paper that globalization reinforces inequality and may not guarantee the much talked about even development for all the members of the so called 'global village'. As a corollary to the issue of inequality, the paper also noted that corruption, lack of purposeful and dynamic leadership and other fissiparous tendencies exacerbate the negative externalities of globalization which impact dismally on governance and development in Nigeria. The paper recommended inter alia that Nigeria should consistently strive to meet those basic objective conditions that can obtain benefits from globalization in order to enhance good governance and development.

Keywords: Globalization; Governance; Development; Dependency, Inequality, Corruption.

Introduction

The axiom of uneven endowment of resources has naturally given rise to exchange. Exchange therefore becomes a veritable means through which a country consumes what ordinarily she was not endowed with. This exchange is predicated on the basis of mutuality of benefits between or among participants.

However, the mutuality of benefits has been skewed in such a manner that what is derived from the exchange in the form of benefits is now a function of the power quotient of a country within the purview of the matrix of interdependence in global configuration. Power, which is seen in international relations as the ability of a country to influence the course of events to her favour may not be fully appreciated from only the mere fact of natural endowment. Beyond that is the fact the natural endowments must be fully harnessed and fairly distributed in order to give fillip to the economy and enhance development which can improve living conditions of the people. The state through governance, provides the enabling environment that can facilitate the harnessing and fair distribution of resources for development. The question that boggles the mind now is, can governance be efficacious in the face of globalization so as to achieve development, particularly in Nigeria? It is against these backdrop that the paper critically examined the nexus among globalization, governance and development in Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework-Dependency Theory

In a bid to clearly appreciate the inter-connectivity, integration and the different impacts they have on the governance and development of the different countries in a globalized economy, the dependency theory appears more appropriate and adopted in this paper. Before now, the interconnectivity and integration found expression in a world economy but now they can be understood within the context of a globalized economy with its concomitant contradictions that vividly explains unequal exchange fuelled by global

capitalist economy which is based on market and competition. The attendant international capitalist division of labour which divides the globe into primary and secondary producers reinforces unequal exchange. Simply, dependency theory as one of the theories of development places much premium on unequal exchange. It is this unequal exchange that explains development and underdevelopment in the countries of North and South. It should be noted that an economy or country is said to be dependent if it is unable to pursue self sustaining development due mainly to its contact with other economies. It follows that a dependent economy is one that is not in control of its affairs in an inter-dependent relationship and so most often loses out economically (Nna, 2002). Accordingly to Dos Santos (as cited in Nna, 2002, 192), dependency refers to a situation in which:

“the economy of certain countries is conditioned by the development and expansion of another economy to which the former is subjected. The relation of the interdependence between two or more economies and between these and world trade assumes the form of dependence, which some countries (the dominant ones) can expand and be self-sustaining while other counties (Dependent ones), can do these only as a reflection of that expansion which can have either a positive or negative effect on their immediate development”.

Following from the views of Dos Santos, and which in a way is corroborated by the work of V.I. Levin on imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism, it is our view that imperialism, which approximates unequal exchange and exploitation, can be understood through the characteristics of capital and by extension capitalism as a mode of production. Capital and indeed capitalism are exploitative, expansionary and self augmenting. These traits of capital and capitalism explain the irresistible pressure on European businessmen to carryout ‘discovery’ voyages which subsequently brought imperialism to the fore.

In the views of Ray (2003) dependency is a process through which peripheral countries have been integrated as well as assimilated into the international capitalist system, and the way the former have experienced structural distortions in their domestic societies because of such assimilation and perpetration. Igwe (2005, 111) opined that:

“dependency defines a situation in which the policy or life of a state and its citizens are exploitatively determined by an outside power or powers, usually through the simultaneous application of unequal socio-economic, political and cultural measures, and it often occurs either as a successor policy to past unequal (e.g colonial) ties, or through the acquiescence of the local agents of the foreign power who for various reasons become willing tools of such a policy.”

Generally, dependency theorists, blame the economic and political difficulties of the least developed countries on their contact with, and eventual incorporation into the global capitalist economy in which they are conditioned for the role of suppliers of basic raw materials and importers of capital goods, technology and Machinery. This development they say, is perpetuated by international financial institutions, multilateral agencies and multinational corporations which exacerbate the flight of capital and resources from the least developed to the more developed economics (Nna, 2002). In as much as we uphold this view, we make haste to add that the dependent economy of least developed economies is worsened by the nature and character of their states as exemplified by lack of visionary leadership, and other prevalent negative values such as corruption, ethnicity, nepotism, tribalism, favouritism (or what is known in Nigeria as man-know-man). The relevance of the dependency theory in this study stems from the fact that it exposes the unequal exchange with the accompanying exploitative tendencies which is couched in neo-liberal orthodoxy. These capitalist exploitative tendencies via unequal exchange are reinforced by globalization which also is a new phase of imperialism. The thought here, therefore, is that with the turn of events in some third world countries,

particularly in Nigeria, globalization would continue to impede development more so as it distorts and negates some vital democratic values or principles.

Globalization and its Democratic Implications.

Globalization is a process that thrives on inequality especially when you consider the fact that some countries like Nigeria hardly have little or no capital that can speedily move across national boundaries. Even when they do, such capitals are discriminated against and hindered from competing favourably in some economics of the North. Simply put, globalization which is the speedy and unhindered movement of capital across national boundaries is selective and discriminatory. In another perspective, Ihonvbere (2001) opined that "...globalization seeks to bring all together in one global economic, social and political structure based on capitalist values and liberal democracy. Its watchword being "integration" today's globalization seeks to climb, domesticate and reshape all cultural and political barriers in the quest for profits". From the opinion of Ihonvbere (2001), it means that there is a matrix of relationship among the various countries which transcends space and time barriers. This is made possible by improved means of communication and transportation as a result of achievement in science and technology. The scientific, economic and social factors, rather than political developments have contributed more significantly to the erosion of state sovereignty and in shaping the character of globalization in recent times.

Ihonvbere (2001) also noted that central in the process of globalization are the transnational corporations. According to him, these transnational corporations are rapidly streamlining technology, labour training, utilization and exploitation, regulations and production process. This also includes a strategy to as much as possible, streamline and rationalize consumption around the world to facilitate the production and marketing of goods and services without frequent retooling, investments in fixed capital or skill development. It should be noted that these transnational corporations are rooted in the countries of the North with their branches all over the world – the delocalization of production process in the search for cheap raw materials and labour. Their activities as indicated by Ihonvbere (2001) tend to erode the sovereignty of most states, especially – countries of the south. Furthermore, Ihonvbere (2001) observed that globalization emphasizes money rather than people with its primary concern as profit. This breeds injustice, inequality and poverty. He expressed this by saying that to the opposing group, globalization is just a mere liberal or shorthand name for imperialism, domination, exploitation marginalization, and the overall reproduction of the injustices, inequalities, and poverty that characterize the relations within and between nations.

The consequence of this is that globalization can destroy the environment, commoditize human relations, destroy the welfare basis of society and consolidate inequalities. Ihonvbere (2001) argued that "the net result would be increased poverty, unemployment, instability, corruption and the negation of local or indigenous socio-cultural institutions and values. From the views of Ihonvbere (2001) it is apparent that globalization has anti-democratic tendencies. For instance, whereas globalization reproduces inequality, democracy promotes equality to the extent that it ensures that equality before the law and equal opportunities to everybody, especially in participating in making and implementing decisions that affect their lives. In the views of Michael Walzer as cited in Putnan (1992) citizenship in a civic community is marked first of all, by active participation in public affairs. Interest to public issues and devotion to public causes are the key signs of civic virtue. In the words of Putnan (1992:48)

"citizenship in the civic community entails equal rights and obligations for all. Such a community is bound together by horizontal relations of reciprocity and co-operations, not by vertical relations of authority and dependency. Citizens interact as equals, not as patrons and clients nor as governors and petitioners. The more politics approximates the ideal of political equality among citizens following norms of reciprocity and engaged in self-government, the more civic that community may be said to be" (page 48).

However, from the views of Putnan (1992), globalization through its agents – the transnational corporations (TNCs) does not give equal opportunities to the members of the so called 'global village'. A

case in point is the discriminatory posture of World Trade Organization (WTO). The WTO plays a prominent role in the globalisation process. It was the product of the Uruguay Round which was set up in 1995. It succeeded the General Arrangement of Tariffs and Trade (GATT) set up in 1947 after World War II. The aim of the institution is to create a multilateral legal framework to settle outstanding issues in international trade, be in charge of creating an international environment conducive to international trade and the liberalization of international trade. Nevertheless, WTO has been biased in favour of the countries of the North. For instance, it is only the agriculture of developed countries (temperate countries) that escaped international agreements and the agriculture of tropical countries (mainly developing countries) was subjected to these regulations.

The fact remains that WTO plays double standard. What is applicable to America and other temperate countries is not applicable to the tropical countries of the south. The concept of liberalization makes more meaning only to the developing countries. The WTO conference held in Cancun, Mexico in August, 2003 is a clear manifestation of the imperialistic and anti-democratic tendencies of WTO as an agent of globalization. The Conference could not resolve on some issues; especially the proposal made by the developing countries for the withdrawal of farm subsidies in the countries of the North. The implication of this proposal is that it will assist the developing countries agricultural products to compete favourably with the countries of the North. It was vehemently opposed by the countries the North.

As a way of corroborating the above fact, Rugumamu (1999) said that inequality is a product of the unequal access to dominant organizations or institutions like WTO, IMF, TNC etc, and dominant transactions. It is obvious that the discriminatory and anti-democratic stance of WTO has led to power not equally assessed by the North and South and this breeds inequality and marginalization within the global context.

Another fact to be borne in mind is that whereas globalization places much premium on market, democracy emphasizes people. At least, the over celebrated definition of democracy by the former US president, Abraham Lincoln underscores the above fact. He defined democracy as government of the people, by the people and for the people. Though the definition is short and simple, it is very apt in describing the relevance of the people in taking their own destiny in their own hands. The people need to participate in the governance process that affect their lives. Participation, therefore is one of the key values of democracy. This view was corroborated by an activist in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria (as cited in IDEA, 2000) when he said that “democracy is about local people being in charge of their lives, being able to take charge of their resources and making power flow from them and not the other way round” Hadenius (1992) averred that “political democracy may in this context be terminated as follows: public policy is to be governed by the freely expressed will of the people whereby all individuals are to be treated as equals.

The democratic principle as averred by Hadenius (1992) was brazenly violated by WTO when in a conference in Seattle, delegates from the developing countries were not allowed to make inputs on trade and economic policies that have direct bearing on their welfare and development. The Green room’ meeting where only the delegates from the developed countries participated speaks for itself.

By the exploitative and discriminatory tendencies of globalization through its supra-national institutions, it perpetrates inequality which can reinforce poverty on a large scale. The manipulation and subsequent exploitation of the resources of the countries of the south, including Nigeria by the North impoverishes the economy of the south. It is axiomatic that democracy cannot thrive in a society that has high rate of poverty. In other words, poverty is antithetical to the thriving and sustenance of democracy.

From the few examples given above, it is clear that globalization has negative implications on democracy especially in the countries of the south and to a very large extent can influence governance and development in the countries of the south, particularly, Nigeria.

The Impact of Globalization on Governance and Development in Nigeria

Governance can be seen as the processes, machinery or methods through which a society or organization is ordered or directed in order to ensure peaceful, just, fair and egalitarian society necessary for self and collective actualization. According to the committee of Experts on public administration (2006 as cited in Udeh, 2017: 118) “governance refers to the exercise of political and administrative authority at all levels to manage a country’s affairs. It comprises the mechanisms, processes and institutions through which

citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences. Furthermore, the United Nations Development Programme (2014; as cited in Udeh, 2017: 118) defines governance as a process of creating and sustaining an environment for inclusive and responsive political processes and settlements' At the 'heart' of governance is the need to ensure that the scarce resources are fairly and equitably distributed with the attendant laws, rules and regulations made to checkmate the conflictive motion of man towards his 'felicity' (ie personal interest). Governance is said to be 'good' when it succeeds in impacting positively on the lives of the people by upholding equity, fairness, justice and participation of the people in making and implementing decisions that affect their lives. These virtues of governance approximates democracy. Thus, democracy becomes a sine qua non for good governance. Fundamentally, participation is a key to good governance as its absence, neglect, negation or denial may not guarantee equality, inclusiveness, firmness and justice. Deliberative democracy, which is the idea that a legitimate political decisions is one that results from discussions among citizens under reasonably favourable conditions, builds consensus and eliminates inequality, marginalization and exploitation. In effect, it carries everybody along and gives a sense of belonging to the citizens or members of an organization.

However, it should be noted that democracy is not only about the mere presence of democratic institutions or inclusion of democratic principles in constitutions, treaties or charters but more importantly is the imbibing and demonstration of democratic culture by the people or members of an organization (Wonah, 2017). Good governance, therefore, means the presence of democratic institutions fortified by prevalent democratic culture in a society or organization devoid of oppression, marginalization, injustice, inequality and exploitation. The ultimate aim of good governance is to facilitate development. Development is man-centred. In other words, man is the pivot around which development revolves. Man participates in development, thus portraying participation as a common denominator for democracy and development, Nnoli (2011:21) noted that democracy is that political society in which social struggles are heading to decreasing domination, oppression, injustice and exploitation, as well as increasing legitimacy. The implication of the above fact is that the more a society is stripped of oppression, injustice and exploitation, the more democratic it becomes which in turn can engender good governance and development.

Globalization, ordinarily would have been a veritable development paradigm that can guarantee even development for all the members of the 'global village'. But the inability of the countries of the south, as a result of bad and visionless leadership, to endogenously expand economic activities that can generate the much needed capital that can 'move' and compete favourably with the countries of the south is a serious obstacle. Ake in Efemini (2002:22) noted that "great or charismatic leadership could play decisive role in transforming societies. A charismatic leadership is capable of engineering society to new heights where ethnicity and other social vices can be reduced if not eliminated". It is the absence of this charismatic and purposeful leadership that has adversely affected governance, and by extension, development in Nigeria. Globalization fundamentally, is concerned about the market and not the people. Whereas, it is the cultivated people or citizens of a country that need to galvanize, harness resources, make and implement decisions that can foster socio-political development of their society. Market alone cannot engender development when the people are neglected.

The people need to participate in governance through democratic process and indeed in development. Development starts and ends with man. In order for man to participate in development process, man need to be free from oppression, suppression, marginalization and exploitation. In a bid to project market for profit motive, globalization through its imperialistic agencies and institutions exhibit and perpetrate discriminatory and anti-democratic tendencies which tend to reinforce oppression, inequality, marginalization and exploitation. The external dependence of Nigerian economy coupled with the trade liberalization sermon of globalization debilitates Nigerian economy and force Nigerians to wallow in what seems like abysmal poverty and underdevelopment. However, what seems more worrisome or disturbing is the collaborative effects of some Nigerian leaders who poses or act as comprador bourgeoisie. They connive with agents or institutions of globalization and act as conduit pipes through which Nigerians are defrauded and impoverished. The introduction of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) against the wish of Nigerians is a classic example. Furthermore, the primitive accumulation mentality of most Nigerian leaders makes them see the state and its apparatuses as means of amassing wealth. Thus, they perpetrate corrupt practices

and see ascendancy to power or public office as a do-or-die affair, thereby undermining democracy, through electoral malpractice. Consequently, elections in Nigeria have been upgraded to war-fare where guns and other dangerous weapons are freely used to intimidate voters and hijack the electoral process. The implication of course is that those who emerge through such barbaric process will not be answerable, responsive and responsible to the yearnings and aspiration of the people. The people are alienated from governance and development process which scuttles governance and development suffers a great deal. It is evident from the foregoing that globalization with its discriminatory, antidemocratic and exploitative tendencies reinforces inequality and poverty in Nigeria which obviously affect negatively governance and development. In other words, it follows that there can be no good governance and development in a society where few people are swimming in an ocean of influence while the rest of the people are wallowing in seemingly abysmal poverty and underdevelopment. Again is the fact that the much celebrated even development for members of the “global village” will be elusive and mere sham, if some countries like Nigeria do not generate the needed capital that should move across national boundaries.

The Way Forward

It is evident from the foregoing that globalization as a precipitate of the imperialistic inclination of capitalism as a mode of production is also exploitative and imperialistic. This, clearly makes globalization through its agents or institutions to be discriminatory and antidemocratic. It follows that globalization should be inclusive and be made to have human face because the people are the drivers of development process. There should be unconditional and massive support to Nigeria by the developed countries of the world to enable Nigeria invest in economic ventures that have multiplier effects. However, It is also on record that in most cases when these aids or loans are given, they are misappropriated in ostentatious consumption and counter productive activities by our leaders. There is therefore the need for Nigerians and indeed our leaders to imbibe and demonstrated democratic culture. They (the leaders of Nigeria) need to be statesmen and women who are civic minded and are selflessly committed to serve their fatherland. Attention should be paid greatly to diversification of the economy which can increase economic activities, thereby expanding the productive base of the economy. This would necessarily create the capital for Nigeria which can move to other economies of the world.

Conclusion Remarks

It is apparent that given the discriminatory and antidemocratic tendencies of globalization, it cannot guarantee the much talked about even development for the members (including Nigeria) of the “global village”. This is because it generates inequality and poverty which devastatingly affects governance and development in Nigeria. Globalization through its agents or Institutions need to be democratized and should be made to also place much premium on the people. Another point to note is that leaders in Nigeria should brace up to the challenges of development by absolving themselves of the primitive accumulation of wealth mentality. They should be selfless leaders whose mission and vision should be geared towards catapulting Nigerians to the state of Eldorado. Moreover, the bootics of office should be made less attractive to discourage or abate this ‘madness’ of I must rule over you, whether you like it or not’. Globalization should promote good governance which inturn can facilitate development in Nigeria.

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