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**GLOBALIZATION AND NATIONAL POLICY MAKING IN
THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES**

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ABSTRACT: This paper studies “Globalization and National Policy Making in Third World Countries”. It evaluated the effects of globalization on policy and policy-making in third world countries. Developing countries are particularly vulnerable to global events and actions and have come to depend heavily on the international community for financial and technical assistance. Consequently, National Policies are interlocked with global issues, because poor countries generally have fragile and weak political systems of accountability. With few autonomous institutions and little power to offset that exercised by the central government, external agencies being potentially key political players, therefore exert considerable influence. The aim of this paper therefore is to study globalization and its impacts on the national policy agenda and policy making in third world countries. Data for this study was generated through secondary source of data. The researcher found out that the Making of national policy in different African states is heavily influenced by the globalization process. The theoretical framework used was the theory of Post-Colonial State developed by Alavi (1972). The paper recommends that one possible way out of the menace of globalization and its devastating effects is the subordination of external relations to the logic of internal development. Through this, African revolutionary and activist classes could be actively engaged in building alternative structure of power for organizing production based on new values of humanity and care for the environment.

Keywords: Globalization, Policy-making, Society, Policy Agenda.

Introduction

Policy-making is an extremely analytical and political process which involves complex set of forces. It begins with the ideas of people or interest groups have about the actions they want the government to take or those that are influenced by the ideology of the ruling political party. In other words, these are the demands or proposals made by interest groups or by other actors upon the political system for action or inaction on some perceived problems. Public policies are being conditioned everywhere by the external environment. Tilly, (1995:95) opined that it is impossible to separate the external environmental factors, as they invariably influence the political processes and policy outcomes. The influence, being brought to bear on socio-economic problems of a country by agencies like WHO, ILO, UNDP, etc, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, Globalization of National Policy-Making: An International Perspective Forum, the Organization for

Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the European Central Bank, etc., is of critical importance in shaping its policies.

Objectives

The general objective of this study is to explain economic impacts of globalization in the third world countries; however, the special objectives are:

1. To identify the effects of Globalization on the national policy making in third world countries.
2. To suggest the necessary steps to be taken by third world countries in curbing the devastating effect of globalization on national policymaking.

The Concept of Globalization

Globalization refers to the process of the intensification of economic, political, social and cultural relation across international boundaries. It is aimed at making global being present worldwide at the world stage or the global arena. It deals with the increasing breakdown of trade barriers and the increasing integration of world market. (Fafowora, 1998:5). As Ohuabunwa (1999:20) once opined; Globalization can be seen as an evolution which is systematically restructuring interactive phases among nations by breaking down barriers in the areas of culture, commerce, communication and several other fields of endeavor.

This is evident from its push of free-market economics, liberal democracy, good governance, gender equality and environmental sustainability among other holistic values for the people of member states.

Within the parameters of the foregoing, globalization could be correctly defined from the institutional perspective as the spread of capitalism. (MacEwan,1990:10). However, it is germane to adumbrate that the collapse of the Eastern bloc in the late 80s and early 90s led to the emergence and ascendancy of a global economy that is primarily structured and governed by the interests of western behemoth countries, thus, facilitating the integration of most economies into the global capitalist economy

One major feature of globalization is that it enhances the volume of international trade and investment, which is a reflection of the global pattern of specialization (i.e. the international division of labor). Though there is an increase in the volume of goods among nations, international trade continues to be largely concentrated in developed countries. (i.e. trade continues to exist between economies at the same level of economic development.)

There is no doubt that globalization is one of the most challenging developments in the world history. As Tandon (1998:2) once argued, “globalization in its most generic and broad sense is part of the movement of history” in other words, globalization which is an imperial policy and the “final conquest of capital over the rest of the world”, is deeply rooted in

history and quite explainable within the context of the one arm banditry and the exploitative antecedents of capitalism which, by its nature cannot exist without parasitic expansion.

Giving the changing faces of and phases of globalization and its immutable central and primary focus is to exploit African resources, disintegrate its economies and incorporate it into the international capitalist economy.

Theoretical Framework

Economic crisis, no doubt, is one of the persistent problems confronting most third world countries. Inevitably, the problem requires state intervention. Monetary adjustment and the mechanism of Globalization have been strategies adopted by most third world countries in Africa as a panacea to the enduring economic crisis. Thus, in analyzing the problem at stake, the writer adopted the theory of Post-Colonial State which was developed by Hamzi Alavi (1972:67), and later was popularized by third world scholars like Claude Ake (1985:23), Ekekwe (1985:65). The most distinguishing feature of the theory is that “it is an assumption that the post-colonial state is a creation of imperialism, as such, it has followed a developmental strategy dictated by the interests of imperialism and its local allies, not by those of the majority of indigenous population. The post colonial state has created a deep crisis from which it can hardly extricate itself without fundamentally changing its present nature”.

The theory holds that one of the cardinal goals of the post-colonial state is to create conditions under which accumulation of capital by the foreign bourgeoisie in connivance with the ruling elite will thrive. To this effect, Ekekwe (1985:56) observed that the post-colonial state rests on the foundation of the colonial state, which in turn, had incorporated some important rudimentary state structures. As a result, the main goal of the colonial state was to create conditions under which accumulation of capital by the foreign bourgeoisie would take place through the exploitation of local human and other natural resources. The post-colonial state, it is argued, emerged on this basis.

Impact of Global Events on National Policy Agenda

Developing countries are particularly vulnerable to global events and actions and have to depend heavily on the international community for financial and technical assistance. Consequently, national policies are interlocked with global issues. As Landell Mills and Serageldin (1991:87) state, “because poor countries generally have fragile politics and weak systems of accountability, with few autonomous institutions and little power to offset that exercised by the central government, external agencies are potentially key political players, capable of exerting considerable influence. The boundaries of the political system are no longer impermeable to outside pressures and influences. Public policy now takes place in a world system as well as in national political systems. The international environment has an added role to play in influencing the national policies. The mass media and international conferences ease the process of policy diffusion. Harrop, :34(1992) notes that “The international environment forms much of the context of national policy-making. Policy-

makers in each country share a policy context formed by the international economic cycle of prosperity; recession depression and recovery. International organizations such as the EU also form an increasingly important part of the context of national policy-making. The policy agenda is also becoming international”

As multinational corporations and international organizations come to exercise a great degree of influence, so the capacity of national policy-makers to frame their own agendas is reduced. National issues, such as social welfare, environment, drugs and trade, are items on the national policy agenda which have become global issues. This has been accompanied by increasing transnational cooperation. National policy agenda in a developing country is now exposed to developed countries. With globalization, there is a greater scope of interaction between a nation state and other countries. A nation state has now come to exercise less control on policy agenda than it was in the second half of the twentieth century. From the national perspective, this means that the policy agenda may be global, but the policy-making and implementation remain national. Thus, there is a new kind of inter-play between transnational companies and the national and world economies.

Global issues interact with national issues, which, in turn, interact with the local level. Globalization posits that these layers are becoming even more interactive and permeable and that a new policy is emerging. For example, in European context, a new policy level is developing in terms of Europeification of national policy-making. Europe’s common currency (Euro notes and coins issued by the European Central Bank from 1 January 2002) is expected to open the way to a closer political union among European nations.

Similarly, most developing countries undertook significant liberalization of their trade regimes during the late 1980s and the 1990s slashing tariffs, reducing non-tariff barriers to trade, and privatizing public enterprises under the pressures of the World Bank and European countries.

The Need for a Global Perspective

It may be noted that the notion of World Politics was central to Harold Lasswell’s (1951) conception of the policy sciences. In 1951, Lasswell argued that policy sciences should take account of world trends and forces when considering the context of policy problems. He maintained the following: “Indeed, one of the major tasks of the policy sciences today is to follow in detail the processes of social invention, diffusion, and restriction throughout the globe for the sake of estimating the significance of specific events”. Writing in 1968, Lasswell also maintained that “As the globe shrinks into interdependence, relying more fully on science and technology, the policy sciences gain significance. Interdependence implies that every participant and every item in the social process is affected by the context in which it occurs.”

Similarly, Etzioni (1968) also observed that there was a rising interdependence between nations and economies. But he also felt that “Surprisingly, many social scientists tend to overplay that nation-state as the unit of societal analysis and underplay supranational bonds

and controls; above all they tend to take the nationalistic moral community as the community of values”

Policy Agenda in a Global Context

It is important for policy-makers to take account of global issues when considering the context of policy problems in national setting;

Environment

Pollution of the air and water, destruction of forests and loss of fertile soil are becoming critical problems with serious consequences for health, food production, productivity, and perhaps even the ability of the earth to support human life. Protection and improvement of the quality of the environment has become a global issue since 1980s.

To Porter and Brown, (2001:96), the environmental issue is increasingly penetrating policy issues, such as international security, North-South relations and world trade, their study shows how the issue has involved the development of new levels of interactions among states to form a “global environmental regime”. Because of a growing global environmental stress, there is a sustained pressure on national policy-makers to change or modify their policy positions. The World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) observed the following: “The traditional forms of national sovereignty are increasingly challenged by the realities of ecological and economic interdependence. Nowhere is this more true than in the shared ecosystems and in “the global commons those parts of the planet that fall outside national jurisdictions”. Industrial growth places pressures on policy-makers to prevent control pollution. International agreements on ways to control pollution and close ties between environmentalists have provided an exchange of information that shapes the policy agenda. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Brazil in June 1992 produced treaties to control global warming and preserve the diversity of species. The meeting issued the Rio Declaration, setting forth broad principles of environmental protection and sustainable development, and Agenda, a detailed plan for combating various environmental problems. In sectors, such as land, fresh water, forests, biodiversity and climate change, the 1997 UN assessment found that conditions either were no better than in 1992 or had worsened.

Poverty and Population Growth

Developing countries are facing increasingly serious population growth and poverty problems. Despite lower poverty rates, the number of poor people has increased largely because of population growth in developing countries, as well as un-even development, and increasing concentration of wealth.

Almost half of the world’s population (approximately 2.5 billion) lives on less than \$ 2 a day, and one fifth of the world’s population (approximately 1.4 billion) live on less than \$ 1.25 a day. This horrific level of poverty persists despite unprecedented increase in global

wealth in the past century. As the 21st century begins, a growing number of people and rising levels of consumption per capita are dimensions of poverty. Poverty and population growth have now become global issue. The World Bank's (WB) new strategy proposes, for example, an approach to fighting poverty. The three-pronged approach of the WB focuses on increasing opportunities for people, facilitating their empowerment and enhancing their security. Policy makers and environmentalists now largely agree that efforts to reduce poverty and population growth and to achieve better living standards can be closely linked and are mutually reinforcing. The policy agenda at the global level is now slowing the increase in population and attacking poverty. (Peter and Brown, 2001:56)

Most countries, especially developing ones, have come out with national health policies, which are global in context. As diseases have no barriers, there is the need for international cooperation and national political action by turning statements of principle into specific policies and actions throughout the world. Family planning is seen as a strategy to reduce population growth. The 1994 International Conference on Population Development (ICPD) programme of action states that "the aim of family planning programmes must be to enable couple and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children" with a view to reducing population size. Governments of nations that sign international documents of principles make a commitment to act on these principles. The extent of government attention to such commitments and the amount of money allocated to implementing them, however, vary considerably around the world.

Aids

AIDS as a communicable disease has become a serious concern to the international community. AIDS has already killed more than 20 million people, and today 35 million people are living with HIV/AIDS, 23 million of them alone are living in Sub-Saharan Africa. Every day another 7,000 people are infected. Around the world, the epidemic is having a huge effect on GNP. Since it is a global issue, the policy analyst must find a global solution involving a coordinated international cooperation and national political action. Johnatan Mann, the Director of the WHO's AIDS Programme, stressed that AIDS has been bringing about a "new paradigm of health, because of four factors: "it is a global problem; it is understood and spoken as a global problem; and it is known worldwide; and AIDS is combated at the truly global level".(Toyo, 2000)

The use of drugs has become an equally global concern. Earlier, it was regarded as a social problem and the focus was on seeking a national policy. However, since 1980s drug use has posed a serious menace to the international community and it requires a global cooperation and action. The international concern has addressed the supply and transportation of drugs from the producer nations, such as Thailand, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Columbia, Peru and Bolivia. (Toyo, 2000)

Trade and Industry

Changes have occurred in industry as a consequence of global changes and shifts. The major sources of global shift are transnational corporations' which organize production on a world-wide scale, the policies pursued by national governments and the enabling technologies of transport, communication and production. This has largely weakened the ability of national governments to make policies independently of those changes. Dicken (1988:34) observes the following: "the well-being of nations, regions, cities and other communities depend increasingly no merely on events in their own backyards but on what happens at a much larger geographical scale. We need a global perspective".

Yet nearly 80 countries containing a third of the world's population are being increasingly marginalized, and over the past 20 years developing countries' share of global trade fell from 0.8 to 0.4 percent. The fact is that 2.5 billion people live on less than \$ 2 a day, and 1.4 billion live on less than \$ 1.25 a day. In this way, international development cannot be achieved. (Dicken, 1988:78)

However, national policy-makers have the task of formulating policies which help create business climate. The global industrial environment interacts with the national political processes, and consequently, national policies are increasingly influenced by activities and events happening well away from the national context. So, the capacity of the national policy-makers to frame their own agendas is considerably reduced.

Privatization

The beginning of the 1990s witnessed a marked privatization instead of government control. There has been a renewed emphasis on privatization and competition throughout the world. Governments of most countries, both developed and developing, have adopted policies of (1) transferring government – controlled enterprises to have private sector; and (2) opening up a large number of industries to the private sector to encourage competition. Privatization is now fashionable in European community, South and North America, Australia, Asia, Africa, and is gaining popularity in Eastern Europe. The concept of privatization is ambiguous, as it may imply severe reductions in the size of the public sector and a drastic shrinkage of public ownership of key industries. Privatization is being driven by the shift of important economic sectors to operation on a global scale. National policy agendas are being shaped by forces of global economic restructuring.

Terrorism

Terrorism is another global problem, which is spreading like a cancer. In Iran, examples of terrorism are Hypocrites group (MKO), Jundullah in Sistan and Baluchistan Province, PJAK group in west of Iran. In the world, Al-Qaeda, Taliban, Revolutionary Armed forces of Colombia, Ansar al-Sunnah Army, Basque Fatherhood and Freedom are operating as terrorist organizations. Attacks on the World Trade Centre and Pentagon in the United States on 11 September, attacks on India's Parliament on 13 December in 2001, bombings of three

subway trains and one bus in the UK on 7 July 2005 and an attack by bombing to Islamic Republic Party office in Iran on 1 October 1982 are four important dates that made the whole world realize that terrorism had challenged the world community.

Sabharwal (2005:90) observed that “Our main enemy in the twenty-first century will be terrorism. Terrorism organizations or countries using them as a front, could explode a stray nuclear warhead or carry out biological or chemical attacks which in turn could cause a chain reaction and bring the world to the brink of destruction” There were several wars in the last century, including two World Wars, but the first decade of this century saw a radically different scenario – highly motivated groups of people launching attacks on nation-states. The shadowy figure of the terrorist has loomed large in homes and outside, menacingly. Now, there is the need for global cooperation for fighting global terrorism. For this aim, in September 2006, the UN General Assembly adopted the Global Counter Terrorism Strategy. Then, between November 2010 and May 2012, the Office of the UN Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) was established. Also, recently, the second global conference of the national focal points has been held in Geneva, entitled International Counter-Terrorism Focal Points Conference on Addressing Conditions Conducive to the Spread of Terrorism and Promoting Regional Cooperation. Today, countries more than any other time have concluded that they cannot stand alone to fight with this phenomenon. Therefore, more and more are encouraged to international cooperation. An example of such international cooperation is Iran’s recent cooperation with Argentina about identifying the perpetrators of terrorist explosions in the AMIA Trade Center.

Other Global Issues

It may be added that the world is becoming reluctantly internationalist, recognizing that the diversity of domestic social and economic issues (social welfare, trade, industry, agriculture, health, education, nuclear war, famine, etc.) is an item on the national political agenda, which is tied up with global issues. This has been accompanied by growing regionalization and internationalization. The global environment forms much of the context of national policy-making.

Conclusion

Considering the advantages and disadvantages of globalization for Africa and in the light of the analysis that has been done in the context of this paper, our argument is that much as globalization may be inevitable, its consequences for Africa are devastating. It is therefore, our contention that, there is need for an appropriate response to emerge from Africa with a view to understanding the dynamics that will reduce the devastating effects of globalization. Thus, we pose the question, what is to be done? Do Africans require a response informed by their own historical development? Our belief is that, for Africa to get out of this entrapment, it needs to delink its dependency on the western powers and that its system of independent states needs to be recomposed.

Given the forgoing, what are the alternatives left for the states in Africa in view of the rampaging menace of globalization and the seeming helplessness (due to debt burden) of the states and the citizenry? In other words, what are the ways out? Even though these questions on the surface appear unanswerable, it is essential for Africa's very survival to be emancipated from the current state of helplessness.

It is largely felt that in developing democratic countries policy agenda is driven by global forces. Problems arise in a context in which economic and social conditions play a major role in shaping opinions and political strategies. For example, the economics that stuck with the planning model experienced slow growth, stagnation, or worse; the collapse of the socialist economies was but "the final nail in the planning coffin". By the 1990s, countries around the world were actively engaged in privatizing public enterprises.

But the power of decision or policy and the capacity to implement it remains largely within the nation states. There is, therefore, a tension between the spillover, which may be said to be taking place at the global level and the reality of the maintenance of national sovereignty. Against the pressure of global agenda, the fact remains that at times of crisis "governments are prone to withdraw from intergovernmental cooperation and supranational policy-making rather than move positively into closer collaboration". A common issue and problems within a global context may be increasingly identified in international terms, but decision-making and implementation still remain largely within nation states. The global socio-economic framework interacts with the political processes and policies pursued by governments of nation states. The success of nation states in policy performance will diverge notwithstanding the convergence of the global policy concern.

Recommendations

One possible way out of the menace of globalization and the devastating effects, undue influences in policy making in third world countries according to Tandon (1998:45), who draws upon Amin's (1987:23) earlier works, is the subordination of external relations to the logic of internal development. Through this, African revolutionary and activist classes could be actively engaged in building alternative structure of power for organizing production based on new values of humanity and care for the environment.

African government must not resign themselves to fate vis-à-vis the menacing claws of globalization and, they must realize that it is always better to be a king in a "jungle" than a deprived and malnourished messenger in the "city". They must cease to be mere on-lookers-who according Frantz Fanon (1961) are either cowards or traitors on issues affecting their economic, political, and socio-cultural well being. Instead, they must ever the apron-strings of domination by the developed world by categorically and practically resisting the inequality inherent in a civilized world.

According to Ake (1996:122), "the people of Africa will have to empower themselves to repossess their own development" this could in addition to other mechanisms, be done by rebuilding their national images, by fighting corruption and by insisting on their own

cultural preferences, and terms of membership in the global village. This will only be possible through a sincere, committed sociological, cultural, economic, and political realignment that is truly African in nature, and intent. Without these conditions, it will be difficult, if not totally impossible, for Africa and Africans to talk about political and economic integration, improvement and above all, emancipative development in the twenty-first century.

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