

Globalization and Higher Education: A Challenge for Curricular Innovation for Relevant Education

Obitor Wizoma Matthew Ogeh (Ph.D), and Dr. Ezinne Abe,

*Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty Of Education, University Of Port Harcourt
Department Of Curriculum Studies & Educational Technology Faculty of Education*

Abstract: *This paper sought to examine globalization and higher education as a challenge for curricular innovation for relevant education. It is geared towards establishing the relevance of globalization in the selection of relevant curriculum and innovative patterns of teachers in higher education as to promote the presence of relevant education. To foster this, several concepts and theory were reviewed to further establish the purpose laid-out for this study. In conjunction with this, it was concluded that globalization do influence the innovative nature of the teacher as well as the curriculum that therefore brings about the dynamic nature of the entire educational process, and innovation is a nice ingredient towards the globalized nature of relevant education worldwide. It was then recommended that teachers should endeavour to seek out innovative means that will endeavour to promote their dynamicity in their professional enterprise and seminars should be organized and duly funded for teachers towards the importance of greater innovative prospects both nationally and internationally. It was also recommended that Curriculum planners should always put in check the needs of the society when planning the curriculum of schools for better efficiency in the relevancy of education.*

Keywords: *Globalization, Higher Education, and Innovation for Relevant Education*

Date of Submission: 27-04-2020

Date of Acceptance: 10-05-2020

I. Introduction

The Concept of Globalization

Globalization refers to all those process by which the people of the world are incorporated into a single world society, Global society?(Martin, 1990). Globalization include among others the shrinking of the world into a global village and the collapse of boundaries between different worlds and the expanding connectivity of all forms of interaction. Scholle (2000) maintains that Globalization facilitates the removal of barriers among nations of the world, thereby giving social relations unhindered access. In this regard, globalization reveals the extent to which the actions of one group of humans exert either positive or negative impact on others. Globalization could also be defined as the intensification of the world social relations which link distant locations in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa (Anthony, 1990). For Rosabeth Moss Kanter (1995) Globalization is seen as a situation where the world is becoming a global shopping mall in which ideas and products are available everywhere at the same time.

Globalization can also be defined as the process of increasing interconnectedness between societies, such that events in one part of the world more and more have effects on peoples and their societies far away (John & Steve, 1997). In other words, a globalized world is one in which political, economic, cultural, and social events become more and more interconnected, and also one in which all these (they) have more impact. In this regard, societies are affected more and more extensively and more and more deeply by events of other societies. These events can conveniently be divided into three types: social, Economic - (global currencies Pounds, Euros, Dollars, Grito, coins etc.) and Political - (Global weaponry, International Ballistic Missiles, Spy satellites etc.). In each of this the world seems to be 'shrinking' and people are increasingly aware of this. For example the World Wide Web WWW allows one to sit at home and have instant communication with Web sites around the world. Another example is the electronic mail (E-mail) which has also transformed communication in a way that we never envisaged twenty years ago.

Others include (i) World Wide Television Communications, (ii) Global newspapers, (iii) International social movements such as Amnesty International, Green Peace and others (iv) Global franchise such as Coca-Cola, McDonalds professional sports teams (v) The Global economy - other countries products marketed in other countries to the extent that one may likely think that the products are produced or manufactured in the marketing countries (a walk through any of the super market will prove this true) (vi) Global risk such as pollution, AIDS, Global warming, Deforestation, Desertification and others. The pattern of events seems to have changed too in the fact that time and space becomes compressed to the extent that everything loses its traditional identity. However it is imperative to observe that despite the benefits of globalization to the human race in

general, globalization also carries some evil seed which possess serious challenge to the very existence of the global village itself. One danger of globalization is that it makes it easier for drug cartels and Terrorist groups to operate. These definition can then be said to be hinged on the development level at which a particular nation has attained but still need further digression for the sake of the study.

Globalization and Education

Given the fact that the world now is a global village , it becomes imperative that the educational systems and programmes of nations must be improved to be responsive to the contemporary technological, economic and social challenges of the time as to make citizens or recipients relevant and useful in the globalizing world .Education must be adapted to respond and also contain the emerging global social and environmental challenges for a safe and peaceful world (globe). Hence we now talk of Millennial Development goals and Sustainable Development Goals. Globalization also calls for the harmonization of national education programmes in response to the emerging global challenges to make the world a healthier safer place.

The need for uniformity of various national education systems; yet recognising specific environmental peculiarity and challenges that makes every educational education system unique. Global challenges also make demand for joint action and programmes amongst nations of the world to contain the millennial challenges which must be pursued through deliberate education of the populace – formal, informal or non-formal. This action must be sustained through deliberate effort by nations of the world and intergovernmental agencies by providing greater budgetary allocation to educational programmes.

The need to encourage some ‘political refugee’ nation-states, failed states, and nations with pariah statuses , (mostly the third world and African nations) through aids , grants and advocacy programme to enable them respond to and actualise the millennial demand and challenges respectively in a globalized world.

Theoretical Framework

Post-modernism Theory

Post-modern theorist tends to argue that the Enlightenment “project “(the aims of Enlightenment thinkers) has been abandoned in contemporary societies. Foremost in the postmodern argument is the French theorist, Jean-Francois Lyotard (1992), in Haralambos (2008). The post modernists argue that people no longer believe in the inevitability of progress and the power of science to solve all problems, the perfectibility of humanity or the possibility of running societies in a rational way. Post modernists posit that people are more pessimistic about the future and much less willing to believe that the truth can be found in grand theories or ideologies such as Marxism.

Post modernism further maintains that there is now a much wider variety of beliefs and most people are unwilling to accept that one set of ideas can give the absolute truth and all others are false. There is no simple recipe for solving the worlds’ problems. The post modernists maintain that their faith has been lost with all ground plans for the future of humanity in all areas of social life. The Post modernists opted for diversity and maintain that anything goes in an era where all styles and fashions are possible so long as none is taken too seriously.

Lyotard and Stark (2007), argue that the post-industrial society and post-modern culture began to develop at the end of the 1950s, although the rate of development and the stage reached vary between and within countries. Social life is seen to as be organized around what is called “Language game” which seems to justify or legitimize people behaviour in society –games in which the participant can try to assert certain things to be true or right. The postmodern era has two main characteristics; which maintains that diversity is the order of the day as people lose faith in the search for one great truth that unites and justifies knowledge.

Furthermore, Emphasis shifts from the ultimate ends of human activity towards the technical means through which things can be achieved. In this regard, knowledge is no longer seen as an end in itself, but something to be bought and sold, perhaps even fought over. Post-modernists argue that knowledge that cannot be translated into a form usable by computers tends to get lost or disregarded. Increasingly, economic activity centres on information technology. Postmodernism offers the possibility of tolerance and creative diversity, in which humans are not corrupted by some doctrinaire meta-narratives.

Educationally, the postmodernist are opposed to any belief that there is a firm foundation to knowledge. Post-modernists are critical of any attempt to impose one version of truth on people, and are against believing that science and technology can solve all human problems. According to Usher and Edward (1994), the postmodernists teaches us to be sceptical of “foundationalism”(the idea that only one source of theory can solve man’s social problem) in all its forms, or totalizing and definitive explanations and theories and dominant take- for- granted paradigms in Education, whether this be liberals, conservative or progressive. Thus post modernism is suspicious of grand claims such as the following that:

1. Human potential can be achieved through Education
2. Education can provide shared values and social solidarity

3. Education can produce equality of opportunity and a just society.

The post-modernist also deny that there is any single best curriculum that should be followed in schools. Rather than providing any definitive blueprint for education, postmodernism simply suggest there should be no attempt to impose one set of ideas on all education. Supporting the work of Usher and Edward (1994) writing on Adult education and the postmodern challenge, Usher, Bryant and Johnson (1997) argue that Adult education has been encouraged by postmodernism theory. This is manifest in greater choice and diversity compared to schooling and much more use of flexibility and distance learning. This post-modernists argument allows for greater tailoring of the concept and pace of education to meet individual needs.

Post-modernists argue that no knowledge is central to all and superior to other forms of knowledge. This is reflected in the vast range of courses provided for adults by educational institutions. It is also reflected in increase of uncertainty about what adult education is for "*Knowledge is valued for its "interest "and its role in supporting the play of difference"*". Usher et al, (1997) further argue that knowledge is to become a commodity that can be bought and sold. Knowledge is also valued if it is useful and can therefore, be exchanged for money in the labour market. Post modernists further maintains that despite the fact that people value knowledge because it makes one to be rational as one gets enlightened, it must be said to be valuable only if it meets mans' daily need and solve his problem.

Post-modernism also believes that postmodern Education can play important role in helping oppressed groups because of its openness, it gives a chance for education to feature the concerns of the oppressed. Usher et al (1997), also argue that adult education is no longer a well-defined field with clear goals. It increasingly overlaps with other areas of life, including leisure and work, and has a multiplicity of meaning and purpose for those involved. Postmodernists like Michael Apple (1996), also believes that the educational system can be shaped by powerful political and economic forces.

Relevance of the Post-modernist Theory to Globalization and Educational Innovations

The post-modernist argument is relevant to this paper given its position on the function of education in the society, the openness and versatility of the school curriculum, especially as it affects distant learning and adult educational program and other disadvantaged groups in the society. And also looking at the Sustainable Development goals and the 'global village' itself, given the fact that the entire globe has become a global village, no problem is seen as a localized problem. Education in the globalized world should be aimed at meeting the daunting challenges of peculiar environment and at the same time responding to the global environmental challenges. Since the postmodernist subscribes to versatility of education programmes, it becomes imperative that starting from the primary to Higher education (curriculum) in Nigeria should be reflective of the global imperatives and challenges devoid of local cultural limitations.

According to the post-modernist, there is no grand solution or method to societal challenge and educational challenges, rather any knowledge that can be useful and converted to money for human survival and sustainability of the environment is welcomed. In this regard, this paper argues for the cracking of the educational walls that emphasises strict compartmentalization of educational programmes in higher institutions. An improved and extended inter-disciplinary approach peculiar to specific learner's unique nature should be accommodated and encouraged in the school programmes which will be responsive to the global environment.

This will create and increase capacity to engage students in cross-border collaboration and knowledge construction. This is imperative, given the fact that globalization has created impact that has reshaped and continues to reshape the landscape of academia, giving room for more interconnectedness of universities in terms of research initiatives. This new demand poses new and divers challenges too in administration of higher education in Nigeria which urgently must be attended to. One of such challenge is the demand for increased funding for higher education as to translate the dream and desired status of higher education to reality of global standard. According to Marginson and Wende (2007), increased funding will enable the universities produce internationally knowledgeable graduates that will and can be relevant in the global market.

Producing graduate for the global market will require a paradigm shift from the traditional local classrooms that are very limiting and research inhibiting. This new order will require exposing students to peers and instructors, professionals, experts and communities from diverse content across diverse boundaries. In this regard students will be encouraged to learning and knowledge across diverse boundaries cultures. This is what Anikpo (in Okodudu and Peterside, 2015) referred to as multicultural integration of the curriculum. According to Anikpo, this requires a curriculum and methodology of learning which must be devoid of entrenched cultural, racial and ethnocentric prejudices. Anikpo (2015), further maintains that this will also warrant and challenge education to increasingly be treated as business. Making and putting new policies in place to attract new international students to study with local universities. Attracting international students demands the need to benchmark performance with selected foreign universities in areas such as teaching pedagogy; students have to become creative, innovative and flexible and to find new solutions to new problems,

course content and its market relevance. Actualizing these ideals will call for the restructuring of higher education in Nigeria to make it more competitive globally.

However, in a pluralistic multicultural society like Nigeria where ethnic consciousness, ethno- religious groups and fanatics are making high demand on the Nigerian state in terms of pacification for relevance in the polity, and for local and contextualized knowledge and so on, care must be taken not to ignore these ethnic nationalities in the curriculum and content delivery in the schools. While the higher education in Nigeria attempts to respond to the international pressure and adapt to a 'world model' (Meyer, et al., 1997) in the globalized village, it must not forget to respond to the national and local forces, meet and solve local needs and problems respectively.

This approach should be able to create unity in diversity in the international global system. In other words, the new curriculum while attempting to meet ethno-national demands, must transcend the cultural prejudices that created social castes of oppressors (the centre) and the oppressed (the periphery). According to Margison and Wende (2007), given the globalized network environment in which every university is visible to every other, with increasing weight and demand for benchmark of the global dimension, it becomes very difficult for nations or individual higher institutions to utterly shut themselves off from global effects, hence the need for educational curriculum consistent with international and multicultural ethos, yet with local environmental cultural blend.

Globalization, Higher Education and the Teacher and Innovation

Given the fact that Globalization is dynamic and a continuum this also places a high demand on the educational process in Nigeria, especially as it relates to service delivery in the institutions of learning. The teacher as a major actor in the field must also be dynamic in his method and approaches to educational demand of the learner. Ukeje (1986) maintains that the quality of education for any nation is anchored on the education of the teacher. The need for the teacher to be awakened to new techniques of production and distribution of 'educational goods' currently going on in the globe has become imperative. This in line with Ukeje (1986) argument when he opined that the most effective method to usher in the desired educational reform is through adequate preparation of the teaching personnel. This calls for constant and regular interactions among teachers through regular (international and local) workshops, conferences and seminars to update and upgrade to new method of service delivery. There is also a demand on the teacher need of update and review educational content regularly because the society is constantly changing. This must not be limited to professional part of teacher education but should include the subject matter too and contemporary skills that education in the globalized world currently demands (Tilak, 2003).

- **Teacher Innovative Skills**

Any competent teacher must possess an iota of skill towards innovating new ideas or concepts that can help foster the propensity of their profession and its cause. Innovation is the idea of one to be creative and willing to initiate new things into an existing agenda that will help to foster better functionality. An innovative teacher can therefore be said as one that possesses a great amount of skills at being creative with ideas that can intermittently promote the current level for which they are presently working. With the presence of innovative skills in teachers, the high rate of attainment of great educational outcome will be imminent. This is so because their innovation will majorly be engendered on the ways to bring about better efficiency in the all-round activities of their instructional process, from the planning to its delivery state.

In a globalized world that is bound with daily changes, there is need for high level of innovation, not only from the teachers but also from every individual on planet earth. Innovation brings into reality developmental concepts that can foster the promptness in the rate at which improvement is ascertained. It can intermittently be said that innovation is the cause for change both national and international. With innovation, the desired change of effect one desires in the world can be brought to reality. So therefore, if a teacher desires for an improvement in the professionalism rate of his/her work, then he/she must endeavour to be very innovative towards the creation of ideas that can help foster this.

- **Teachers Innovation for Globalized Education**

As a teacher, it is imperative for one to note that one of the founding duties of the profession is the zeal to expand more in knowledge that will indirectly foster the amount of richness of the information shared or rendered to the students under ones watch. There is also the need for the teacher to be innovative on approaches of both sourcing out for information as well as dishing out the knowledge to students. There are several trends that can be found in the educational sector of the world today and as the educational process gets to be dynamic, the teacher should also learn to follow-up in the dynamicity of these processes. The high amount of innovative ideas derived by teachers to foster their instructional process helps in determining their competency level towards their area of specialisation of their profession.

Since teachers are known to be experts in their field of transmitting knowledge, there is the need for the attainment of certain amount of richness in their instructional delivery and what can help them to acquire such is their dynamic nature towards the obtaining of informationalknowledge that helps to bring about their constant development. As the world of education is changing daily globally, there is need for the teacher to also follow-up in this trend.

Globalization Higher Education and Curricular Innovation

- **Curriculum review and updating is imperative**

To be responsive to the contemporary educational trend occasioned by globalization, the need to constantly review, update and redesign the curriculum in terms of content and method of delivery is very imperative. Curriculum planners should not be stereotype rather, should accommodate interdisciplinary and comprehensive approach in service delivery to ease learning .This approach also demands developing more participatory teaching and learning methods to encourage students to learn not just ‘to know’ but also learn ‘to do’. This also calls for the curriculum planners to integrate cooperate bodies and institutions relevant to students programmes in curriculum planning to enable students easy access to practice what is learnt in the school.

Competency –based approach in the redefinition of educational programmes. This approach according to UNESCO published report 1996 in Jacques Hallak and Muriel Poisson (2000) stressed that:

- **The need to favour the development of skills alongside knowledge.**

The fast evolution of today’s societies - and, more specifically, of labour markets - requires new skills from individuals. These were summarized in a report published by UNESCO in 1996 as follows: learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be. They call for the redefinition of educational programmes on a competency-based approach: this implies that from now on, curricula should focus on students attaining a stated number of clearly defined skills or competencies at the end of each stage and level of school education. This, of course, should have consequences on teaching/learning methods, student assessment procedures and certification.

- **The need to adapt curricula to the needs of different socio-cultural groups, and to maintain the national and social cohesion of the country.**

The phenomenon of globalization has helped to widen the gap between those who globalize, and those who are globalized - or left out - of the process at the local, national, regional and international levels. This raises the problem for public authorities of how to maintain the cohesion of a country. As a result, there are implications for education, since the situation and the socio-cultural background of learners are seldom taken into consideration when conceiving and implementing curricula. Trying to cope with this situation means not only having to refer to the national identity or promote the concept of citizenship, but also having to include the teaching of peaceful co-existence in educational content.

Why this particular phenomenon is necessitated in due cause is that the dynamic nature of education brought by changes in the world is mostly derived from the societal needs, since the major purpose of education is to foster the great amount of growth and development of a nation. And so in this due course, the prospects of education must fall in-line with the socio-cultural prospective of each and every nation. These prospective are what then brought about the diversification in the way and manner education is being practiced in each country, thereby originating the world of globalization. This therefore brought about the need for the curricula to be adjusted so as to adapt to these varying socio-cultural characteristics of these nations.

II. Conclusion

From the above postulations thus far, it can then be concluded that globalization places a high demand on the innovation the teacher, his method of delivery as well as the entire curriculum as to enable the educational respond to the dynamic nature of the entire educational process in the globalized world . In this regard, much access to ‘educational goods’ will be created for varied groups as the wall of rigidity in educational delivery will be collapsed as a result of innovation . The Learners too , at the same will be globally relevant given the new approach of delivery and versatility of the curriculum and thereby meeting the global bench mark.

III. Recommendations

From the above conclusion, it was then recommended that:

- 1) Teachers should endeavour to seek out innovative means that will endeavour to promote their dynamicity in their professional enterprise.
- 2) Seminars should be organized and duly funded for teachers towards the importance of greater innovative prospects both nationally and internationally.

- 3) Curriculum planners should always put in check the needs of the society when planning the curriculum of schools for better efficiency in the relevancy of education.
- 4) Government, NGOs, and other concerned bodies should as well contribute their quota in making necessary provision that will aid the integration of globalization towards the creation of relevant education.
- 5) The funding of education should be responsive to international standard for effective innovation and advancement to be attained .

References

- [1]. Anikpo, M.(in Okodudu, S. and Peterside, S.J., 2015). The Academic Legacies of Anikpo: With Reminiscences of Associates and Friends. Port Harcourt. Souldek Consulting.
- [2]. Anthony, G. (1990). *The Consequences of Modernity*. Stanford: Stanford University Press
- [3]. Apple, M.F. (1996). *Cultural Politics and Education*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- [4]. Essiet,U.(2019). Nigerian Curriculum not in tune with 21stCentury Challenges Nigerian Vanguard Nov 14 2019story by Olawole page
- [5]. Haralambos, H. & Holborn, M. (2008). *Sociology: Theories and Perspectives* (6th Ed). Collins London
- [6]. Jacques, H. & Muriel, P. (2000). *Globalization and living together: The challenges for educational content in Asia*. CBSE – IBE, 2000 (p.136).
- [7]. Jean-Francois, L. (1995). *Toward the Postmodern*. Humanities Press New Jersey
- [8]. John, B.& Steve, S.(1997).*The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- [9]. Margison, S. &Wende, M.V. (2007). Globalization and Higher Education . EDU/wkp(2007)3No .8 ,6 july .http/www. oed org.
- [10]. Martin, A. & Elizabeth, K. (1990).*Globalization, Knowledge, and Society*. Sage Publications, 1990 (pp. 280)
- [11]. Meyer, J.W., Boli, J., Thomas, G.M., &Ramires, F.O. (1997).World society and the Nation – State.*American Journal of Sociology*, 103(13): 144-181
- [12]. Rosabeth, M.K.& Todd, L.P. (1995). Globalization: New Worlds for Social Inquiry. *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, 40: 1-20
- [13]. Tilak, J.B.G. (2003).*Education , Society and Development .National and International perspectives* A.P.H Publishing Corporation New Delhi
- [14]. Ukeje, B.O. (1986). *School and Society in Nigeria*.Fourth Dimension PublishingCo.,Enugu.
- [15]. Usher, R. & Edwards, R. (1994). *Postmodernism and Education: Different Voices Different Worlds*. London: Routledge
- [16]. Usher, R., Bryant, I., & Johnson, R. (1997). *Adult Education and the Postmodern Challenge: Learning Beyond the Limits*. London: Routledge

Obitor Wizoma Matthew Ogeh (Ph.D). "Globalization and Higher Education: A Challenge for Curricular Innovation for Relevant Education." *IOSR Journal of Research & Method in Education (IOSR-JRME)*, 10(2), 2020, pp. 20-25.