

EPITOME OF GLOBALIZATION: DECEPTIVE COMFORT OF NEO-COLONIALISM IN AFRICA

Nwosu Raphael Chijioke* & Anusiem Uche Samue**

ABSTRACT

This paper critically examines the impact of globalization on Africa, arguing that the continent's integration into the global economy has perpetuated neo-colonialism. Under the guise of economic development and modernization, globalization has created a deceptive comfort that conceals the exploitative nature of neo-colonialism. The author contends that Africa's reliance on foreign capital, technology, and expertise has led to a loss of sovereignty, cultural erosion, and economic dependence. Furthermore, the paper highlights how globalization has exacerbated income inequality, environmental degradation, and social injustice in Africa. Ultimately, this research calls for a reevaluation of Africa's engagement with globalization and advocates for a more equitable and sustainable development model that prioritizes African agency, self-determination, and socio-economic transformation.

Key words: Globalization, neo-colonialism, cultural hegemony, Africa, colonial, economic, political,

INTRODUCTION

Globalization is defined in multiple ways for various audiences. In this article, however, globalization refers to the increasing integration of global markets, money, finance and technology, fueled by increasingly liberalized macro-economic policy frameworks. (Kassie and Jorgie, 2020). Globalization as Ibiam et al (2022) view as a covert political economy motivated agenda for the sustenance of the strangle hold of the developed metropolitan societies to lure Africa and other less developed societies into unwitting ensnaring themselves into a complex web of political, socio-economic and cultural re-orientation. Globalization, as Mohmood et al (2023) put it, the rational allocation of resources and enhanced capital flows, can lead to global economic integration and higher growth rates, which in turn can improve people's living standards and employment opportunities. As Zheng et al, (2022) put it, by incorporating positive features of one culture into another, breaking down language and allowing for commerce and cooperation between two very different areas. Simply, it is a process which involves much more than simply growing connection and interdependence, it is a historical process involving a fundamental shift or transformation in the spatial scale of human social organization that links distant relations across regions and continents.

Yet beneath the polished surface of international cooperation and economic integration lies a subtler, more insidious reality — one that echoes the power dynamics of colonial eras past. The former colonial rulers ensure that the newly sovereign colonies remain dependent on them for economic and political direction. As Tegegne (2024) puts it, Neo-colonialism was used by the leaders of the Cold War USA and the Soviet Union as well as the former colonial masters to compete with one another. Neo-colonialism presupposes a practice where former colonizers and or new emerging super-powers subtly impose their interests and enforce economic, political and cultural dominance over other nations. (Adoko et al, 2021). As John et al (2023) view the Neo-colonialism is the subtle propagation of socio-economic and political activity by former colonial rulers aimed at strengthening capitalism, neo-liberal globalization and cultural suppression of their former colonies. In reality, its economic system and thus, its political policy is directed from outside. Neo-colonialism does not require physical, direct control or manipulation by the imperial power, rather, it is through means and mechanisms like foreign aid, foreign trade, multinational corporations, foreign direct investment, international financial organisation, media and literature. (John et al, 2023).

This modern-day imperialism thrives in the shadows of globalization, offering a deceptive comfort to developing nations while subtly entrenching their dependency and subordination. In examining the global

landscape, it becomes increasingly clear that what is often hailed as integration may, in truth, be the refined perpetuation of control — the epitome of globalization marked by the quiet persistence of neo-colonial rule.

EXPLOITATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Globalization has been a defining characteristic of the industrial capitalist system. Capitalist imperialism is dialectic of political actors that command a territory and capital accumulation in space and time. It goes on to state that developing countries depend on developed countries for resource flows and technology but developed countries depend heavily on developing countries for raw materials, food and oil and gas markets for industrial goods.

Economic globalization has been fueled by market forces that are much more interested in profits than the protection of the planet. (Edet and Odey,2022).

The operation of some multinational corporations in Africa, for example, ignore the plight of the poor and their environment. From the rise of the fossil energy to the renewable resources, the global integration of economies has brought perpetual economic growth, technological innovations and profit accumulation. To understand the relationship between globalization and exploitation of natural resources, we must know the historical analysis. The industrial revolution marked the beginning of significant capitalogenic ecological crisis, with the large scale burning of crude oil, coal leading to increased greenhouse gas emissions. As global trade expanded so did the exploitation and commodification of natural resources. The contemporary form of globalization, driven by economic power, clearly promotes the hegemony of western culture and corporations, puts jobs and communities at risk in the rich countries and exploits cheap labor in the poorer countries, increases threats to the environment, and undermines the foundations of democracy and social stability by subjecting natural political institutions to forces of economic change beyond their control. It is in regard to this, that spread of the ideas of neo-colonialism is the driving force of globalization, by creating a borderless world where the global replaces the local rational. These calculated methods the colonialist created situation which enabled them to perpetuate their domination and exploitation of the Africans. The colonial lords saw the extraction of natural resources from Africa continent to develop their economies. Economic globalisation has been credited with improving interactions between developers from around the world. It has generated important issues that influence how multinational corporations operate around the world such as widening economic disparities, dependence on foreign countries for their products, weakened environmental integrity ,increased likelihood of a trade war between major economic players on the global market and possible currency rate fluctuations (Mukherjee,2023). The dependency and exploitation of the socio-economic and political lives of the now sovereign colonies are executed for the economic, political, cultural and military gain of the colonial masters home states.

MECHANISMS OF NEO-COLONIAL FOREIGN AIDS AND TRADE.

After the Second World War, the Bretton Woods system was created to bring greater order to the global financial system. As much a political as financial adjustment within countries. The so called Bretton Woods institutions, the World Bank and the IMF and the General Agreement On Tariffs and Trade (GATT) have become central parts of an international order that purports to be multilateral in form and global in scope. Indeed, it is quite absurd to imagine what globalization might look like without the existence of international organization generally or of the international economic. United States is most important player, but its underlying values and norm of social organization, democracy and free markets, also seem to be the only real game in town.

The impact of globalization on neo-colonialism is significant. Globalization has facilitated the integration of markets, enabling corporations to exploit resources and labor from developing nation more efficiently.

Additionally, globalization has enabled developed countries to exert their economic and political influence on developing countries. These include economic and political forms. Each of these forms of Neo-colonialism re-enforces the others. In the case of Africa countries, economic form was the foundation. This exposes the role of international financial institutions in African countries debt crisis.

The International Financial Institutions, as a neo-colonialist control the Horn of Africa in its sphere of interest by providing economic assistance. The IFIs became primarily associated with the promotion of a neo-colonialism agenda of economic liberalization especially policies to enhance: the devalue of currencies, remove subsidies, reduce tariff barriers, raise agricultural commodity prices, cut back bloated bureaucracies, sell or close state enterprises, deregulate prices, reduce budget deficits and public borrowing and lift restrictions on foreign investment.

IMF and others pushed African countries into a debt cycle where the former force loans on the later without recourse to how the loans are utilized with a deliberate plan to collect interests for their mismanagement and turn around to give out more loans to them with stiffer conditions. Africa's economic decline during the 1980s that it became known as the lost decade. Unable to raise funds locally, shunned by commercial banks abroad, African states opted for rescue by the IMF and the World Bank. In effect, western donor institutions took over as Africa's bankers. The remedy they devised for Africa's ills was a series of radical reforms. Facing bankruptcy, however, African governments had little alternative but to sign up. All a total of 243 loan agreements were made. Africa obtained more than 200 billion dollars in foreign aid. Foreign aid is based on profitability resulting from economic, political or military calculation. Instead of increasing development, foreign aid has created dependence. These international financial institutions promote their interests while simultaneously subjecting their countries to the dominance of these rich and powerful countries that control the international capitalist system.

Africa was structured to be in perpetual dependence on advanced economies of the liberal capitalists, right from the colonial era. In addition, the record of foreign aid to Africa is one of abysmal failure. This foreign aid now focuses in promoting certain changes in the developing countries that will enhance western economic expansion and dominance. Foreign aid is design to promote western donors economic interest around globe. The activities of these international institutions actually reinforces the present of the Neo-colonialism in Africa nations.

THE AUTHENTIC CULTURAL INFLUENCES FROM THE DOMINANT HEGEMONY.

The term Cultural imperialism was most popular in political discourse during the 1970s and 1980s, when some radical scholars of international mass communication along with a number of intellectual and politicians in western Europe and the developing countries, voiced concern about the homogenizing and potentially damaging effects of western culture overwhelming the globe. By the early 1980s, academic writers had already begin to criticize the notion of cultural imperialism, preferring the term cultural globalization instead. Cultural imperialism refers to a global situation in which powerful Culture industries and actors located almost exclusively in the West and, in particular in the United States, dominate other local, national and regional cultures and actors.(Demont-Henrich,2011). Cultural imperialism exercised by the Western hegemonic dominant social norms and intellectuals sustain the dominant order by creating and popularizing a worldview that convinces the oppressed that their subordination is appropriate, inevitable and just.

The global dissemination of Western cultural goods and practices involves the spread of social visions of Neo-colonial style development, with its heavy emphasis on progress, in the form of unlimited, quantitative growth and economic-technological expansion. Furthermore, cultural hegemony is an aspect of marxist philosophy that calls attention to the promotion of one culture over another with the objection of that the ruling class worldview becomes the norms. It could be noted that culture and language are pacesetters of our intellectual paradigms. For instance, globalization hampers local business. The local business shrinks as more companies globalize their business targeting a wider scope of market, it goes

along with the developing nations and rids their chances of development for example modern methods are accessible only for developed states and this may blind side developing states in development. Languages begin to disappear as urbanization encourages people to learn a country's domination language and culture that some cultural aspects are being lost like dialects. Thus, modernization looks at tradition as backward, rudimentary and yet there are some traditions which have stayed with us and have stood the test of time for example the local brews and herbal medicine in different communities and modernization only adopt the European values.

The first transmutation of modern cultural imperialism is its transfer to the centre of the media industry. In the context of globalization, the mobility of various cultures has been enhanced. It is through the rapid development of the media under the support of globalization, especially the mainstream and mass transnational media, cultural imperialism is able to be prominent and significant in the global dissemination. (Chen and Shen, 2021). Global media transmit news, market information, adverts and entertainment in forms of drama, music and sports to audience around the world. (Iyorza, 2014). New technologies such as e-mail, internet makes it easy for people to communicate quickly and efficiently all over the globe. The influence of the neo-colonial culture is rampant over the internet. No language can replace English in world politics, economy, science and technology, media, scholarly communication, entertainment etc. English is also the primary language used by Netizens, users of the most popular social media platforms eg Twitter, Facebook, Instagram) use English as their preferred language of communication. (Zeng et al, 2023). The superiority of the English language has been deeply rooted in the ideology of the educated in post colonial countries or regions. It affects the moral perception and the ethics of an average African.

The second transmutation of cultural imperialism in modern times is more driven by Western culture represented by the United States of America. The US styled cultural imperialism is helping other countries to realize the process of modernization. The result is a global homogenization of Culture built mostly but not exclusively around Western and American cultural forms eg Hollywood action films, UK style reality TV programs, McDonald's, necessarily means the widespread adoption of American ideology. Western cultural forms have features that transcend social divisions, national borders, language barriers and more generally, distinctive cultures United States of America has supplied essential components to the developing countries especially Africa television industry an experience that television industries across the globe have likely shared.

Debates over democracy and democratisation, through feverish conducted by scholars, appear in the view of some analysts to be quite misplaced. To be sure, democratic ideas have spread round the globe. Most signalling, in response to Arab Uprising's pervasive authoritarianism. In Tunisia, Mohammed Bouazizi set himself on fire in December 2010. Protest began and brought an end to the two decades rule of Ben Ali. At that point, the democratic authoritarian had spread all over the region. Barack Obama authorizing military intervention in Libya. The goal was to save the lives of pro-democracy protesters who found themselves the target of a crackdown by Libyan dictator Muammar al-Qaddafi. In the immediate wake of the military victory, US democratic culture was triumphant. Its first elected prime minister, Mustafa Abu Shagour, lasted less than one month in office.

The principles of liberal democratic rule continue to radiate with enormous intensity in all cultural circles. Globalization may have spread democratic apparatus since most nations have fallen under the influence of democratic propaganda. It is in the process of spreading democracy that liberal democracies enter into conflicts with non democratic nations like Tunisia, Egypt, Libya. Democracy is widely understood to be a form of representative government that is characterized by free and fair election, equality and guaranteed freedoms and rights. Indeed, guaranteeing rights beyond ones own borders were even one of

the pretences for the NATO invasion of Libya. Globalization, regardless of its disguises and deceptive on the spreading of civilization and technology, can be best understood as a neo-colonial project.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF GLOBALIZATION

Globalization has succeeded in indoctrinating new Western cultures in our lives. The age long communal life of the Africans, which is generally known as extended family system is being looked down upon as primitive system of exploitation and domination that was intrinsic to the very nature of colonial rule. There is a rapidly growing trend towards the erosion of national varieties of capitalism and the rise of a new neo-liberal hegemony rooted in globalization.

One of the central tension of a global perspective concerns the effects of neo-colonialism in majority-world educational communities.(Nganga et al,2020). A neo-colonial curriculum is likely to promote western educational ideologies. It has been said that when one acquires a new language or culture, he ultimately acquires a new soul and of course, a new culture. The greatest consequence of globalization is that, like colonialism, it is going to spell the doom of weak indigenous cultures. Loss of indigenous languages, foreign names became synonymous with Christian names, traditional medicine are regarded as fetish.

Regrettably, through globalization has further consolidated the use of English and French languages as the official language across the continent. African culture is thought to lose some of its own cultural identity in the process. As language disappears, culture dies. Therefore, cultural imperialism is the bedrock of globalization. Africans have lost its values in the struggle with the trends of globalization. Originally, IMF and World Bank were formed to promote steady growth by offering unconditional loans to economics in crises and establishing mechanisms to stabilize exchange.

Globalization facilitates the spread and consolidation of free market economy without government intervention, resulting in a complex interplay between developed and developing countries. It is essential to understand the relationship between these concepts because they have significant affects on the distribution of power and wealth across the globe. (Ezechi ,2023) . The primary beneficiaries of these form of oppression are powerful countries, multinational corporations and the wealthy elite. It can contribute to imbalances in bargaining power , unequal access to information and unfair trade agreement.

It is widely accepted that most of the debts, as a cause of poverty in Africa, are due to the policies of the IMF and the World Bank. Seen in this way, Africa countries have deregulated foreign investment, liberalized their imports, removed currency controls and have implemented all the economic policies of IMF and World Bank. These foreign investors now act as the primary source of exploitation. (Essien,(2021). In effect, MNCs have re-created the colonial hierarchy of spaces in new forms with the former imperialist countries on the top and the neo-colonies at the bottom.(Ogar et al,2019) . This aid distribution is often driven by the political and strategic interests of donor nations rather than the actual needs of recipient countries, resulting in a new form of colonialism.

The SAP policies of the International Monetary Funds , one of the US normative agencies , had a negative impacts on the Socio-economic and political advancement of nations in the Horn of Africa. Inflation numbers started to appear in a number of digits and result of rising unemployment. The richer are getting rich and the poor are becoming poorer. However, rather than bringing and enhances welfare as claimed by its advocates, has caused tremendous poverty and polarization of the African economies with the developing countries at the receiving end. It undermines sovereignty and hinders economic growth. The prevalent practice of foreign aid provision has led to increased debt , higher inflation rates , currency market instability, limited attractive investment opportunities and heightened risk of civil conflict and turmoil in Africans.

Globalization has aided deforestation and the huge consumption of non-renewable fossil fuels. Fossil Fuels played a fundamental role in facilitating certain economics practices and opening a scope for certain developments such as centralization, acceleration and increased economic productivity. As Abeer (2023) views that fossil fuel combustion is the primary cause of global warming which has resulted in greenhouse gas emissions with carbon dioxide being the most significant contributor to environmental pollution. Coal-using power plants are inefficient energy users that contribute to global warming by emitting high volumes of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. Consequently, low-income communities bear the brunt of ecological degradation such as soil erosion, water scarcity and biodiversity loss, while their limited economic means prevent effective response or recovery. (Fletcher et al, 2024). The degradation of the environment is one of the most urgent challenges facing the global community. (Hussain et al, 2021). Environmental degradation occurs when extraction effects are multiplied by high rates of consumption.

CONCLUSION.

Globalization can be considered as the covert proliferation of socio-economic and political activity by previous colonial rulers with the intention of propagating Washington consensus model, accumulating capital and cultural domination of the territories they formerly controlled. With developmental strategies such as combating terrorism, providing economic assistance, providing humanitarian relief are the best masks for Neo-colonialism to achieve its socio-economic and political interests in the African countries. Sadly, the covert activities of western superpowers become invisible governments in the countries of Africa. This, the invisible hands of Adam Smith in the region can be seen in products, food and capital travel the world in unprecedented numbers and at historic speed, so too do the myriad of diseases, environmental hazards, economic inequality, cultural imperialism, social and ethnic difference and terrorism in Africa. As we have seen, globalization seems to be both creative and at the same time destructive but trying to distinguish its positive from its negative sides is demanding and controversial debates. Globalization may be a beautiful thing but it is definitely not a panacea. It is an enterprise that favours western cultures and it is the same old neo-colonialism with a new tool. Despite the failure of African socialism, there is an African way of development that is different from the western countries. Our development lies not only in our possessing rationality but it is our ability to cultivate mental independence by the reviving of indigenous knowledge and skills should be mounted and sustained, traditional medicine should be studied, developed and applied where appropriate, native languages should also be compulsory at any level of education; development of mineral refinement capacity, and rejection of the IMF and world bank counter developmental neo-liberal policies. It is in the stadium of mental independence that Africans rationality wins its most precious laurel in the globe.

***Nwosu Raphael Chijioke**

Educational Foundations/Management
Alvan Ikoku Federal University Of Education, Owerri,
Imo State
chijiraph@gmail.com

And

****Anusiem Uche Samuel**

Educational Foundations/Management
Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education Owerri Imo State

REFERENCES

- Abeer,M.A.R.Y(2023) The Role Of Nuclear Power In Sustainability Of The Electricity Sector. American Journal Of Environmental And Resources Economics. 8(2)19-27
- Edet,L. A and Odey ,P. (2022) Africa And The Challenges Of Globalization: An Overview. PNISI Journal Of Art ,Humanity And Social Studies. 2(3).
- Essien,U.U.U(2021) Neo-Colonialism And Debt Crisis: A Challenge To Development In Africa. (A case study Of Nigeria) .AKSU Journal Of Administration And Corporate Governance. Vol 1(1).
- Ezechi,E.D (2023). The String Between Neo-liberalism,Neo-imperialism And Globalization.SIST Journal Of Religion And The Humanities. 3(2).
- Fletcher,C, Ripple, W.J, News come,T ,Bernard ,P , Beamer , K , Behalf,A, Bowen,J , Cooney,M ,Christ , E , Field,C , Hiser,K ,Karl,D.M ,King ,D.A, Mann,M.E, Me Gregor,D. P, Mora,C, Oreskes,N and Wilson,M(2024) Earth At Risk: An Urgent Call To End The Age Of Destruction And Forge A Just And Sustainable Future. PNAS Nexus 3(4)1-20.
- Hussain,H.I ,Haseeh,M ,Kamanidin , F, Dacko-pikiewics,Z,Szczepanska-Noszczyna,K (2021) The Role Of Globalization, Economics Growth And Natural Resources On The Ecological Footprint In Thailand: Evidence From Nonlinear Casual Estimations. Processes Vol 9
- Ibiam ,O.E ,Okechukwu ,G.P ,Agudiegwu,M.O And Ibe, E.C (2022) Globalization As Culture Imperialism: A Death Knell For The Development Of The Indigenous People's Culture In Africa. Socialscientia Journal Of The Social Sciences. Vol 7(1).
- Iyorza,S (2014) Global Media And Neo-Colonialism In Africa:The Socio- Ecological Model Solution To Nigeria's Development Efforts. Eds , Kingsley Oweta et al, Freedom ,Self determination and Growth In Africa. Berlin -Germany: Media Team IT Education Centre. P 1-18
- John,O.I, Messina,G.M And Chukwuemeka ,O.A.(2023) The Effects Of Neo-colonialism On Africa's Development. Pan African Journal Of Governance And Development. Vol 4(2).
- Kassie,T and Jorgie,Y (2020) The Challenges Of Globalization To Africa: Theoretical Reflections And Practical Assessments. World Journal Of Rese6 And Review. 11(3) 21-38.
- Maduagwu, M.O. (1999). Globalization and its Challenges to National Cultures and Values. A perspective from sub-Saharan Africa: International Roundtable on the challenges of globalization.
- Mohmood,A , Zanoor,A , Xiyue,Y and Muhlis,C (2023) Natural Resources Depletion, Financial Risk And Human Well Being. What Is The Role Of Green Innovation And Economics Globalization? Social Indicators Research Vol 167. 269-288.
- Mukherjee,S(2023) Effects On MNCs Of Globalization. International Journal Of Novel Research And Development. 8(6).
- Nganga,L ,Akpovo, S.M ,Thapa, S, Mivangi,A.M (2020) How Neo-colonialism And Globalization Affect The Early Childhood Workforce In Nepal And Kenya. Contemporary Issues In Early Childhood. 21(2) 111-125.
- Ogar J.N ,Nwoye,L And Bassey ,S.A(2019) Archetype Of Globalization : Illusory Conflict Of Neo-Colonialism In Africa. International Journal Of Humanities And Innovation. Vol 2(3) pp 90-95.
- Tegegne, Y (2024) Neo-Colonialism: A Discussion Of USA Activities In The Horn Of Africa. Cogent Arts And Humanities. 11(1)
- Xinyi, C and Siwen,S ,(2021) Review Of The Impact Of Cultural Imperialism In The Context Of Globalization To The Film Industry. Advanced In Social Science, Education And Humanities Research. Vol 559
- Zeng,J Ponce,A.R and Li, Y (2023) English Linguistic Neo-Imperialism In The Era Of Globalization: A Conceptual Viewpoint. Front Psychol 14.

Zheng,L ,Xu, M , Chen ,H ,Li,Y and Chen ,S (2022) Globalization , Green Economy And Environmental Challenges: State Of The Art Review For Practical Implications. Front Environmental Science.