



Globalization: Does it have Effects on Nigeria's Governance System?

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Abstract

Even though globalization has made countries across the world more connected than ever, there are still controversies over its benefits regarding socio-economic development and good governance in developing countries. Against this backdrop, the study investigates the link between globalization and governance in Nigeria. This is with a view to determining the implications of globalization on the governance of Nigeria. The study, which relies heavily on secondary data, shows that the country's political authority has been depleted in order to conform to global trends. Globalization has affected the quality of bureaucratic governance, puts pressure on governance on whether to open up or restrict the economy, and exacerbated the unequal distribution of incomes because of the relative differences in the mobility of labor and capital. The study further revealed that globalization triggered the unregulated use of the internet and exposed people to illicit activities. It also contributed to the transmission of diseases, including HIV/AIDS, the Ebola virus and COVID-19. Globalization also encouraged multinationals to access Nigeria, thereby adding to environmental pollution, climate change, food insecurity, and health-related challenges, especially, as a result of oil exploration. These activities have continued to disrupt the people's means of livelihood, and consequently provoked political and social agitation and engendered secessionist groups, threatening the unity and existence of the country. The study, therefore, concludes that globalization has caused more damage than good to Nigeria's political and socio-economic activities.

Keywords

globalization, governance, bureaucratic governance, mobility of labor, socio-economic and development

1 Introduction

Following centuries of evolution and advances in technology, as well as international relations and cooperation, the world is more connected than ever through globalization. Globalization has been recognized and adopted by countries across the globe as one of the mechanisms for enhancing economic development and improving social welfare, as well as reinforcing political ties between and among countries across the world. Globalization has therefore become a

topical issue of discourse among scholars, politicians and governments at national, regional and international levels and among international organizations, as well as, interested stakeholders.

Even though the evolution and development of globalization is not recent, the political, economic, and technological improvements of the 1990s fast-tracked the processes of globalization (Khan Academy, 2022). Thus, following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989, which subsequently brought an end to the Cold War in 1991, the world turned out to be more connected. Hence, globalization has been one of the major developments in the contemporary world system, which brought about a cooperative arrangement that covers various aspects of governance, which have continued to shape daily activities around the world (Gulmez, 2017; Brooks & Wohlforth, 2000; Kolb, 2021; Khan Academy, 2022).

Globalization is defined as a broad network of economic, socio-cultural and political interrelationships or interconnections and processes that transcend national boundaries (Yeates 2001 cited in Yalcin, 2018). In essence, it covers economic integration, political links vis-à-vis policies being transferred across borders, the transmission and exchange of knowledge and ideas and socio-cultural interactions, among others. Suffice it to say that the world today has become a global village, given the unparalleled level of interconnectivity and interrelation between the political, economic, social and technological forces that pervade the present-day global system (Akinboye, 2008), one such force being governance.

Governance can be seen as a system through which “power is exercised, in the management of a country’s political, economic and social resources for development” (World Bank, 1993). It is the total of actions and activities of government directed toward the realization of good economic policies (Adegbami & Adepoju, 2017). It is also a mechanism designed to guarantee transparency and accountability, rule of law, responsiveness and inclusiveness, as well as broad-based participation. In essence, governance relates to the proper application of rules, norms and values in the management of public affairs. Governance, therefore, has to do with the culture and the environment of the institutions of government, where citizens and stakeholders interrelate and partake in regulating public affairs (UNESCO-IBE, 2022).

While a set of people considered globalization as a platform for global integration with many benefits to different countries of the world, particularly in the area of good governance and socio-economic development, others see it as being beneficial to certain parts of the world, especially the developed countries, and to the detriment of developing countries. It is in light of this opinion that the study investigates the effects of globalization on the governance of developing countries, with particular reference to Nigeria.

2 Globalization and Governance: A Review of the Literature

The term globalization is not only heavy in its usage but also obscure in meaning, even for those who invoke the term (Reich, 1998). The extensive or general use of the term globalization notwithstanding, there has not been a uniform or perfect definition for it. Since there is no precise and universally accepted definition of the term, all the arguments in favor or against it can be seen as being obscured. Consequently, different scholars have offered various definitions of the term globalization, based on their philosophical inspirations, and what they wish to prove. In essence, “globalization is an ideological term and, like all ideological terms, it is the subject of great controversy” (Subaşat, 2015, p. 3).

The eventual cessation of the Cold War has made what seemed to be a bipolar world become more unified and interconnected. As a result, countries and people across the world became

more conscious and aware of some global challenges, such as poverty and climate change and more importantly, economic interconnections and linkages become more visible. This explains Reich's assertion that "the demise of the Cold War coincided with the onset of globalization, raising the question of whether there is a causal relationship between the two" (Reich, 1998, p.6).

What then is globalization? It can be seen from different perspectives. In his book titled "The Race to the Top: The Real Story of Globalisation", Larsson defines globalization as the process of shrinking or contracting the world, by shortening existing distances between and among countries of the world, in order to increase their relations and interactions in different aspects of lives (Larsson, 2001). For Larsson, globalization is about reducing the distances between and among countries across the globe to increase their dealings and relations. In other words, globalization presents chances for greater dealings and relationships among people and organizations around the world (Martell, 2017). A more detailed definition of globalization is offered by McGrew. According to him, globalization can be seen as:

a multiplicity of linkages and interconnections that transcend the nation-states (and by implication the societies) which make up the modern world system. It defines a process through which events, decisions and activities in one part of the world can come to have a significant consequence for individuals and communities in quite distant parts of the globe (McGrew, 1990, cited in Honsberger, 2016 para. 1).

McGrew views globalization beyond mere relations and interactions between various countries. He opines that it covers a variety of connections that shape the contemporary world system in areas of decision-making, as well as the significance and consequences of such decisions on individuals, different countries and the world at large.

Jain (n.d.) sees globalization mainly from an economic point of view, and states that it has to do with the interaction between/among the countries of the world to develop the global economy. Thus, globalization is about integrating the societies of the world and their economies. Jain's view is corroborated by Thompson (1995), who sees globalization as a system that encourages global economic relations, as against the widening of such relations among different countries and their agents. For Williamson (1998), globalization is a system whereby the whole of the world is increasingly participating or involved in a single market, with mutually dependent production and consuming similar goods, as well as responding to the same forces. In essence, different studies by Jain (n.d.), Thompson (1995), and Williamson (1998), in that order, perceived globalization as a process of enhancing economic relations and integration among countries across the globe.

The definition of globalization as offered by the IMF (2008) is not at variance with the foregoing. The central focus of globalization, according to the IMF is the economy. The IMF therefore defines "globalization" as the process of enhancing economic integration across the world, vis-à-vis the movement of goods, services and capital, as well as labor, across international borders. It also involves exchanging knowledge, information and technology beyond national borders. Beside this are the political, socio-cultural and environmental dimensions of globalization.

The trio of Sheffield, Korotayev and Grinin see globalization from a social system angle. According to them, it has to do with the growth and development of social systems, which brought about an increase in the complexity of inter-societal connections. As such, globalization can be seen to have linked or connected the past, the present, and the future. Put differently, globalization has created avenues for bridging the past with the future (Sheffield et al., 2013).

Globalization in essence covers technological, political, socio-economic, and cultural interactions (Jain, n.d.), and it became acceptable and popular as a result of the rise of global communications, particularly the internet, which enhanced easy connections, and easy communication and flow of information among diverse people across the world (Williamson, 1998; Martell, 2017).

Having reviewed the concept of “globalization”, it is pertinent to do the same for “governance”. What does the word constitute? It has a long history, as it is traceable to the ancient Greek word “kubernaein” and the Latin verb “gubernare,” which means “to steer.” Further etymological studies revealed that the English probably adopted and adapted the word from the French word “gouvernance” around the 12th century (cited in Vymětal, 2007).

In view of the fact that the concept of governance is flexible and thus covers many areas of government operations and activities and cuts across different academic disciplines, it could be said that governance is understood according to the area of interest of the user of the concept and what the user intends to achieve by using it. This stance has made the concept appear blurred and vague and, as such, the term has continued to generate a lot of debates, arguments and differing views among social scientists. It is for this reason that Vymětal retorted thus:

Are we really sure about the exact definition of the term governance? Do we not use this term to describe everything and nothing at the same time? Is there only one exact narrow definition, or is it better to use plenty of characteristics and broad definitions? (Vymětal, 2007, p. 5).

Vymětal’s position notwithstanding, an attempt will be made to review some of the definitions of the term governance as offered by scholars.

The World Bank (1993), for instance, sees governance as “a power exercise”. To the it, governance is about having power, as well as exercising those powers to manage the country’s political, economic and social resources for the development of the people and the country. In the same vein, the Committee of Experts on Public Administration (2006), sees governance from the perspective of using governmental powers. According to the Committee, governance is a process of exercising the political and administrative powers in managing the country’s governmental activities. Governance in this context encompasses the instruments, and procedures, as well as institutions, through which people and groups express their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and reconcile their differences. Fukuyama (2013), while corroborating the World Bank and the Committee of Experts on Public Administration, defines governance as the power of the government to enact and enforce rules, and to deliver services, be it a democratic or non-democratic government. For Fukuyama, governance is about the powers of government, and how such powers are being used to make rules and implement them for the benefit of the citizenry, irrespective of the type of regime in the country.

To the Governance Institute of Australia (2022), governance incorporates all the systems through which a country is organized, controlled and operated, as well as those mechanisms used by the people to hold those at the helm of affairs of governance activities accountable. In essence, governance covers all the mechanisms applied to plan, operate and regulate the ruled and the rulers alike for equity and accountability. Rao (2008) believes that governance is about the decision-making process in such a way that, whether the decisions made are implemented or not, it does not affect governance from being governance. In line with Rao’s assertion are the trio of Wolman, Levy and Hincapie. They elaborate more on the nature of decisions that are needed for governance. To them, governance is the procedure by which economic, social and environmental policy decisions affecting society, are made (Wolman et al., 2011).

In the view of the International Monetary Fund (2016), governance encompasses all structures and strategies applied to rule a country, make its economic policies and regulate its affairs. Thus, governance has to do with the actions and activities of government directed toward making policies for the economy and other governmental activities. Similarly, the Commission on Global Governance sees governance as

the sum of the many ways individuals and institutions, public and private, manage their common affairs. It is the continuing process through which conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated and cooperative action may be taken (The Commission on Global Governance, 1995, p. 2).

A critical look at the definitions of governance as espoused by scholars from developing countries reveals that their views are not at variance with those of their counterparts in the developing worlds. For instance, Ogundiya (2013) sees governance as a means of achieving the noble goals of the state. Governance is the art of ruling a given territory and its people. It covers the structure of the state, which includes the legislative, the judicial and the executive, as well as the civil/public service at different levels of government. Agagu (2010) defines governance as a means by which institutions of government manage governmental affairs through the use of the country's resources for the good of the people and development of the country. For Benson (2010), governance is a process of making decisions, which may be implemented or not.

Thus, governance is concerned with the collective activities and actions of individuals, institutions, and agents of the government to manage the affairs and activities of government, vis-à-vis, transforming or implementing governmental policies and programs for public goods and services.

3 Globalization and Governance: The Connections and Implications

Although scholars have argued that the integration of globalization with governance has been a major unresolved issue (Nadeem et al., 2014), and as such, the nexus or connection between globalization and governance has continued to generate a great discourse, on which consensus has not yet been reached (Bonaglia et al., 2001). Beyond this argument, however, the links or nexus between globalization and governance can be examined from two perspectives, namely a positive or negative one. In other words, there are two divergent views regarding the nexus between globalization and governance. While one point of view argues that globalization is a benefit to good governance, the other argues that globalization has damaging effects on governance. For instance, Kahler & Lake (2003), in their joint studies, documented some negative effects that globalization had on the governance of nation-states. According to them:

Globalisation drains political authority from nation-states, long the dominant form of political organisation in world politics. The state's monopoly of familiar governance functions is ending as governance migrates down to newly empowered regions, provinces, and municipalities, up to supranational organisations, and laterally to such private actors as multinational firms and transnational nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) that acquire previously "public" responsibilities. In this view, globalisation not only transfers the location of governance but also forces the convergence of state institutions and policies. In exercising their residual authority, states are constrained to

look and act alike. Although a transfer of governance to subnational units may increase democratic accountability, these governance changes and the accompanying pressures for convergence are more often seen as a threat to the ability of societies to chart their own democratically determined courses (Kahler & Lake, 2003, p. 1).

To Saich (2000), globalization negatively affects the quality of bureaucratic governance, and he further argues that a country could face various governance challenges as a result of globalization. A country facing such a bureaucratic challenge, for instance, may have to change some of the structures of governance and enlarge its legal systems due to conflicts that could emerge between local and central governments as a result of inequalities within the globalization-induced economy.

Similarly, there could be a challenge especially in the area of finance to the provision of public goods and services proposed by globalization. The significance in the globalization process of global public goods is without doubt increasing on a daily basis. Public goods in this context refer to such services provided through the efforts of individuals or governmental institutions for the benefit of the people, and include accessible and well-maintained roads, schools and educational facilities, health care facilities, potable or drinking water and the security of lives and properties (Colomer, 2011).

In essence, public goods are those which people continue to enjoy without direct payment, and such goods and services must be sustained. However, since public goods are free, there is the likelihood that they are limited in supply or under-produced, overused and degraded. Although the issue of global public goods propelled by globalization is laudable because of their immense benefit to the populace, the lack of financing or supplying additional resources to assist in providing such goods through globalization has on one hand been a major challenge to the new initiatives. On the other hand, many developing countries are facing financial challenges, and where resources are received through aid and assistance, such resources have not been judiciously utilized (Kaikai, 2015). The clamor for the provision of public goods, which some governments fail to accommodate, has constituted a burden on governance and constantly creates additional challenges to domestic governance.

Akhter (2004), in his studies, avers that globalization puts serious pressure on governance. According to him, the pressures are from two differing directions. While pressures are mounting from firms agitating for the economy to be opened up, fearing over-regulation by governments, some other groups that feel threatened by globalization are putting pressure on governments to maintain their restrictive posture. These pressures on governments have forced them to be in a dilemma when making the critical decision on whether to open up or not. A wrong decision at this point has the ability to whittle down the quality of policy regulation by governments, as well as affecting the effectiveness of governance.

Globalization has also been found to have led to even more unequal distribution of incomes. This is so because of the relative differences in the mobility of labor and capital. While it may not be easy for labor to cross international borders, because of some conditions attached to travelling, despite the various migration routes, capital can easily do so. It can easily be moved by investors and, in many developing countries, easily evade regulatory or tax regimes. This normally brings about differences and variations in the income gains by capitalists and labor groups, and so globalization has worsened social inequality. And social inequality has been found to have triggered mass grievances and uprisings on several occasions, and in some instances snowballed into political instability (Dutta & Mukherjee, 2015).

Technological development, which is part of globalization, is also bringing challenges to governance. It gave rise to the internet, which helps to disseminate information and opinions among the people and across the nations of the world. However, the use of the internet and what is being disseminated through it is beyond and difficult for many governments across the world to control. According to Deibert and Crete-Nishihata, (2012), the internet is becoming extremely difficult for governments to regulate. It has continued to provide a channel of opportunities for criminals, individuals and groups of people, as well as state-backed hackers, among others, to operate and perpetrate illicit activities. The activities pose challenges to governance affairs, apart from the fact that they can lead to the breakdown of essential government infrastructural systems, they can also result in financial waste and impose a financial burden on governments (Goldin, 2013).

The fact that there has not been a globally or a centrally managed institution of governance to nip illicit activities in the bud has created a responsibility gap in governance, which has, for instance, put an extra burden on banks and other financial institutions to develop security for themselves. In essence, private sector actors, especially those in the areas of cyberspace infrastructure, are being constrained and duty-bound to implement forms of regulation and control on behalf of states (Deibert & Crete-Nishihata, 2012). This in essence means that governance affairs and activities, which should ordinarily be handled by governments, have been forced on different actors, including banks, financial institutions and multinational firms.

In a similar vein, open, free and unregulated internet devices have brought negative challenges to the people, which inevitably constitute governance challenges. The Internet, for instance, has continued to corrupt people's minds, as such, people's moral and ethical values are being badly affected. Young people in Nigeria, like their counterparts in other African countries, are being exposed to a negative alien culture, including money laundering, cultism, international terrorism, pornography, child abuse (Omekwu, 2006), nudity, drug abuse, and the proliferation of arms and ammunition (Adesina, 2012); all these negative activities pose a threat to the governance system. The internet also brought about various cases of cybercrimes, in Nigeria. Those who are involved in these dastardly activities are called Yahoo Guys. They have developed various means of defrauding the people, from dubious extortion of money to operating illegal businesses and arranging fake marriages among other crimes. All these are the fallout from globalization, which has continued to constitute challenges to governance in Nigeria.

Another negative effect that globalization has had on governance is the spread of various diseases. For instance, the HIV/AIDS pandemic and the challenges of containing it have been a great challenge to the government. According to Msimang (2003), globalization is strongly linked with AIDS transmission in Africa. Nigeria without a doubt has been one of the countries in the world that are worst hit by HIV/AIDS. According to UNODC (2022), Nigeria was of 2019, ranked third among countries with the highest number of people infected with HIV/AIDS in the world. The continued spread of the infection is largely attributed to the movement of people from one country to another, which facilitated the rapid transmission of the disease across international borders. Although antiretroviral and other TRIPS have been developed and produced to curtail its spread, many affected people in Africa have no access to the drugs, given the nature and condition of many of the hospitals in Africa.

In a similar manner, the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) was imported into Nigeria through a Liberian diplomat. He arrived in Lagos, Nigeria through the Murtala Mohammed International Airport Lagos on July 20, 2014, and was not feeling well on his arrival, and was therefore admitted to a private hospital in Lagos, only to be diagnosed with EVD. This index patient was

said to have exposed 72 persons at the airport and the hospital to the disease (Shuaib, et.al., 2014; Otu, et al., 2018). The Federal Ministry of Health in Nigeria and the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), immediately declared an Ebola emergency in Nigeria in order to curtail the spread.

Similarly, the first case of COVID-19 was confirmed on the 27th of February 2020. The deadly health challenge was brought to Nigeria by an Italian citizen, returning from Milan, Italy to Lagos. He arrived in Lagos on the 25th of February 2020, and was confirmed to be carrying COVID-19 disease two days after, at the Lagos University Teaching Hospital. From then on, the disease spread to other parts of the country. The Government of Nigeria, through the Federal Ministry of Health, took various measures to control and contain the spread of the disease.

In essence, HIV/AIDS, Ebola Virus Disease and COVID-19 epidemics are globalized diseases that pose great challenges to local governance. According to Shuaib, et.al., (2014), the high level of travel across borders being promoted by globalization greatly facilitates the spread of these infectious diseases (Shuaib, et.al., 2014). Tackling them greatly burdened the government of Nigeria, given the fact that the country had on no occasion experienced any of the diseases until foreigners brought upon the country. The diseases thus suddenly hit Nigeria and Nigerians, as the country was ill-prepared, while its health sector was ill-equipped.

Similarly, human trafficking is encouraged by globalization, which also creates a challenge to governance. Most of the those being trafficked from Nigeria to Europe and America under the guise of seeking greener pastures will be used for commercial sex purposes. This trend added to the number of HIV/AIDS cases in Nigeria, given the sexually related contact of the returnees with the home-based Nigerians (Onyeonuru, 2004). As such, resources that could have been used for the country's development are being diverted to caring for those stigmatized by the majority society, and beyond this is the irreparable and incalculable loss of human lives.

Globalization has also contributed greatly to environmental pollution, by facilitating the movement of multinational companies to Nigeria. The activities of these multinationals have heightened the intensity of pollution in the country. Pollution of the environment came through different channels, namely the increase in industry and the exploration, exploitation, production, refining, and transportation activities of the multinational corporations in the oil-producing areas of the country, this has become a major source of environmental concern to the government. Beyond this are other challenges, such as pipeline leaks, explosions, gas flaring, and drilling floods, all of which have caused widespread disruption of the natural terrain of the environment. Similarly, it contributes to climate change, food insecurity and health-related problems. In addition, the activities of multinational companies, especially their exploration and exploitation of crude oil, have continued to cause damage to the means of livelihood and sustenance of the masses. Their farmlands have been destroyed, and they cannot engage in fishing activities either due to pollution. In essence, the masses have been cut off from making ends meet, and as such, globalization has added to their suffering, and further widened inequality gaps. The consequence of this is the appearance of agitators and secessionists groups that are currently shaking the unity and existence of the country.

Despite Nigeria's experience, globalization has, however, been argued to have had a positive impact on economic development elsewhere, and the economic development of any country has the potential to have a positive effect on its governance. The extant literature has revealed the positive relationship between economic development and globalization on one hand, (see Levy, 2012; Demir et al., 2021) and economic development and good governance on the other (see Fayissa & Nsiah, 2013; Mira & Hammadache, 2017). According to De Macedo (2001), globalization and governance not only affect each other but also affect the countries' economic

performance. For instance, globalization and governance have influenced the countries' economic strategy, including their decisions on how much, as well as what type of foreign capital should be accommodated? How important is the countries' participation in multilateral trade negotiations or a regional trade zone? How can countries be affected by global challenges, and in what manner can local institutions respond to these challenges? (Braga de Macedo, 2001). Beyond this, globalization has caused economic interdependence among people, and such interdependence of countries and their population has generated further challenges for governments, especially in the area of controlling and regulating their economies. In essence, the integration of economies propelled by globalization has, therefore, necessitated harmonizing national policies for interlinking markets and economies (Esty & Ivanova, 2003).

Furthermore, on a positive note, globalization, by enhancing press freedom, has significantly facilitated good governance. This is because the press has continued to play the role of watchdog in the economy and economic development. In other words, the higher the freedom of the press, the better the governance and administrative activities of a country. It is to this extent that Ahrend (2002) states that freedom of the press helps in monitoring the capacity of society by creating effective checks and balances on bureaucrats' activities, as well as, curbing the political officeholders' excesses which allows for curbing corruption practices. In this sense, globalization, by enhancing press freedom, has contributed positively to good governance.

4 Summary and conclusion

The evolution of and advancements in technology, coupled with several years of international relations and cooperation, later on, have impelled unprecedented connections between the countries of the world. The connectedness, which has been referred to as globalization; has been accepted and adopted as one of the mechanisms for enhancing economic development, and improving social welfare, as well as reinforcing political ties between and among countries across the world. With the 1989 collapse of the Soviet Union and the eventual end of the Cold War in 1991, the world became more connected. The improved connectedness of the world notwithstanding, it cannot be said that it has prompted good governance everywhere, especially not in developing countries. It was not surprising that the findings from the study revealed that globalization had negatively affected the quality of bureaucratic governance in Nigeria and so the country is facing bureaucratic challenges, which has forced it to change some of the structures of governance. Globalization has also put pressure on economic governance, in terms of whether to open up, or restrict the country's economy. There is also a challenge regarding the unequal distribution of incomes, as a result of the relative differences in the mobility of labor and capital. In addition, the unregulated internet, which allows easy connection to the world, has continued to create illicit opportunities for criminals and to normalize illicit activities among the populace. Globalization has contributed to the transmission of diseases, including HIV/AIDS, Ebola Virus Disease and COVID-19 to Nigeria. Globalization no doubt enabled multinationals to have greater access to Nigeria, but their activities have added to environmental pollution, climate change, food insecurity, and health-related challenges, among others. These activities are causing damage to the people's means of livelihood, leading to social and political agitation and secessionists groups that continue to threaten the corporate unity of the country. The study, therefore, concluded that globalization has caused more damage than good to Nigeria's political and socio-economic activities.

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